Professional practice framework model

Being able to articulate your professional practice framework is critical from your first placement, right through to when you are an experienced practitioner. It is essential and key to us as a profession and professional social workers to be accountable in our work, and we do this by being able to articulate our lens for looking at the world, for how we understand, how we analyse information, and how we make the decisions we make.

Your practice framework is a work in progress, we should never think that it is ‘complete’ or ‘fixed in stone’. You add to this and change it as you grow and develop as a practitioner, just as you yourself grow and develop as a practitioner.

The Following is a template adapted from Harris (2012) and includes the core components of our frameworks. The starting point is to identify and really unpack your core values and beliefs and the principles that guide who you are as a person, because these underpin everything else that you do, either consciously or unconsciously.

Another way to conceptualise your framework is to use the Heart, Head, Hand and Feet model:

**Heart**: core values and beliefs and principles  
**Head**: theories, knowledge, cultural understanding, research  
**Hand**: skills we use  
**Feet**: the context in which you are grounded which impacts on what we do and how and why we have to do what we do.

Please use these guides as a discussion point throughout your placement experiences.
**Personal beliefs, values and principles**

Beliefs, values and principles underpinning my practice include:

Discuss the core or most important beliefs, principles and values that underpin your framework, why are these central to your framework as a professional social worker? How do they align with a quality social work practitioner?

**Cultural knowledge and beliefs**

My personal and professional understanding and beliefs about culture is based on...

Discuss what culture means to you, unpack how you have developed your cultural sensitivity and competence, what you plan to do in the future, why this is important...

**Professional practice skills**

My professional practice skills developed thus far include...

Discuss why are these important to ethical and quality social work? what skills do you want to develop further?

**Professional knowledge**

My professional knowledge at this stage of my career consists of.... e.g. legislation in particular areas, knowledge of particular areas, policies , academic studies, etc

Discuss how you have developed your professional knowledge, what role this plays in your overall framework, how you will continue to develop this

**Theory and research**

What are the key theories and research that underpins your framework?

Discuss how this informs your framework and your practice, how does this speak to what kind of emerging practitioner you are, why have you selected the theories you have selected, what does evidence based practice mean to you, how do you plan to use this? Focus on three key theories

**Organisational context**

What is the framework of the organisation you have undertaken your placement in? what are the values, mission and theories of that underpin their work and purpose.

Discuss how this aligns with your framework, where are the synergies, where are there tensions, what strategies did you develop to deal with this? What have you learnt about how you deal with these in the future?

(Adapted from Harris, T. 2010)
My Practice Framework – add your own details as you go

- Personal beliefs, values and principles
- Cultural knowledge and beliefs
- Professional practice skills
- Professional knowledge
- Theory and research
- Organisational context