

## BASW Top Tip Guide for Student Social Workers

I have always wanted to pursue a career in which I give back to the world rather than take from it

I chose social work because I wanted to help people and I cared about people being treated unfairly. I wanted to do a good job, and make a difference to people who needed help

I am studying to be a social worker, to play a role in tackling mental health stigma and ensuring those who experience mental health challenges, have someone prepared to advocate for them

# About this guide

**This guide has been produced by BASW England Student/NQSW group. They have put together information they wish they had access to when they started their social work journey. We would like to thank the members of the BASW England NQSW & Student group who contributed to and developed this document.**

This short guide includes top tips, resources and information on how you can compliment the learning you will receive on placement and at university.

Before we start, we would like to give a warm welcome to new and returning students embarking on their social work journey. May we take a moment to congratulate you on making it this far - we know from first-hand experience that for many of you, the sacrifices you have made to arrive at this point cannot be understated.

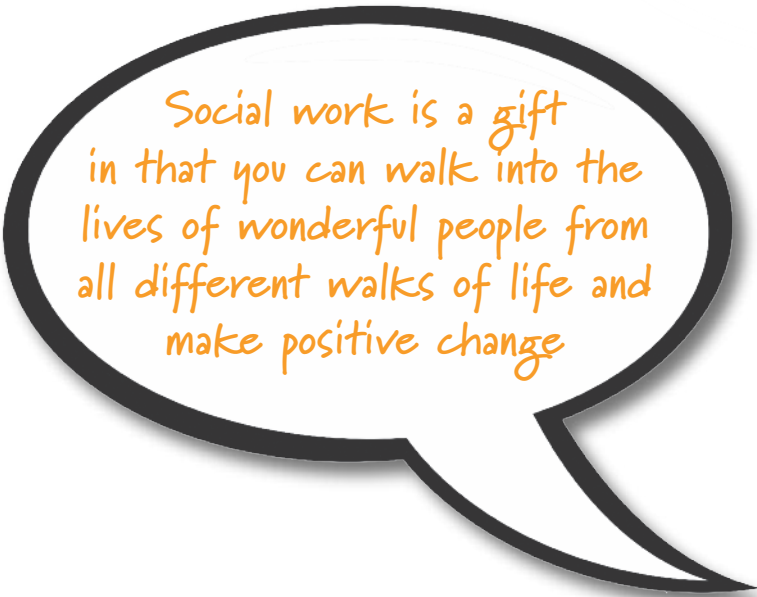
Beginning a new career is a daunting prospect for anybody, let alone in the midst of a global pandemic, at a time of such uncertainty. It is normal to have questions, doubts and anxieties – which is why we have put together this short guide.

As the future of the profession, you are in a unique position to transform lives, advocate for human rights, and promote the voices of the most vulnerable. As your professional organisation, we will be here for you every step of the way, supporting you as you go on to support others.

**Here, we celebrate diversity in all its forms, and we look forward to welcoming diverse students from all routes into the profession.**

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*Social work is a gift in that you can walk into the lives of wonderful people from all different walks of life and make positive change*

# Welcome



**My name is Jade** and I am Chair of the BASW England Student and Newly Qualified Group. I am passionate about raising the student voice, challenging inequalities and tackling mental health stigma. I hope you consider joining our group – we need people like you to stand up for social work students and newly qualified social workers!

Since starting my degree in September 2020, I have proactively sought to expand my learning and network further than my degree course (which is also amazing!). I would like to say thank you to BASW who have been central to me achieving this.

## **I've chosen 4 key learning points to share about my first year studying social work:**

- 1.** That as a future practitioner, I will hold onto the fact, that I believe without good relationship foundations, there is no social work.
- 2.** To ensure we work WITH people from all cultures, communities and societies in a truly anti-oppressive way and take the least intrusive approach possible whilst ensuring safeguarding (where relevant).
- 3.** That our work should empower and enable, and that language is a huge part of that.
- 4.** The importance of continued learning and considerate curiosity/questions.

## **What is the BASW England Student & NQSW Group?**

The Student & NQSW Group gives a voice to students and newly qualified social workers in England. This involves peer advice/support through regular meetings held via Microsoft Teams; various continuous professional development opportunities and ways to shape BASW's priorities. Students and NQSW's are the future of social work and so it is important this group shares knowledge and ideas with other groups and wider social work groups to assist forging a positive future for social work, social workers and those we work with.

The group have delivered a number of successful webinars on getting your first social work role, as well as training opportunities to compliment learning through your placement and university.

Our student group is a rich, diverse group made up of individuals from across the country. It is welcoming to all no matter their race, culture, sexuality, religion, disability, neurodiversity as well as other intersectionalities.

We typically meet once a month – keep your eyes on the BASW events page for dates:

**[www.basw.co.uk/events](http://www.basw.co.uk/events)**

Another way to keep up to date with events across BASW England is to follow the student twitter account **[@BASWStudentNQSW](https://twitter.com/BASWStudentNQSW)** or the UK-run account **[@BASWUK](https://twitter.com/BASWUK)**

# Why Join BASW



BASW offers services that protect, support and develop your social work career, and supports you to shape the profession and our context.

## 1 Be protected

£5 million of professional indemnity insurance. *Please note: students members are only covered for professional placements.\**



## 2 Be represented

Get advice from BASW Advice and Representation, a team of qualified social workers, for professional and regulatory help. Opt in to the Social Workers Union for full, tailored employment help and protection services.\*



## 3 Be recognised

Show your commitment to professional practice and use MBASW after your name.



## 4 Be progressing

Develop your career. Learn about the latest social work practice developed by and for social workers. Log your CPD from a range of free or discounted training, online resources and events.



## 5 Be informed

Professional Social Work (PSW) magazine – the UK's only printed social work magazine – delivered free to your door ten times a year. Member-only free access to selected resources online.



## 6 Be ethical

BASW's Code of Ethics along with a full range of guidance and policies, upholds the highest professional standards and practice.



## 7 Be saving

Save up to 75% on social work journals and books as well as discount shopping deals at major retailers. Plus heavily discounted and free CPD and events. 50% discount on student membership for first post-qualifying year.\*



## 8 Be independent

A bespoke membership for self-employed social work professionals. BASW 'Independent Plus' includes Public Liability Insurance.\* Be listed as a specialist in our directory to acquire business as an Independent member.



