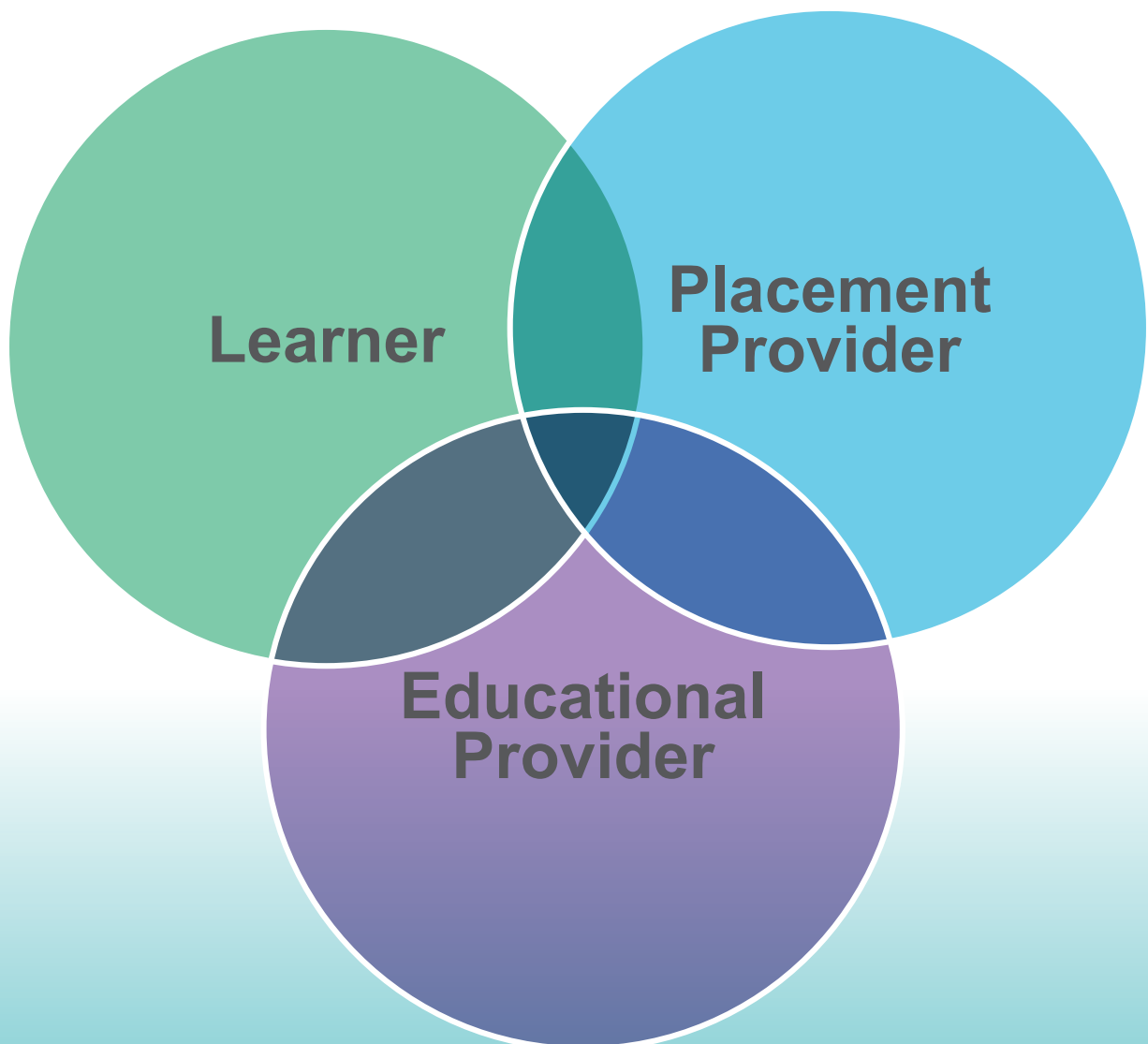


# Guidelines for Professional Practice Placement in Community Learning and Development

2017



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# Statement from Minister

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In professions across education, health, social work and other human services, the essence of learning to do the job well is in grasping the link between theories and what actually happens when we work with people, their communities, and the organisations that impact upon their lives. Models of practice come alive as they are tested in real life situations, and our ability to have a positive impact on these events improves as we understand how our learning applies.

