

**NCFE**

**CACHE**

**Guidance on  
Reflective Practice  
and Placement  
For second year  
students studying  
Health and Social  
Care**

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## Introduction

Welcome to our programme. As you begin your second, and potentially final year of study for a health and social care qualification, you may find that placement opportunities have been interrupted due to Covid-19.

This document has been developed to help you to reflect on your placement experience, the knowledge and skills that you have acquired so far and the links that you have been able to make between theoretical learning and practical experience. You will also have the opportunity to consider your own career goals and begin to compile a professional development plan.

Use the box below to reflect on your placement experience. It may help you to try and remember a typical day in the setting, what sorts of things would you do in the morning and later throughout the day for example?

Activity	Reflection

## Becoming a reflective practitioner

You may have heard the term 'reflective practitioner' before or it may be a term that is new to you. Being a reflective practitioner means being able to learn from your experiences, build from your knowledge and make changes to the way you work in order to improve your practice. A reflective practitioner will enhance individuals' experiences, improve outcomes for individuals, motivate and inspire colleagues. All of these rich qualities contribute to high quality health and social care provision.

## Theoretical models of reflection and how these can be used in health and social care

As we have already considered, a reflective practitioner will need to take time to think about the changes they need to make in order to improve practice, as well as extend own professional development. There are two theoretical models identified below. The models are often used to help provide a sequential or cyclic approach to reflection, enabling a process for reflection to be established.

- Schon
- Gibbs

Research the models introduced by both Schon and Gibbs if you are not already familiar with them and summarise any new learning in the box below:

## Career aspirations

Now that you are in your second year, you will need to reflect on your next steps. You may have decided that you want to go straight to employment or you may be thinking about further study, it is also OK if you haven't really decided what you would like to do next yet. However the following activities may support you, whatever stage you are at in your next steps planning.

Have a look through our progression maps where you will see some suggested learning pathways. This will give you some ideas as to where undertaking a further qualification could lead.

[www.ncfe.org.uk/media/2452/health-and-social-care.pdf](http://www.ncfe.org.uk/media/2452/health-and-social-care.pdf)  
[www.ncfe.org.uk/media/2451/health-and-science.pdf](http://www.ncfe.org.uk/media/2451/health-and-science.pdf)

You may be interested in pursuing employment in a specific role within health or care. Have a look at the career maps below to consider further the range of opportunities both short and long term available to you.

[www.cache.org.uk/media/1638/career-map-health-and-social-care.pdf](http://www.cache.org.uk/media/1638/career-map-health-and-social-care.pdf)  
[www.cache.org.uk/media/1631/career-map-health.pdf](http://www.cache.org.uk/media/1631/career-map-health.pdf)

It is likely that whichever pathway you decide to follow it will be dependent upon your own career aspirations. Therefore it may be useful to spend some time exploring a range of practitioner roles in more detail. To do this access the links below.

[www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/)  
[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Careers-in-care/Think-Care-Careers.aspx](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Careers-in-care/Think-Care-Careers.aspx)

Use these links to help you think about any action you will need to take in order to support you in your exciting career journey. The next activity will help you do this.

## Planning for your own development

From the research you have undertaken choose a practitioner role of interest to you. Identify the qualifications and attributes required for your selected role and review these in relation to your own personal and professional development needs.

Completing a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis will support you to do this. It will enable you to assess your existing knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to your chosen role. Use the template below.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Now examine your weaknesses and identify opportunities available in order to transfer these to strengths. Also consider your identified threats and problem solve as to how they could be overcome.

Try to identify 3 development objectives which will support your own progression. Ensure that your objectives are SMART; meaning that they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

This is the start of a professional development plan. Remember, you must review and update your goals to check progress and amend them as appropriate. Of course once you have returned to placement you will be able to further reflect on knowledge, skills, values and behaviours you have acquired. Remember, learning never stops.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Introducing CACHE Alumni

No matter what stage you are at in your studies or what your career aspirations might be, being a member of CACHE Alumni will help keep you up-to-date with the health and social care sector.

CACHE Alumni is an online membership network which includes articles from leading professionals in the health and social care sector to support your learning and development. It also contains other useful features, such as a CV builder, a job finder tool, careers guidance, e-learning and podcasts.

It's free to join CACHE Alumni and is suitable for you as a learner as well as when you qualify as a practitioner.

To become a member of CACHE Alumni, follow the link below.

[www.cachealumni.org.uk/Public/Join-Us/Public/Join/Membership\\_Join\\_Us.aspx?hkey=86c6893b-bca4-4871-a937-4664b8a02263](http://www.cachealumni.org.uk/Public/Join-Us/Public/Join/Membership_Join_Us.aspx?hkey=86c6893b-bca4-4871-a937-4664b8a02263)

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

An important aspect of any practitioner's role is undertaking CPD. This ensures practice is current and up to date. CPD can be used to meet identified learning needs and skills gap of health and social care practitioners, essentially supporting lifelong learning, and in turn sustaining a competent workforce.

It will be helpful to explore different organisations that represent the health and social care sector and see what development activities they offer for CPD. Access the links below:

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/)

[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/)

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/all-our-health-about-the-framework/all-our-health-about-the-framework](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/all-our-health-about-the-framework/all-our-health-about-the-framework)

[www.nmc.org.uk/](http://www.nmc.org.uk/)

[www.hcpc-uk.org/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/)

What did you find out? Summarise the CPD opportunities and options available to you now as a student and as a health and social care practitioner in the future.

So you can see that achieving your qualification does not mean the end of your learning journey! In fact as your learning journey progresses the knowledge, understanding and skills you gain will evolve and translate into your everyday practice reinforcing professional principles and values.

To finish, let us see how health and social care practitioners describe their role in one word:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKINwKFWciU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKINwKFWciU)



## **Thank you, goodbye and good luck**

We hope that you will be able to begin attending placement again soon, please take care and stay safe.

Finally, well done on all that you achieved so far on your study programme. As a second year student you have already gained so much knowledge and skills that will support you as you enter into the next stage of your journey, there will be new topics to study, some may be challenging and we would like to encourage you in this stage of your studies.

At CACHE we are very proud of our students, and we would like to wish you every success for the future in this amazing career, thank you for making a positive difference to the health and social care workforce.

## Wider reading

The following organisations may be helpful for research and accessing relevant information:

Age UK: [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

Alzheimer's Society: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

British Sign Language: [www.britishsignlanguage.com](http://www.britishsignlanguage.com)

Care Knowledge: [www.careknowledge.com](http://www.careknowledge.com)

Care Quality Commission: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

Children and Young People Now: [www.cypnow.co.uk](http://www.cypnow.co.uk)

Community Care: [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

Cruse Bereavement Care: [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

Dementia UK: [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)

Department of Health and Social Care: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care)

Equality and Human Rights Commission: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

Health Education England: [www.hee.nhs.uk](http://www.hee.nhs.uk)

Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Mind: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

National Children's Bureau: [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)

National Health Service: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Nursing and Midwifery Council: [www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org)

Public Health England: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england)

Royal College of Nursing: [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

Skills for Care: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

Skills for Health: [www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

Social Care Institute for Excellence: [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)

The Royal Society for Public Health: [www.rsph.org.uk](http://www.rsph.org.uk)

World Health Organization: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

