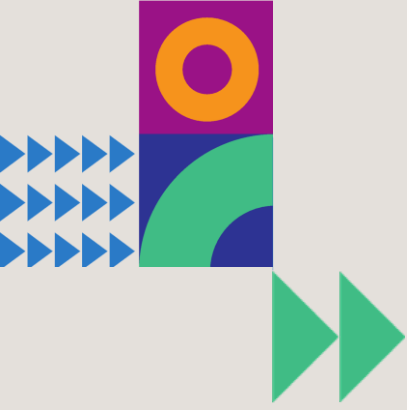




2026 Work Based Supervisor Guidance

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The professional association for
social work and social workers

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Professional Capabilities



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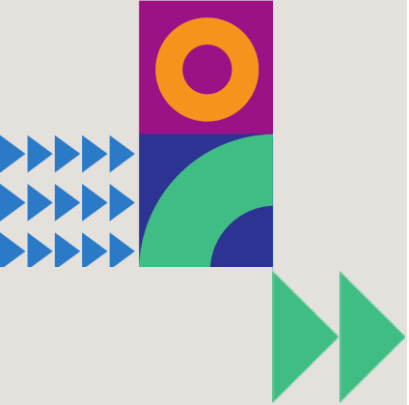
Work-based supervisor guidance:

Purpose

- Gateway information for supervisors
- Signposts more detailed national & local guidance
- A basis for WBS training

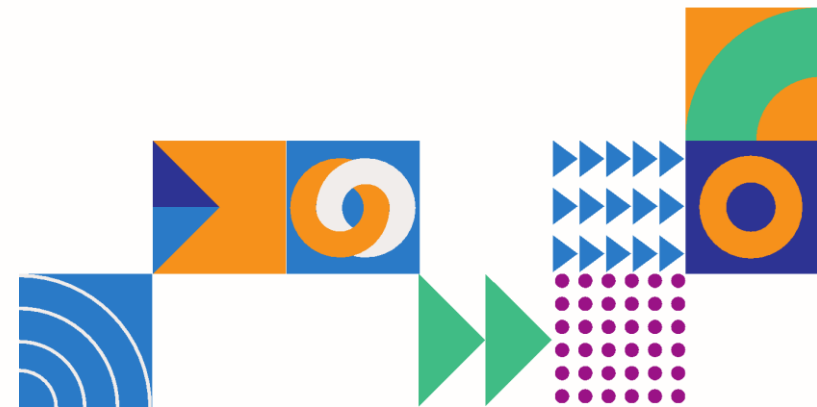
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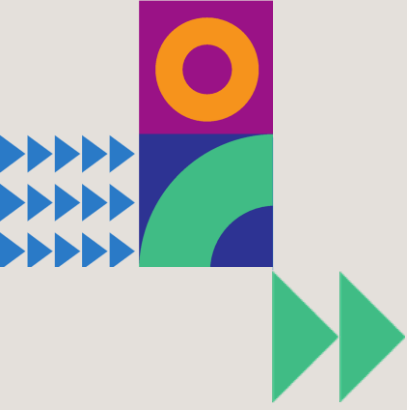
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Summary of Guidance Contents

- What is a social work placement?
- Key People involved in the placement
- Who can act as a Work Based Supervisor?
- Work Based Supervisor Responsibilities
- Practicalities
- Adult learning
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Reasonable Adjustments

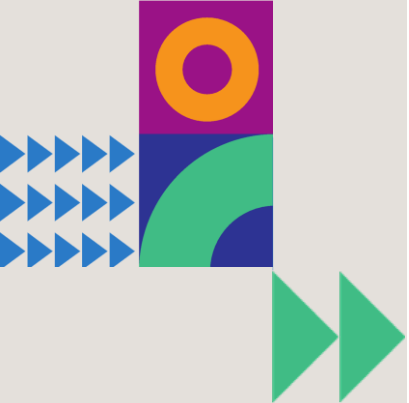




Particular challenges for supervisors

- Supporting a student in addition to general workload e.g. making space for supervision
- Multiple different people involved in the placement
- Managing student needs and expectations and ensuring appropriate learning opportunities
- Navigating different course provider assessment frameworks
- Understanding social work expectations (for non-SW)
- Generative AI – conflicting requirements, capability, expectations
- Supporting students when a placement has an element of remote working

To focus on the final two points in more detail...