Like any profession, making the link between practice and academic learning is essential for Community Learning and Development (CLD) practitioners. CLD professionals require a wide range of skills and knowledge to encourage, share and deliver learning opportunities with diverse people and communities across informal settings to highly structured contexts. For professional CLD practitioners, quality and effectiveness depends on the rigour and critical awareness that comes from professional learning.

This is why these Guidelines for Professional Practice Placement in CLD are important. Practice placements are the means by which academic and practice-based learning are brought together and it is hard to overstate the role that they play in developing competent CLD professionals. By advancing the quality of practice placements, we will improve the outcomes that CLD enables people and communities to achieve.

From the comments of learners, tutors and placement providers quoted in the document you will gain insight to the value placed on quality practice placements that benefits both learners practitioners and the learning culture of workplaces.

I therefore welcome this publication and look forward to seeing the impact of high-quality practice placements as we work together to close the attainment gap and empower communities.



Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP

Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science

## Foreword

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Quality as a concept may be hard to define but when we experience it, we absolutely know it. We share our story with others and are keen to model, repeat and enhance. Thus it is the notion of quality that sits at the heart of these Guidelines for Professional Practice in CLD.

As the professional body, the CLD Standards Council for Scotland's mission is to drive high standards of professional practice. In carrying out this mission, the Standards Council seeks to involve educational partners in communities and in further/higher education. Through the Approvals process, the CLD Standards Council continues to protect and promote the importance of placements within programmes of professional study in order to ensure that they fully prepare students for practice. The Standards Council places great importance in maintaining the 60/40% balance between academic and placement time.

Accordingly, further to a CLD Standards Council placement seminar, comprising practitioners, students and academics, the Professional Placement Review Group was formed. Building on the well-established placement system of strong co-operation and exchange, these Guidelines were developed to create a set of guiding principles for placement practice.

This document therefore offers a good practice guide for CLD Students, Placement Agencies and Educational Providers. It acknowledges the diversity of practices by considering what constitutes a CLD placement and defines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved.

What follows is a comprehensive guide that promotes quality placement experiences for students, placement providers and educational establishments. This is essential as we aim to ensure that the communities of Scotland are served by experienced CLD practitioners who have undertaken quality professional learning. We should expect nothing less.



Marion Allison  
Head of CLD Standards Council for Scotland

## Context

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Placements require a strong partnership between learners, the field of CLD practice, and educational providers.

The need for a guide which could reflect the diversity of placements and practice learning across Scotland has been identified for some time and it is hoped that this can provide support and contribute to on-going dialogue and developments. The need was identified by the education providers to support the field in their work with students.

The aim of these Guidelines is to clarify roles and responsibilities and promote consistently good practice.

These national guidelines have been created by a range of practitioners from across the field including academics, employers, students and placement supervisors.

## Definition of Terminology

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Over the course of many years the terminology used across education providers and the field of practice has changed, therefore for clarity the following definitions will be used:

**Educational Provider:** any organisation providing CLD learning. This could be a college, a university or independent training/learning provider.

**Field:** the settings where community learning and development practice takes place.

**Learners:** students on placement as a result of their college or university programme or a volunteer who may be undertaking learning as part of their work within an organisation.

**Placement:** the setting and the time that learners are based in agencies and organisations in the field.

**Placement Provider:** an organisation who has the ability to support a CLD learner, and who has agreed to the complete the plans and programme of learning associated with a practice placement learner.

