

THE FRAMEWORK FOR CONTINUOUS LEARNING
IN SOCIAL SERVICES



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Adam Ingram

MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

The Scottish Government's purpose is to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth. The Concordat between the national and local governments heralds an exciting and challenging time for Scotland's policy development and implementation with a new focus on outcomes.

Transforming the outcomes of Scotland's children, families and users of social services is a key aim of this Government. To achieve this the Government is developing an 'Early Years /Early Intervention Framework' and remains committed to supporting the implementation of the vision set out in 'Changing Lives: Report of the 21st Century Social Work Review'.

The Continuous Learning Framework is the key output from the workforce development change programme under 'Changing Lives'. It will make a major contribution to ensuring that our vision of a confident, competent and valued workforce committed to continuous learning and development and contributing fully to our ambitions for Scotland, becomes a reality at all levels in social services. The Framework sets out what all people in the social service workforce need in order to be able to do their job well now and in the future. It will improve approaches to three key areas – learning and development, career pathways and improved standards of practice. In order to facilitate the use of the Framework in practice tools and resources will be developed for social service workers and their employers.

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS) have developed the Continuous Learning Framework in partnership with the sector. The response so far has been overwhelmingly positive. We now need to see employers and workers building on this enthusiasm at a local level to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by the Framework.

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting this activity. We are providing significant additional financial resources to the SSSC and IRISS to take forward a strategy to promote local ownership of the Framework. This will include supporting both employers and their workers to adopt the Framework. Employers may need support to decide how best to use the Framework in their organisation; while both workers and employers may need support in using the Framework in practice.

The Scottish Government's vision for transformational change requires purposeful engagement by social service workers, managers and employers across the social service sector. Given the enthusiastic and constructive approach already demonstrated by the sector during the development of the Framework and the Government's ongoing commitment to support this, I am confident that we will succeed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Ingram'.

Adam Ingram
Minister for Children and Early Years

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS) wish to thank all those who have helped to develop the Continuous Learning Framework. We are particularly grateful to the members of our reference pool and the participants in the nine trials. Their insightful contributions have ensured that the Framework is both rigorous and grounded in

practice. We would especially like to thank all of the people who use services, carers and practitioners' groups who contributed so enthusiastically to the development of the Framework. Finally, we are grateful to everyone who responded so constructively to the consultation events and the on-line questionnaire and to George Street Research for their analysis of the consultation responses.



INTRODUCTION

The Continuous Learning Framework sets out what people in the social service workforce need to be able to do their job well now and in the future and describes what employers need to do to support them. It has been developed by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS) and a reference pool of people with a broad range of expertise and experience across the social service sector. The Continuous Learning Framework aims to enrich rather than replace the systems and processes that many organisations have already developed.

This document is for individuals working in the social service sector and for the organisations which employ them. It has three main sections. The first outlines the purpose of the Continuous Learning Framework, the second describes the four key elements of the Framework and the third focuses on using the Framework in practice. This third section includes a number of examples of how the Framework has already been used by organisations delivering social services. Appendix 1 sets out the personal capabilities in full, appendix 2 sets out the organisational capabilities in full and appendix 3 contains three fictional illustrations of how all of the elements of the Framework could be used in practice.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

The Continuous Learning Framework aims to continuously improve the quality of outcomes for people who use social services by supporting the people who are delivering these services to be the best they can be. This requires a shared commitment from both the worker and their employer. It is important that each individual social service worker takes responsibility for their own learning and development throughout their career and that employers provide opportunities for continuous learning and improvements in practice. These responsibilities are already set out in the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers which can be found on the SSSC's website at www.sssc.uk.com.

THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING FRAMEWORK AIMS TO SUPPORT SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS TO:

- » identify their learning needs throughout their career
- » get the most from induction, supervision, performance management and employee development processes
- » improve their practice
- » gain recognition for the progress and achievements they have made over time
- » gain recognition of prior informal learning
- » provide evidence of the impact on their practice of formal and informal learning, including post registration training and learning (PRTL).

IT AIMS TO SUPPORT EMPLOYERS OF SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS TO:

- » identify, analyse and meet the learning needs of their workforce
- » increase the capability of their workforce
- » provide transparent, consistent and detailed person specifications for job roles in their organisation
- » create an organisational culture and conditions which support the recruitment and retention of staff
- » add value to existing systems for induction, supervision, performance management and employee development
- » provide evidence of the impact of learning and development on the quality of service provision and continuous improvement.

THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING FRAMEWORK IS FOR EVERYONE WORKING IN SOCIAL SERVICES IN SCOTLAND. IT IS FOR PEOPLE:

- » working in all areas of social service provision in the public, voluntary and private sectors
- » involved in the delivery and management of frontline services
- » in senior and middle management
- » working in the education, training and development of the social service workforce.

THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

When you apply for a job in social services, you will usually receive some information that describes the kind of person the employer is looking for. It might describe the qualifications and training and the personal qualities necessary to do the job well. The first three areas in the Continuous Learning Framework are very similar. We have included a fourth area

which recognises that you will need support to do your job well and to keep getting better at it no matter how long you decide to stay in the job. The Continuous Learning Framework also describes the type of support that your employer can provide to help you to continue to learn and improve your practice.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, VALUES AND UNDERSTANDING

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

PERSONAL CAPABILITIES

ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES

THE FOUR KEY AREAS OF THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING FRAMEWORK ARE:

1. Knowledge, skills, values and understanding

The knowledge, skills, values and understanding required for each role in social services are shaped in a number of ways. National Occupational Standards (NOS) describe best practice in particular areas of work across the social service sector. They bring together the knowledge, understanding, values and practical skills required to do the work and present these as statements of competence. Employers often use NOS to help them to draw up job descriptions, person specifications and job advertisements. NOS are also used in the development of the standards underpinning specific qualifications and awards relevant to the social service workforce, for example the Standards in Social Work Education and the Standard for Childhood Practice.

The SSSC provides a common statement of the value base for the social service sector in its Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers. The Code of Practice for Social Service Workers is a list of statements that describe the standards of professional conduct and practice required of social service workers as they go about their daily work. The Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers requires them to adhere to the standards set out in their code and to support social service workers in meeting the requirements of their code. Further information about NOS and about the Codes of Practice is available on the SSSC's website www.sssc.uk.com.

In addition to these national expectations, each employer is likely to have their own requirements for knowledge, skills, values and understanding. For example, they will expect their employees to understand and work according to the vision, values and aims of the organisation and know about the organisation's policies and procedures.

2. Qualifications and training

The 'qualifications and training' and 'knowledge, skills, values and understanding' sections of the Framework are closely linked. For example, the NOS are set out in the form of units which form the basis for qualifications such as Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). The qualifications and training a person requires will vary depending upon the requirements of the job role they undertake. The necessary qualification will largely be determined by the Scottish Social Services Council's registration requirements. Further details about registration and qualification requirements are available on the SSSC's website at www.sssc.uk.com.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) brings together Scottish qualifications into a single framework and levels and allocates credit to all assessed and quality assured learning. It supports the development of progression routes between qualifications, it clarifies relationships between qualifications, it helps maximise credit transfer opportunities, and it clarifies entry and exit points and progression routes. The SCQF underpins the Continuous Learning Framework and is an essential tool for enabling individuals to gain recognition, and where appropriate formal credit, for the learning that they

undertake throughout their career. Further information about the SCQF is available at www.scqf.org.uk.

In addition to the national qualification requirements, each employer is likely to have requirements for training that are specific to their particular organisation and to particular job roles within the organisation. For example, all organisations are likely to require their employees to participate in an induction programme and specific job roles will require training on, for example, the protection of children or vulnerable adults or health and safety.

3. Personal capabilities

While the first two areas of the Continuous Learning Framework are already well established in Scotland, the second two areas are new additions and have been developed specifically for this Framework. The new areas are the personal capabilities and the organisational capabilities. These aim to outline the shared commitment required by both the individual and the organisation.

The personal capabilities aim to describe the ways in which people manage themselves and their relationships with others in the workplace. They focus on how people put their knowledge, skills, values, understanding, qualifications and training into practice. There are 13 personal capabilities¹ in the Framework. Some relate to how people manage their relationships with others and the remainder to how they manage themselves. The personal capabilities are:

Managing relationships:

- » empowering people
- » working in partnership
- » leadership
- » empathy
- » dealing with conflict.

Managing self:

- » professional autonomy
- » lifelong learning
- » flexibility
- » confidence
- » resilience
- » accurate self-assessment
- » awareness of impact on others
- » awareness of wider context.

The personal capabilities have been described across four stages of progression from engaged through to established, accomplished and exemplary. The full description of the 13 personal capabilities across the four stages of progression is set out in appendix 1.

You will notice that there are a number of indicators under each of the stages of progression. These indicators describe what each personal capability looks like and provide ways in which each stage could be evidenced. The stages of progression are cumulative. For example, for someone to be at an accomplished stage they would need to demonstrate evidence of the indicators under engaged, established and accomplished stages.

¹ Seal, C., Boyatzis, R. & Bailey, J. (2006) Fostering social and emotional intelligence in organisations Linking Theory and Practice: EAM White Paper Series Vol. 3 No. 3 pp. 190 – 209



It is at the discretion of employers and social service workers to determine which of the personal capabilities individual workers aim to develop at any particular time. They may choose to develop all of the personal capabilities or just some of them.

It is also important to note that the stages of progression at which an employee is currently able to evidence the personal capabilities do not necessarily relate to the length of time they have been in the social service workforce. So someone entering the workforce and bringing a range of personal and work experience with them may already be able to demonstrate some of the personal capabilities at established and accomplished stages.

4. Organisational capabilities

An individual can be committed to doing a good job but unless they are part of an organisation that supports them to learn it can be very difficult to make the most of their capabilities. The organisational capabilities describe the culture and conditions in the workplace that enable social service workers to be the best they can be. There are six organisational capabilities:

- » creating a learning and performance culture
- » planning for learning, development and improved practice
- » promoting access to learning and development opportunities
- » promoting access to feedback
- » treating people with dignity and respect
- » focusing on health and wellbeing.