## 9 Be connected

Meet like-minded colleagues, through branches, events and special interest and other groups to share ideas, discuss practice, policies and develop our profession together. Join our community of social workers online – through Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.



## 10 Be heard

The powerful voice of 21,000 members, building the strength and influence of social work and calling for urgent action on issues that really matter. Be active in campaigns. Join one of our member committees, groups and networks to shape policies.



## 11 Be supported

Create your personalised wellbeing programme with the resource available through the online portal. Apply for financial support grants for education, hardship or international work.



**BASW**  
**England**

The professional association for  
social work and social workers



@BASW\_UK



BASW.UK

BASW is the independent professional association for social work.

Join online at  
[www.basw.co.uk/membership](http://www.basw.co.uk/membership)

\* Terms & Conditions apply – for full details visit [www.basw.co.uk](http://www.basw.co.uk)

# BASW Code of Ethics for Social Work

## VALUES

**key principles**

**Human rights:**

- 1 Upholding and promoting human dignity and well-being
- 2 Respecting the right to self-determination
- 3 Promoting the right to participation
- 4 Treating each person as a whole
- 5 Identifying and developing strengths

**Social justice:**

- 1 Challenging discrimination
- 2 Recognising diversity
- 3 Distributing resources
- 4 Challenging unjust policies and practices
- 5 Working in solidarity

**Professional integrity:**

- 1 Upholding the values and reputation of the profession
- 2 Being trustworthy
- 3 Maintaining professional boundaries
- 4 Making considered professional judgements
- 5 Being professionally accountable

**Ethical practice:**

- 1 Developing professional relationships
- 2 Assessing and managing risk
- 3 Acting with the informed consent of service users, unless required by law to protect that person or another from risk of serious harm
- 4 Providing information
- 5 Sharing information appropriately
- 6 Using authority in accordance with human rights principles
- 7 Empowering people
- 8 Challenging the abuse of human rights
- 9 Being prepared to whistleblow
- 10 Maintaining confidentiality
- 11 Maintaining clear and accurate records
- 12 Striving for objectivity and self-awareness in professional practice
- 13 Using professional supervision and peer support to reflect on and improve practice
- 14 Taking responsibility for their own practice and continuing professional development
- 15 Contributing to the continuous improvement of professional practice
- 16 Taking responsibility for the professional development of others
- 17 Facilitating and contributing to evaluation and research

Download the full BASW Code of Ethics at: [www.basw.co.uk/codeofethics](http://www.basw.co.uk/codeofethics)

**BASW**  
The professional association for social work and social workers

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**Professional Support Service**

**“I found the session to be very useful and I am really pleased that BASW has set up this very useful resource”.**

**BASW's successfully launched Professional Support Service, exclusive to members, aims to support the development of their professional career as well their all important wellbeing during COVID-19**

The Professional Support Service is designed by and for social workers. It is a safe space to work through and think about positive solutions to any challenges you are facing and make decisions about the next stage in your career.

You can access up to three one-to-one video or telephone sessions with a trained volunteer coach who understands the challenges faced by our social work community. The sessions last up to one hour and coaches are available between 9am-5pm on weekdays. You can search for and select your own coach by location and specialism.

**Book your sessions now!**

It's really simple and easy to register

**We're here to listen.**

simply head over to [www.basw.co.uk/professional-support-service](http://www.basw.co.uk/professional-support-service)

**Professional Support Service**  
Supporting you so you support others

Working in partnership with **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

**Professional Support Service –**  
This service is also available to students

## PCF – Professional Capabilities Framework

The PCF is a framework for the nine levels of social work in England. It is a useful tool to help identify which level you are, define your professional capabilities and develop your career. We recommend printing this out and sticking it on your wall/saving as your phone background!