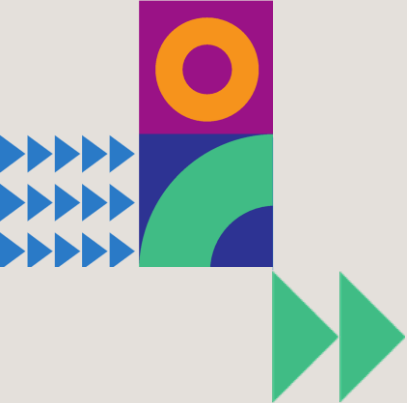


Use of Generative AI

Supervisor considers the organisational requirements, course requirements, student expectations & capability with AI, own expectations and capability.

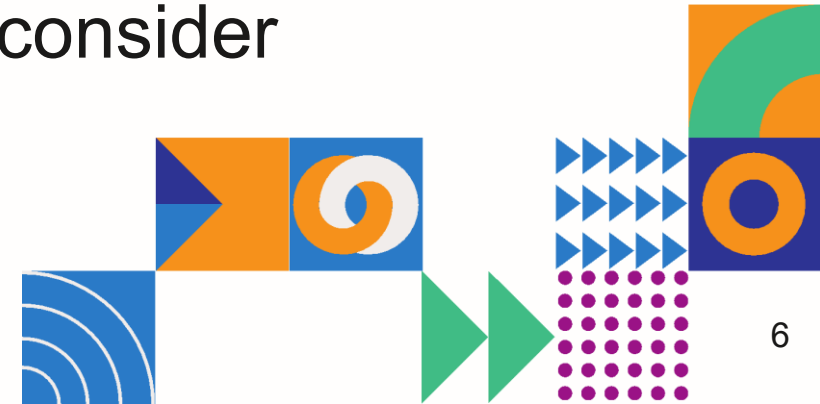
Supervisory role in relation to:

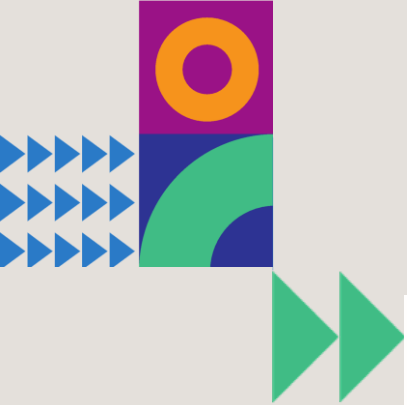
- The place of Gen AI in training / practice
- Agreeing when / if AI is used
- Awareness of the impact on the learner, the organisation and those using the service
- The AI policy of both the organisation and the training organisation.



Remote working

- ➔ A realistic experience of current practice, an opportunity to develop strategies and tools to enable effective remote working
- ➔ But: allow for inexperience in the workplace. Setting expectations, supporting student to familiarise themselves with tasks, consider isolation etc

