

Assessed and Supported Year In Employment Programme Handbook



Building a Better Bournemouth

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ASYE Guidance

The Assessed & Supported Year in Employment is a requirement for all social workers employed by Bournemouth Borough Council who have qualified since 1st April 2012 or who have joined the authority, having recently qualified. The ASYE is scheduled to take 12 months but this may be extended if the NQSW works part-time or is not at work for any reason. It is the responsibility of the NQSW to present evidence in support of their meeting the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) at ASYE level

WHAT IS THE ASSESSED AND SUPPORTED YEAR IN EMPLOYMENT (ASYE)?

The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment was introduced in September 2012. It aims to support a Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) during their first year or so in employment to develop practice as a confident and capable social worker. The scheme can be used for all social workers, irrespective of the setting in which they are employed. Social work degree students will be able to register as social workers following successful completion of a recognised social work degree. Therefore, social workers will continue to qualify, as now, when they graduate. The ASYE will be a period when a newly qualified social worker engages fully in a social work role at an appropriate level, receiving tailored support and development. In the future, employers are likely to see ASYE success as evidence of a new social worker's ability to apply their learning in employment. During the ASYE period, the NQSW will be developing their practice to demonstrate that they are able to meet the standards of the Professional Capabilities Framework. This will involve meetings with a mentor/assessor to have dedicated time to reflect on practice; direct observations; reflective pieces of writing and feedback from service users and colleagues.

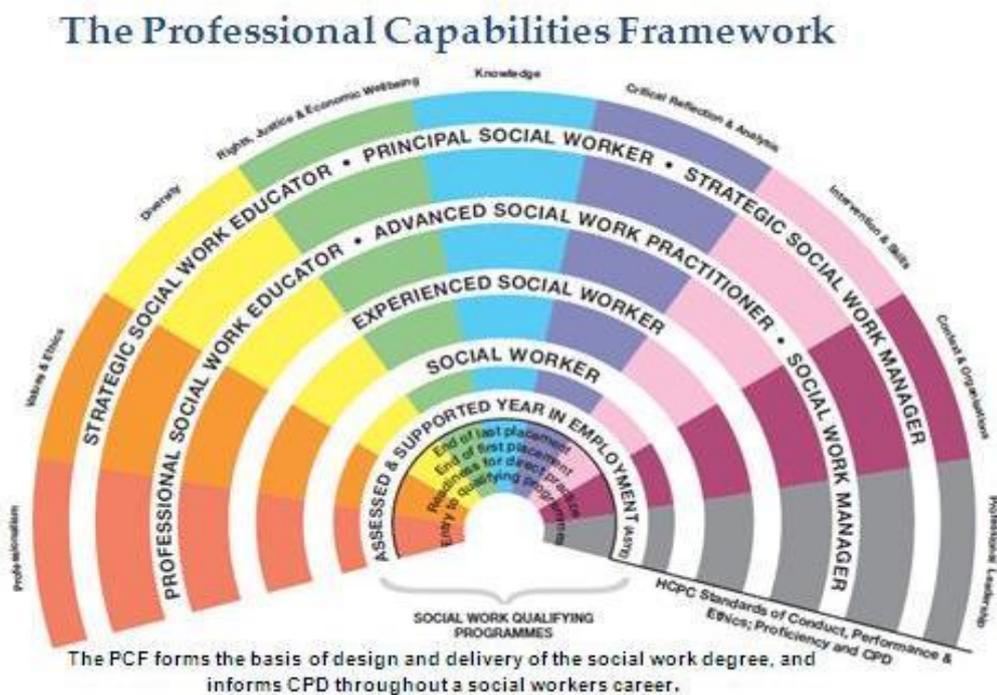
ASYE ASSESSMENT:

The Professional Capabilities Framework is the *method* by which the ASYE assessment is made.

ASYE is a measure of professional capability; employers will be responsible and accountable for their assessment decisions and outcomes and will be undertaken by

a registered social worker qualified more than 2 years, who is also familiar with the NQSWs progress.

The Framework sets out the profession’s expectations of what a social worker should be able to do at each stage of their career and professional development. It is a generic framework that applies to all social workers in all settings. It is a professional, rather than an occupational framework.



