

**ALPS Conference 2010**

***Work-based Learning and Assessment  
for the Next Decade***

**16 - 17 March 2010  
Weetwood Hall, Leeds, UK**

**Poster abstracts (draft)**

*The programme has yet to be confirmed and is subject to change*

**An e-learning approach to supporting social work students while on Practice Learning Opportunities**

**Presenters:** Jo Rees, Paula McCreary

**Institution:** Swansea University

The Care Council for Wales requires that the social work qualification degree programme is offered in partnership with local authorities and voluntary sector agencies. The academic and practice elements of the social work qualification are considered to be of equal importance.

Two hundred days of practice learning opportunity (PLO) are spread over the three levels of the degree. The challenges of supporting students placed off-campus for significant periods of time are exacerbated at Swansea University due to the disparate and rural nature of some PLOs. In addition, some students request to undertake their PLO through the medium of Welsh, while other non-Welsh speaking students are placed within primarily Welsh speaking localities.

In order to support students effectively, a pilot study is being undertaken to encourage students to use e-learning while on PLO. PebblePAD is a personal e-learning environment based on the Gibbs/Kolb Reflective Cycle. It is user-driven and allows student users to set up a blog space without intervention from the BSc Social Work Programme. All users are able to create thought assets (reflections) and action plans, record experiences and meetings, undertake learning profiles and create weblogs – particularly relevant to students on PLO. All users can also upload digital images, sound files, video and scanned documents – particularly relevant for staff to support students on PLO. A range of privacy settings allow material to be kept private or shared with individuals or groups of users.

The aims of the pilot study are:

1. to encourage students to use PebblePAD as a reflective blog during PLO.
2. to encourage students to use this blog to create their reflective commentaries, and to receive feedback from their academic tutor on their first draft.
3. to encourage students to use PebblePAD to develop an online community of practice - a forum to share experiences, thoughts and reflections with other students.
4. to set-up and encourage students to use particular communities of practice where they have indicated that particular support is required, for example:
  - students within similar PLO settings
  - students relocating for their PLO
  - students who wish to practice through the medium of Welsh
  - students with a disability
  - student only space

5. for PLO Liaison tutor and Personal Tutor to create blogs including FAQ's, reminders and generic advice.
6. for students to use PebblePAD to submit questions to the PLO Liaison Tutor and Personal Tutor
7. for staff to create blogs in relation to particular interests for students to access.
8. for Practice Assessors to use PebblePAD to develop an online community of Practice Assessors - a forum to share support and good practice with each other.

### **Work Based Learning as an Emancipatory User-centered Design Approach for Preceptorship Experiences**

**Presenters:** Lyn Rosen, June Rutherford

**Institution:** University of Salford

Literature suggests that the preceptorship period is challenging for both newly qualified nurses and their preceptors. Newly qualified nurses (preceptees) report issues related to, support, confidence, competence, preparedness, and quality of the preceptorship experience. Preceptors report issues related to preparation for their role.

This poster will offer an overview of a pilot project being undertaken at a UK School of Nursing and Midwifery, in partnership with a National Health Service Foundation Trust, with the aim of finding a solution to these challenges. By developing and enhancing the preceptorship experience for preceptees, their preceptors, and education managers, an envisaged outcome is that the project work will become the engine for developmental activity within the Trust (Armsby 2000), as the education managers who are responsible for this important aspect of organisational activity will, after completion of the pilot, be able to continue the process. Academic credit will be awarded upon completion of an assessed component which will focus on the process undertaken by the participants.

The evidence base used to build the project work includes literature reviewing, student questionnaires, curriculum content review, and analysis of post outlines for newly qualified nurses.

Work Based Learning is being used to offer a systematic approach, combined with an Action Learning process which is being co-facilitated by academics from the HE establishment, and the Practice Education facilitators from the Trust. This creative pedagogy will encourage the preceptees, preceptors and education managers to focus on their learning within the workplace by identifying real life work issues related to the preceptorship period.

Initial uptake is good, with 24 participants engaging in the 12 month pilot. This includes 12 newly qualified preceptees, 10 qualified preceptors, and 4 Practice Education Facilitators.

This poster will focus on the interim evaluation results to determine how well the project has performed in maintaining the emancipatory relationships established between education and practice through a topic of current, high national importance. Key themes that will be explored are, collaboration, employability, transition, and the impact on the learning environment.

**References:**

Armsby, P. (2000) Methodologies of Work Based Learning. In Costley, C. & Portwood D. (Eds) Work Based Learning and the University: New Perspectives and Practices. SEDA publications

### **Workbased facilitated learning to support and enhance the competence and quality of leadership and management skills in community specialist practitioner students**

**Presenters:** Stephanie Hodgson

**Institution:** NHS Blackpool

Community specialist practitioner students are experienced healthcare professionals who have been recruited to study at degree level to be able to lead in practice and manage community service teams. This case study aims to support professional development in the workplace, alongside their academic course. This study incorporates workbase learning strategies to support, enhance and develop complex competencies in leadership and management by using reflection on practice and promoting emotional

intelligence. By drawing on previous personal and clinical experience, the programme builds confidence and ability with enhanced communication skills. It seeks to empower the practitioners with more flexible and creative leadership and management skills to work flexibly in a modernised NHS community care setting.

Key programme areas include reflective practice, peer support, emotional intelligence and conflict management. Aimed initially at community nursing, it is hoped for the future that the programme's generic principles will be suitable for interprofessional learning and transferable for multiprofessional teams

Additional information on evaluation of the process.

- The process involves the use of student self assessment tools reflecting on competencies in leadership and management. The assessment tool is aimed at raising awareness of relevant emotional competencies and promoting capability building through reflection and peer support.
- The proposal for a 6months posts qualifying repeat self evaluation tool is planned.
- The study includes an evaluation of the role of the Practice Education Facilitator as a work based catalyst for enhanced and flexible learning in line with learning and development agreements and the quality assurance process in support of students in NHS work place settings.