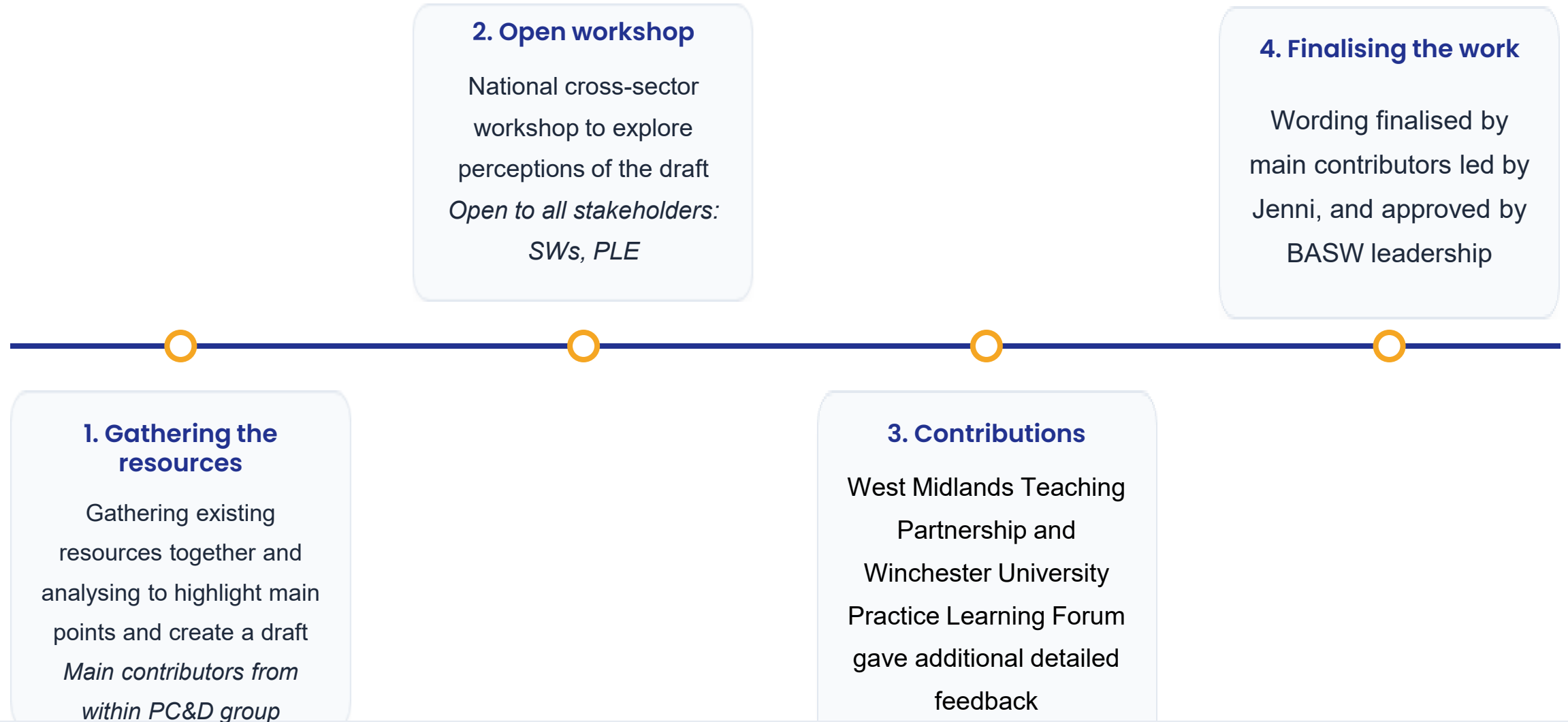


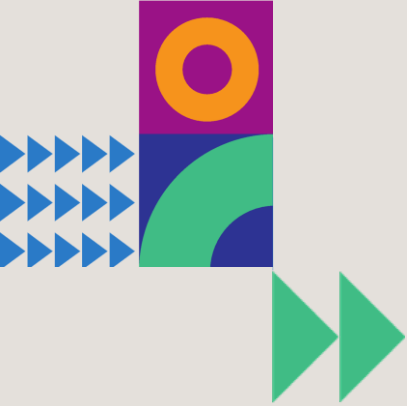


Remote working: practicalities

- **Induction period:** more in person work for vicarious learning and team identity
- **Use of technology:** e.g. 'virtual office', with learners logged into the system and visible alongside their colleagues, facilitating some of the incidental discussion and support that would usually occur in person.
- **Offer guidance around effective remote working:** how to create a dedicated workspace at home to switch between 'work' mode and 'relaxation' mode, confidentiality, structuring the day, taking time away from workspace
- **Developing good relationships across the team** to facilitate confidence, generate shadowing and learning opportunities and to reduce reliance on the PE or supervisor. 'Getting to know you' and social activities, particularly at the start of the placement.