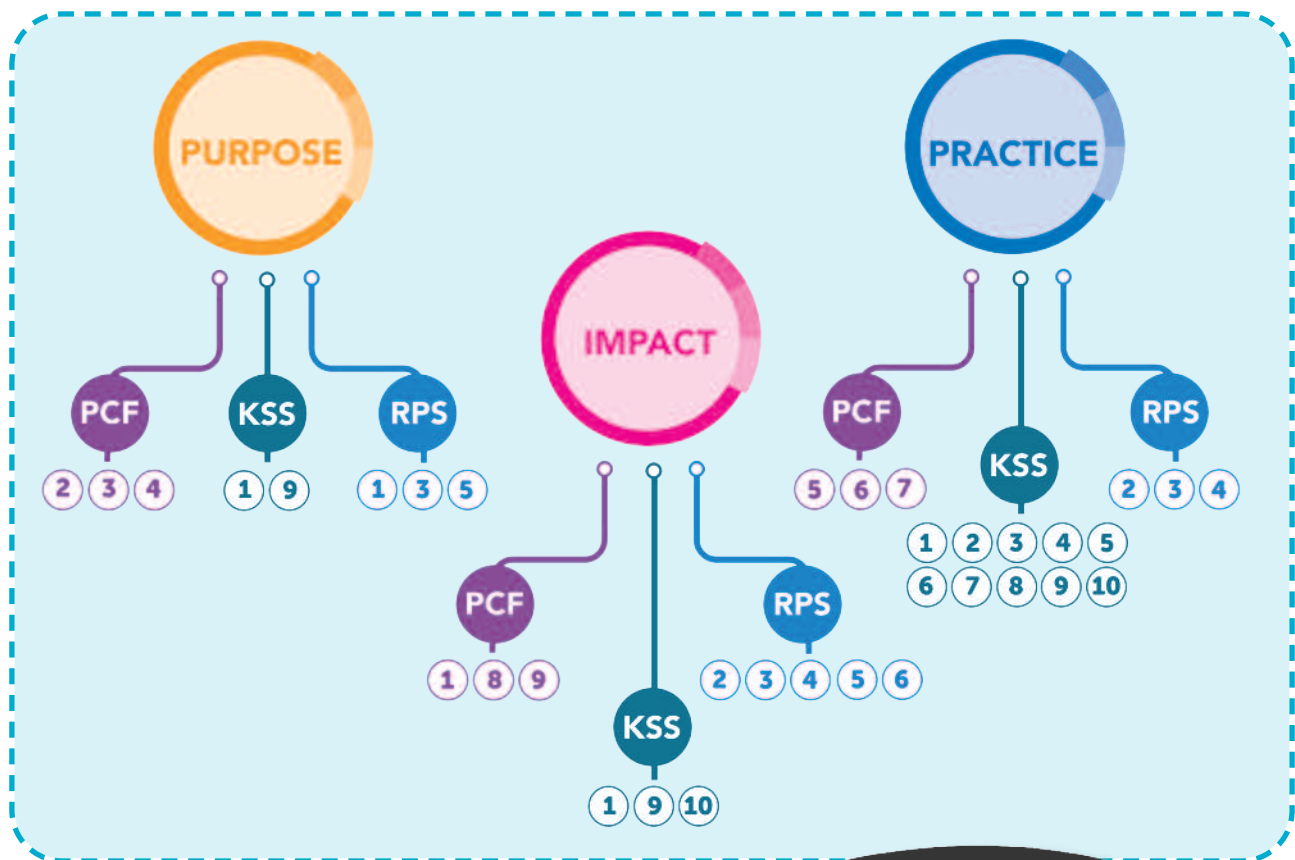


# Professional Standards Mapping

Professional standards support the learning and professional development of students and social workers across their career. Our **mapping document** helps explain how the 3 standards - the **Professional Capabilities Framework** (PCF – see page 4), **Knowledge and Skills Statements** (KSS) and the **Regulatory Professional Standards** (RPS) relate.

Visual learners may find the below useful:

## PCF, KSS and Regulatory Professional Standards in England - Mapping diagram (Children and Families)



**PCF** = Professional Capability Framework

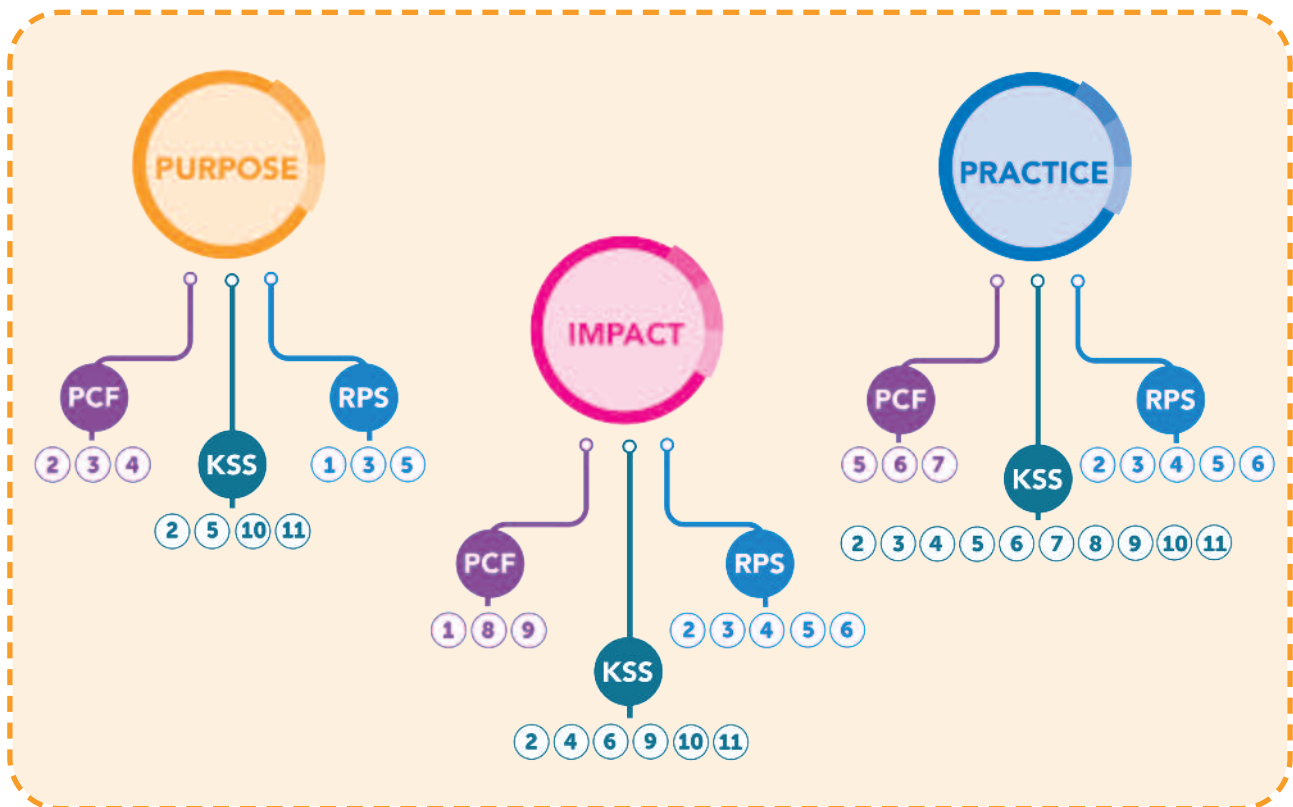
**KSS** = Key Skills Statement

**RPS** = Regulatory Professional Standards



*I became a social worker to advocate for children with disabilities and help families to look after their child in their homes*

## PCF, KSS and Regulatory Professional Standards in England - Mapping diagram (Adults)



**PCF** = Professional Capability Framework **KSS** = Key Skills Statement **RPS** = Regulatory Professional Standards

### Other standards

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education Subject Benchmark Statement for Social Work provides guidance for course providers on articulating learning outcomes for qualifying programmes/modules. They represent a tool for education providers to deliver the requirements of the Regulatory Professional Standards, the PCF and the KSS for Adults and the KSS for Children as part of an academic degree. The statement can be found here: **Subject Benchmark Statement: Social Work** ([qaa.ac.uk](http://qaa.ac.uk))

Similarly, the Apprenticeship Standards support key skills and knowledge requirements for those pursuing an apprenticeship route within social work. Information can be found here: **Social worker (integrated degree) / Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education**



# BASW branches

Local branches and networks give you the opportunity to get involved with BASW at a local level.

Check where your nearest branch and network is to attend events and courses local to you, and pursue your career interests. Join a branch or network today, or if there isn't one near you, note your location preferences so we can gauge interest in developing new branches or networks.





# Top Tips from children, families and adults who use social care

At BASW, we believe the best way for social workers to develop their practice is to listen to those they support. It is crucial we learn from the incredible knowledge of people with lived/living experience.

We asked survivors of domestic abuse what advice they had for social workers, and they created the graphic below to describe what their 'social worker of the year' would look like.