Each of the organisational capabilities is set out in two sections. The first section describes how the organisation might demonstrate the capability and the second section describes what the social service worker should experience as a result of this.

The organisational capabilities have also been described across four stages of progression, engaged, established, accomplished and exemplary, in a similar way to the personal capabilities. There are a number of indicators under each of the stages of progression. These indicators describe what each organisational capability looks like and provide ways in which each stage could be evidenced.

These stages are progressive, so for an organisation to meet the requirements of an accomplished stage they would need to address the indicators under engaged, established and accomplished. The full description of the organisational capabilities across the four stages of progression is set out in appendix 2.

It is recommended that organisations consider each of the organisational capabilities when looking to improve the culture and conditions in the workplace. They will then be able to use their discretion to decide which they will develop further at that point and how they will do this.

USING THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Many organisations delivering social services have undertaken a great deal of work in identifying the qualifications, training, knowledge, skills, values and understanding required for different job roles. Indeed a number of examples of good practice were used in developing this Framework. However, many views expressed during the consultation process suggested that organisations could see how the Framework could add value to the systems and processes that they already have. Others are just beginning to establish these processes and could see how the Framework could support them.

The Continuous Learning Framework is not mandatory. It has been developed as a tool to:

- » support learning, development and improved practice
- » promote continuous improvement in standards of practice and
- » provide transparency of pathways for career progression.

The following section aims to describe the different ways in which the Framework can be used to achieve these outcomes. The approaches described are not intended to be exhaustive as it is expected that new and innovative ways of using the Framework will continue to be developed as organisations and social service workers use it in practice. This section contains a number of examples of how the Framework has already been used by organisations delivering social services.

1. Supporting learning, development and improved practice

All social service workers are required to take responsibility for their own learning and development whether they decide to stay in the same job throughout their career or move between jobs. However, people have told us that it can be hard to make decisions about where to focus their learning and development.

The Continuous Learning Framework supports individuals to recognise their current achievements, identify their learning needs, target learning to meet these needs and demonstrate continuous improvement in the standard of their practice. The organisational capabilities support organisations to determine how best to support their employees and to evaluate the impact of learning and development initiatives.

The Continuous Learning Framework has already been used by a number of organisations to support learning, development and improved practice through induction, supervision, performance management and by recognising prior learning.

LEARNING THROUGH PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Staff from one local authority recently won an award for the quality of their performance appraisal and development system. They were keen to use the personal capabilities in the Continuous Learning Framework to contribute to this innovative work and to strengthen performance appraisal and supervision in practice.

‘The personal capabilities promote a move away from a tick box approach to performance discussion and appraisal in a way that is flexible and can be adapted to individual team needs.’

(Trial participant)

Staff highlighted the following benefits of the Continuous Learning Framework.

- » It supported change across the department as staff have a more realistic understanding of the contribution they make to the workplace.

- » The personal capabilities enabled them to focus on how people put their knowledge, skills, values, understanding and their training/qualifications into practice.
- » Staff found it motivating and empowering.
- » Staff have greater ownership of the process of supervision.
- » Performance and appraisal discussions became more meaningful and the quality of the discussions improved.

‘Although I have been very positive from the outset about the Framework and how it could improve the appraisal/supervision set-up within Home Care I never expected the staff to respond in such a positive manner and to put so much work into the trial. I am very proud of them.’

(Home Care Manager)

The Continuous Learning Framework encourages creative approaches to meeting the learning and development needs of social service workers. Learning can and will continue to be recognised through formal

provision, such as training courses, qualifications and awards. However, there are many informal learning opportunities available within and across workplaces.

USING FEEDBACK TO SUPPORT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

A Wraparound Care Service, which enables parents to extend the time their child spends in nursery each day, wanted to explore how the personal and organisational capabilities could be used to support their team's learning, development and improved practice. They used their existing team meetings and six of the personal capabilities as a focal point for sharing constructive feedback about themselves and

each other. They developed a set of 'rules' to ensure the conversations were respectful and insightful. Initially, staff members were apprehensive about rating themselves at anything other than established or accomplished stages of progression. As the group's discussions deepened, they were able to make use of the indicators to refine their judgements and highlight areas of strength and areas they would like to further develop. This formed part of their individual learning plans.

The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) enables the use of the Recognition of Prior Informal Learning (RPL) for personal and career development and RPL for credit. RPL is about recognising learning which has its source in experience. This includes knowledge and skills gained outside formal learning situations through life and work experiences. RPL can help people who have no formal qualifications to value and build on the learning they have gained informally and to use this recognition as a means of meeting their goals in terms of further learning and development. RPL processes involve the learner reflecting on their experiences, identifying the learning within these experiences and providing evidence of the learning claimed. The personal capabilities can be used to support all three of these processes. Further information about RPL is available on the SSSC website at www.sssc.uk.com.

The SCQF has 12 levels. Each level has a descriptor which shows how demanding a qualification or programme of learning is by describing its learning outcomes, including the depth of knowledge and its application to practice and the degree of autonomy exercised by the learner. The SCQF level descriptors provide a national vocabulary for describing learning opportunities. They enable people to reflect on their current level of learning and plan the future direction of their learning. The personal capabilities can also be used to support these processes of reflection.

RECOGNISING PRIOR LEARNING

One private organisation used the Framework to support the induction of new staff through recognition of their prior learning. They did this by focusing on the personal capabilities in supervision. The new staff were helped to recognise that they brought with them a number of capabilities at different stages of progression. Together with their manager

they then identified a small number of the capabilities as a focus for their initial learning and development. The decision about which capabilities to focus on was informed partly by the organisation, using the personal capabilities identified as most important for the role, and partly by the individual. One manager commented that 'it has changed supervision 100%'.

2. Promoting continuous improvement in standards of practice

The Continuous Learning Framework aims to improve the quality of outcomes for people using social services by supporting the people delivering these services to be the best they can be. An important focus of the Framework lies in continuously improving the standards of practice of organisations and social service workers. The Framework can be used in two key ways to achieve this.

First, individuals and organisations can use the Framework to monitor their progress and achievement over time. For example, support workers in a care centre for adults had already begun to collect evidence of their qualifications and training in learning portfolios. They used the Framework to help them to provide evidence of how they were applying the knowledge, skills, values and understanding they had gained to their own practice. They used the learning opportunities that occurred every day in the workplace and recorded their reflections in their portfolios. In a similar way, organisations can gather evidence to determine their stages of progression against the organisational capabilities, reflect on this information and develop action plans to improve standards of practice. They can then undertake this process again at a later date to identify progress.

STRENGTHENING STANDARDS WITH THE ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES

A voluntary sector organisation providing support to homeless or potentially homeless people was interested in exploring ways in which staff could be better supported by the organisation to continuously improve the standards of their practice. Their ultimate aim was to improve outcomes for people using their services. The Chief Executive asked each staff

member to rate the organisation against each of the organisational capabilities. This gave them a baseline against which they could measure improvements to their organisational practice over time. They reflected on the collated feedback and were able to put a number of action plans in place. They intend to use the same process next year to determine their progress and achievements and to identify future action plans.

A second approach to improving standards in practice involves organisations using the Framework to help them define the standards of practice required for each particular job role by describing:

- » the qualifications and training required
- » the knowledge, skills, values and understanding needed
- » the personal capabilities which the organisation considers are the most important for that role and
- » the stages of progression at which people would need to demonstrate the required personal capabilities.

This will also require organisations to define the stages of progression of the organisational capabilities which they will need to demonstrate in order to support social service workers to meet these standards and continually improve their practice.

STRENGTHENING RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

A private provider of a new housing support service for adults with complex needs used the Framework to support their recruitment process. The project manager identified a number of the personal capabilities which she saw as essential to ensuring the right profile of worker who would be able to deliver high standards of practice in these demanding posts. These personal capabilities were then assessed at interview through the use of scenarios which had actually taken place in the project.

Staff and managers highlighted the following benefits of the Continuous Learning Framework.

- » Using the personal capabilities in the person specification and at interview gave applicants a more realistic view of what the job would entail.

- » Using the personal capabilities to assess applicants at interview gave the organisation a clearer view of their skills, values and attitudes.
- » Staff recruited in this way were clearer about the expectations the organisation had of them and understood their role better.
- » The Framework offers the opportunity for prevention of problems through development rather than dealing with problems when they come up later.
- » The organisation could use the personal capabilities to enhance their corporate person specifications and their supervision pro-forma.

The organisation made a commitment at the start of this process that they would use the learning gained from using the Framework to improve their own performance using the organisational capabilities.

3. Promoting transparency of career pathways

The Continuous Learning Framework can be used to help social service workers to make decisions about their career pathways and progression. Some may aspire to a job with more responsibility while others may be looking for a move to another part of the sector. Some will be planning to stay in their current role but everyone in the sector will need to be committed and able to learn in the job they are doing in order to continue to do it well.

For those who do wish to develop their career, either by moving within the sector or through seeking a promoted post, the Framework can

help to make possible career pathways more transparent. The first three sections of the Framework are similar to a person specification and organisations could use them for this purpose. Social service workers will then be able to compare what they can already demonstrate in their current role with what they will need to be able to demonstrate in the role they are interested in. They will be able to determine what is transferable from one role to the next as well as what areas they will need to learn and develop. This will help them to target their learning and development while still in their current role.

SUPPORTING CAREER PROGRESSION IN OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

One umbrella organisation with a focus on promoting the quality of over one thousand out of school care clubs across Scotland was interested in using the Continuous Learning Framework to describe job roles across out of school care services in Scotland with a view to supporting career progression.