The standards for ASYE are fully integrated into the PCF. *Evidence will be built up and reviewed over the year* rather than focussing on a “single point” of assessment to show sufficiency in essential skills, knowledge and values that cover the whole of the PCF at ASYE level. Achievement should be assessed against the capability statements, based on a holistic approach to assessment.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS STATEMENTS

In November 2014 Government Social Work reform introduced the Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) of what a child and family social worker needs to be able to

do at the end of their first year of practice. The government are planning to use the Knowledge and Skills to develop a new Approved Child and Family Practitioner (ACFP) status test which they are piloting early in 2015. It is not government's intention that the KSS statement should replace the PCF. If you want to know more about this, see the link below

[Consultation on knowledge and skills for child and family social work: government response](#)

PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES FRAMEWORK:

The ASYE assessment is made against the 9 Domains of the PCF below:

PROFESSIONALISM - Identify and behave as a professional social worker, committed to professional development

VALUES AND ETHICS - Apply social work ethical principles and values to guide professional practice

DIVERSITY - Recognise diversity and apply anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive principles in practice

RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC WELLBEING - Advance human rights and promote social justice and economic wellbeing

KNOWLEDGE - Apply knowledge of social sciences, law and social work practice theory

CRITICAL REFLECTION AND ANALYSIS - Apply critical reflection and analysis to inform and provide a rationale for professional decision-making

INTERVENTION AND SKILLS - Use judgement and authority to intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support and prevent harm, neglect and abuse

CONTEXTS AND ORGANISATIONS - Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing contexts that shape practice. Operate effectively within own organisational frameworks and contribute to the development of services and organisations. Operate effectively within multi-agency and inter-professional settings

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP - Take responsibility for the professional learning and development of others through supervision, mentoring, assessing, research, teaching, leadership and management

Knowledge and Skills Statements for child and family social work:

There are ten KS statements that a child and family social worker should be able to do effectively by the end of their first year. It is intended to help close the gap between study and practice for NQSWs, and equip them more effectively for the challenging work faced in their first year and beyond.

Statements reflect the day to day professional practice that an NQSW will be engaged in. The assessment of the Knowledge and Skills is made against the nine domains of the PCF.

Knowledge and Skills 10 Statements	
1	Relationships and effective direct work
2	Communication
3	Child development
4	Adult mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, physical ill health and disability
5	Abuse and neglect of children
6	Child and family assessment
7	Analysis, decision-making, planning and review

8	The law and the family and youth justice systems
9	The role of supervision
10	Organisational context

Within each of the ten statements, there are more detailed descriptors of what an NQSW is expected to meet to evidence their understanding, professional judgement and progression in practice.

[Knowledge and skills statement for child and family practitioners](#)

Use of the [Knowledge and Skills self-assessment tool](#) will assist with reviewing progress against the descriptors within each statement.

Roles and Responsibilities:

THE ROLE OF THE ASYE CO-ORDINATOR

- Oversee BBC's implementation of ASYE
- Represent BBC at ASYE meetings
- Keep records of NQSWs and monitor their progression through the scheme
- Facilitate allocation of mentor/assessor
- Monitor the scheme for quality assurance
- Support all colleagues involved in the implementation of ASYE
- Carry out ongoing evaluation to develop BBC's ASYE
- Liaise with Skills for Care, DfE, etc
- Collate evidence to claim funding.

Good communication is important to ensure that everyone involved with the ASYE is appropriately supported to fulfil their appointed roles.

The ASYE Co-ordinator has a responsibility to monitor all aspects of the ASYE. She must be informed of the arrangements for review meetings and any changes that are made. Copies of all review documentation must be sent to her, preferably by email with the various signed documents scanned and attached as PDFs. The ASYE Co-ordinator will respond to any queries about the scheme, give feedback, receive

suggestions and meet periodically with mentor/assessors and NQSWs. She will also be involved in the event of any disagreement.

THE ROLE OF THE NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKER (NQSW)

The ASYE is not like another year of a degree. The emphasis is on developing practice and your confidence and skills as a social worker. It is unlikely that there will be another opportunity in a social worker's career to have reduced caseload and protected development time, so make the most of it!