The survivors also created video footage which they shot and produced themselves, **which can be found on this link.**

- **Listen to survivors** – we are the experts in our own lives.
- **Work with us – not against or for us** – take a collaborative and empowering approach.
- **Focus on well-being** not just risk and physical safety. For example, help us build our self-esteem, and support us to connect to others in our community.
- **Approach us on a human level** and as a whole person.
- **Respect our different cultures, identities, and life experiences** – do not make judgements based on prejudices, stereotypes, or assumptions.
- **Be transparent and clear.**
- **Don't jeopardise our safety.** For example, ensure you know the safe methods to communicate for the survivors you are working with.
- **Don't unnecessarily make us re-tell our story** – read the notes but do not prejudge.
- **Don't assume** that a child survivor is less knowledgeable than an adult survivor.

# Handy Resources

Embarking on a social work course is hugely exciting – but often, the amount of resources and recommended reading can be overwhelming. Below, you can find the critical stuff in one place to help you get a head start on your studies or placement experience.

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## Anti-Poverty Practice Guide

BASW and CWIP. (2019). Anti-poverty Practice Guide for Social Work. Birmingham. British Association of Social Workers.  
<https://www.basw.co.uk/what-we-do/policy-and-research/anti-poverty-practice-guide-social-work>

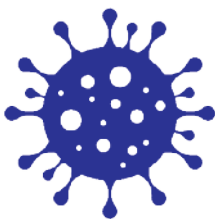
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## Anti-Racism Resources

BASW. (2021). Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Community Resources. [Online]. Available at: Black, Asian and minority ethnic community resources <https://www.basw.co.uk/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-community-resources>

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## COVID-19 Resources

BASW. (2021) Social Work Resources During COVID-19. [Online]. Available at: [www.basw.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-basw-updates](http://www.basw.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-basw-updates)

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## CPD Guidance on Social Work Undertaken During Disasters

BASW. (2019) CPD Guidance on Social Work Undertaken During Disasters. Birmingham: BASW. <https://www.basw.co.uk/social-work-disasters>

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## Digital Capabilities for Social Workers

BASW. (2021). Digital Capabilities Statement for Social Workers. [Online]. Available at: [www.basw.co.uk/digital-capabilities-statement-social-workers](http://www.basw.co.uk/digital-capabilities-statement-social-workers)

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## Domestic Abuse Practice Guidance

BASW England (March 2021) Domestic Abuse Practice Guidance: for Children and Family Social Workers. Birmingham: BASW.  
[https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/181181\\_basw\\_england\\_domestic\\_abuse\\_guidance\\_v5.pdf](https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/181181_basw_england_domestic_abuse_guidance_v5.pdf)

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## Homes not Hospitals

BASW. (2021) Homes not Hospitals. [Online]. Available at:  
<https://www.basw.co.uk/homes-not-hospitals>

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## Recording in Children's Social Work

BASW. (2020) Recording in Children's Social Work. Birmingham: BASW.

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## Relationship Based Practice 80:20 Campaign

BASW. (2019) 80-20 Campaign – Upholding Relationship Based Practice in Social Work. [Online]. Available at: [www.basw.co.uk/8020-campaign-relationship-based-social-work](http://www.basw.co.uk/8020-campaign-relationship-based-social-work)

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## Social Worker Wellbeing and Working Conditions

BASW. (2020). Social Worker Wellbeing and Working Conditions. [Online]. Available at:  
[www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/good\\_practice\\_toolkit\\_1.2.pdf](http://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/good_practice_toolkit_1.2.pdf)

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## Top Tips for Virtual Direct Work

BASW. (2020). Top tips for virtual direct work with children & families during COVID-19. [Online]. Available at:  
[www.basw.co.uk/media/news/2020/jun/top-tips-virtual-direct-work-children-families-during-covid-19](http://www.basw.co.uk/media/news/2020/jun/top-tips-virtual-direct-work-children-families-during-covid-19)

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# Direct Work Tools

Below are a few examples of visual direct work tools which can be used on placement when supporting children, families and adults you work with. Throughout your career journey, ensure you tap into the knowledges of tutors, peers, line managers, and people with lived experience to learn more about useful resources.

## Power and control wheel

The image below is a powerful tool which can be used with survivors of domestic abuse, to help them to identify the areas in their life they may be experiencing abuse. Further information can be found in our guidance. The below can be adapted for survivors of any gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, and other intersectionalities.



Source: [www.coercivecontrolcollective.org](http://www.coercivecontrolcollective.org)

4-11 years old

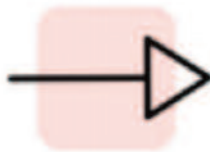
# Superhero Safety Sheet

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

My superpower is \_\_\_\_\_

Even the most super of superheroes need help sometimes. If you're scared or worried about something, it is okay to tell someone or ask for help - no matter how big or small the scary thing is!

If people you know say or do angry things, it is not your job to save the day. And it is not your fault! Here are three things you can try to do:



1. Try to get out of the way

2. Go to a safe spot. At home this is \_\_\_\_\_  
Outside of home this is \_\_\_\_\_

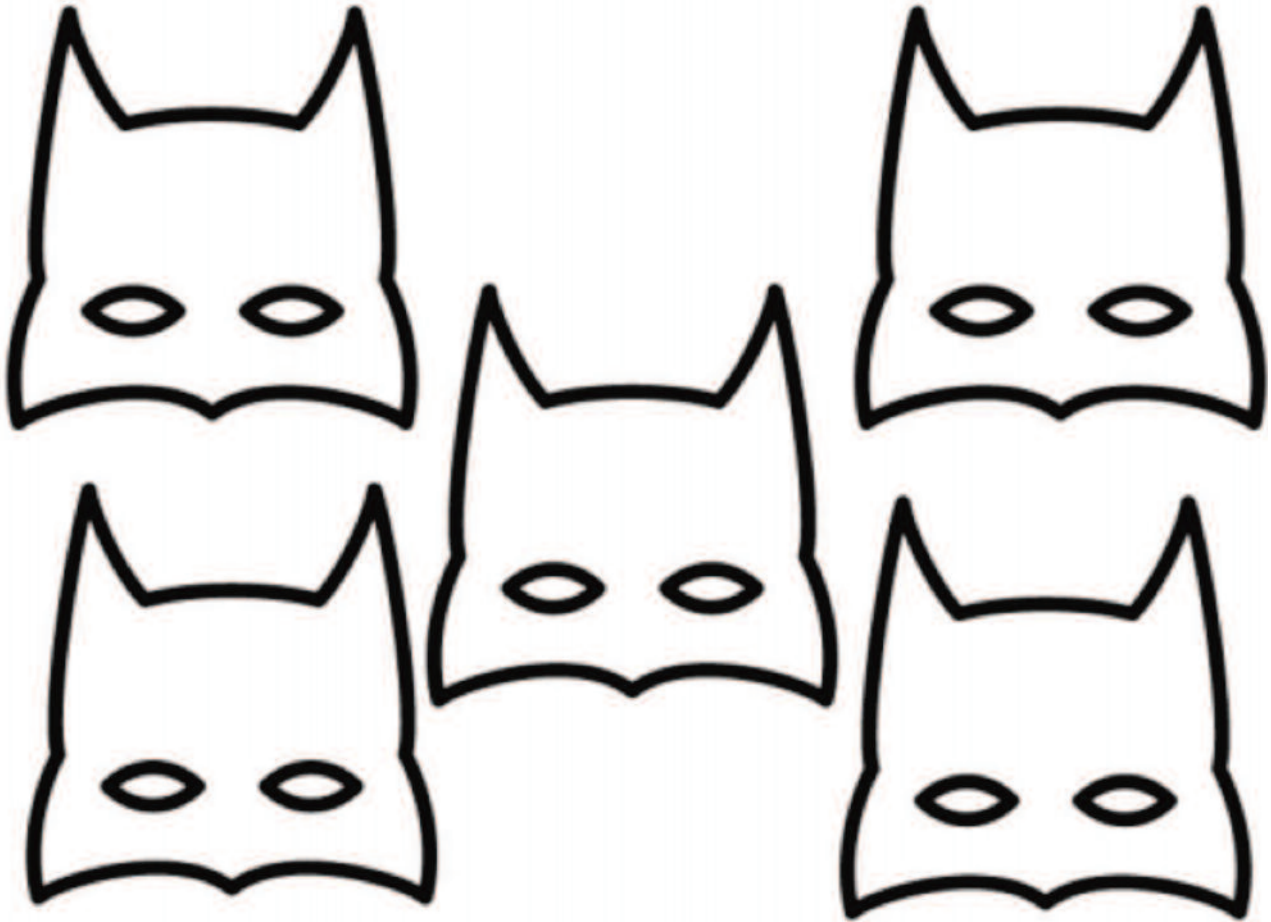
3. Call 999 if it is safe. Say your name, address, and what is going on.

Blank light blue area for writing names of superheroes.

Here is a list of the superheroes in my life at home, school or elsewhere. Okay, so they might not have REAL superpowers, but these people make me feel safe. I know I can talk to them if something is wrong.

## 4-11 years old

Sometimes we hide our emotions, like wearing a mask. Can you design masks showing different types of feelings?



When was the last time you felt each of these?

How does your body feel at the time? What are the signs your body gives you to tell you that you might need help in that moment?

Next time I feel \_\_\_\_\_, I will tell \_\_\_\_\_

Here are some super cool things about me:



# 11+ years old

# Safety Plan

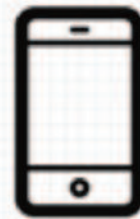
If you feel scared & unsafe at home, it is never your fault. Here are 3 things you should try to do if you or someone else is at risk:



Move out of the way



Go somewhere safe.  
At home this is \_\_\_\_\_.  
Outside, this is \_\_\_\_\_.



If it is safe, call the police. Say your name, address, and what is going on.



My top likes

- 
- 
- 
- 



My top dislikes

- 
- 
- 
- 



I would describe myself in these 5 hashtags:

- #
- #
- #
- #
- #

Write a list of people you could tell if you needed support.

Emergency contacts

Professionals

Family/guardians and carers

Friends

Agree a code word or emoji you can use to communicate if you're not safe, and share this with those above

# 11+ years old



## Mapping.

Print out a map/find one on your phone of your area. Put a green dot next to places you feel safe, a red dot next to places you don't, and an orange dot next to places that are sort of in the middle.

## Emoji faces

Emojis are a great way to share how we're feeling without even saying a word. When was the last time you felt like these? Feel free to use your own emojis instead!