They used the Framework to define job roles at support worker, practitioner and lead practitioner/manager levels. They used the National Occupational Standards to describe the core and optional

knowledge, skills, values and understanding for each role. In developing the values, they drew upon the Standard for Childhood Practice, the National Care Standards and the SSSC Codes of Practice. They completed the process by using a group discussion to determine the stages of progression for each of the personal capabilities for each job role.

The group felt that this work would not only be beneficial for career progression but also for recruitment, induction, performance management and supporting staff with SVQs as well as providing useful evidence for Care Commission inspections.

CONCLUSION

The Continuous Learning Framework has been developed to continuously improve outcomes for people who use social services by supporting the people delivering these services to be the best they can be. A wide range of individuals and organisations have been involved in its development and its use in practice. The Framework is now being published so that it can be used across the social service sector.

However, the ways in which it is used will grow and develop as more individuals and organisations use it. A strategy has been developed to make sure that these ideas and experiences are shared across Scotland. In this way the impact of the Framework will be increasingly evident in practice.



PERSONAL CAPABILITIES

INTRODUCTION

The 13 personal capabilities¹ of the Continuous Learning Framework (CLF) will help you to continue to develop and improve your practice throughout your career in social services. The first five personal capabilities focus on how you as a social service worker manage your relationships with others in your work. This is because people supported by social services consistently tell us that it is the quality of the professional relationship they have with you that makes the most difference to them and to their lives. The other eight personal capabilities are about managing yourself and will help you to grow as a critically reflective worker.

HOW TO USE THE PERSONAL CAPABILITIES

Job roles across the social service sector are varied. It is up to you and your employer to identify which personal capabilities are most important for your job role as well as your own particular strengths and areas for development. This will help you to decide which personal capabilities you are aiming to develop at any particular time as part of your personal learning plan. If you are a lone worker, you might want to talk about them with others in a similar role.

THE STAGES OF PROGRESSION, INDICATORS AND EVIDENCE

Each of the personal capabilities is described across four stages of progression which are engaged, established, accomplished and exemplary. These will help you to recognise that your personal capabilities are developing and provide evidence to support this. For each stage of progression there are indicators which suggest some ways you could demonstrate the personal capability in practice at this stage. The stages of progression are cumulative. This means that to be at the accomplished stage, for example, you should be able to demonstrate evidence of the indicators under the engaged and established stages as well as the accomplished stage. The indicators are a guide and you will need to think about how you can evidence them in your own role.

You should be able to evidence indicators by being aware of how you apply your knowledge and understanding in practice and reflecting on this. Evidence from a variety of recent and current practice events that have generated (personal) reflection, external feedback and demonstrable outcomes will give you and others the confidence that you meet or even exceed this indicator in your day to day practice. Practice events may provide evidence for more than one capability and more than one indicator.

You may find it helpful to discuss this with your manager, colleagues and/or the people you support. If you are a lone worker, such as a childminder or personal assistant, some parts of the indicators which refer to the team or organisation may not seem relevant to you. Please don't let this put you off – the personal capabilities are just as important to people working on their own and you can discuss how you are evidencing the indicators with the people you support and/or their carers.

Overarching descriptors have been used to make sure that there is consistency in the stages of progression across all of the personal capabilities. The overarching descriptors are outlined below.

¹ Seal, C., Boyatzis, R. & Bailey, J. (2006) Fostering social and emotional intelligence in organisations
Linking Theory and Practice: EAM White Paper Series Vol. 3 No. 3 pp. 190 – 209

ENGAGED

You demonstrate awareness and understanding of the personal capability as well as a commitment to developing it. You take responsibility for your own learning and can reflect on and improve your practice but are expected to seek advice and support to help you with this. You contribute to the learning and development of others.

ESTABLISHED

You consistently demonstrate the personal capability in practice. You are a reflective practitioner who is aware of and uses research and evidence to inform your practice. You actively engage in your own continuous learning but continue to seek advice and support as appropriate. You can focus on the development of others as well as yourself.

ACCOMPLISHED

You exercise increasing autonomy and initiative in your practice and begin to provide a model for others. Your practice is consistently informed by research evidence and critical self-reflection is embedded in your day to day practice. You actively contribute to the learning of others and to the learning culture within your organisation.

EXEMPLARY

You are recognised by others for your excellent practice. You appreciate the strengths and contribution of others and encourage them to achieve their potential. You enhance the learning and quality of practice in your own organisation and, where appropriate, beyond. You exercise high levels of leadership, autonomy and initiative and use evidence informed practice to continuously improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

LINKS TO THE LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

As part of the strategy for building leadership capacity in Scotland's social services, six leadership capabilities have been developed. There are close links between the leadership capabilities and the CLF. Indeed some of the indicators for the leadership capabilities have been taken from the CLF, particularly the leadership capability indicators for front line workers. The leadership capabilities can be found on the SSSC's Step into Leadership website². The personal capabilities are listed below.

Managing relationships:

- » empowering people
- » working in partnership
- » leadership
- » empathy
- » dealing with conflict.

Managing self:

- » professional autonomy
- » lifelong learning
- » flexibility
- » confidence
- » resilience
- » accurate self-assessment
- » awareness of impact on others
- » awareness of wider context.

² Step into Leadership, Scottish Social Services Council, <http://www.stepintoleadership.info/>

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

EMPOWERING PEOPLE - working in partnership with individuals, families and communities to enable them to lead their own lives

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am committed to making a positive difference to the lives of the people I support and those who care for them. » I am committed to making sure that the people I support are able to design and direct their own care as fully as possible and achieve their personal outcomes. » I recognise and value the carers and families of the people I support as equal partners in care. » I recognise the strengths of individuals, families and communities while being aware that I must make sure that children and adults are protected from harm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I recognise and value the knowledge and expertise that the people I support have about their own care and that carers have about the person they care for. » I work in partnership with the people I support and those who care for them to identify their strengths, needs and goals and to create and deliver the care that will achieve their personal outcomes. » I work with the people I support, those who care for them and colleagues to constantly reflect on the balance between goals, needs, risk and protection in designing and delivering services to achieve their personal outcomes. » I use the resources and capacity of communities to maximise choice and opportunity for the people I support. » I remain focused on the care of the people I support when faced with conflicting priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I support others working in my service to understand and embed assessment and support that focuses on outcomes for people and to balance enabling hopes, choice and risk with ensuring care and protection. » I actively encourage the people supported by my service and those who care for them to be at the centre of service design and delivery. » I actively listen to, hear, value and act on expertise and contributions from the people supported by my service and those who care for them, colleagues, communities and partners in other agencies as appropriate. » I use research, evidence and the views of people supported by my service and those who care for them to continually improve my own practice and that of the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I use research and evidence to identify innovative ways of enabling the people supported by my service to manage their own risks and support others working in my service to embed this. » I use research, evidence and the views of people supported by my service and those who care for them to overcome barriers that might prevent them from engaging in the planning and shaping of services. » I contribute to changes in the culture of my service towards personalised and outcomes-focused services. » I model positive leadership behaviours that support the creation of a culture which empowers people and encourages leadership throughout the workforce and the individuals, families and communities the service supports.

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP – working collaboratively with the people I support and other partners.

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I understand the importance of relationships and value the diverse perspectives of others. » I can build helping relationships with the people I support and sustain these through challenging situations. » I can build effective working relationships with people from diverse background, with people in different roles in my own service and colleagues in partner organisations. » I put outcomes for people supported by my service first and can recognise that I need to work with colleagues in other organisations to achieve this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I recognise the positive value of diversity and use it to strengthen the quality of my own practice and the work I do with others. » I constantly reflect on the balance of power in my relationships with the people I support and I seek to influence rather than direct. » I take active steps to build positive relationships, develop networks and promote partnership working. » I put outcomes for people supported by my service first and can work with colleagues in other organisations to overcome any areas of conflict to achieve this. » I use working across services and organisations as an opportunity to share learning and promote my own development and the development of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I actively seek opportunities to work in partnership with others within and beyond my service to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities. » I use research and evidence to reflect on and continuously improve the quality and equality of the helping relationships I have with the people I support. » I use trusting relationships with colleagues in my own service and in partner organisations as well as evidence, information and research to influence the thinking and behaviour of others towards shared purpose, goals and outcomes. » I support and challenge others to work in partnership with colleagues in my own service and in partner organisations to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I provide an ongoing and dynamic link between my own workplace, the organisation, other agencies and wider networks. » I am able to hold on to and balance different perspectives and take others with me towards a shared goal. » I use research and evidence to influence my own service and partners we are working with to reflect on and improve co-production. » I promote and advocate diversity and inclusion and can constructively challenge my own and others' assumptions about partners we are working with. » I can demonstrate how working in partnership with others is improving outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

LEADERSHIP - motivating and inspiring others.

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I can see how I demonstrate leadership in my current role and I believe I can develop this further. » I acknowledge the capacity for leadership in colleagues, people supported by the service and those that care for them. » I set challenging goals for myself and have high expectations of the quality of my practice. » I actively share and promote good practice within my own team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I reflect on my leadership approach and seek advice and support to improve. » I encourage the people supported by my service and those who care for them to develop their leadership capabilities so that they are able to plan and direct their own care to the fullest extent possible. » I work with others to set challenging goals for my team and service (where appropriate) and have high expectations of success. » I can lead on areas of work while bringing others with me and supporting them to feel valued for their contributions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I actively seek feedback from others, including people supported by the service and those who care for them, and use research and evidence to improve my leadership. » I actively support and nurture the leadership of people supported by my service and those who care for them and help them to recognise their own leadership. » I actively encourage and support colleagues to take a leadership role, be innovative and take appropriate decisions. » I am able to motivate and lead others to achieve identified goals and make best use of their individual and collective abilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I successfully adapt my leadership style, skills and abilities to work in partnership with others within and outwith my own service to achieve the best outcomes for individuals, families and communities. » I actively share leadership, learning and ideas with people supported by my service and those who care for them, with colleagues in my service, with partners in other organisations and with wider communities. » I model positive leadership behaviours that inspire enthusiasm and confidence in others. » I recognise, value and champion the contribution of people supported by my service and those who care for them and of colleagues in my own and partner organisations to improving outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

EMPATHY – sensing and understanding others’ feelings and emotions.