**Practice Learning:** the learning that happens within a placement.

**Practice Research:** the practice based action research projects carried out by students on placement.

**Supervisor:** the agency practitioner who supports and assesses the learner's ability, skills and professional competence whilst on placement.

**Tutor:** the Higher Education, Further Education, or independent training/learning tutor who supports the learner with their continuing professional and academic development.

**Work-based Learning:** the context where a learner engages in a programme undertaking study which requires them to integrate learning primarily in their workplace.

**The above points on terminology should be read in conjunction with the refreshed Guidelines for the Professional Approval of CLD learning programmes (CLDSC, 2016) and the Guidelines for Approval of CLD Learning Programmes: Developmental (CLDSC, 2016).**

## Introduction

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### Purpose of this guide

We recognise the range of roles and settings within the field and the need for flexibility and consistency. These Guidelines are there to support the whole placement process and to create dialogue between all partners.

The guide is structured around sections aimed at Learners, Educational providers and Supervisors who can refer to their own discrete areas but also have access to the guidance being offered to the other partners in the process. In this way we hope that partners will be able to appreciate the complimentary roles that they play, and the unique contribution that each brings. All sections offer advice on different stages of the placement process.

For ease of reference there is an at a glance checklist highlighting the roles of each partner.

The dialogue boxes throughout the document provide an interactive space to influence and capture ideas and shape on-going discussion.

### What is a Community Learning and Development Placement?

Professional practice placement is a process of experiential and contextual learning which involves a partnership between the placement agency, the learner and the educational provider.

Professional education involves the provision of opportunities for emerging CLD professionals to develop a critical relationship to the theoretical concepts, philosophies, specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of the CLD profession.

Professional practice placements in settings that represent the diverse scope of contemporary CLD practice will help to prepare learners for the multiple future roles that they may encounter upon graduation.

Placements take many forms (this list is not exhaustive):

- Full-time block placements take place over various time periods and involve the learner in an immersive professional experience.
- Part-time placements can take the form of an induction process or a longer term professional experience with fewer practice hours per-week.
- Work-based placements allow learners to use employment as a form of supervised practice.
- Research based internships or research projects.

## The benefits of a Placement

Providing an effective and rewarding educational experience for a learner can bring clear benefits for the agency and its staff and volunteers. The process of providing a placement often results in a two-way learning process in which the agency can learn as much about itself as the learner learns about the agency. Having a learner in the midst of your agency encourages reflection and a re-visiting of principles and practices that may have become habitual or institutionalised. Additionally, creating an optimal learning environment within the agency creates a space for everyone to learn and reflect in a collaborative, mutually respectful, open, flexible and supportive manner.

Learners and Practice Supervisors can benefit by:

- contributing to the development of their professional education, supervision and leadership skills
- being prompted to critically reflect on their own practice
- being kept up to date with current theories and evidence
- supporting and enhancing the future of the CLD profession
- providing opportunities to model sound professional and ethical behaviour
- increasing employability of the learner
- increasing organisational provision
- developing supervision and training skills.

But don't just take our word for it, here are some quotes from learners and practitioners:

**'It provides students with the opportunity to put theory into practice, in real life situations. It is simple to read about how to deal with situations but things rarely happen that simply in the field. Furthermore, it provides students with the opportunity to experience the job first hand, decide if they like it, if they are good at it and how they would change it. It produces a more rounded worker.'**

**(Placement provider response)**

**'Acting as a sounding board for the learner as they learn about themselves, connect their practice to theory and compare/contrast their learning environment with their own working experiences.'**

**(Learner response)**

**'Students who take time to build relationships and networks whilst on placement can use these later for further research and placement opportunities.'**

**(Tutor response)**

**‘Supporting students to meet competences: to make sure that if there is a problem, they tell the learner early enough for them to act on it and improve practice.’**