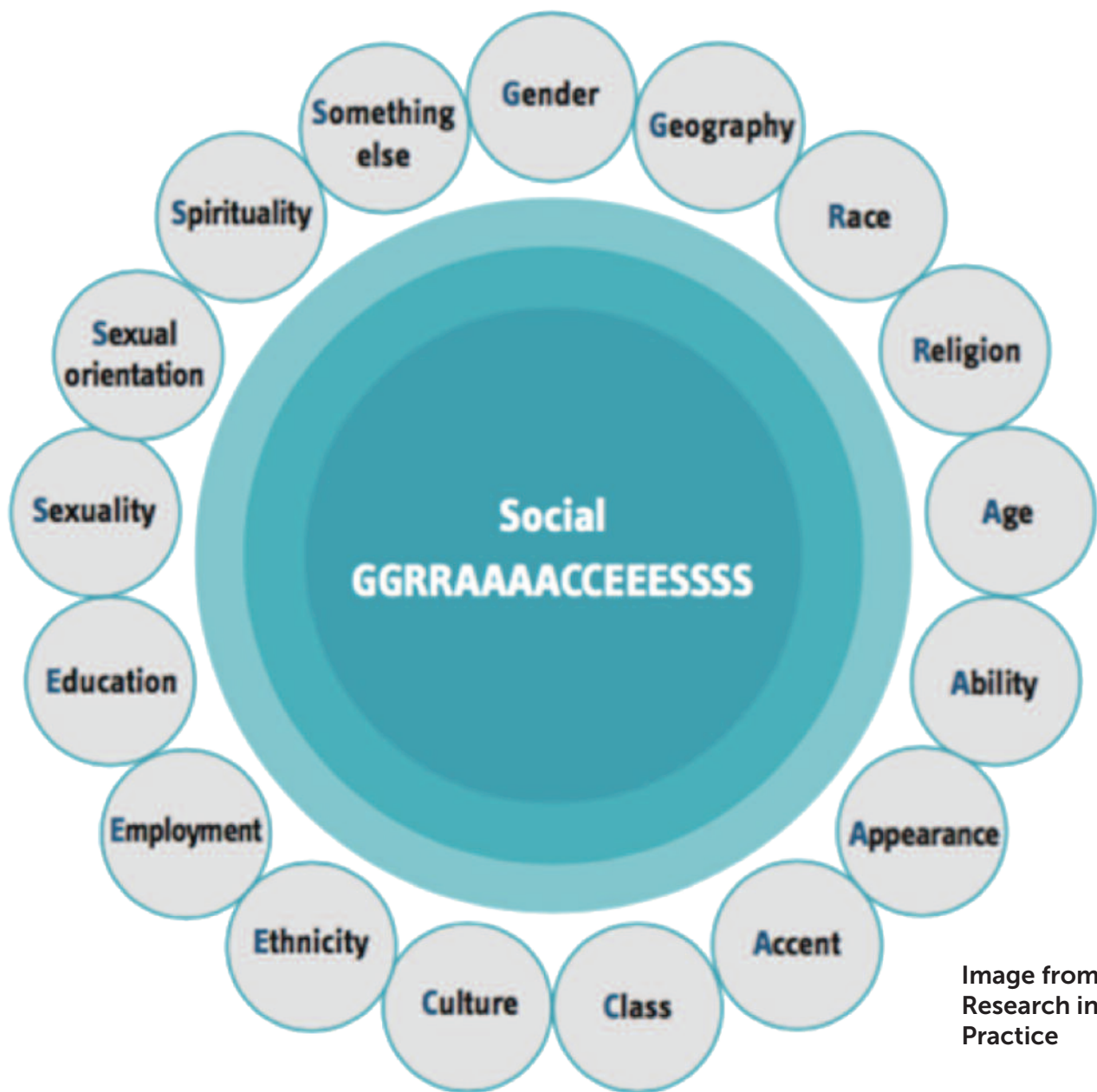


## Socials Challenge

Research says we remember stuff we teach others. If you had to teach other teenagers about how to stay safe, what would you tell them? Come up with a Tik Tok/Music Video/Photo Collage with your social worker. This will be deleted afterwards!



# Social Graces – A tool for addressing inequality



**The term 'Social Graces' is a mnemonic to help us remember some of the key features that influence personal and social identity (see image above), as developed by John Burhnam, Alison Roper-Hall and colleagues (1992).**

One of the key aims of the graces is to 'name' power differentials. In doing so, it is far easier to identify (and work on) our own prejudice, or indeed on our own privilege.

Naming power differences can invite service users, colleagues or even friends to share the social graces which they feel can hold them back, or even cloud their judgement of others.

The graces in the figure about are not an exhaustive list and can be adapted. They could differ according to place, time and culture. That's the beauty of the graces; they are fluid. There is room for reflection and correction.

### How to use the Graces as a time-pressed social worker:

- Choose one of the graces you are drawn toward. Or ask service users to do so. Reflect on why this is – this is something you can share vocally, through writing, or any other creative outlet.
- Attempt the above exercise with the grace you feel the least drawn toward.
- Consider which of the graces mostly influences your relationship with a service user. Or a supervisor/supervisee. This may feel uncomfortable at first but keep at it.
- Rate the graces on a linear scale of 1-10, 1 being that they impact you only a little, 10 being that they impact you significantly. This is also an exercise which can be done with service users, both adults and children, to learn more about the way in which they see the world.
- In a group setting, or in pairs, attempt to roleplay the social graces from different perspectives.

Further information can be found at [www.basw.co.uk/media/news/2020/jul/social-graces-practical-tool-address-inequality](http://www.basw.co.uk/media/news/2020/jul/social-graces-practical-tool-address-inequality)

## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

**BASW celebrates the richness and diversity of social workers and the societies we serve across the UK. We recognise that diversity of thought and widening the membership of the social work profession - and BASW - enrich our profession and enable social work to support the needs,**

For this to be more than words, BASW must be open, relevant and welcoming to social workers of all backgrounds and identities - and a credible leader in the promotion of inclusive social work practice across the UK.

Fundamental to this is setting, promoting and embedding common principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across all our work. This statement commits BASW to challenge oppression, exclusion and discrimination within the association within social work and within social work education. It also commits us to raising social work's voice, perspectives and influence on issues of EDI and oppression across wider society.

For further information, please refer to our website on [www.basw.co.uk/basw-uk-summary-position-statement-equality-diversity-and-inclusion](http://www.basw.co.uk/basw-uk-summary-position-statement-equality-diversity-and-inclusion)

BASW encourages students to seek out additional resources, learn and share experiences with peers, colleagues and people with lived experience.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact our equality, diversity and inclusion group at [edi@basw.co.uk](mailto:edi@basw.co.uk)



# Coronavirus

**Studying social work is a challenge in and of itself, without the added pressure of a global pandemic.**

We understand just how difficult a time this can be, what with the uncertainties of virtual learning, changes to placement opportunities and the added stressors for those who have caring or other responsibilities. Do check the BASW website for regular updates as these may be subject to change.

## **BASW information and guidance around Covid-19**

BASW encourages the take up of vaccination(s) against Covid-19. **The latest statement of vaccines can be found here.** Please check the website regularly, as this may be subject to change.

BASW resources for social workers working during the pandemic which include **risk assessments and guidance for home visits are available here.**



To know that you have made at least one life breathe a little easier for being here is to have truly succeeded. My calling to this profession was to use myself in the service of others and never forget what a privilege that is.

# Tips, thoughts and reflections on how to succeed as a student



**Charles Ukandu**

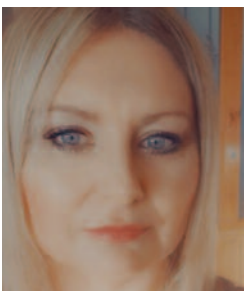
*Core Member of BASW England Student & NQSW Group, postgraduate social work student at the university of Bradford and social justice activist.*

**As a Social Work student, two of the biggest hurdles you need to clear in your journey to becoming professionally qualified are the placements. Below are a few tips on overcoming the tension and stress associated with them.**

## DOs

- Get involved with organisation's operations and activities as much as possible, not just your unit.
- Keep an open mind regarding where to go.
- Put yourself forward to complete tasks in other departments if the opportunity arises. (I volunteered at reception to answer calls for a day and enjoyed it).
- Be assertive.
- Speak up if you don't understand a task. (Don't wing it). You're there to learn not to be examined.
- Seek help from your PE if things are not going well before it's too late.
- Keep on top of your journal. (Write as you go!).
- Be passionate about your placement. It is the key to a successful placement.