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I give people time and space to express what they think, feel and want. » I can recognise people’s emotions and this helps me to understand their behaviour and change my own behaviour in response. » I listen to people without making assumptions or stereotyping them. » I can recognise the effect on me of the emotions of other people and seek support appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I use creative ways to help the people I support and those who care for them to communicate their feelings, concerns and hopes. » I can interpret the emotions of the people I support, including those whose behaviour can be challenging, and use this to anticipate their behaviour and respond appropriately. » I take responsibility for managing my own emotional responses and make good use of supervision and other forms of support to help me to do so. » I am aware that cultural and other differences may affect empathy and I reflect on my own practice and challenge any discrimination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I use research and evidence to continuously improve how I help people to communicate their feelings, concerns and hopes. » I can use my own experiences appropriately to further develop my empathy without imposing my own feelings and emotions on others. » I support colleagues to express and deal with their own emotional responses to challenging situations and conflicting values and needs. » I use research and evidence to identify the impact on empathy of discrimination and oppression and work with others to challenge it effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am skilled in understanding the often conflicting feelings, concerns and hopes of the people supported by my service and those who care for them who are involved in complex situations. » I use research and evidence to gain greater insight into people and their circumstances and I use this to improve my own empathic approaches and to influence the practice of others. » I promote and advocate an organisational culture which supports colleagues and encourages them to support each other to effectively manage the emotional impact on them of their work.

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

DEALING WITH CONFLICT – being able to identify issues and find solutions

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I can recognise issues that are worrying me at work, raise them appropriately and am willing to participate in finding solutions where this is relevant to my own role. » I can recognise when there is a conflict between my own values and what my employer is expecting me to do and seek support to manage this. » I am aware that there may at times be a conflict between the needs and wishes of the person supported by my service and those who care for them and their family and I understand my role in managing this. » I treat others with dignity and respect in dealing with situations where there is conflict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I proactively identify potential problems and work with others toward finding and implementing creative solutions. » I reflect on my own practice and seek feedback appropriately to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the situation causing conflict. » I can manage situations where there is a conflict between my own values and what my employer expects me to do so that I can remain focused on the needs of the person I am supporting. » I sensitively manage conflict between the needs and rights of the person supported by my service and those who care for them and their family, ensuring the needs and rights of all are taken into account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I seek to understand and empathise with the diverse views of others and can engage with them in creative problem-solving to find solutions that are acceptable to everyone involved. » I can manage and support others to manage unpopular decisions that may arise as a result of conflict. » I use conflict situations as an opportunity to learn and continually improve using critical analysis, research and evidence and I support others to do this too. » I sensitively manage, and support others to manage, conflict between the needs, aspirations, rights and protection of individuals, families and communities. » I work effectively with others to challenge discrimination and oppression arising from conflict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I can deal with complex ethical and work related issues and can identify and effectively implement solutions having considered a range of potential options and their consequences. » I recognise potential and current conflicts arising across the social service sector and other public services and I work with others to address them. » I engage with individuals, families and communities as appropriate in finding creative solutions to problems and conflicts.

MANAGING SELF

PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY – exercising judgement and initiative and being accountable for your practice.

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am aware of decision making processes in my service and the level of decision making appropriate to my own role. » I am aware of the need to balance the needs, rights and wishes of people supported by my service with their protection and the safety of others, including my own. » I can reflect on judgements and decisions made by myself and others and their consequences. » I can use my initiative and act on opportunities to improve outcomes for the people supported by my service and those who care for them. » I am aware of how my own background, assumptions and values will have an impact on the judgements and decisions I make. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I make informed judgements based on an evaluation of the evidence and the careful balancing of risks, rights, needs and aspirations within the service's framework of accountability. » I can see situations from different perspectives and critically evaluate the contribution of these different perspectives in understanding the situation. » I can explain and account for my practice and expect to have my thinking appropriately and constructively challenged. » I am prepared to make and be accountable for decisions that are appropriate to my role. » I can see how I, my team and the service could do things differently and in creative ways which would improve outcomes for the people supported by the service, those who care for them and the wider community. » I critically reflect on how my own background, assumptions and values impact on the judgements and decisions I make and I take steps to address this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I contribute to the ongoing evaluation of decisions made by my team, service and with partner organisations as appropriate to my role to make sure these are evidence based. » I can make evidence- based judgements and decisions in complex situations and manage the acceptance or non acceptance of those decisions by others. » I am prepared to take intelligent risks, based on sound risk assessment and risk management, to improve outcomes for the people supported by my service, those who care for them and the wider community and can see the possible consequences of these. » I use research and evidence to find innovative approaches which lead to improved outcomes for people supported by my service, those who care for them and the wider community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I use research and evidence to assess, manage and evaluate the risks I take to achieve better outcomes for individuals, families and communities while remaining accountable for my practice. » I see the potential for improvement in a range of situations and am ready to act on opportunities which present themselves and to create innovative solutions. » I analyse local, organisational, national and international trends both within and outwith the social service sector to create innovative approaches. » I work with colleagues in partnership organisations to build collaborative leadership capacity and enable innovation and risk-taking across organisational boundaries.

MANAGING SELF

LIFELONG LEARNING – actively engaging in the continuous learning of yourself and others

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I actively engage in and take responsibility for my own learning and development. » I keep my knowledge, values and skills up to date and reflect on how my learning makes a difference to my practice. » I actively participate in learning opportunities within and outwith my workplace. » I contribute to the learning and development of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I actively identify my ongoing learning needs and seek a range of formal and informal learning opportunities to meet them. » I take responsibility for my own learning plan and I demonstrate how I have used my learning to continually improve my practice. » I actively promote the learning and development of others through a range of formal and informal approaches. » I embed critically reflective learning in my everyday practice. » I actively seek opportunities to share good practice within and outwith my service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I create innovative approaches to learning in the workplace for myself and others. » I actively promote the use of evidence and research in the workplace to support the learning and development of myself and others. » I actively seek networks, communities and other sources of knowledge and encourage others to do so to promote the creation of a knowledge management culture. » I actively participate in the evaluation of learning and development in my service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I actively contribute to an organisational culture which promotes learning by facilitating the sharing of ideas within and outwith the organisation and with people supported by my service and those who care for them. » I embed structured approaches to the development of others, for example coaching and mentoring, in my everyday practice. » I can demonstrate how my learning and development has contributed to improved outcomes for people supported by my service and those who care for them.

MANAGING SELF
FLEXIBILITY – being adaptable and open to change

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I recognise the importance of change in continuously improving practice. » I am open to change in my own workplace. » I can adapt my skills to the changing demands of the work environment. » I can adjust a strongly held opinion in response to evidence that challenges it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am flexible in dealing with circumstances as they arise and I can manage a degree of uncertainty. » I embrace change as essential to continuously improving practice. » I can adjust my practice approach depending on the needs of different situations. » I engage in open and reflective debate and provide constructive comments about proposed changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I promote and advocate a culture in my service which embraces change while acknowledging and listening to different points of view and the anxieties of others. » I use research and evidence to inform my ability to adapt to a variety of complex practice situations. » I consistently make identifiable contributions to and/or lead change in my own team and support colleagues to embrace change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I can manage the complexity and uncertainty of major change within my own service, in social services and in public services in my area. » I use research and evidence to work with others to find innovative ways to continuously adapt to a rapidly changing context. » I consistently make identifiable contributions to change and improvement in my service and constructively and appropriately challenge people, assumptions and organisational constraints which impede new and creative ways of working.

MANAGING SELF

CONFIDENCE – knowing you are able to do your job well

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am confident that I have the knowledge, skills, values and understanding to carry out my role. » I am confident that I understand my role and responsibilities and I can explain this to others. » I am aware that my level of confidence in my ability to carry out my role will have an impact on my practice. » I am clear about the contribution I can make to better outcomes for the people I support and those who care for them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am confident that I can apply my knowledge, skills, values and understanding in practice while seeking support appropriately. » I feel confident about receiving constructive feedback positively and using it to learn and to improve my practice. » I am confident to challenge poor practice and discrimination within and outwith my workplace. » I am confident about my distinctive contribution as a social service worker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am confident in my ability to practice in increasingly complex situations while still seeking support where necessary. » I can nurture the confidence of others. » I am confident to both give and actively seek constructive feedback to/from colleagues, my manager and the people I support. » I am confident to contribute constructively to organisational change while questioning appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am confident in my ability to perform in complex and demanding situations with which I am not familiar. » I am confident to actively promote the capacity of social services to make a significant difference to outcomes for people who use services and to society as a whole. » I am confident to play a lead role in change and improvement in my service.

MANAGING SELF

RESILIENCE – persisting in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I believe in my ability to move past obstacles and setbacks. » I persevere with challenging tasks over an extended period of time in order to achieve them. » I am aware that I need a range of support strategies to build my resilience. » I make good use of supervision to reflect on my practice and use my learning to build my resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am able to keep a sense of perspective when dealing with challenges and difficulties. » I sustain efforts to overcome obstacles, setbacks and feelings of frustration and I can maintain a positive view. » I reflect on how I respond to personal and professional stress and challenge and I use my learning to build my resilience. » I take care of my own health and wellbeing and actively support others to do so. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I demonstrate persistence in changing things for the better while being realistic about what can be achieved. » I have developed a range of strategies to build my own resilience and to support others to be resilient. » I persist in trying to positively influence the outcomes of change in the workplace. » I support others to make good use of supervision with peers and line managers to reflect on practice and learning and build resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am persistent and creative in my approach to achieving successful outcomes at individual and organisational levels. » I use research and evidence to inform and improve strategies for resilience in the workplace.