**(Placement provider response)**

**‘Personally I feel that the most effective aspects of the supervisor’s role was the weekly support....This was very effective for me as it helped to ensure me that I was on the right track and hitting the deadlines on time. I feel that it was also effective for my supervisor as it allowed for them to stay updated on my progress and to ensure that I was working effectively.’**

**Learner response)**

**‘One of the most rewarding experiences happens when you hear practitioners and students talking about interesting and challenging practice that is making a difference in local communities.’**

**(Tutor response)**

**‘Placement - The work involved for the learner is representative of real life working experience. They are supported to work to a set of ethical standards, convert theory to practice and in addition meet placement organisational needs. The learner experiences a diverse scope of community development work which helps them prepare for the varied type of roles that they could progress onto. The organisation gains an opportunity to stay fresh and keep practices updated, be challenged and allows the organisations to increase capacity to provide crucial front line services.’**

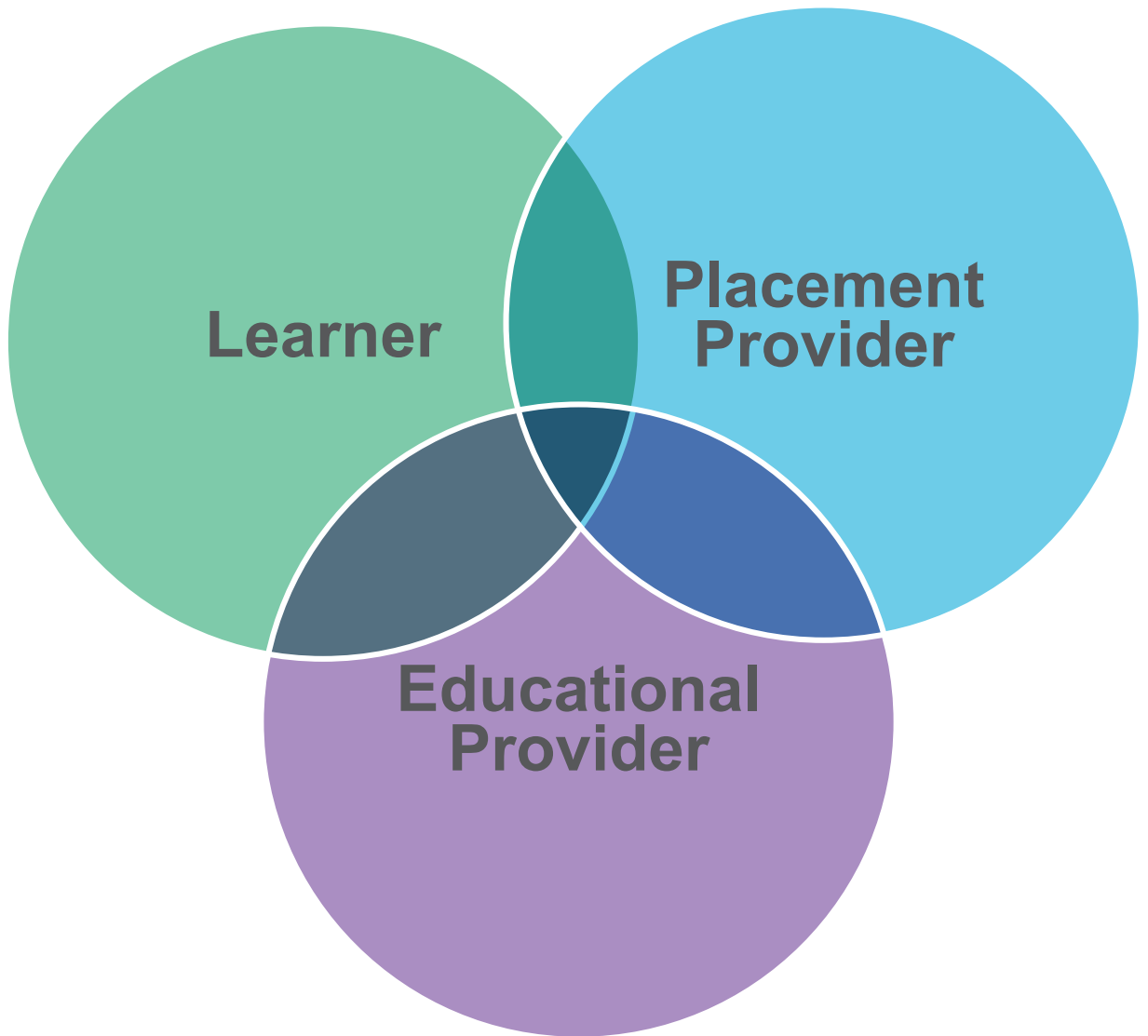
**(Placement provider response)**

**‘Visiting the learner and supervisor in the organisation at the midway point of placement enables me to see how the learner is being supported, and importantly, how learning is taken place and evidenced.’**

**(Tutor response)**



## Placement Partnership



The diagram above shows how each of the partners connect with each other in a Professional Learning Context. Each of the partners in the professional practice placement process has a particular role to play in ensuring the success of the learning opportunities offered throughout the placement experience. We offer the next few sections as guidelines, and a starting point for discussion of these particular and complementary roles.

## 2. Guidelines for Placement Providers

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The following are good practice points or suggestions to be considered during the placement process.

**For further guidance on these areas, please [click here](#).** Full details of the URL are on page 22.

### **Pre-Placement:**

- Provide an outline of the professional learning opportunities offered by your agency.
- Participate in the supervisor development meeting/seminar offered by the educational providers.
- Liaise with the learner and tutor to agree a practice learning plan and arrange induction.