The NQSW will be expected to be proactive about the process. This will include

- co-ordinating arrangements for Learning Agreement and review meetings
- circulating copies of completed documents and ensuring they are also sent to the ASYE Co-ordinator
- ensuring that the mentor/assessor (who is usually coming from off-site) is absolutely clear about arrangements for meetings and observations
- carrying out any agreed actions from mentor/assessor meetings in a timely manner
- taking responsibility for your portfolio and compiling evidence
- proactively identifying opportunities to produce evidence of your practice, including direct observations
- keeping on top of the evidence gathering, so that the portfolio reflects development of your practice over time, as well as meeting the requirements of the PCF.

Your progress in gathering evidence will be discussed at the review meetings and you will be expected to bring your portfolio to the review meetings.

THE ROLE OF MENTOR/ASSESSOR

This person must be a social worker and, ideally, they are also a Practice Educator. Efforts should be made to identify a colleague who works in BBC to carry out the mentor/assessor role but, if this is not possible, then a freelance practice educator may be required. Any arrangement requires liaison with the ASYE Co-ordinator. There are various opinions as to whether or not the mentor/assessor should be in the same team as the NQSW. Ultimately the appointment of the mentor/assessor comes down to availability of human resources but, in identifying someone, there

should be due regard to the nature of the relationship between the NQSW and the mentor/assessor.

The Mentor/Assessor must

- be a qualified and HCPC registered social worker
- have completed the ASYE Practice Assessor training
- support the Newly Qualified Social Worker to develop their skills, knowledge and reflective practice so that, by the end of the period of the ASYE, the NQSW meets the requirements of the PCF
- To make a holistic assessment and judgement of the NQSW's performance over the period of the ASYE against the nine domains of the ASYE level of the PCF Responsibilities
- Meet with the NQSW to provide supervision and mentoring
- Agree expectations and responsibilities of the mentoring relationship with the NQSW.
- Liaise with the NQSW and line-manager to draw up a Learning Agreement
- Work with the NQSW and the line-manager to draw up a Professional Development Plan (PDP) and review this regularly
- Provide fortnightly mentoring sessions of at least 90 minutes in the first six weeks of the programme, reducing to a minimum of monthly. There is scope to negotiate a revised timetable if the NQSW is part-time.
- Ensure that the content of these sessions is recorded and mapped to the domains of the PCF
- Encourage the NQSW to identify opportunities to reflect on and develop their practice
- Meet with NQSW and line-manager for reviews at 3, 6 and 9 months (or at mutually agreed points, if NQSW is not full-time)
- Liaise with the line-manager concerning the progress of the NQSW
- Action plan with the NQSW to identify suitable sources of evidence to demonstrate their progress in meeting the requirements of the PCF
- Consider any evidence presented by the NQSW, determine whether it meets the requirements of the PCF and feed back to the NQSW

- In consultation with the NQSW plan, carry out and record at least 2 direct observations of the NQSW's practice, ensuring that feedback is sought from service users and colleagues as appropriate
- Complete a report at the end of the ASYE period, indicating whether or not the NQSW's practice meets the PCF (ASYE)
- Maintain contact with BBC's Learning & Development co-ordinator for ASYE
- Contribute to ASYE portfolio standardisation activities
- Contribute to evaluation of the ASYE scheme

THE ROLE OF THE LINE MANAGER

As in any situation where a new member of staff is employed, the line manager maintains an overview of how the employee is settling in, becoming acquainted with colleagues and processes, and developing generally in their new role.

In respect of the NQSW on the ASYE, the line manager needs to

- Attend and be involved in, the initial Learning Agreement (LA) meeting and the subsequent reviews
- Consider the Professional Development Plan (PDP) with the NQSW and the mentor/assessor
- Carry out line management supervision with NQSW as normal practice
- Ensure that the NQSW's caseload is 10% less than a normal caseload. As the NQSW develops, management of the caseload will involve the introduction of more complex cases requiring increasing autonomy
- Help the NQSW to identify suitable opportunities for CPD
- Enable release for NQSW to attend training, in particular events arranged specifically for ASYE
- Ensure that the NQSW is given -and takes -protected development time, measured as 10% of working time but at least 10 full days per year for learning and development (not including training).
- Liaise with the mentor/assessor as to the progress of the NQSW in developing his/her practice
- Carry out and record direct observations of NQSW's practice or identify opportunities for colleagues to do so.
- Contribute to the final assessment report
- Contact the ASYE co-ordinator to discuss any concerns or provide feedback

LENGTH OF THE ASYE

The one-year timescale for completion (the 'Y' in ASYE) is an indication of the time it will normally take an NQSW to complete. At the Learning Agreement meeting there will be discussion about the NQSW's normal pattern of work, e.g. part-time, and whether longer than 12 months might be needed to enable development of practice. Timescales can then be adjusted accordingly. There is also scope to amend any arrangement at the 3, 6 and 9 month reviews.