MANAGING SELF

ACCURATE SELF ASSESSMENT – knowing your own strengths and areas for development

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I understand the need to be aware of my strengths and areas for development. » I can critically reflect on my practice, learn from this reflection and apply my learning to improve my practice. » I am open to constructive feedback from others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I can identify and describe my strengths and areas for development. » I take responsibility for my mistakes or when my practice falls short of what is required and I learn from this. » I demonstrate ongoing critical reflection and resulting improvements in my practice. » I use feedback from a range of sources, including the people I support and those who care for them, to help me accurately assess my own capabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I actively support and encourage others to assess their strengths and areas for development. » I use creative ways to gain feedback from a wide range of sources including the people I support, colleagues in my own and partner organisations and my manager. » I make best use of my strengths and finds ways to address my areas for development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Through my own behaviour I promote a culture of learning from strengths and achievements as well as from mistakes. » I can use my awareness of my strengths and areas for development and those of others to find ways to improve outcomes for people supported by my service and those who care for them. » I use evidence and research to enhance my ability to critically reflect on and improve my own practice.

MANAGING SELF

AWARENESS OF IMPACT ON OTHERS – being aware of the effect you and your behaviour have on others

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I am aware of how what I do and say and how I behave affects other people. » I am open to constructive feedback about the impact I have on others and using it to change my behaviour. » I am aware of how my own values, attitude and cultural assumptions impact on others and change my behaviour to make sure I respect diversity and different cultures and values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I seek feedback and regularly reflect on the impact my behaviour, actions, words, attitude and manner have on others and actively seek to improve my practice accordingly. » I reflect on the impact my own values, attitude and cultural assumptions are having on others and take action to make sure that my practice is anti-discriminatory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I actively seek and use feedback from a range of sources including the people I support and colleagues I work with to better understand the impact I am having on others and improve my practice. » I can constructively and sensitively give feedback to colleagues about the impact they are having on others and support them to reflect on this and improve their practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I use evidence and research to critically reflect on the impact I have on others and to continuously improve my own practice. » Through my own behaviour I promote a culture of awareness of the impact individuals, teams and the service have on the people we support, colleagues in our own and partner organisations and the community.

MANAGING SELF

AWARENESS OF WIDER CONTEXT- recognising the wider context in which you are working

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<p>» I understand that I am part of a wider multi-agency workforce that provides public services, whether I work in a public, third or independent sector organisation or am self-employed.</p> <p>» I am aware that the service I work in and the wider context in which it operates are constantly changing and that I need to keep up to date with these changes, for example the law, policy, new initiatives, etc.</p> <p>» I am aware and understand the value of other services and sources of support that are available in communities for the people supported by my service and those who care for them.</p> <p>» I am aware that organisational dynamics can have an impact on my practice and I use supervision and other sources of support to help me to understand and manage this.</p>	<p>» I have a public service ethos which puts outcomes for individuals, families and communities first and can work in partnership with other services to make this happen.</p> <p>» I take responsibility for keeping up to date with changes in the service I work for, and in the wider context in which my service operates, and I seek to understand the rationale for these changes.</p> <p>» I constantly update my knowledge and understanding of formal and informal services and sources of support that are available in communities for the people supported by my service and those who care for them.</p> <p>» I am committed to developing my personal capabilities so that I can contribute to a supportive, creative and critically reflective organisational culture.</p>	<p>» I understand the challenges and opportunities affecting the service I work in and I can see these from a range of perspectives including those of the people supported by my service and those who care for them, colleagues and managers.</p> <p>» I seek to influence the way my team and service responds to changes in the wider context, for example the law, policy, and other aspects affecting the social service sector.</p> <p>» I promote the development of the organisation by supporting others to think, discuss and act differently and to work together to achieve change.</p> <p>» I work with others inside and outwith my service to build capacity and resources in communities.</p>	<p>» I anticipate how changes in the wider context might affect the individuals, families and communities I support and the colleagues I work with and I seek to influence these changes.</p> <p>» I work with others within and outwith my service to influence how changes in the wider context are implemented to achieve better outcomes for the individuals, families and communities I support.</p> <p>I embed approaches to organisational development in my everyday practice and seek to build a learning organisation which treats people with dignity and respect.</p>

APPENDIX 2: ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES

The six organisational capabilities have been developed specifically for the Continuous Learning Framework. Their purpose is to support organisations to create a culture and conditions that enable individual employees to be the best they can be.

The organisational capabilities describe how the organisation might demonstrate each of the stages of progression and, as a result, what this might look like for the social service worker.

It is recommended that organisations consider each of the organisational capabilities when using the Continuous Learning Framework. They will then be able to use their discretion to decide which they will develop further and how they will do this.

THE STAGES OF PROGRESSION

The stages of progression are used to describe what each organisational capability looks like at engaged, established, accomplished and exemplary stages. There are a number of indicators under each of the stages of progression. These indicators describe ways in which each stage could be evidenced. The stages of progression are cumulative. For example, for an organisation to be at an accomplished stage they would need to address engaged, established and accomplished stages.

Overarching descriptors have been used to make sure that each of the organisational capabilities accurately describes each stage of progression. The overarching descriptors are outlined below.

ENGAGED

The organisation has an awareness of the organisational capability and has made a commitment to develop it. There is some evidence that systems and processes have been developed to support the organisational capability. These take account of the needs and views of employees and of people who use services and their carers.

ESTABLISHED

Employees, people who use services and carers are involved in developing systems and processes to support the organisational capability. The systems and processes are transparent, clearly documented, available to everyone in the organisation, and regularly evaluated. There is evidence of innovative approaches and the sharing of good practice.

ACCOMPLISHED

The organisation uses evidence, research and the needs and views of people who use services, their carers and employees to continuously monitor and improve the systems and processes for the organisational capability. Innovative approaches and the sharing of ideas and resources are actively encouraged across the organisation. Evaluation is determined by the impact of learning on the practice of all employees. The outcomes of this analysis are used to inform future developments.

EXEMPLARY

The organisation is recognised for its expertise and innovative approaches to the continuous improvement of the organisational capability. The organisation learns from others and regularly shares what it has learnt with others in other organisations. Evaluation data is analysed and compared with other quality assurance data to determine trends, effectiveness and areas for continuous improvement. There is clear evidence of how the organisational capability is impacting on the performance of employees and outcomes for those who use the service.

The organisational capabilities are listed below with the page on which each full description of the capability begins.

	Page
» Creating a learning and performance culture	36
» Planning for learning, development and improved practice	38
» Promoting access to learning and development opportunities	40
» Promoting access to feedback	42
» Treating people with dignity and respect	44
» Focusing on health and wellbeing	46

CREATING A LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE CULTURE

Social service workers are part of an organisational environment which supports them to practice professional autonomy, continuously learn, embed their learning in practice and use their learning to improve outcomes for people who use services.

IF THE ORGANISATION...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » is committed to building a learning culture which will lead to continuously improved practice and performance » has developed a range of systems and processes which lead to learning and improvement » encourages employees at all levels of the organisation to contribute to the continuous improvement of the service » demonstrates commitment to using feedback from people who use services and their carers to continuously improve » makes sure that employees, people who use services and their carers are made aware of changes in the organisation and the rationale for these 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » learns from the views and insight of employees, people who use services and their carers to continually improve practice » recognises and rewards the contributions of employees in the celebration of organisational achievements » builds a workplace which encourages and supports employees to practise professional autonomy » provides opportunities for critical feedback on the learning and performance culture of the organisation » actively identifies and addresses any organisational practice that is discriminatory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » builds leadership across all levels of the organisation which includes employees, people who use services and their carers » demonstrates that learning is consistently used to continuously improve the performance of the organisation and outcomes for people who use services and their carers » uses research and evidence to identify and overcome barriers to learning and improved performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » analyses diverse sources of evidence to evaluate the organisation's performance, critically reflects on practice and uses this to continuously improve » is recognised for its outstanding learning and performance culture which embraces the leadership and learning of employees, people who use services and their carers

THEN THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER SHOULD...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » feel that they are encouraged to learn and reflect on their own and the organisation's practice » feel encouraged to provide suggestions for improvements in service delivery » feel that the organisation values their views, insight and contributions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » have opportunities to regularly reflect on their practice and work with others to find ways to learn, innovate, and continually improve » feel able to express their views and know that these views will be listened to without recrimination » have opportunities to act autonomously and take some of their ideas forward » work with a line manager who encourages the sharing of leadership, learning and ideas to improve practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » be encouraged to be innovative and share their ideas and insights with others » have access to research, evidence and opportunities to work with others to foster innovation and creativity » feel that they have been listened to even though their ideas may not be adopted in practice » feel that they are actively encouraged and supported to take a leadership role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » believe that they are part of an organisation which values collaborative learning, shared leadership, innovation, and the sharing of ideas » believe that the contributions they make are recognised and valued by the organisation » believe that the organisation is highly effective in using learning to continuously improve outcomes for people using the service and their carers.

PLANNING FOR LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVED PRACTICE

Social service workers are part of an organisation that uses planned and strategic approaches to learning and development to support them to continually improve their practice.