- Keep in contact with the academic tutor (as required) about any concerns/queries or progress in fitness to practice.
- Provide a range of practice learning opportunities and a supportive environment in which to coach and support the learner in their learning and professional development.
- Carry out a risk assessment/checklist of duty of care for the learner whilst they are on placement.

### **During Placement:**

- Meet the learner on a regular basis to give structured support, feedback and guidance.
- Complete the necessary practice feedback reports (assessed/non-assessed).
- Monitor, progress, attendance and timekeeping.
- Create opportunities for planning, implementing and evaluating CLD practice with individuals, groups and communities.
- Provide a learning environment where challenges for the learner are balanced with support from the supervisor, team and partner agencies.
- Undertake ongoing negotiation and review between learner and supervisor in relation to CLD competences/indicators and how these are being demonstrated and evidenced.
- Work towards increasing learners' ability and application of reflective practice by developing and modelling praxis.
- Assess the learner and provide structured feedback around relevant and measurable learning outcomes.
- Give clear and timely feedback to any learner and educational provider if it appears that the learner is not meeting the standard to achieve a pass grade. Create a development plan where appropriate.

## Post Placement:

- Provide the necessary assessment report on placement and reflect on the process.
- Provide evaluation/feedback to educational provider on any improvements to the learning provision.

**For further guidance for Placement providers, please [click here](#).**

Full details of the URL are on page 22.

**This area is provided for you to make notes to support your role as a placement provider and offers some questions to start the dialogue. Each agency will be different and have different needs.**

What does your organisation need to consider in advance of accepting a learner into your agency?

What work can you make available to the learner during their placement? What time will this involve? How can you protect this time in your own calendar?

Are you comfortable in assessing the work of the learner or do you need to seek support and guidance to complete this?

## 3. Guidelines for Learners

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The following are good practice points or suggestions to be considered during the placement process.

