

The University of Hong Kong
Department of Social Work & Social Administration

Social Work Fieldwork Placement

List of Fieldwork Supervisor's Tasks

This list of tasks is not meant to be exhaustive. Fieldwork supervisors may need to consider the specific situation and context of the placement and of the supervised student, as well as the SWRB's Principles, Criteria and Standards for Recognizing Qualifications in Social Work for Registration of Registered Social Workers in the performance of their duties.

A. The tasks of the fieldwork supervisor in planning and organizing the student's field placement.

A.1 Tasks related to preparing the student for placement

- discuss with the student to find out his interest, knowledge, strengths, experience, expectations, learning needs and objectives
- clarify with the student the roles of the student and of the fieldwork supervisor
- state clearly the fieldwork supervisor's expectation on the student's workload, task performance and criteria for evaluation
- give information to the student on the agency's service, clientele, philosophy, organization, administration, culture etc.
- give information to the student on what he can expect from the placement, the nature of work, the limitations, the scope of learning, the requirements, the difficulties etc.
- work out the learning contract with the student, taking into consideration the student's opinions
- involve the student to discuss the placement arrangements and get his agreement
- organize visits to relevant agencies and services

A.2 Tasks related to the "goodness of fit" between the student and the placement agency

- clarify expectations with student and agency on the roles, tasks, responsibilities and workload of the student
- negotiate for compromise between the agency and the student on expectations
- clarify the roles and expectations between staff and student engaged in a joint project
- teach the student about agency staff dynamics and how to relate with agency staff

- have ongoing communication with agency to keep updated about agency development and help student to meet its requirements
- mediate between the student and the agency to resolve misunderstandings and clarify mutual expectations

A.3 Tasks related to planning and monitoring the student's work

- discuss with the student to derive mutual agreement on his task assignments, workload, work plan and time schedule
- formulate a specific work plan and schedule with all parties concerned, ie, student, agency staff and fieldwork supervisor
- keep updated about the student's work progress through reports, audio-visual tape recordings and direct observation
- involve the agency staff to give feedback to the student on his task performance
- review the student's progress with the agency and adjust the work plan if necessary
- monitor the student's progress according to his work plans and learning objectives
- have a mid-placement review and make modification to the learning contract and work plan if necessary

B. The tasks of the fieldwork supervisor in facilitating the student's learning

B.1 Tasks related to teaching the student how to apply theory to practice

- suggest references
- discuss with the student the models and theories relevant to his practice situation
- analyse the case, group or community situation with the student to identify the link between practical situations and conceptual ideas
- quote examples on how to apply the theoretical knowledge to real situations
- provide a range of perspectives for the student to examine his experience
- review with the student his assessment and plans according to developments in the situation
- point out the student's weaknesses in applying theories

B.2 Tasks related to teaching the student practice skills

- identify the student's skill deficits and assess his learning needs
- assign tasks that provide a variety of learning situations
- stimulate the student's thinking on problem solving alternatives

- demonstrate the use of skills directly or through audio-visual aids
- advise on appropriate use of skills
- give feedback promptly on the student's skills and task performance
- involve the student to analyse his use of skills through reports and audio/video recordings of his work
- review with the student what he has learned and its application to future situation
- share own experience in handling difficult situations
- provide guidelines for written work
- correct the student's written work
- remind student's to adhere to the SWRB's Code of Practice and Department's guidelines for record keeping

C. The tasks of the fieldwork supervisor in enhancing the student's self understanding and development

C.1 Tasks related to supporting the student in his work

- give freedom to the student to try out his ideas
- give encouragement
- appreciate the student's work
- provide opportunities to the student for the ventilation of feelings
- show understanding of the student's difficulties
- review with the student his negative feelings and reactions in handling difficult clientele and problem situations

C.2 Tasks related to encouraging the student's self reflection

- identify and tell the student his strengths and weaknesses
- discuss with the student his value dilemmas, conflicts and ambivalence
- encourage the student's self expression
- encourage the student's self evaluation
- alert the student to examine blocks in his learning
- encourage the student to reflect on feelings