IF THE ORGANISATION...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » recognises that everyone in the organisation is a lifelong learner » encourages employees to take appropriate responsibility for identifying their own learning needs » demonstrates commitment to strategically planning for employees' learning, development and improved practice » demonstrates commitment to using feedback from people who use services and their carers to inform this strategic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » works with employees, people who use services and their carers to develop a strategy for the learning and development of employees » bases the strategy on the systematic identification of the learning needs of all employees and takes appropriate account of their career aspirations » supports line managers to make sure that all employees have a plan that contributes to their learning, development and improved practice » monitors the effectiveness of employee learning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » bases their strategy for employee learning and development on the learning needs of employees, the workforce planning needs of the organisation and local and national priorities » supports line managers to engage in meaningful supervision and performance management processes which improve outcomes for people who use services and their carers » actively supports the involvement of people who use services and their carers in planning organisational learning » evaluates the impact of learning on practice and uses this to inform planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » is recognised for their outstanding ability to support employee learning, development and improved practice » continuously develops their strategy for employee learning and development based on a range of relevant evidence » demonstrates that planned approaches to learning and development are leading to improved outcomes for people who use services » is recognised for their outstanding ability to involve employees, people who use services and their carers in planning, developing and evaluating organisational learning

THEN THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER SHOULD...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » know how their ongoing learning and development will be supported » have regular time with their line manager (or appropriate other person) to discuss their practice, learning and development » feel that their views about their learning needs are listened to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » meet regularly with their line manager (or appropriate other person) to identify their progress, achievements and future learning and development needs » have a learning and development plan which is linked to their job role, has been drawn up in partnership with their line manager and takes account of their career aspirations » feel supported to plan, implement and reflect on their practice on an ongoing basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » have access to a range of resources to support them to plan for learning, development and improved practice » work with a line manager who is confident, knowledgeable and capable of engaging in supervision and performance management processes which lead to continuous learning and improved practice » feel involved in the planning and evaluation of learning and development in the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » feel confident that the planning processes used by the organisation will significantly contribute to their learning, development and the continuous improvement of their practice » be actively involved in the evaluation and continuous improvement of the organisational learning and development strategy.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Social service workers will have access to a wide range of informal and formal learning and development opportunities which meet their identified needs.

IF THE ORGANISATION...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » has developed systems and processes to support access to formal and informal learning for all employees » allocates resources to support employees' learning and development at all levels of the organisation » demonstrates a commitment to involving people who use services and their carers in employee learning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » has developed transparent systems and processes to make sure that all employees have access to formal and informal learning opportunities which meet their identified needs » encourages a range of opportunities for learning within the workplace and with other agencies and disciplines » provides opportunities for employees to share initiatives, good practice and resources » involves people who use services and their carers in formal and informal learning and development opportunities for employees and promotes recognition of their involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » works creatively to develop opportunities for informal learning in the workplace » creates opportunities for employees to share learning with other agencies and disciplines » supports employees, people who use services and their carers to develop the necessary knowledge, skills, values, understanding, personal capabilities, and, where appropriate, qualifications to support the development of others » uses research and evidence to identify barriers to learning and development and find ways to overcome them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » is recognised for its innovative and effective approaches to creating accessible learning and development opportunities throughout the organisation » demonstrates outstanding practice in creatively involving people who use services and their carers in employee learning and development and in actively supporting and recognising their involvement. » is recognised for its initiative in promoting creative approaches to multi-agency and multi-disciplinary learning and development

THEN THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER SHOULD...

ENGAGED

- » have access to informal and formal learning and development opportunities
- » be able to access the tools they need to support their learning (internet, relevant reading material, discussions with colleagues and training).

ESTABLISHED

- » have access to clearly documented and transparent information about how the organisation will support them to access learning and development opportunities
- » have access to a range of formal and informal learning opportunities which meet their identified needs, take appropriate account of their career aspirations and involve people who use services and their carers
- » be able to share initiatives, good practice and resources and have access to multi-agency and multi-disciplinary learning opportunities.

ACCOMPLISHED

- » be able to engage in learning opportunities which are evidence-based, involve people who use services and their carers and are fully integrated into organisational culture
- » be encouraged and enabled to support the development of others
- » be actively involved in sharing good practice and learning within the organisation and with other agencies and disciplines.

EXEMPLARY

- » have access to a range of high quality learning and development opportunities which take account of their learning styles
- » recognise the value of the high quality opportunities the organisation offers to support their learning, development and improved practice
- » recognise the value of involving people who use services and their carers as an integral part of their learning and development.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO FEEDBACK

Social service workers gain access to high quality, fair and honest feedback in a way that enables them to continually learn, develop and improve their practice.

IF THE ORGANISATION...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » promotes the use of feedback as a way of supporting learning through reflection on individual practice » has established systems and processes which support the giving, receiving and use of feedback in a way that is fair and treats people with dignity and respect » is aware that inappropriate feedback processes can result in discrimination and oppression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » supports line managers to continuously improve the ways they give, receive and use feedback paying particular attention to ensuring that processes are fair and treat all employees with dignity and respect » develops processes which result in multiple sources of feedback including that gained from colleagues, line managers, people who use services and their carers as well as self assessment » ensures that systems and processes are clear, evaluated and available to everyone in the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » involves staff in developing, implementing and evaluating systems and processes that use feedback to support continuous learning, reflection and improved practice » uses evidence, research and the views of people who use services and their carers to strengthen the way feedback is used to support learning and improved practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » is recognised for their outstanding ability to use feedback to support learning, improve individual and organisational practice and improve outcomes for people who use services and their carers » is able to provide evidence of the impact feedback is having on the practice of staff and the outcomes for people who use the service and their carers

THEN THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER SHOULD...

ENGAGED

- » feel that the organisation values feedback as a tool for learning, development and continuous improvement
- » be given feedback by their line manager or appropriate other person fairly and constructively
- » have the opportunity to provide fair and constructive feedback to their line manager or appropriate other person
- » be aware of the action they can take should they feel feedback processes are unfair or discriminatory.

ESTABLISHED

- » gain feedback that is linked to the requirements of their job roles
- » feel that they are treated with dignity and respect when gaining, receiving and giving feedback
- » have access to feedback from a range of sources including line managers, colleagues, people who use services and through self reflection
- » work with a line manager who is continually improving the ways in which they gain and use feedback.

ACCOMPLISHED

- » work with a line manager who feels confident in their ability to gain, give and receive feedback in a way that supports learning, development and improved practice of all employees
- » have access to resources that enables them to gain, give and receive feedback fairly and with dignity and respect.

EXEMPLARY

- » feel confident that the feedback processes significantly enhance practice, the quality of the service and outcomes for people who use services and their carers.

TREATING PEOPLE WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Social service workers are part of an organisation that values the diversity of its workforce and challenges discrimination at all levels.

IF THE ORGANISATION...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » promotes awareness and understanding of difference and values diversity in its workforce » demonstrates awareness of the impact of discrimination on employees and is committed to challenging it » has developed systems and processes to support employee learning and development which recognise the diverse needs of employees » has developed systems and processes which provide transparent routes for employees to challenge inequality and discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » actively promotes the diversity of its workforce and inclusion in the workplace » recognises differences in power in line management arrangements and is committed to preventing abuse of power within workplace relationships » actively supports the diverse learning needs of employees » supports employees and managers to critically reflect on how their own background, assumptions and values impact on workplace relationships, including their assessment of employees' learning, development and practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » supports line managers to routinely consider the possible impact of individual and organisational discrimination where employees' values conflict with those of the organisation » uses evidence and research to inform approaches to anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » is recognised for its innovative and effective approaches to anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice within the organisation and across organisational boundaries » demonstrates creative and innovative approaches to involving employees, people who use services and their carers who are members of minority and disadvantaged groups in organisational learning

THEN THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER SHOULD...

ENGAGED

- » feel valued by the organisation whatever their culture, background, disability, gender, age or sexual orientation
- » know how to recognise and challenge discrimination in the workplace.

ESTABLISHED

- » feel their own particular learning needs are recognised and met
- » feel able to challenge discrimination and inequality in the organisation without fear of recrimination.

ACCOMPLISHED

- » feel that diverse learning needs are actively supported
- » feel confident to challenge discrimination in the organisation knowing that this will be acted on without recrimination
- » work with a line manager who is aware of the relationships between individual, organisational and structural discrimination and how these can impact on employees.

EXEMPLARY

- » recognise the value of the pro-active and innovative approaches the organisation takes to challenge discrimination and oppression
- » feel that they and others are treated with dignity and respect at all times.

FOCUSING ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Social service workers are part of an organisation that recognises the impact that health and wellbeing can have on an employee's ability to learn, develop and improve their practice.

IF THE ORGANISATION...

ENGAGED	ESTABLISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	EXEMPLARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » acknowledges that the health and wellbeing of employees is important to their ability to learn and to deliver high quality services » has developed a range of systems and processes that support the physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of employees » has developed systems to make sure that employees have manageable workloads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » develops a strategy for employee learning and development which takes account of the impact on workloads » supports line managers to make sure that learning and development is recognised as an integral part of employees' workloads » supports employees to embrace change while taking account of constructive criticism » monitors the effectiveness of the systems and processes that support the physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » recognises and addresses the organisational obstacles that undermine the resilience of employees » uses evidence and research to identify barriers to health and wellbeing and seeks to continuously improve it in practice » makes sure that people at all levels in the organisation recognise the importance of caring for and consistently valuing the health and wellbeing of themselves and others to enable lifelong learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » is recognised for the significant contributions they make toward the health and wellbeing of their employees » uses evidence and research to implement innovative approaches to individual and organisational learning while ensuring the health and wellbeing of all employees » can demonstrate that employees value the organisational focus on their health and wellbeing

THEN THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER SHOULD...

ENGAGED

- » be part of an organisation where their health and wellbeing is considered
- » be aware of the systems and processes that have been established to support their health and wellbeing
- » be aware of systems which support the management of workloads.

ESTABLISHED

- » feel that their learning and development is valued as an integral part of their workload.
- » feel confident that the organisation will support them without recrimination if they feel their health or wellbeing are at risk
- » be confident to use the established systems and processes to resolve issues
- » feel able to voice their concerns about change but supported to manage it.

ACCOMPLISHED

- » feel supported to deal with obstacles and setbacks and achieve positive outcomes
- » feel confident that the established systems and processes will continuously improve the health and wellbeing of employees including their own
- » work with a line manager who is knowledgeable and skilled in supporting their health and wellbeing
- » be confident that the health and wellbeing of employees is consistently valued by people at all levels of the organisation.

EXEMPLARY

- » acknowledge that the organisation supports their health and wellbeing and that this enables them to learn, develop and continually improve their practice.

APPENDIX 3: PRACTICE ILLUSTRATIONS

The characters and circumstances in all of the practice illustrations are entirely fictional.

