



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, MONA CAMPUS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMME

PRACTICUM EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

SPECIALIZATION:

**CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK
PRACTICE**

PRACTICUM JOURNAL

Name of Student: _____

Student ID# _____

Minor Practicum ☐
Major Practicum ☐
Minor / Major Practica ☐

Agency: _____

THE PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL

Purpose

Journal writing is an essential activity in the development of any helping professional. It is both a cognitive, reflective as well as an emotional, heart-searching activity. How else can we seek to sharpen the self – the most important tool that we use in our daily interactions with others?

Journalling provides us with an opportunity to reflect honestly on our experiences, how we are being experienced by others, the feedback we are getting (if we are listening!) our successes, our mistakes, our positive vs our negative times, etc. The purpose then, is to enable us to become stronger, more competent and empathic clinicians because of our increased capacity to reflect objectively and creatively both **in** practice as well as **on** practice.

The Process

1. Begin by making a commitment to the process. Set aside at least **30 minutes** at the end of **each practicum day** to review the day's events and activities.
2. Reflect on the extent to which you have effectively demonstrated your IQ (Academic intelligence), your AQ (Attitudinal Intelligence) and your EQ (Emotional Intelligence). More importantly, how in tune and in touch are you with your own self as a necessary precursor to getting in touch with your clients and others with whom you interact on a daily basis?
3. Write brief notes in a special notebook to remind yourself of the issues that arose as well as the thoughts, feelings, assessments and decisions that you have made as a result of what happened.
4. Seek to better inform yourself if knowledge is lacking in any area. Let your experiences guide you as to where you need to gain more competence in terms of knowledge, approaches and skills. Read, search online, talk to others, be a part of a study group.
5. Set aside at least **two hours each week** (or as regular as necessary) to do your journal writing. Try to be as open and honest as possible and be particularly conscious of any tendency to self-blame or to blame or find fault with others; to make excuses; to rationalise or to deny our real thoughts and feelings. Pay attention to the verbal and non-verbal

messages that we are getting from others. Affirm ourselves, when appropriate. Seek to make changes if necessary and where we have unresolved issues, seek guidance and counselling for ourselves.

Reflective Practice

Reflective practice takes place at two levels:

1. Reflection IN practice

- Pay close attention to the particular situation or interaction
- Both listen and utilise your power of observation
- Attend to both your feelings and the feelings of others in relation to the experience
- Ask yourself:
 - What am I feeling?
 - How am I presenting?
 - Why do I feel comfortable /uncomfortable?
 - Do I need to change my approach or focus?
- Reflect on how your re-active responses (internal and external) could be typical of the way you tend to respond in similar circumstances. Is there a pattern of behaviour that needs to be changed? For example, taking things too personally, blaming, excusing, losing control, being angry, etc.
- “Imaginise and reframe” by thinking of alternative ways of understanding the situation.

“Recognize that different points of view can be taken about similar situations leading to legitimate debate about appropriate professional responses. These points of view and debates are represented by different practice theories, which suggest different ways in which social workers may interpret and react to the situations they face”.

(Gould, 1996; Schön, 1983)

2. Reflection ON Practice

(a) Involves a 3-phase process:

- Returning to an experience
- Attending to feelings connected to the experience
- Re-evaluating the experience through recognizing its implications and outcomes

(Boud & Knights, 1996)

(b) Exercising discipline in working through the **Reflective Cycle**

- **Description** (What happened?). How did I engage with the person or persons or in that situation?
- **Feelings** (What was I thinking and feeling?) What previous experiences influenced these thoughts and feelings?
- **Actions** (What did I do?) Which action(s) was/were appropriate or inappropriate and why did I do what I did?
- **Evaluation** (What was good and bad about the experience?)
- **Analysis** (How can I make sense of what happened?) How does my theoretical knowledge help? What are the implications for self and practice?
- **Conclusions** (What alternatives did I have?) How might I have responded differently, if at all? What lessons have I learnt?
- **An Action Plan** (What would I do if it happened again?)

Adapted

The benefits of reflective practice and of journalling

- *“Reflection, then, leads us to experiment with alternative approaches which eventually become incorporated into our ways of thinking and acting (treating / intervening) in social work.*

Such alternative approaches can form the basis for the development of new theories, especially when applied to one’s own cultural context”. (unknown)

- Reflective practice, then, is the hallmark of the true professional practitioner. The greatest benefit of this approach, however, is to see the reflective cycle come full circle in the lives of our clients and those whose lives we touch when they, in turn, utilise the reflective cycle as a tool of empowerment in making needed changes in their lives.

Preparing to write your journal

- Review and reflect on the values, principles and ethics required for the practice of social work, and in particular, clinical social work practice.
- Read the Practicum Evaluation Booklet, examine and assess your own core competencies and use the lists given to guide you on the areas to be assessed in your journal.
- Write your journal following the format based on the evaluation framework.

NAME OF STUDENT:

NAME OF AGENCY:

NAME OF SUPERVISOR:

NAME OF PRACTICUM COORDINATOR:

NAME OF UWI STAFF MAKING PRACTICUM VISIT:

DATE OF VISIT:

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY

B. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WORK ASSIGNED

C. HOW I WAS ABLE TO WEAVE THEORY INTO PRACTICE (Give actual case examples)

D. EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC THEORETICAL SKILLS AND INTERVENTIONS

- **In each of the following core competencies and skills as listed in the Evaluation Booklet, outline a critical incident or example and demonstrate your understanding and strengths in relation to these areas.**
- **Highlight appropriate theories, laws, policies or regulations that had relevance to this situation.**
- **Explain how your personal and professional values influenced your response in the practice of each core competence.**
- **Assess your own level of competence and identify areas for future growth and change.**
- **Include samples of material as evidence of competencies shown.**

E. CORE COMPETENCE: CASE MANAGEMENT

F. CORE COMPETENCE: ENGAGEMENT PHASE

G. CORE COMPETENCE: ASSESSMENT PHASE

H. CORE COMPETENCE: TREATMENT PLANNING AND INTERVENTION

I. CORE COMPETENCE EVALUATION OF INTERVENTION(S) /PRACTICE

J. CORE COMPETENCE: DISCHARGE PLANNING / TERMINATION

- K. CORE COMPETENCE: GROUP COUNSELLING / THERAPY
- L. CORE COMPETENCE: FAMILY THERAPY
- M. CORE COMPETENCE: ABILITY TO WORK IN ORGANISATIONS
- N. CORE COMPETENCE: RELATIONSHIP TO AND USE OF SUPERVISION
- O. CORE COMPETENCE: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Idea for outline of this Journal taken from an Anonymous source.

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