Completion of the ASYE may be deferred in cases such as maternity/paternity leave or long-term sickness. This will be addressed on an individual basis and should involve discussions between the line-manager, the mentor/assessor, the ASYE Co-ordinator and the NQSW. ASYE Guidance- Roles and Responsibilities

An extension will not be granted on the grounds of poor performance; as such matters should be addressed through capability procedures.

THE LEARNING AGREEMENT (LA)

The Learning Agreement (see appendices) provides the structure for discussion as to how the ASYE is to be conducted, including highlighting the role of NQSW, line-manager and mentor/assessor in the process. The Learning Agreement meeting must include these three people, so a mutual date and time should be agreed. The ASYE Co-ordinator should be notified of the date and time, so that she/he may attend to provide support and monitor the activity of the scheme generally.

The line manager and NQSW may have already started the NQSW's Professional Development Plan but the learning agreement meeting should include discussion about it and any amendments made.

Dates for the 3, 6 and 9 month reviews must be agreed at this meeting and recorded on the Learning Agreement. These can always be changed later but will be difficult to schedule if dates are not put in the diary in the first place.

As an indication of the commitment of all parties, it is important that all sections are discussed and that the document is fully completed.

At the end of this initial Learning Agreement meeting, all 3 parties must sign the document. It should then be copied so that all parties have a copy. A scanned copy must also be sent to the ASYE Co-ordinator.

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP)

The PDP (see appendices) is key to working on the NQSW's particular strengths and areas for development. Having considered these, there can be discussion about what the NQSW can do to continue their professional development. This may include reading, research, shadowing, specific training and experiential opportunities. The PDP is a live document so can be amended at any time. It is expected that a recent copy of the PDP is sent to the ASYE Co-ordinator, along with the Review form at each review point. The PDP must be included in the portfolio and should include professional development beyond ASYE.

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

NQSWs will be able to access core training from either adults' or children's services training programmes in BBC. There will be some training sessions organised specifically for the ASYE scheme.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT and PROTECTED DEVELOPMENT TIME

It is a requirement of HCPC registration that a social worker undertakes Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This can take a number of forms, e.g.

- Attending courses, workshops and training sessions
- Taking part in meetings
- Reading and research
- Shadowing BBC and other colleagues

ASYE Guidance- Roles and Responsibilities

- Informal discussion with colleagues The CPD activities you have undertaken should be recorded as you go along, using the CPD log, and notes made as to their value to your professional development.

An NQSW undertaking the ASYE should be given 10% relief on workload to undertake CPD and carry out the work needed to present the ASYE portfolio. At the Learning Agreement meeting, there needs to be discussion about how this 10% of

time will be taken. How the time is being taken and used should also be discussed at the review meetings.

REVIEW MEETINGS

Reviews should be carried out at 3, 6 and 9 months. Use the headings on the Review Meeting form (see appendices) as the basis for discussion and record an outline of this discussion on the review form.

Although the PCF capability statements should not be assessed separately, taken overall they describe the expectation at ASYE in the context of the level of complexity, risk and autonomous working. Therefore the 9 domains could be used at the Review Meeting as a way of measuring the NQSW's progress. The individual statements under each domain will be of great help when identifying gaps or areas for development or concern.

All three parties need to sign the Review Form. Copies of the Review Form and the updated PDP should be made and distributed. Make sure the ASYE Co-ordinator receives copies.

ASYE PORTFOLIO

The main purpose of the ASYE portfolio is to show the NQSW's growth in confidence and judgement as a practising social worker and their ability to meet the PCF at ASYE level. However, it also acts as a record of the support that the NQSW received throughout the ASYE. So, what is put in the portfolio should

- evidence the progress of the NQSW
- evidence the NQSW's ability to meet the PCF
- evidence the support provided to the NQSW

The portfolio should contain evidence from a variety of sources to show that the NQSW has developed and is meeting the requirements of the PCF

Portfolio Contents

- Learning Agreement
- Review notes
- Professional Development Plan
- Holistic Assessment Report

- Log of Protected Development Time
- CPD Learning Log
- Direct Observations
- Mentor/Assessor notes
- Reflective Pieces
- Service user/ Carer feedback
- Feedback from colleagues/other professionals.