1. MARY'S STORY

Mary is a support worker in a residential care home for older people. She has worked in the same job role and in the same care home for 20 years. Many of the residents in the care home have complex physical needs and some have dementia. Mary enjoys her job but says she is not ambitious and wants to stay in her current role. However, she knows she will need to become qualified and is very worried about this. Mary's line manager John would like to support her as she prepares to undertake her qualification. He thinks she is a committed worker who is sensitive to the needs of the residents but she has difficulty managing change in the workplace. John would also like to support Mary to develop in this area but finds it difficult to discuss with her. He decides to explore whether the Continuous Learning Framework could help.

Knowledge, skills, values and understanding

Mary has a job description which sets out the knowledge, skills, values and understanding which she needs to do her job. These are based on the National Occupational Standards for Health and Social Care which are relevant to her role as a support worker. For example, the four core units of competence are:

- » Communicate with, and keep records for, individuals
- » Support the health and safety of yourself and individuals

- » Develop your knowledge and practice
- » Ensure your own actions support the care, protection and wellbeing of individuals.

As a social service worker, Mary is expected to work according to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers published by the SSSC and this is also set out in her job description.

Mary also needs to have knowledge about the residential care home which employs her, including their vision, values and aims and their policies and procedures. She gained much of this knowledge through her induction when she first joined the organisation but needs to keep up to date with changes and new developments.

During a shift one day Mary tells John that she is finding it challenging at the moment working with one of the residents, Kate, who has dementia and has begun to demonstrate aggressive behaviour at times. Mary has always got on well with Kate and is finding this change in her behaviour difficult. John suggests that if Mary learns more about dementia, it will help her to understand these changes. John has access to the internet where he finds a range of resources. He purchases some and makes these available in the staff room. He also encourages staff to share what they have read at staff meetings.

Qualifications and training

Mary's employer expects her to register with the Scottish Social Services Council when the register for support workers in care home services for adults opens in April 2009. She will then be expected to achieve an appropriate qualification, which in Mary's case will be an SVQ Level 2 in Health and Social Care as she can be assessed for this in the workplace. As SVQs are made up of National Occupational Standards relevant to the particular job, Mary has already developed much of the knowledge and many of the skills, values and understanding required. The SVQ will give her an opportunity for these to be recognised but she will need to be able to provide evidence. She is however worried about the prospect of undertaking a qualification as she hasn't done any formal learning for over 30 years.

The residential care home which employs Mary also requires support workers to undertake a number of training courses and to keep them up to date. These include moving and handling, health and hygiene, case recording and working with vulnerable adults. Mary has a personal learning plan which sets out what training courses she needs to undertake and when these will need updating and a learning portfolio where she records her learning. Following their discussion about Kate, John and Mary have noted a need for Mary to have training about dementia.

Personal capabilities

Both John and Mary recognise that she is worried about undertaking her SVQ and they look together at the personal capabilities which will help to support her in this process. They agree to focus on 'accurate self assessment' and particularly on Mary's ability to reflect on her own practice. They go on to look at learning opportunities to help Mary develop this capability. They agree that Mary will do some structured observations of Kate, making a note of what seems to trigger Kate's aggressive behaviour and the ways in which she and other staff manage the situation. They will then discuss these observations one to one. John will help Mary to use the knowledge she has gained about dementia with Mary taking increasing responsibility for making the links between this and what she is observing, working towards doing reflective accounts. The aim is for Mary to feel confident that she is able to demonstrate this personal capability at the engaged stage of progression before she begins her SVQ. John points out that she has already demonstrated that she understands the need to be aware of her own limitations in recognising she needed support in her work with Kate.

Later, during her annual performance review meeting, John is able to give Mary feedback about many areas where she has progressed. However he feels that she has difficulty managing change in the workplace. Mary's job role requires her to demonstrate the personal capability of 'flexibility' at engaged stage but John feels she is not yet able to do this. When

they are discussing Mary's learning needs for the coming year, John uses the descriptor for 'flexibility' at engaged stage to raise this issue. He gives some examples where he feels Mary has not been as open to change in the workplace as she might be. Mary is able to recognise this but feels that change is imposed with little or no explanation. John accepts that the organisation could be more transparent about the reasons for change. A new work rota is about to be implemented and John takes the time to explain the ways in which the new rota will improve the service for the residents. He suggests that Mary write down all the pros and cons of the changes from her perspective. Mary feels more open to this change now that she understands the thinking behind it and because her views are being listened to.

Organisational capabilities

John finds that this conversation causes him to reflect on the organisational capability about 'creating a learning and performance culture'. The organisation is aspiring to be at the established stage. However, John realises that it is probably not yet operating at the engaged stage. Mary is not the only member of staff who is unclear about the reasons for proposed changes to the work rota and John believes there is much more to be done to make sure that the views of staff are encouraged and valued. As a result he decides to work with some of his colleagues to try to strengthen this organisational capability. He is also aware that supporting employees to manage change is an important part of the organisational capability 'focusing on health and wellbeing'.

However, John thinks that the organisation is beginning to demonstrate the organisational capability of 'planning for learning, development and improved practice' at the established stage as they have moved from a commitment to strategically planning for employees' learning to a system for identifying the learning needs of all employees. For example, John found some interesting courses on dementia through the internet but there was no money left in the budget for external training courses in the current financial year. He was however able to record this as a priority need for the coming year as he has identified this as a learning need for other members of staff as well. In the meantime he contacts the Learning Network in his area as he thinks it is likely that other employers have identified a need for staff training in dementia and they may be able to find a shared solution.

2. MICHAEL'S STORY

Michael has been working as a social worker in a local authority children and families team since he qualified 10 years ago and has always been committed to his own learning and development. He wants to remain as a front line practitioner rather than seek to become a manager as he enjoys working directly with vulnerable children and their families. However, he is increasingly frustrated by what he sees as limited opportunities for him to develop in his current role. Michael's line manager Sarah has recognised his frustration and is worried about losing him. They agree to use the four key areas of the Continuous Learning Framework at Michael's annual

performance review to look at his learning and development.

Knowledge, skills, values and understanding

Michael has a person specification which sets out the knowledge, skills, values and understanding which he needs to do his job based on the National Occupational Standards for Social Work and including the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers. As a qualified and experienced social worker committed to his continuous learning and development, Michael has already demonstrated the knowledge, skills, values and understanding required by his employer for him to be competent in his role. However, he needs to continue to keep these up to date and to make sure he is aware of changes in the organisation he works for such as the vision, context, policies and procedures.

Michael has also developed expertise in working with children affected by parental substance misuse but he feels that the organisation does not make use of this. He would like to develop this further and has undertaken self-directed reading and internet research as part of his post registration training and learning (PRTL). Sarah suggests to Michael that he might be interested in undertaking a piece of practitioner research on the ability of the key agencies in the local authority area to work in partnership to support these children. Michael agrees to contact the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS) for advice on how to take this forward and what support might be available to him.

Qualifications and training

Michael has a Diploma in Social Work and is registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. He completed the foundation level child protection training required by his employer in his first year in post and has since successfully completed the Graduate Certificate in Child Care and Protection and training in Joint Investigative Interviewing of Child Witnesses. He therefore already has the qualifications and training his employer requires him to have for his job role.

Michael's post registration training and learning (PRTL) has included attending seminars and training events which he and Sarah felt were relevant to his role but both agree the process for identifying these learning opportunities has been rather ad hoc. Michael would like to undertake further formal training but is unsure what opportunities there might be. Although Michael is clear that he wants to remain as a practitioner, it is also evident to Sarah that he is seen by others in the team as something of a role model. He is often sought out by less experienced members for advice and support. Michael is happy to provide this but admits he doesn't think this role is recognised by the organisation. Sarah is aware that the Scottish Social Services Council has developed a new framework of qualifications for people working in social services who are supporting learning for practice in the workplace. These are the Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services), known as PLQ(SS) and they are available at four SCQF levels. Michael agrees to contact the local Learning Network for further information.

Personal capabilities

As Michael already has the knowledge, skills, values and understanding and the qualifications and training the organisation requires him to have to practice in his job role, he and Sarah decide to focus most of their discussion on the personal capabilities. They agree that Michael is able to demonstrate the personal capabilities at appropriate stages of progression for his role. The challenge for him is to develop further, particularly to demonstrate that he is increasingly able to exercise initiative and look beyond his own learning and development to that of others and the organisation. However, Michael and Sarah acknowledge that it would be unrealistic for Michael to try to further develop all of the capabilities at once. After discussion they agree to focus in the coming year on 'working in partnership' and 'lifelong learning'.

Sarah has already acknowledged the contribution Michael makes to developing others in the team. Michael also feels he contributes to the learning and development of other colleagues with whom he works closely. These include colleagues from other parts of the council which employs him, such as substance misuse, education and criminal justice staff, and colleagues from other agencies, including health. Like him, they are keen to keep up to date with research, evidence and policy issues and seek creative local solutions to improve outcomes for children affected by substance misuse and their families as the procedures of the different agencies involved can sometimes be a barrier to this. Michael suggests to Sarah that

inter-agency learning communities would be a good way to take this forward and that he would like to lead this initiative. It would link well with the possible practitioner research they discussed earlier. Sarah agrees to seek support for this from the relevant senior managers.

By negotiating this workplace learning opportunity Michael has already begun to demonstrate the capability of 'working in partnership' at accomplished level. Considering the range of learning opportunities which he and Sarah have identified in their discussion, Michael feels he should be able to develop the personal capabilities of 'working in partnership' and 'lifelong learning' to accomplished and exemplary stages. Clearly he will not be able to take advantage of all of the identified learning opportunities at once and he agrees with Sarah that he would like to make the development of the inter-agency learning communities his priority. Nonetheless he decides he will look into the practitioner research and the PLQ(SS) so that he can make informed decisions in the future.