*After volunteering for years, I decided I wanted to be able to use myself as a resource for those who require the knowledge and tools, to meet their needs. To inform, to empower! To be an activist, to be a louder voice for the people I would work with.*



**Karen Skinner**

*Co-Vice Chair of BASW England Student/ NQSW Group and Second Year BA Student*

**A comforting ear that really listens to what someone is saying is priceless; learn to listen to understand and not just reply.**

During your studies, get comfortable with the uncomfortable and have a go, your confidence will build, and you will get so much more out of your learning. **Enjoy the process.**



## Pamela Shodeinde

*Newly qualified social worker*

**Starting your Social Work Career can come with a range of mixed emotions, it is exciting but at the same time, the reality dawns on you that you are now a qualified Social Worker and therefore more will be expected from you.**

The truth is as a Newly Qualified Social Worker, your employer is required to provide support for you to thrive in your new role and you should not be alone in your journey. With that in mind, it is still an assessment year and there are clear requirements and standards you will be expected meet to pass your ASYE year.

**Below are my top tips that helped me get through my first year of practice.**

- 1. Keep a journal for reflections and critical thinking:** Having a journal is really key in helping to develop your critical thinking and reflections. Make time to write in your journal daily how ever small. When it comes to writing your portfolio, you will find this very useful as you will have a wealth of information to refer back to.
- 2. Write up your case recordings as soon as possible:** As a NQSW, it can sometimes feel very overwhelming when you have your portfolio work to complete and also work on your cases. Make a habit of writing your case notes and recordings as soon as you are able to when the information is still fresh in your mind. If unable to, make notes as soon as you can so you do not leave out important information.
- 3. Make use of the training opportunities and evidence this in your portfolio:** As a requirement for your ASYE, you will have many training opportunities. Utilise these as much as possible and evidence it in your portfolio where you are showing how your learning has developed your practice. This will help build your confidence when working with individuals, families and professionals. In addition to this, training also forms a part of your CPD which you can evidenced on Social Work England CPD requirement.
- 4. Identify Areas where there is a Gap in your learning:** It is your responsibility to identify areas of your practice where there is a gap in your knowledge and learning. Go through the KSS and PCF as regularly as possible to identify these gaps because meeting these requirements is a core part of your ASYE portfolio. Discuss this with your manager and proactively find opportunities to bridge this gap. This can be shadowing opportunities within other teams or co-working cases with more senior practitioners who work complex cases.
- 5. Utilise your personal Supervision:** Personal supervision is a core requirement for your ASYE so utilise this as best as you can. Go into your supervision prepared, ask question and talk about areas of your practice you want to develop in and need support. Be open and honest about the areas you need help and support and talk about your achievements as well. Your manager and mentor will make a note of these in your supervision notes which you can al ways refer back to when needed. For more information on how to utilise supervision, I highly recommend school of Shabs on YouTube where you will find lots of useful tips.

**6. Make time for Self-care:** The importance of self-care cannot be over-stated in Social Work. Make time for yourself and prioritise your health and mental wellbeing. Be realistic about your goals and be intentional about doing things for you. It is important to unwind and take a break from it all. This will help in reducing burnout and you can be at your best when working with the individuals and families you will work with. Learn to pace yourself and ask for help when you are struggling.



### **Sarah Harrison**

*Newly-Qualified Lead of BASW Student & NQSW group.*

*"I am co vice-chair for the NQSW and student group and been involved for over 12 months now. I am a NQSW and completed the step-up to social work course. I have a passion for working with children and families who are affected by disabilities. I am a Mum of 4 and two of my children have Autism."*

### **Here are my top tips for success:**

- Join BASW and your local branch.
- If on social media, there are support groups on Facebook and Instagram and Twitter is great for networking.
- Print a copy of the Professional Capabilities Framework from BASW for the level you are currently studying at e.g., end of first placement and write down against each one how you have met the statement. This will help for you to see any gaps in your learning.
- A separate "to do list" book to write down tasks and then tick off once complete. Great to stay organised and keep on top of things.
- Take planned time for yourself each week.
- Attend every additional bit of training you can – it all helps!
- For every module there will be a course handbook which I found helpful in giving me an idea of expectations for the assignment and useful further reading.
- Placement handbook, another way to gain further information on what is expected of you within your placement.
- Do not set high expectations on yourself a pass is a pass and mental health is more important than getting top grades.
- A good diary to help with planning. If you have a submission date, then write it in and plan study time if possible (depending on circumstances). Set achievable goals of what you want to accomplish.
- I found it was helpful to remember my reasons for choosing social work especially if I was struggling with anything as this helped to motivate me.
- Practice educators, supervisors and tutors and are all there to support you in placement and can be approached. If you have dependents or any caring responsibilities share these as they can make allowances. Honesty is best!
- Make a list of your strengths and weaknesses so that you can understand yourself and where you may need more support.
- If you have a particular interest area within social work, then make this known before the placement search.
- Try and build relationships with other students so that you can support each other and check in with each other while on placement.



## Diane Deehan

*"I'm a recent core member of the BASW Student and NQSW group. I am about to embark on the third and final year of the apprenticeship degree with Coventry University. Welcome to social work study and I wish you ever success on your chosen route."*

**I have just completed the second year of the degree apprenticeship, and within a couple of weeks will be starting on my final year.**

There's no big summer holiday included on this route! I am one of the first cohorts to commence the apprenticeship degree, so the past two years have been a roller coaster in many ways. Heading into our final year, we face many uncertainties, in particular with the unknown End Point Assessment (EPA). I'm led to believe there are still some changes being made as I write, so it will be interesting to see what it entails. January 2022 offers some anxieties, but excitement too as the degree enters its final year.

The apprenticeship has its own set of standards and I think there has been little discussion around these in the social work community. In some aspects, the apprenticeship route can often feel a little isolating; the connections are more between your work place and your day in university and I think it's really important to seek out wider connections. By becoming a member of the BASW England student and NQSW group, alongside Siobhan MacLean's student connect team, I'm fortunate to have learnt so much more than what work and university alone can offer me. I've broadened my horizons and met so many interesting and knowledgeable people, which has given me greater confidence and developed my communication and relationship building skills. I would definitely recommend looking beyond your work role; **social work is a big world out there and has so many opportunities to offer.**

The apprenticeship route is demanding, working 4 days a week and then a full study day. You may find your caseload does not reduce and you're fitting 5 days work into 4 days. On top of that, the majority of your university reading and assignment writing will be in your own time. If you're just starting out on this exciting journey, plan in some self-care, and try and balance your work, study and personal life. You don't want burn out before you've even graduated. Don't be afraid to ask for support if needed, this may be through your university or your employer. They've all signed up to guide and support you so make the most of this.

Placements are an important aspect of the social work degree, but you may find that on the apprenticeship route you don't get the same opportunities. From my personal experience, my work role is classed as an ongoing placement, hence I will only complete a 30 day contrasting learning experience (CLE), due to commence at the start of Year 3. I am excited to know I have the privilege of a place within adult mental health and am looking forward to the learning experience I'll get. If you get additional placements, fully embrace them but be prepared that not everyone will, as universities run their programmes differently.

**So enjoy your journey ahead, look beyond the apprenticeship and seek further social work knowledge. There are so many free webinars and YouTube channels for you to sign up to. Take time to look after yourself and remember, the 3 years will fly by. They certainly are for me!**



Social work has a rich lingo of its own. Often, without realising it, professionals use acronyms which can be overwhelming for students on placement. Here is a breakdown of some of the most used terms (this list is not exhaustive). Some of these terms are clumsy or derogatory, and, we encourage social workers to speak in plain, compassionate language. The below is provided just to make you aware of what is what.

## Organisations

**BASW** – British Association of Social Workers. An independent professional membership organisation for social work, working to support, protect and help to develop social workers across their career.

**DFE** – Department for Education. A government department responsible for children's services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy.

**DHSC** – Department for Health and Social Care. A government department working on policy related to adult social care and health.

**JUCSWEC** – Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee. A coalition of higher education institutions which works to promote, develop and coordinate the work of higher education institutions in the pursuit of education, training and research in public administration, social policy and social work.

**SFC** – Skills for Care. The strategic body for workforce development in adult social care in England, who are also responsible for the delivery of the ASYE currently.

**Social Work England** – This is the regulatory body for social work.

**SWU** – Social Workers Union. Linked to BASW, SWU is a union which protects social workers on placement and in employment, providing advice, support and representation.

## On-the-job terms

**CIN** – Child in Need Plan. When a family is engaging with children's social care voluntarily (under section 17) they are given a CIN plan. This identifies the needs of the family alongside actionable steps to be taken by various professionals/agencies.

**CP** – Child Protection Plan. When a child is considered at risk of serious harm (following a section 47 investigation) they are given a CP plan. This is given on the same premise as a CIN plan, although there may be more actions required and more frequent contact with the child.

**LAC** – Looked After Child. A child who is in the care of local authority, or has been for more than 24 hours continuously (in England). Many prefer the term 'Children Looked After' because sadly, children have interpreted 'LAC' as 'lack'.

**Strategy meeting** – A safeguarding meeting convened with police officers when a child's safety is at risk.

**S.17** – Voluntary engagement with social care under a child in need plan.

**S.47** – An investigation which takes place if a child has experienced significant harm.

**S.20** – A parent is able to sign a s.20 to consent for their child to be placed in the care of the local authority (or child over the age of 16 can do this).



**Special Guardianship Order** – A court order which passes over the responsibility of a child to a named carer, which lasts until the age of 18. The child's parents still have legal responsibility, however the guardian makes the majority of big decisions.

**Placement** – This refers to the foster home/residential home a child lives in once they become looked after. We think 'home' is more appropriate though, as do looked after children!

## Policy

**IRCSC** – Independent Review of Children's Social Care. An ongoing review into the care system which BASW England is campaigning around and contributing to.

**HSCB** – Health and Social Care Bill. A white paper published in 2021, which set out proposed reforms to be included in a Health & Care Bill (the Bill) to restructure parts of the NHS in England and create a 'truly integrated' healthcare system.

## Social Work Roles

**NQSW** – Newly Qualified Social Worker.

**ASYE** – Assisted Year in Employment (this is both a post-qualifying course which students do as part of their first job, as well as a colloquial term for entry-level social workers undertaking it).

**AMHP** – Approved Mental Health Professional. A mental health professional who has been approved to carry out certain duties under the Mental Health Act. They are responsible for coordinating assessments and admissions to hospital if somebody is sectioned. They may be: social workers, nurses, occupational therapists or psychologists.

**LADO** – Local Authority Designated Officer: This individual is responsible for managing all child protection allegations made against staff and volunteers who work with children and young people in a local authority.

**EDT** – Emergency Duty Team SW. A social worker who belongs to the local authority out of hours team.

**EBE** – Experts by Experience. A child, young person or adult from any background who has experience of having had a social worker.

**IRO** – Independent Reviewing Officer. These are experienced social workers who works to make sure the local authority is taking care of looked after children in the way they should.

**PSW** – Principal Social Worker. Advanced social work practitioners who work to ensure social workers develop excellent practice, and undertake quality assurance.

**CSW** – Chief Social Worker. Provide independent expert advice to ministers on social work reform. Currently the chief social worker is **Isabelle Trowler**.

*I decided to become a social worker when, after working so many years in childcare settings, I could see that I was not able to support and help those more vulnerable due to the restrictions that my position held, so I decided to study and make a difference in people's life.*

*To walk alongside others and support them achieve their potential against a face of oppression and diversity.*

# Jot down the jargon

You may wish to keep a note of any 'jargon'/acronyms you hear and log them in one place. Be sure to challenge leaders and organisations to use more friendly, accessible language too.

A large rectangular box with a blue border, containing 25 horizontal grey lines for writing notes.

# Stay connected

If you are on social media, here are a list of accounts to follow to build and expand your network:



## Twitter:

@BASWStudentNQSW @BASW\_LDN  
@BASWStudents @BASWbc  
@BASW\_UK @SWBohemians  
@BASWKent @SW\_student\_com  
@BASWSouthWest



Let's talk social work



Let's Talk Social Work  
on Apple Podcasts



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Podcast on Spotify



[www.linkedin.com/company/british-association-of-social-workers](http://www.linkedin.com/company/british-association-of-social-workers)



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[www.facebook.com/BASW.UK/](http://www.facebook.com/BASW.UK/)

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**BASW**  
**England**

The professional association for  
social work and social workers