Health and Social Care Qualifications in NI

– with special reference to Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice

Coaching and mentoring guidance for employers, managers and learners

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November 2025

Supporting social care career progression

Contents

Purpose of the guidance

The purpose of this guidance is for employers who are supporting a social care practitioner through the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice*.

From a coaching and mentoring perspective, the guidance considers what has been reported as working well and what barriers and challenges have been encountered while hoping to offer recommendations for overcoming these in relation to the implementation of the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* for future learners, as social care practitioners.

Introduction

The *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* provides a social care practitioner with the knowledge and skills to enable them to work in health and social care services.

There are seven units covered within the qualification, which include:

1. Standards and Values Underpinning Social Care Practice
2. Understand Safeguarding in Social Care Services
3. Safe Moving and Positioning of Individuals in Social Care Services
4. Environmental Health and Safety in Social Care Services
5. Understand Safe Medication Practice in Social Care
6. Safe Food Handling and Dysphagia Awareness in Social Care Services
7. Emergency First Aid in Social Care Services

This qualification is targeted at new social care practitioners registering with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

The qualification is the entry point onto the Care in Practice Framework (the CiP) Framework and will be the first entrance level qualification for all newly registered social care practitioners.

Progression opportunities

The *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* will support social care practitioners to progress to the *Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care* and/or other qualifications deemed appropriate for a social care practitioner.

Entry requirements

The entry requirements for this qualification are for those aged 16 or over and in employment within social care services in Northern Ireland.

Criteria for funding through Northern Ireland Social Care Council (SCC)

There are certain criteria that apply if funding for the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* has been received from the SCC. Some of the key points include:

- Available **funding is for qualification fees only**. Funding is not available to cover staffing costs and/or absence while qualifications are completed.
- Applications for funding support **must** be signed off by a CEO, Director or a Senior Manager and/or Manager within an organisation with the understanding that social care practitioners will complete the qualifications and the employer will provide support for their employees for the duration of the course.
- Applications will only be considered for staff with an **active registration on Part 2** of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's Public Facing Register (the Register) and who have **been in employment for at least one calendar month** at the time of application.
  The Social Care Council will fund successful social care organisations. It is the responsibility of employers to source the training provider/s.

The importance of continuous social care workforce development

*"The **CiP Framework** is for everyone who is a **registered social care practitioner**. Social care practitioners provide high quality, safe and effective social care practice, supporting people of all ages with a range of diverse and complex needs. This is, however, dependent upon a valued and supported workforce, who are appropriately trained, skilled and rewarded for their work and the vital impact that has on people's lives."*

You can find out more about the Care in Practice Framework on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council website at: CiP Framework.

The Social Care Workforce Strategy 2025 – 2035, Department of Health (NI) also clarifies the importance of creating a learning culture so social care practitioners can access qualifications and opportunities to improve practice, knowledge and skills.

Coaching and mentoring support

Coaching and mentoring support has been available to social care practitioners through the Northern Ireland Social Care Council since 2022. During this time, there has been significant learning about the successes and positive outcomes for social care practitioners who have successfully gained a social care qualification. There were also barriers

organisations and social care practitioners have faced in gaining a qualification. This guidance aims to use the feedback received to give managers an insight of the potential issues and possible solutions to prevent and/or navigate these issues.

Issues raised

1. Is it the right time to undertake a qualification?

It has been observed that a number of social care practitioners agree to undertake a qualification without fully understanding the affect this decision will have on their work and/or home life. The *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* offers an opportunity for a social care practitioner to begin their learning journey through the CiP Framework. It is the first step to progression within the social care workforce and an exciting opportunity for professional growth and promotion. Whatever the level of qualification the social care practitioner must consider if they can give the time and commitment to complete the course.

… some points to consider

Life can be unpredictable and it is not always possible to know what may happen in the future. However, if a social care practitioner has plans to move home, change jobs and/or change career, etc., it is important to question if this is the right time for them to start a course that may never be completed. While the social care practitioner can take the qualification with them throughout their career, they are unlikely to be able to continue their qualification if they change their job during the course, and move to work with a different social care provider.