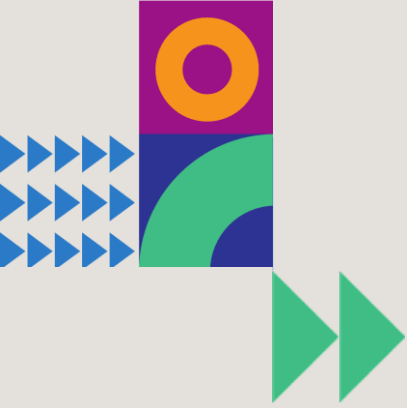
Engagement Process





Consultation and Feedback

- The Work based Supervisor role is an excellent source of CPD for both qualified social workers and staff with other qualifications and experience.
- We need to emphasise that the Practice Educator is the person to co-ordinate the placement, deal with issues that arise and provide support and guidance to the WBS.
- Promote the WBS role as a positive opportunity to attract new people to the role.
- Provide more clarity on EDI, AOP, ADP readiness to practice issues and the ethics and values underpinning social work.
- Provide guidance of reasonable adjustments and how these can be put in place for the student learner or the WBS.
- Clarify what activities the WBS may be expected to undertake during the placement, e.g. supervision, formal/informal support, one direct observation, midway and final reports.

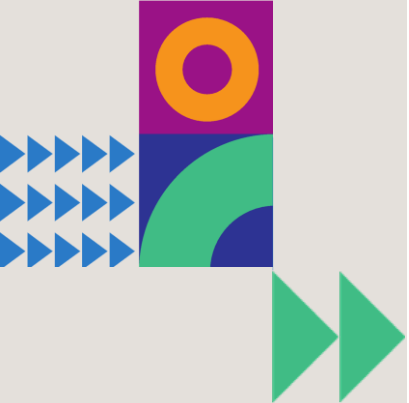


Consultation: Key Points

The different working groups and forums we consulted with all appreciated being involved.

We have recognised that providing guidance for Work Based Supervisors is a gap in the wider quality assurance of practice education.

The WBS role is very often taken on by a staff member who is not social work qualified. We need to value the diversity of social work placements across private, voluntary and independent sectors and ensure support is available.

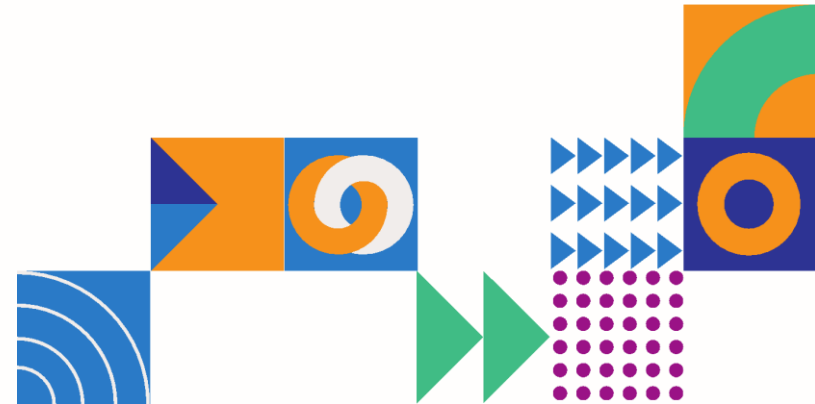


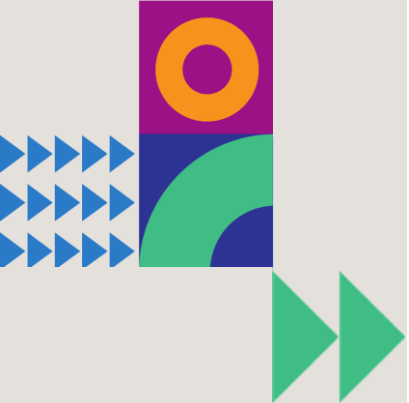
Next Steps

- Launch (today!)
- There is scope to build on the WBS Guidance to provide a bespoke WBS Training and Resources Pack for placement and course providers
- Other ideas and requests...

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Thank you for listening

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