Organisational capabilities

At the end of the meeting Michael feels he has a clear plan for his learning and development in the coming year and beyond. He begins to feel valued again by his employer and to feel he has a future in the organisation. Sarah uses the organisational capabilities to help her reflect on their conversations. She recognises that looking with Michael at his overall learning needs using the key areas of the Continuous

Learning Framework helped them to identify learning opportunities which were clearly linked to his individual learning needs. The local authority aims to demonstrate the organisational capability of 'creating a learning and performance culture' at established stage so Sarah knows it will be important that senior managers agree to support Michael's inter-agency initiative and enable him to practise professional autonomy.

The local authority also aims to demonstrate the organisational capability of 'planning for learning, development and improved practice' at established stage. However Sarah feels the organisation's commitment to strategically planning for employees' learning and development is not always evident in practice and that this needs to be more systematic and consistent across all employees. Sarah decides to talk to other team managers and to the Learning and Development Team about the process she has gone through with Michael using the Continuous Learning Framework and discuss ways of raising this with senior managers.

3. SUNITA'S STORY

Sunita has been working as a practitioner in a private day nursery since leaving college with an HNC in Early Education and Child Care five years ago. The nursery offers childcare and education to children aged three months to five years and is open all day. Sunita loves her current job but aspires to become a manager of a nursery one day. She takes advantage of as many opportunities for learning and

development as she can. However, she wants to increasingly target her learning in ways which will support her career plans. Sunita raises this with the nursery manager Ray during one of their regular one to one meetings and they decide to use the Continuous Learning Framework in a series of discussions to explore ways of achieving this.

Knowledge, skills, values and understanding

When Sunita did her training she undertook an award that was based on the National Occupational Standards in Children's Care, Learning and Development. She has therefore already demonstrated the knowledge, skills, values and understanding which she needs to be competent in her job. She is aware that to progress her career as a manager she needs to show how she can demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities and professional values and personal commitment in Childhood Practice. She is also aware that as a practitioner in a day care of children centre she needs to be aware of the requirements of the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare.

Qualifications and training

Sunita has an HNC in Early Education and Child Care and is registered with the SSSC as a practitioner in a day care of children service. To become a manager she needs to demonstrate ways she can meet the Standard for Childhood Practice. As a first step Ray thinks Sunita should be given more responsibility and this would allow her competence to be assessed against some key units in the SVQ level 4 in Children's

Care, Learning and Development. By doing this Sunita will be gaining credit towards the BA Childhood Practice, the new manager award at SCQF level 9. As an alternative Ray suggests she could explore the possibility of doing the Professional Development Award (PDA) Early Education and Childcare (at SCQF level 8) which would also count towards the level 9 award. Sunita agrees to explore this.

Personal capabilities

Sunita has played a key role in supporting some of the nursery's priorities. These include the better involvement of parents and carers to help the nursery meet the requirements of the new Care Commission/HM Inspectorate of Education self-assessment inspections. Sunita has taken responsibility for researching examples of good practice the nursery can use to evidence quality improvement. She has also supported her less confident colleagues to work effectively with parents. As a model of good practice, Sunita's nursery has recently been asked by the local Childcare Partnership to give a presentation to others on how they achieved this. Ray tells Sunita that he considers she is demonstrating the personal capability of 'a focus on people who use services and their carers' at exemplary level. This acknowledgement boosts Sunita's confidence as she considers her career pathway.

The nursery has used the Continuous Learning Framework to draw up person specifications which describe the qualifications, training, knowledge, skills, values, understanding and personal capabilities required in each of the job roles in the nursery. They have also set out the stages of progression at which people should be able to demonstrate the personal capabilities required for their job role. Sunita looks at the person specifications for her current role and for the role of manager which she aspires to. She acknowledges many capabilities that she can transfer but also sees that one of the most important personal capabilities for managers is 'motivating and leading others'. Her organisation expects managers to develop this personal capability to the accomplished stage of progression.

Sunita and Ray discuss the learning opportunities in the workplace that would support the development of this personal capability. They agree that she will lead a specific project planned for her playroom. This will involve motivating, leading, and valuing contributions from the staff team. Ray will help Sunita to access research and information on leadership to help her in this role and Sunita plans to gain feedback from colleagues, families and children to help her to reflect on her leadership both during and after completion of the project.

Organisational capabilities

Ray uses the Continuous Learning Framework to reflect on his discussions with Sunita. It has highlighted the need to build leadership capacity in the nursery. His view is that if he can sustain supporting staff in the same way he has been able to respond to Sunita, there is the potential to demonstrate the organisational capabilities of 'creating a learning and performance culture' and 'promoting access to learning and development opportunities' at the accomplished stage of progression.

Ray also thinks about Sunita's plans to obtain a range of sources of feedback to help her reflect on her leadership. Ray is committed to providing staff with feedback which is constructive and fair and which recognises good practice as well as areas for development. However, he reflects that his reliance on his own observations could result in processes which are unfair. He realises that the organisation needs to develop the organisational capability 'promoting access to feedback'. In particular, it needs to support line managers like himself to improve the ways in which they give and use feedback. Ray sees that he can develop his own practice. He also decides to suggest to his manager the need for the organisation to develop processes which result in all staff receiving multiple sources of feedback. This would include feedback from colleagues, line managers, people who use services and their carers and critical self-reflection.

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APPENDIX 5: DEFINITION OF KEY WORDS AND PHRASES WHICH APPEAR IN THIS FRAMEWORK

‘Employee’ means a person who works in the social service sector who is employed by an organisation or an individual.

‘Employer’ means an individual, organisation or service which employs one or more social service workers.

‘Evidence’ is the information that supports or substantiates research findings.

‘Evidence informed practice’ means making decisions about how to meet the needs of people who use services and their carers informed by an understanding of the best available evidence on what is effective, practice wisdom and the views and expectations of people who use services and their carers.

‘Formal learning’ is learning which has been assessed and given credit against recognised learning outcomes, e.g. qualifications such as an SVQ, an HNC or a degree and awards such as the Practice Learning Qualifications.

‘Informal learning’ is learning gained through life and work experiences and from workplace training or other learning which has not been formally credit-rated.

‘Organisation’ in this Framework refers to any agency which is providing a social service so it might include a local authority, private or voluntary body providing several services or an individual service, such as a single owner care home or an out of school care club.

‘Research’ is a process of investigating, exploring, studying, examining or looking into something in a systematic way.

‘Recognition of Prior Learning’ (RPL) describes the process by which ‘informal learning’ (see above) can be recognised. This can include the formal recognition of the learning, a process known as credit-rating, which can only be done by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, colleges or universities. If prior informal learning has been credit-rated, it can count towards a qualification.

'Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework' (SCQF) identifies how the many different Scottish qualifications relate to each other. It has 12 levels and the level descriptors describe the general outcomes of learning at each level. This allows comparisons to be made between different qualifications, formal programmes of learning and other learning opportunities.

'Social services' includes social work, social care, housing support, residential child care and early education and childcare.

'Social service worker' means any person who works in a 'social service' as defined above. Some social service workers can also be employed in services which are delivered by another sector, e.g. health or education, or in integrated services which have workers from a range of disciplines. The Framework is relevant for these social service workers.

'Supervision' or 'one to one' in this Framework refers to any occasion where a social service worker and their line manager or other appropriate person discuss and reflect on their practice and learning.

'Systems and processes' in this Framework mean organisational procedures which are recorded (either written or on-line) so that they are accessible to everyone in the organisation, e.g. performance review systems, guidance.

'Team' in this Framework can be a group of people working together for a particular purpose, whether or not the organisation they work for calls them a 'team'.

APPENDIX 6: MEMBERS OF THE PROJECT BOARD

Carole Wilkinson	Chief Executive, Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
Bryan Williams	Executive Director, Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS)
Edith Wellwood	Workforce Development Manager, SSSC
Kate Skinner	Institute Lead (Research, Development and Application), IRISS
Pam Linton	Training and Staffing Manager, Angus Council Social Work and Health
Fiona Clark	Learning and Development Adviser, SSSC (Joint Project Manager)
Jayne Dunn	Institute Lead (Workplace Learning and Development), IRISS (Joint Project Manager)

APPENDIX 7: MEMBERS OF THE REFERENCE POOL

Maureen Anderson	Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care
Rona Beattie	Glasgow Caledonian University
Ann Brady	Care and Learning Alliance
Valerie Cramb	Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care
Gail Crawford	Dundee City Council Practitioners' Forum
Janet Davidson	Adam Smith College
Phil Ford	Skills Active
Marc Hendrikson	Social Work Inspection Agency
Brenda Hutchinson	South Lanarkshire Council
Yvonne Leathley	Learning Network North
Pam Linton	Angus Council Social Work and Health
Joyce Lishman	The Robert Gordon University
Cathy Macnaughton	Multi-Cultural Family Base
Maureen McKissock	Scottish Out of School Care Network
Tony Mackie	Glasgow City Council
Janet Miller	Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit
Wendy Paterson	Learning Network South East
David Rennie	Scottish Care
Elizabeth Ritchie	South Lanarkshire Council
Anne Rooney	Midlothian Council
Celia Rothero	Learning Network West
Adrian Snowball	Aberlour Child Care Trust
Anne Tavendale	Learning Network Tayforth
Jenny Thomson	South Ayrshire Council
Joan Watson	University of Strathclyde
Keith Wilson	West Lothian Council

APPENDIX 8: ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE TRIALS

For reasons of confidentiality we have listed only the organisations that tested out the Framework for us but our thanks go to all of the staff involved.

Aberdeen City Council South Children and Families

Angus Council Social Work and Health

Choices Care

Orkney Islands Council Kalisgarth Care Centre

Leamington Care Home

Midlothian Council

Rowan Alba

Scottish Out of School Care Network

South Ayrshire Council Children and Families Services

The Scottish Government

Scottish Social Services Council
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Lo-call 0845 60 30 891
Fax: 01382 207215
Email: enquiries@sssc.uk.com
www.sssc.uk.com

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