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council have provided funding for many social care practitioners to undertake the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice*. This funding is awarded to the organisation rather than any individual social care practitioner. Therefore, it is up to the organisation to ensure that their funding is used to strengthen the workforce in the organisation and the social care practitioners must be made aware that the qualification may not be able to be progressed if they leave their current employment.

The information in the following raises some points organisations should consider with the social care practitioner to ensure they have a full understanding of the commitment they are making to undertake a qualification in health and social care.

2. Does the social care practitioner understand the amount of time that is required to be dedicated to achieving the qualification?

(**Please note**, all qualifications have different total qualification times, for example the *Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Health and Social Care (NI)* has a total qualification time of 900 hours.)

The *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* involves a Total Qualification Time (TQT) of 200 hours, which includes a blend of assessor and/or tutor-led classroom-based training/learning, assessor guided activities and contact (including, assessment and direct observation), supervised training/learning and self-directed and/or independent study.[1]

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[1] See **Appendix A** for further information about Total Qualification Time (TQT), Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and an example of notional hours.

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This qualification offers a valuable opportunity for practitioners to increase their knowledge, enhance their skills and grow professionally.

To support successful completion of this qualification, it is important that social care practitioners are aware of the time commitment involved - which may include some learning outside of their paid working hours. Organisations are encouraged to have **open and supportive conversations** with staff about how the 200 hours will be structured, clearly outlining what will be covered during paid time and what may require personal investment. This transparency should help practitioners to plan effectively and feel more confident in their learning journey.

3. Identify the learning needs of the social care practitioner

From experience, it is clear that many social care practitioners have the values, skills and knowledge to provide excellent support and care to individuals in the social care setting where they work. However, many social care practitioners have not been required to demonstrate their skills or understanding in a written format nor have they had to use IT equipment to upload the same information in a particular format. Many social care practitioners undertaking this qualification may need additional support with demonstrating their knowledge, skills and understanding.

The table below provides details of the assessment structure for social care practitioners. The social care practitioner is required to provide a demonstration of skills, knowledge and learning in the following formats.

Table 1: Details of assessment structure for social care practitioners

Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes. OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the social care practitioner's progression through the course.
Practical demonstration assignment (in a real work environment)	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by social care practitioners, to enable social care practitioners to practise and apply skills and knowledge. This may include a record of observation, learners' notes/written work or a learning log.
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a social care practitioner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course.
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess social care practitioners' work.

Please note, using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can pose a significant risk if used by social care practitioners undertaking qualification assessments. Students must submit their own, independent work for assessment. Any AI generated content, even if acknowledged, will not be used to demonstrate independent work.

Understanding all of the above should be included in the discussion with a social care practitioner in advance of an agreement to fund a qualification. The following questions are an example of considerations managers can discuss with the social care practitioner in advance of undertaking any qualification.

- Does the social care practitioner have access to equipment, i.e., computer or laptop to complete their course work?
- Does the social care practitioner have the skills to type, upload documents, etc.?
- Does the social care practitioner have the literacy skills to complete the course work?
- Does the social care practitioner have support with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia?
- Does the social care practitioner struggle with low confidence when it comes to achieving a qualification?

Please note, none of the above questions should deter a social care practitioner or organisation from supporting a social care practitioner to gain qualifications. Rather, these questions prompt the right support before the qualification begins to avoid any anxiety or delay in progression of the course.

4. Supports available for social care practitioners

Once the support needs of a social care practitioner have been identified this information will be useful in determining how this support may be provided. The organisation should be clear with any training provider they engage with what level of support can be offered to each individual social care practitioner given the identified support needs.