**For further guidance on these areas, please [click here](#).** Full details of the URL are on page 22.

### **Pre-Placement:**

- Meet with their tutor to identify suitable professional practice placement opportunities that are attuned to their professional learning requirements.
- Meet with potential placement agencies/providers to determine compatibility negotiate and implement learning programmes with participants in the agency.
- Arrange an initial placement/practice visit where the learner and supervisor should discuss the practice learning experience and complete the agreement/ plan and an agreed timescale.
- Undertake planning and preparation for the placement experience.
- Undertake an induction and work within the practice agencies' conditions of employment.
- Observe standards of behaviour and professional conduct required of them and adhere to the educational provider's fitness to practise guidelines including CLD Code of ethics.

### **During Placement:**

- Negotiate a work programme that reflects professional learning needs.
- Be prepared and participate in regular supervisory meetings.
- Be responsible for meeting the required amount of placement/practice hours.
- Liaise with your tutor and supervisor to arrange appropriate and relevant assessment during the placement.
- Explore linkages between conceptual frameworks and approaches to practice.
- Identify structured time to provide appropriate recordings about analysis of practice, project progress and areas for possible development.
- Share perspectives from their studies with their supervisors.
- Engage in direct practice with participants in the field.
- Develop skills in planning and evaluation.
- Experiment with techniques of deliberation and reflection.
- Draw from the range of key CLD indicators/competences and evidence practice accordingly.

## Post Placement:

- Share your experience with other students and the placement agency.
- Continue to review and self-assess your own professional learning and areas for future academic and professional development.

**This area is provided for you to make notes to support you in your placement and offers some prompts to start the dialogue with your Educational Provider and/or Placement Provider.**

As a learner what are your hopes, fears and expectations for your practice placement?

Do you understand your role within the placement setting?

Do you have an awareness of the principles and values of CLD, the Code of Ethics and Competences? Do you know how these will apply to your practice placement and how they will be assessed?

# 4. Guidelines for Educational Provider

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The following are good practice points or suggestions to be considered during the placement process.

**For further guidance on these areas, please [click here](#).** Full details of the URL are on page 22.

## Pre-Placement:

- Provide pre-placement preparation for learners. Ensuring learners gain an understanding of professional standards and ethics. **For more detail/suggested checklist, please [click here](#).** Full details of the URL are on page 22.
- Produce practice/placement guidance documents – handbook for learners and placement providers; placements forms (such as assessment forms); information on the placement review process; and placement evaluation.
- Develop networks with the placement providers to secure quality placements and practice opportunities.
- Organise staff development opportunities for supervisors/tutors.
- Coordinate the placement/practice learning and the assessment reports/feedback process.
- Establish clear lines of communication with the placement agency.
- Oversee the learner practice learning plan.
- Collate agency profiles to support the matching, visiting and negotiation of placements.
- Provide pre-placement seminars for learners and practitioners.