ANONYMISATION OF EVIDENCE

Service users' and carers' names should be changed completely to maintain confidentiality. Since it is vital that any evidence presented should not identify the service user, avoid using initials, identifying locations and using the names of professionals. Please state that names have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

MEETINGS WITH THE MENTOR/ASSESSOR

There needs to be an agreement between the mentor/assessor and the NQSW about how these meetings will be conducted and their format. The meeting will provide support by looking at how things are going generally, review professional development and, most importantly -for the majority of the dedicated 1½ hours -will provide an opportunity for the NQSW to reflect. A suggested agenda for the meeting is included in the appendices. The mentor/assessor will help the NQSW to reflect on their response to situations and think about how any learning during the degree is being applied in practice.

We are all different in the way we learn and, as a trained practice educator, the mentor/assessor will be able to adopt approaches to meet the style of the NQSW. However this is a professional partnership which involves respect and commitment from both parties, so it is vital that the NQSW carries out what is agreed in a timely way.

Whilst it is the responsibility of the mentor/assessor to ensure that there are notes of the meetings, it is suggested that both parties make notes to be included in the portfolio. If possible these notes should be handwritten, so that they can be included in the portfolio immediately. There is a danger that, if the notes are taken away to be typed up, they will not be provided in a timely manner, leading to loss of continuity.

REFLECTION

Central to social work practice and to the development of professional judgement and expertise is the ability of every social worker to critically reflect on their work. Whilst there is a specific domain in the PCF that describes the capability for critical reflection, in practice, critical thinking and reflection threads throughout the PCF. The sessions with the mentor/assessor will help the NQSW to reflect on practice but the NQSW will also need to produce a number of reflective pieces. The approach will depend upon the context of the job. It is suggested 8-10 reflective pieces of about 500 words each are produced. These pieces may draw upon cases, significant (critical) incidents, training, reading or research. You may decide to select two or three cases to reflect upon throughout your ASYE.

It is the quality of the pieces you present that is important, not how much you write. You also need to ensure that the pieces show your ability to analyse, reflect and learn, rather than merely recount what occurred. You need to share this work with your mentor/assessor, so that you can discuss it. Your reflective pieces should be mapped to the domains of the PCF. ASYE Guidance- Roles and Responsibilities

How you present your reflection is up to you but a suggested format can be found in the appendices. It can be word-processed or hand-written, in essay format, use bullet points, use mind maps and/or diagrams but it needs to be clear enough for those making an assessment of your capability to understand what you are talking about. In your reflection you may refer to theorists and academic writing but you do not need to Harvard reference.

There is a variety of frameworks for reflection. Your mentor/assessor should be able to help you find an approach to suit you and what you are trying to reflect upon. You can also draw upon tools you may have used during your degree. Some of the names you may be familiar with: Kolb; Driscoll; Gibbs; Johns; Rolfe et al; Schön, Brockbank & McGill.

DIRECT OBSERVATIONS

Direct observations provide key evidence of the NQSW's ability to build and maintain professional relationships. It can be difficult to get everyone in the correct place at

the agreed time in order to carry out a direct observation. Because of the logistics involved, it is recommended that there is discussion about how the direct observations might be achieved early on in the ASYE.

The mentor/assessor should normally carry out at least two direct observations of interventions with service users. The exact timing of these will depend upon whether you are full-or part-time, the type of work you are undertaking and the opportunities that present. Ideally observations should be carried out during the 3 to 9 month window. For this observation, Direct Observation Form A (see appendices) should be used.

It is also valuable for the NQSW to gather evidence of practice through observations by colleagues; these might be at team meetings or joint visits. Aim to have at least two of these observations, with the feedback being recorded on Direct Observation Form B (see appendices).

SERVICE USER AND COLLEAGUE FEEDBACK

Keeping the service user and those who care for them in the centre, it is also valuable to gather feedback from them and reflect upon it. There is no single correct way to seek feedback. How you do it will depend on the situation and those you are supporting. However there is an emphasis these days on seeking feedback from those receiving services, so you will need to consider how you are going to do so. Guidance on this can be found on the Skills for Care Website.