There are several other ways to provide support to a social care practitioner which include peer learning support from another member of staff who has previously completed the qualification and/or from other members of staff who are working towards the same qualification. Support may come from the social care practitioners line manager or the learning and development/training department in the organisation. Coaching and mentoring either internally or by an external source can be a valuable resource and is currently available through Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

5. The use of contracts for learning

Many organisations find having a contract with the social care practitioner is a great way to cover all of the above. A detailed conversation before a qualification is started can identify if it is the right time and circumstances for the social care practitioner to undertake the qualification. Contracts can also plan what additional support is required and who will provide this support.

It is vital that the organisation have plans in place to meet with the social care practitioner on a regular basis. There should be an opportunity for the social care practitioner to discuss any issues or problems they are experiencing and work with the organisation to

find solutions. For example, if the social care practitioner does not have the time to do their coursework because they are undertaking additional hours of work, the organisation could look at the rotas and identify a weekly plan whereby time is set aside to study as a priority.

A contract should also be clear about what happens should the social care practitioner leave the organisation i.e. will the social care practitioner have to reimburse the organisation for costs incurred from undertaking training which has not been completed.

6. **Consider how induction training can be aligned with the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* units**

As mentioned above, the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* has seven units. These seven units are closely aligned to induction training in each organisation. Organisations should familiarise themselves with the learning outcomes of the seven units and, where possible, design induction training in line with these outcomes.

Dated observed practise from training, for example, first aid resuscitation competency observation certificates, can provide evidence for the social care practitioner's portfolio. Similarly, competency observations during moving and handling/positioning training can be recorded and evidence added to the social care practitioner's portfolio.

The overall aim is not to duplicate learning. At this early stage there have been questions raised about a social care practitioner having to repeat similar training. A possible solution to avoid repetition could be a structured process to include up to date training records and reflective written accounts to evidence skills and knowledge rather than these work practices and observations having to be repeated.

For further information on training requirements refer to Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) training guidance and the organisations policy and procedures.

You can access more information about RQIA Training Guidance and information using the following links:

- [RQIA Training Guidance (Adult Services).](#)
- [RQIA Training Guidance (Children's Services).](#)

7. **Are all the units relevant to all work settings?**

Questions have been asked about whether all units within the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* are relevant in all work settings.

For example, is safe medication practice relevant in supported living settings? The quick answer to this is yes. All seven units within the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* are intended to give social care practitioners a basic knowledge to support individuals.

There is no expectation that all social care practitioners will have to support individuals with all seven areas of knowledge. However, should the needs or the support arrangements of an individual being supported change, social care practitioners will have had some basic knowledge and understanding.

For example, if an individual being supported takes medication, all social care practitioners will need to understand what that medication is and what it is being used to treat. A social care practitioner will be able to observe if the individual is experiencing any side effects or adverse effects and report this to a manager so the individual can have their medication reviewed. A basic understanding of an individual's health needs and the medication they take will be useful should a social care practitioner have to take the individual to medical appointments. If an individual had a chest infection for example, there may be prescribed antibiotics. The social care practitioner supporting the individual, will be able to monitor the individual's overall health and report any concerns to the manager.

The *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* gives knowledge about safe use of medication and helps the social care practitioner understand the policies and procedures within the organisation. However, as the safe medication practice unit of the *Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice* is a knowledge-based unit, a learner who **does not** administer medication as part of their job tasks and/or role will not be required to undertake this further training (supervised practice and competency assessments).

The completion of this further medication training will be an employer decision based on the social care practitioners job role and the needs of the individuals who the practitioner is supporting and/or caring for.

8. Regular contact with the social care practitioner and the training provider

Having a learning contract in place with the social care practitioner provides clear guidelines on how often the social care practitioners progress is monitored. This should include communication with the training provider to ensure any issues for the social care practitioner or the training provider are resolved quickly and efficiently to prevent delay in progression or loss of motivation.

Organisations should avoid receiving feedback from a training provider only at the end of the course as this may lead to the social care practitioner not having enough time to complete the course. For example, there have been some issues with staffing levels within training providers. This may result in a change of tutor mid-course, delay in classes, or lack of feedback on submitted units. These lengthy delays to the delivery of the course and lack of consistency can lead to a very negative learning experience and hinders the progression to gain the qualification.

Social care practitioners do not feel that they are in position to resolve the training providers staffing issues and should seek support from the organisation to liaise with the training provider on their behalf to reach a resolution to this problem. Having a good relationship with the training provider should make this easier to resolve.

Similarly, issues arise for the social care practitioner. For example, staff shortages result in the social care practitioner covering more shifts, becoming unwell, dealing with personal matters and can result in the social care practitioner having less time to study and gradually falling behind in their qualification studies. Picking up on these issues early and working with the social care practitioner, the manager and the training provider can put an action plan in place to get learning back on track as quickly as possible.

Supports available

Coaching and mentoring

Coaching and mentoring has been funded by the DoH and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has made coaching and mentoring available, with the single aim of helping social care practitioners complete their qualification.

What is coaching and mentoring?

Coaching and mentoring are developmental approaches based on the use of one-to-one conversations to enhance an individual's skills, knowledge and/or work performance.

Coaching aims to produce optimal performance and improvement at work by focusing on specific skills and goals and empower individuals to make decisions, take actions and create positive changes to achieve their full potential. It may also impact on the social care practitioner's personal attributes such as supporting their social interaction or building their confidence.

We all have the potential to be an effective coach to social care practitioners. See key skills in **Figure 1**.
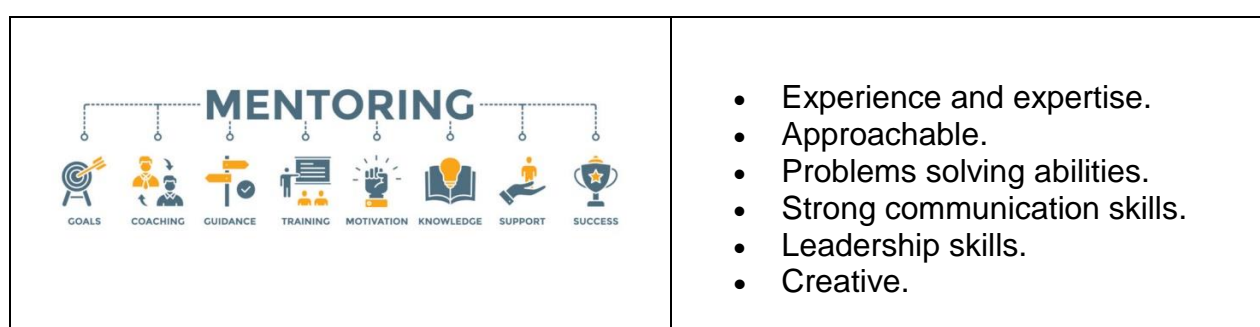
Figure 1: Key skills of a coach

Key Skills of a Coach

- Observes, Listens & Questions
- Suspends Judgement
- Facilitates
- Encourages
- Enables

- Goal setting and accountability.
- Active listening.
- Confidence and positive motivation.
- Observation and feedback.
- Empathy and support.
- Build rapport.
- Provide stucture.
- Active curiosity.

There are many other examples of coaching tools available if the manager and/or organisation is providing support directly to the social care practitioner. In **Appendix B** there is an outline of the *GROW coaching model* which is useful at the start of the social care practitioner undertaking their course and can be used throughout as a tool to gauge any issues that may be hindering progress and helps the social care practitioner identify possible solutions.

Mentoring in the workplace is where a more experienced colleague shares their greater knowledge to support the development of an inexperienced social care practitioner. It also involves the skills of questioning, listening, clarifying and reframing to support less experienced or new workers.

Figure 2: What is mentoring?

MENTORING

GOALS   COACHING   GUIDANCE   TRAINING   MOTIVATION   KNOWLEDGE   SUPPORT   SUCCESS

- Experience and expertise.
- Approachable.
- Problems solving abilities.
- Strong communication skills.
- Leadership skills.
- Creative.

A mentor is an experienced and thoughtful learning and development professional who is committed to investing their time to assist in the growth and development of others. The mentor is willing to share their knowledge, experience, and wisdom and act as a guide and role model.

A mentor supports and encourages the professional development of the mentee and provides active guidance to help them achieve their goals. The mentor offers a fresh perspective and an independent point of view, while guiding a process that fosters the growth and educational development of the mentee.

Supervision

Supervision within the social care sector is compulsory. As the supervisor and the supervisee are already meeting to review and manage competency and performance, this could be a valuable space for the supervisor to review the social care practitioners progress with their qualification. Many social care practitioners work to a high standard, providing quality care and support to individuals within the organisation. However, some social care practitioners find it difficult to capture their skills, experience and knowledge through written coursework.

With support from their supervisor, the supervisee can be guided through a reflective practice process which enables the supervisee/social care practitioner to apply and combine the theory taught with the practical tasks undertaken in the workplace. The stages of reflective practice provide a template for writing up this reflection and submitting it to the tutor to demonstrate learning.

There are many reflective practice tools that can be used by the supervisor to prompt reflection. One such tool is *Gibbs' Reflective Cycle* (see **Appendix C),** which is widely used in the social care workforce.

A skilled supervisor will be able to:

- Support reflections in all areas of work.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
- Listen to both barriers and achievements.
- Provide leadership and motivation for the social care practitioner.
- Be a good role model.
- Support the social care practitioner to analyse practice.
- Build confidence of the social care practitioner.
- Help the social care practitioner to set boundaries and create action plans relevant to their learning.
- Provide key points from organisational policy and practice knowledge.
- Support learning from mistakes.
- Provide advice and guidance.

Appendix A

What is Total Qualification Time (TQT)?

The time required to successfully complete a qualification and includes:

- Guided Learning Hours (GLH).
- Assessment time.
- Learner self-directed/ independent study.

What are Guided Learning Hours (GLH)?

The time a learner spends engaged in:

- Qualification-related teaching and/or training.
- Assessor contact – including, guided activities (e.g. qualification evidence planning, assessment and/or direct observation, etc).
- Assessor contact – progress review.
- Supervised workplace training.

EXAMPLE - Level 2 Certificate in Safe and Effective Practice

- **Anticipated qualification duration = 6 months/ 26 weeks**
- **Total Qualification Time (TQT) = 200 hrs**
- **Guided Learning Hours (GLH) = 160 hrs**

Table 2: Record of activity and hours

Activity	Total hours		Hours/ week (approx.)
Qualification-related teaching and/or training	80		3
Assessor contact/observation	40		1.5
Assessor Progress review	24		1
Supervised workplace training	16		0.5 - 1
Total Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	**160**		**= 6 – 6.5 hrs/ week**
Learner self-directed/independent study	40		1.5 - 2
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	**200**		**= 1.5 – 2 hrs/ week**

Note: the above is an example of **notional** hours per week (approx.) and should be considered to be for **example purposes only**.

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Appendix B

GROW Coaching Model

Probably the most widely known and used model is the *GROW coaching model*, originally identified by Sir John Whitmore, which is introduced in many coach training programmes and mentioned in many coaching books.

Figure 3: GROW coaching model explained

GROW represents four stages in the coaching conversation**.** :

- **G**oal
- **R**eality
- **O**ptions
- **W**rap Up

These four stages are explained in more detail below.

1. Goal

At the outset of any coaching conversation, it makes sense to establish what the coachee wants to achieve. Just as successful people set goals for their work and personal life, establishing goals at the outset of the coaching session helps to give the session a sense of purpose ensuring it becomes a meaningful conversation rather than an aimless chat.

At this stage a goal might reflect the bigger picture of what the coachee is aiming to achieve from coaching e.g. personal development, confidence building, future promotion and also what the coachee specifically wants from the session itself e.g. identify a strategy or specific actions for moving forward or identifying options.

2. Reality

Once you have established what your coachee is aiming to achieve the next stage is about where they are in relation to their goal i.e. what progress have they made towards their goal; what are their current skills, knowledge and attributes; what is the reality of what is expected of them. This is an opportunity to help your coachee build awareness of their current strengths and develop confidence …what are they doing already that they can build on, what skills do they possess which will stand them in good stead for the future?

3. Options

This stage of the GROW coaching model is about helping your coachee explore the options available to them. It is all too easy for your coachee to take the first idea they think of and then move on to wrapping up the session. However, the skill as a coach is in really helping the social care practitioner to think outside the box, be creative and explore extensively until you are both satisfied no stone has been left unturned and they have a solution they are committed to. For example, what has worked in the past? How do others do it? What would they do if anything was possible? What are the relative merits of each option?

4. Wrap up (or Way forward/Will)

This is the end of the coaching process and brings the session to a close. Once the coachee has explored different options for moving forward they are in a better position to select the most appropriate and commit to a specific action. As a coach you will be helping to clarify the commitment of your coachee to their action and ensuring the coachee has an awareness of what they will now do, when, where and who might help them.

The *GROW Coaching Model* need not be linear

The GROW coaching model is described as a linear process however, you can revisit any of the stages during the process depending on the needs of the social care practitioner. For example, after exploration of Reality you may find your coachee wants to readjust their Goal or having checked their commitment to an action may find that more options need to be explored first.

The thing to remember is that GROW provides a useful framework. However, to be effective you need to understand what your coachee's needs are at any particular point in the coaching conversation. So be flexible enough to take them to the stage that most meets their needs, and there may be times using just part of the model is appropriate.

GROW Coaching Model Questions

Goal

1. What would you like to focus on today?
2. What's important to you at the moment?
3. What does your ideal future look like?

4. What will you be doing in five years?
5. What new skills do you want to learn or develop?
6. Where is your life out of balance?
7. What challenges are you facing at the moment?
8. What would make you feel that this time has been well spent?
9. What are you currently working toward?
10. How can you word your goal in positive language?

Reality

1. What is working well at the moment?
2. What do you need?
3. What excuses have you always used for not achieving your goals?
4. What have you done so far to improve things?
5. What parts of your life will be impacted by you achieving your goal?
6. What is the biggest obstacle you are currently facing?
7. What does self-sabotage look like for you?
8. What is your inner critic saying to you?
9. What fears are present?
10. What are you passionate about?

Options

1. What is your first step?
2. If you had 50% more confidence, what would you be doing that would be different?
3. If success was guaranteed, what would you do?
4. If money was not an obstacle, what would you do?
5. What action step is the best use of your time at this moment?
6. If someone else came to you with your obstacle, what would you tell them?
7. What strengths can you use to move forward?
8. If you could do only one thing this week, what would it be?
9. What would you do if you answered to no one?
10. What is the most efficient use of your time in this moment?

Way forward/Will

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how motivated are you to achieve your goal?
2. What will it take to get that motivation closer to a 10?
3. Whatever your first step is, can you think of anything that might stop you from doing it?
4. How committed are you to achieving this goal?
5. How do you want to be held accountable for this goal?
6. How will you celebrate when you've achieved your goal?
7. What are you going to do in the next 24 hours?
8. What will you do when you've achieved your goal?
9. Who do you need to include in your journey to that goal?
10. What else do you need to consider before starting?

Appendix C

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle – Overview [2]

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle was developed by Graham Gibbs in 1988 to give structure to learning from experiences. It offers a framework for examining experiences and, given its cyclical nature, lends itself particularly well to repeated experiences, allowing individuals to learn and plan from things that either went well or didn't go well.

It covers six stages:

1. Description of the experience.
2. Feelings and thoughts about the experience.
3. Evaluation of the experience, both good and bad.
4. Analysis to make sense of the situation.
5. Conclusion about what you learned and what you could have done differently.
6. Action plan for how you would deal with similar situations in the future, or general changes you might find appropriate.

Figure 4: Gibbs' Reflective Cycle
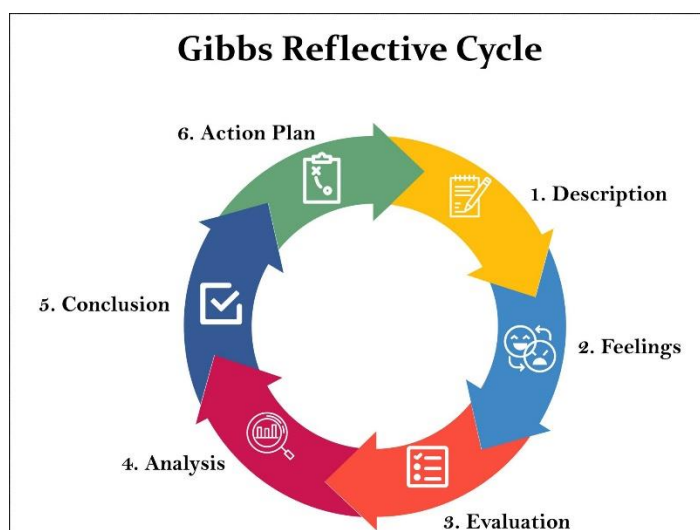
The Gibbs' framework is a straightforward structure that allows the social care practitioner to consider their work practice and compare this with the learning outcomes and assessment criteria that the social care practitioner is being asked to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding about.

1. Description

The first step is to take the opportunity to describe the situation in detail. The main points to include here concern what happened. Your feelings and conclusions will come later.

Helpful questions:

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[2] **Adapted from:** Gibbs G (1988). *Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods.* Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford.

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- What happened?
- When and where did it happen?
- Who was present?
- What did you and the other people do?
- What was the outcome of the situation?
- Why were you there?
- What did you want to happen?

2. Feelings

Here the social care practitioner can explore any feelings or thoughts that they had during the experience and how these may have impacted the experience.

<u>Helpful questions:</u>

- What were you feeling during the situation?
- What were you feeling before and after the situation?
- What do you think other people were feeling about the situation?
- What do you think other people feel about the situation now?
- What were you thinking during the situation?
- What do you think about the situation now?
- Example of 'Feelings'.

3. Evaluation

Evaluation asks the social care practitioner to consider what worked and what didn't work in the situation. Try to be as objective and honest as possible. To get the most out of a reflection, it is important to focus on both the positive and the negative aspects of the situation, even if it was primarily one or the other.

<u>Helpful questions:</u>

- What was good and bad about the experience?
- What went well?
- What didn't go so well?
- What did you and other people contribute to the situation (positively or negatively)?
- Example of 'Evaluation'.

4. Analysis

The analysis step is where there is a chance to make sense of what happened. Having focused on details around what happened in the situation, analysis provides the opportunity to extract meaning from it. Targeting the different aspects that went well or poorly helps the social care practitioner to answer questions such as why that happened.

<u>Helpful questions:</u>

- Why did things go well?
- Why didn't it go well?
- What sense can you make of the situation?

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- What knowledge – your own or others (for example academic literature) can help you to understand the situation?

5. Conclusions

This stage draws a conclusion from what has happened, what changes to the social care practitioner's actions could improve the outcome in the future.

Helpful questions:

- What did you learn from this situation?
- How could this have been a more positive situation for everyone involved?
- What skills do you need to develop for you to handle a situation like this better?
- What else could you have done?

6. Action plan

The final step helps the social care practitioner plan for what they would do differently in a similar or related situation in the future. It can also be extremely helpful to think about how they will help themself to act differently – such that they don't only plan what they will do differently, but also how they will make sure it happens. Sometimes just the realisation is enough, but other times reminders might be helpful.

Helpful questions:

- If you had to do the same thing again, what would you do differently?
- How will you develop the required skills you need?
- How can you make sure that you can act differently next time?
- Example of 'Action Plan'