## During Placement:

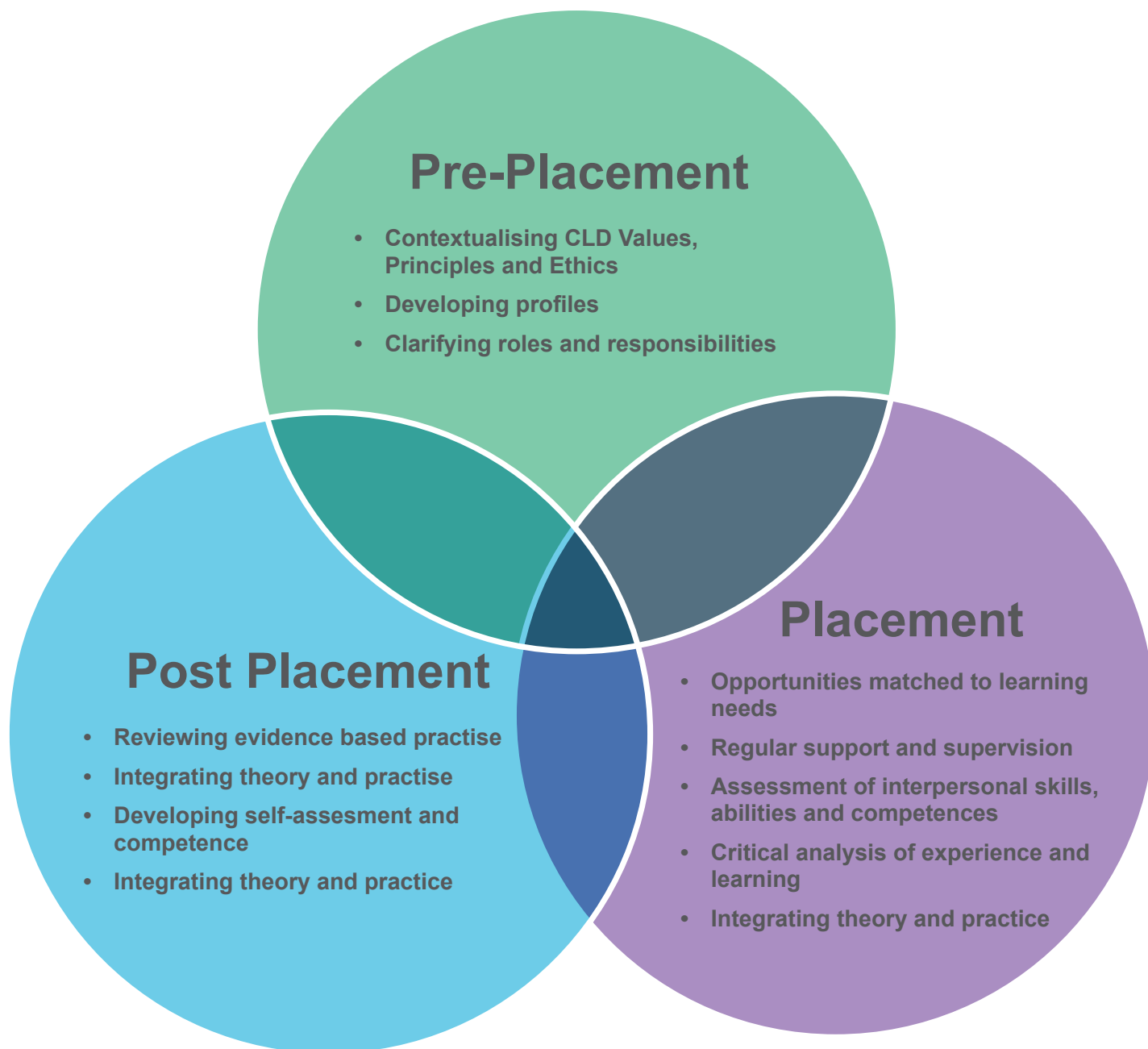
- Provide on-going learner and supervisor support, guidance and feedback on progress.
- Undertake visits as required.
- Undertake any necessary academic assessment.
- Provide opportunity for any general issues to be raised by all parties.

## Post Placement:

- Review placement learning process.
- Create opportunities for learners to reflect on the placement and consider the impact of theory on their practice and the practice of the agency.
- Provide an opportunity to discuss future practice learning opportunities.

## 5. Who does what?

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## Checklist for Good Practice before, during, and after placement

Key Point	Who should be involved/actioning/considering L = Learner, E = Educational Provider and P = Placement Provider			Notes
	L	E	P	
<b>Pre-Placement</b> – contextualising CLD Values, Principles and Ethics, developing profiles and clarifying roles and responsibilities.				
Produce practice/placement guidance documents – handbook for learners and placement providers; placements forms (such as assessment forms); information on the placement review process; and placement evaluation.		✓	✓	
Develop networks with the placement providers to secure quality placements and practice opportunities. Ensure permission is available to share information with CLDSC.		✓	✓	
Staff development opportunities for supervisors/ tutors.		✓	✓	
Establish clear lines of communication with the placement agency.		✓		
Meet with potential placement providers to determine compatibility negotiate and implement learning programmes with participants in the agency.	✓	✓	✓	Create a template to support this area?
Meet with potential placement providers to determine compatibility.	✓		✓	
Discuss the practice placement experience and complete the agreement plan.	✓	✓	✓	Create a template for this area?
Undertake planning and preparation for the placement experience.	✓		✓	