In an environment of professional trust and respect, colleague feedback is probably easier to obtain. Such feedback could be from within your own organisation or from other professionals you work with. Don't demand that it is formally written up, as bulleted points are just as valuable; neither does what is written need to be very long but make sure that the person's details and the date are included. Your response to the feedback is critical as part of your reflection Feedback can be informal or from a third party, e.g. your manager. ASYE Guidance- Roles and Responsibilities

USE OF WORK PRODUCTS (e.g. case notes, assessments) AND NQSW'S SUPERVISION NOTES

In view of data protection and professional confidentiality, these sensitive items should not be included in the ASYE portfolio. There are other ways to present the evidence without actually including it. For example, the NQSW could show the

completed assessment of a service user to the mentor/assessor, who can refer to it in the meeting notes; or the mentor/assessor can seek the opinion of the line manager as to the ability of the NQSW to undertake a certain task. Yet again, this can be recorded and referenced to the PCF in the meeting notes.

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

The mentor/assessor is a qualified, registered social worker with experience in making judgements about performance. In making this holistic assessment of practice, the assessor needs to be satisfied that the standards have been met across all of the nine domains. This will be based on their observations of and discussions with the NQSW, as well as on feedback from colleagues, other professionals and people who use services and their carers, together with written evidence from the NQSW.

It is the responsibility of the mentor/assessor to complete the final assessment report (see appendices). The line manager is also required to complete a section in the report. The employer is ultimately responsible for the decisions about success and failure in the ASYE. Therefore the judgement will not be ratified until the portfolio has been scrutinised by BBC designated staff.

TIMETABLE FOR COLLATION OF EVIDENCE

The pace at which the different types of evidence are collated by the NQSW will depend upon the opportunities available to identify and gather evidence. This will depend upon the nature of the work being undertaken and the NQSW's previous experience. Therefore the timetable should be discussed with the mentor/assessor. The NQSW needs to use their professional time management and negotiation skills to determine how and when the evidence is collated. However the reviews are an opportunity to check that the collection of evidence of all types is up to date. The NQSW must have produced reflective pieces by each of the review points. It is not acceptable to produce all the work towards the end of the ASYE because the NQSW must be demonstrating their development towards meeting the PCF.

STANDARDISATION

BBC wishes to ensure that judgements and processes for assessing a NQSW's work under the ASYE are:

- Accurate -consistent with the expectations of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and a genuine reflection of the NQSW's performance.
- Valid -based on evidence reflecting the breadth of the NQSW's work throughout the year and on appropriate processes for the NQSW's development and assessment over the year
- Robust -judgements and processes are checked, confirmed and consistent across the organisation In order to uphold these principles, standardisation sessions are held at which those involved in the assessment and support process have the opportunity to examine NQSWs' portfolios. This will support mentor/assessors to gain an understanding of the level required and inform good practice.

ASYE LINK TO HCPC REGISTRATION

The Social Work Task Force had originally intended that the ASYE would be a mandatory requirement linked to registration. This is no longer the case, but Dorset County Council is committed to offering this scheme as a way of supporting staff who are newly qualified and employed in a social worker role.

Eventually it is likely that organisations will offer ASYE to social work graduates whom they employ with an understanding that continuing employment will depend upon successful completion of the ASYE, i.e. successful completion of ASYE will be a condition of probation. Equally, as part of the recruitment process, employers will be looking to see if applicants have successfully completed ASYE.

The process of compiling the ASYE portfolio and the reflection involved in doing so will stand the NQSW in good stead to meet the CPD requirements for continued HCPC registration.

RESOURCES

These will be updated regularly and can be accessed by visiting the ASYE programme page on BIZ

<http://biz/BusinessUnits/CSC/PSW/ASYE/default.aspx>

ACRONYMS

ASYE: Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

CPD: Continuing Professional Development

DfE: Department for Education

DO: Direct Observation

HCPC: Health & Care Professionals Council

LA: Learning Agreement

NQSW: Newly Qualified Social Worker

PDP: Professional Development Plan

SfC: Skills for Care

SRB or SWRB: Social Work Reform Board

KSS: Knowledge and Skills Statement