Key Point	Who should be involved/actioning/considering L = Learner, E = Educational Provider and P = Placement Provider			Notes
<b>During Placement</b> – Opportunities matched to learning needs, regular support and supervision, assessment of interpersonal skills, abilities and competences, critical analysis of experience and learning.	L	E	P	
Induction available and undertaken by learner and clear details provided around work within the practice providers conditions of employment.	✓		✓	Induction training, fitness to practice.
Support learner to reflect on their practice.		✓	✓	
Meetings arranged between practice provider, tutor and learner as and when appropriate.	✓	✓	✓	
Provide a range of practice learning opportunities and a supportive environment in which to coach and support learner in their development including areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLD Ethics</li> <li>• Values and Principles</li> <li>• Competences</li> <li>• I-develop</li> <li>• Awareness of ability to register with CLD Standards Council</li> <li>• Critical reflection on practice</li> <li>• Self-evaluation and tools available to support this</li> </ul>		✓	✓	i-develop resources available to support this.  Resources available on CLDSC website.
Prepare for and participate in regular supervisory meetings to ensure structured support, guidance and feedback are available.	✓	✓	✓	
Ensure the required amount of placement/practice hours completed.	✓	✓	✓	
Liaise with tutor and supervisor to arrange assessment visit to practice setting.	✓			
Oversee the learner practice learning plan including ensuring hours of practice are met.		✓	✓	
Explore linkages between conceptual frameworks and approaches to practice.	✓	✓	✓	

Key Point	Who should be involved/actioning/considering L = Learner, E = Educational Provider and P = Placement Provider			Notes
<b>Post Placement</b> – reviewing evidence based practice, integrating theory and practice, developing self-assessment and competence	L	E	P	
Practice feedback reports (formative and summative) in working towards successful completion of final assessment.			✓	
Sharing of placement experience including any suggested changes and/or improvements.	✓	✓	✓	
Provide recordings about analysis of practice, project progress and areas for possible development.	✓		✓	
Creation of professional learning plan.	✓		✓	
Evaluation.	✓	✓	✓	

## **Feedback**

Having gone through this document and made use of it please let us know of any changes, additions or resources that you may find useful.

Email to [contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk](mailto:contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk).

## 6. What next for placement guidelines

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This document will be made available on i-develop and resources will continue to be developed to support practice placement. The feedback opportunity above can be used by the field to make requests for changes.

**For some initial resources, please [click here](#).** Full details of URL can be found on page 22.

## Appendix 1

Resource links within the document.

Page	Resource	Link
11, 13, 15	Praxis	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7b8EYXAkdl0RW5JWFUyRTc1a1E/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7b8EYXAkdl0RW5JWFUyRTc1a1E/view?usp=sharing</a>
12	Resource for Practice Placement Providers	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tgBNspiey-9n1fap2SZhlqZ2jylA0vvXfgwvmebD_Ng/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tgBNspiey-9n1fap2SZhlqZ2jylA0vvXfgwvmebD_Ng/edit?usp=sharing</a>
15	Resource for Educational Providers	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1baHgombKmLY6fdSt9An3eWuEWZzi3PPS1AvVlnOkE6o/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1baHgombKmLY6fdSt9An3eWuEWZzi3PPS1AvVlnOkE6o/edit?usp=sharing</a>
21	Initial resources	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/10GXn5TE7VW6Y0TNmAAAdLMLR4NSo_J7Wb1_Sj36Z3bHA/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/document/d/10GXn5TE7VW6Y0TNmAAAdLMLR4NSo_J7Wb1_Sj36Z3bHA/edit?usp=sharing</a>

With thanks to:

