

Findings from the Student Placement Experience Survey.

Appendix: Full data set

June 2024



Full data set

This is the full data from the Student Placement Experience survey and should be read in conjunction with the summary report, SASW Findings from the Student Placement Experiment Survey¹. Content from the free text comment boxes were copied as received but identifying features of a person or organisation have been edited out.

Q1: Are you a

Answered: 344, Skipped: 0

Student	269	78.20%
Newly qualified social worker	75	21.80%

Q2: Are you an international student?

Answered: 341, Skipped: 3

Yes	47	13.78%
No	294	86.22%

Q3: Please enter the number of placements you have had in:

Answered: 342, Skipped: 2

Placement type	0	1	2	3
Statutory social work	126	182	35	0
Voluntary sector employing social workers		43	5	2
Voluntary sector without social workers in the organisation		125	25	7
Other (please specify)		17		

Q4: How would you rate your placement experience?

Answered: 341, Skipped: 3

Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
16	34	71	111	109	341
4.69%	9.97%	20.82%	32.55%	31.96%	100%

¹ SASW Findings from the Student Placement Experience Survey: <https://new.basw.co.uk/policy-and-practice/resources/social-work-placement-experience-report-sasw>

Q5: What did you enjoy most about your placement? (Tick all that apply)

Answered: 341, Skipped: 3

Direct work with people	310	90.91%
Support from colleagues	221	64.81%
Support from supervisor	193	56.69%
Putting theory into practice	206	60.41%
Taking on responsibility	201	58.94%
Developing your professional practice	258	75.66%
Increasing your social work knowledge	244	71.55%
Working with other professionals	221	64.81%

Q6: In your placement did you have (tick all that apply):

Answered: 336, Skipped: 8

Induction	287	85.42%
Regular supervision with a social worker (at least every 4 weeks)	275	81.85%
Guidance to understand the organisation and the needs of the people you support	269	80.06%
Opportunity to familiarise yourself with relevant policies, guidance and legislation	263	78.27%

Q7: Did you have access to the full range of experiences to meet your learning requirements according to the Standards in Social Work Education?

Answered: 344, Skipped: 0

Yes	209	60.76%
To a certain extent	115	33.43%
No	20	5.81%

Q8: How did you find the support available from the following whilst on your placement:

Answered: 341, Skipped: 3

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not supportive at all
Practice Educator	271	53	14
Supervisor/Link worker	198	135	30
University tutor	163	82	28

Q9: How manageable was the academic work in addition to your placement?

Answered: 343, Skipped: 1

Manageable	103	30.03%
Somewhat manageable	187	54.52%
Not manageable at all	53	15.45%

Comments (copied as written):

- *I am undertaking the distance learning course and the experience of placement, returning to my substantive post and completing academic work was draining both emotionally and physically.*
- *No support given to help manage this*
- *consideration to students with families or other commitments*
- *Far too much pressure. Particularly when this is unpaid placements.*
- *There were some days where there was nothing to do at my placement as the staff were supporting individuals and the link workers were busy with their own duties.*
- *I've completed it during my placement shifts*
- *Part time work, full time unpaid placement, practice teacher assignments, uni assignments is all a bit much. Without the support I would have found this unmanageable. Another study day perhaps would be useful.*
- *Overwhelming*
- *Easily manageable*
- *There was a lot of repetition in the written work and at some points it felt incredibly redundant to write the same essay over and over again.*
- *Practice teachers in 2 placements set work that linked to setting, but it could be challenging to find the time to do it outwith placement to ensure there was no missed opportunities for learning whilst in placement.*
- *Only manageable due to minimal placement workload*
- *As placements are not paid the necessity to juggle work with a full time placement on top of academic work is quite a lot*
- *Far too much module work whilst on placement. Very difficult to do social work all day and come home to do hours of social work reading/activities at night.*
- *I had a 120 day placement, doing assignments for modules, portfolio, and doing a dissertation at once which was too much. I also had to work part time to sustain myself.*
- *The weekly reflection on average of 800 words over an 18 week period adds an additional 15000 words to your workload, this is especially challenging when you have to work to support yourself financially*
- *It would depend on the week but some of the university work, including the Evidence Gathering Tool, were too time-consuming.*
- *As a single parent, juggling the two was difficult at times*
- *Different universities have different expectations. Things such a minutes for supervision with Practice educator and how often your practice educator wish to meet take up more time than peers. My academic word was not consistent or regular it was instead all due in the space of a month at the end of final placement while I was also looking for a job. Too much at once but the quality of work expected was manageable.*
- *There was a lot of academic work which was to be expected, and I do think a slightly less amount would of been beneficial to fully focus on the practical experience of the*

placement as sometimes the stress of a large amount of written work impacted on the enjoyability of the practical part.

- I had to work on top of full time placement skills this was difficult
- acclimatising to the new placement situation and being effective and fully present for casework clients/families felt like the priority, academic work was secondary and rushed
- We're asked to work at our placement locations for almost 35/40 hours a week and expected to write over 8,000 words for the end of term. It's absolutely wild that we're being asked to do both.
- Although the work load is not extensive along side placement it can be difficult to manage.
- Felt as though I was busy mid-point till the end and this was prioritised over my case study due to time scales.
- Having the honors project to complete at the same time, with reflections and the portfolio was too much.
- At points it was too much placement work alongside academic work
- Only manageable as during my placement limited work was given to me, so I was usually left with nothing else to do
- Have a module along side a placement booklet, this is a lot of work to entail at the same time. Additionally travelling to glasgow on a monday, travelling to edinburgh tues-Friday
- It has been manageable so far, however the stress of a large portfolio, an assignment and a reflective analytical 20 minute power point presentation could become overwhelming and hindered the placement experience due to the high levels of stress- especially as I had multiple reviews and placement commitments to balance alongside the academic work
- The university changed deadlines and added on extra work to be completed after placement beyond the original placement dates.
- academic workload just manageable as placement was very supportive and flexible
- a lot of pressure as this specific PgDip is very condensed. Almost unrealistic
- It was difficult juggling both
- Difficult to balance.
- Having to do classes, large assignments and dissertation on top of a 120 day placement was unmanageable. Especially when you have children and other commitments
- I did find the uni work a lot to manage at the same time as my placement workload and duties.
- Difficult with other personal commitments and uni work
- I was originally asked to complete weekly critically reflective journals but I negotiated this down to bi-weekly. This allowed me to give them proper thought and research and be able to have needed self-care time during my time off when I wasn't studying/on placement. If I had been working and/or had kids (as many of my colleagues did), this would have been incredibly difficult.
- Due to fee and funding issues, and the current cost of living crisis most students have to work alongside placement and academic work, it is therefore very difficult to manage all at the same time.
- There is a lot of pressure put onto MSc students with the terms of work load, placement and financial responsibilities during this time. The inter professional working module could have been done in year one as you experience this during placement so it was a bit of a waste in my opinion and more targeted towards health students

- *It is challenging to be able to balance time on placement, university work, needing to work to earn money to pay for bills and university fees and then find time for family and friends. It has been very draining.*
- *Doing the PG Dip there is significant parallels between study and placement learning, as such it can feel overwhelming at times when both paces increase at the same time.*
- *Quite a lot I was out the house 13 hours a day*
- *Keeping on top of the academic work was difficult due to the demands of placement and new learning.*
- *It got very overwhelming but i had to make new coping mechanisms*
- *There is a lot of work along side placement and it takes some time to balance the work but overall it is good. I'd recommend to following students to learn your limits in practice and stand up for the hours you are doing.*
- *difficult to manage placement work, PAR and online work and assignments*
- *Working full time in placement and having 2 part time jobs makes it hard to fit everything in but ive crammed in a few late nights to get any uni work done*
- *There is varied responsibilities on placements, I had my own case load, therefore I had less time to complete my uni work*
- *Very high workload to manage alongside working fulltime and having some form of personal life*
- *I did not do any of my university work during my placements, However my second placement was harder due to the travel and time needed for this. I was fortunate that this was acknowledged before my placement started and i was given opportunities to negotiate my work base and start and end time to accommodate time in the evenings for study.*
- *This is very challenging and caused severe stress*
- *As a student with the [...] University, working full time and completing two modules is a huge amount to get through. It means that whilst on placement I felt I was under too much pressure, which meant that either I didn't have time to really consolidate learning in my placement. I feel there should be less academic work to do in placement to enable students to concentrate on practice itself.*
- *Honours project and placement was very challenging*
- *weekly reflective logs is a lot*
- *the workload for university was too much given we had workload from placement too which we had to prioritise in order to pass the placement in a set timeframe. There was too many expectations from placement on our workload for them, being priority. I was informed that university work was not allowed to be completed within placement hours (when I had completed placement work) even though the assignment correlated directed to the work I was doing in placement (presentation preparation). However, the same sentiment was not instructed for completing placement work in my evenings and weekends which was used for university assignments.*
- *The academic workload is currently overwhelming due to the commitments on placement and assignments.*
- *It was challenging trying to write two end of year essays whilst doing placement. I found it unmanageable to write a dissertation alongside my placement.*
- *The assignments required to be submitted after final year placement need to be revisited as they do not link to social work.*
- *The combination with course work and what is expected from you in placement is overwhelming - you effectively have a full time job and you are a full time student.*
- *was very challenging finding a balance for all academic work/due dates, placement, employment, and managing every day life.*
- *Given more academic work than all others on the same placement. My efforts were treated with mocking and contempt*

- Very front end loaded which was quite overwhelming.
- First placement with third sector was very manageable, second placement with statutory was not manageable at all on top of the dissertation.
- Working 9-5 without a breather working with chip and family. By the end of the day , one is spent and coming home to do academic work?
- I'm a single parent of a disabled child. The uni were flexible and understanding when required.
- The level of academic written work was tough to complete when also on placement.
- Only experienced 1 year face to face learning. Having online discussions and tasks were difficult trying to learn alone.
- Given placement is unpaid I also had no choice but to work this was extremely stressful and I feel it impacted on my ability to do my academic work to the standard I expect of myself this caused alot of additional stress for me
- Sometimes felt overwhelmed with supervision tasks and dissertation planning, alongside end of placement essay planning
- It was a challenge meeting the assessment deadlines, while navigating new areas of assessments and work demands.
- More difficult to complete when on statutory placements due to amount of work to do for placement and actually working on top. Very little time to complete uni work
- In my statutory placement it was difficult to manage academic work due to being given extensive amount of work to do for supervision plus extra reports and assessments
- It can be overwhelming and often makes one anxious.
- I think first year academic work was more manageable than the academic work given in second year. I think there is enough to experience, learn and overcome in your final placement without also doing ALL the academic work within that time.
- I don't think practice educators or the university take in to account how much time individuals have to spend on placement leaving very little time to do academic work and basic needs like living and having adequate breaks.
- Having to submit weekly essays was a challenge as it made placement seem like all I had to think of was writing up my weekly reflection and not focusing on the overall placement.
- It was a lot of pressure but it is manageable.
- Too many assignments.
- We had to do a reflective log every week however the guidelines for that seemed blurry as the university did not have set guidelines for the word count. So for instance I did around 1000 to 1500 words a week as that is what my practice educator set however in comparison some other students did like 500 or some had 2 essays to do etc. It would benefit if there was a guideline set by university rather than practice educator as they already have a good amount of power in the relationship.
- Having the final assignments due on the same day placement finished is challenging as it doesn't feel like it gives enough time to fully reflect.
- I have a learning difficulty which made it very difficult to juggle my placement work with my academic work and my caring responsibilities to my children
- There was too much written work on top of the placement work
- It is hard to balance two modules and placement work. There is also a lot of paperwork that is required for the placement portfolio. Having spoke with students from other universities it seems they have no academic work to complete while on placement.
- Doing an academic module, placement and placement academic module was challenging.

- Initially there was a lot of additional work from the PE which did impact on just trying to learn about the placement at the start. However, now that it is near the end of placement, I do see the relevance of it.
- It's too much to ask to get us to work 5 months for free 9 to 5, expect us to run a household and write 8000 words. The stress of all that and not knowing if you will get a harsh marker is too much. There is too much inconsistency with markers.
- Placement was unpaid, so that I had to work every weekend.
- Towards the end, it was difficult to manage academic work and placement. Particularly in the statutory setting, that I was located in, as there were a number of crisis in the last couple weeks.
- The academic work made placement more stressful and has detracted from the experience rather than adding to it however it has been manageable. I haven't learned any more from doing the academic work than I have learned from placement itself. The assignments have felt like ticking a box.
- I think university can often forget the immense pressure social work students are under whilst on placement, with long unpaid working hours and often having to find part time work on top of this. It can become stressful when uni increase workload
- It can be a lot to take on managing a placement and extra uni assignments - while both are equally important it may be helpful to remind placement settings that students have a heavy workload and sometimes the student may need a bit of time in placement to get this done
- Not manageable when basically working full time on placement whilst also having to work to earn money, so basically working full 7 days a week whilst also trying to complete the academic work
- Extremely stressful with a high expectation of students
- There were multiple demands which although teaches you how to manage multiple priorities it did at times become overwhelming.
- I had to work pretty much full time hours alongside placement so found extra time for studying hard
- University [...] created an evidence gathering tool in our first placement which exceeded 16,000 words in some cases. We had this alongside direct observations, reflective journals, interim and final reports and a final essay. It was excessive. They changed it for the second placement so it didn't require as much detailed evidence. The university still required extensive reports from practice educators. It felt repetitive and writing for the sake of writing. It lost its meaning.
- All of my academic work had been submitted before my placement started
- Full time no pay and additional assignments on top which cut into time to work to fund myself through uni.
- I was on a 6 month placement and my uni [...] reduced the uni workload to reflect this. Extremely appreciated and helpful. It allowed me to focus on practice.
- Completing a MSc dissertation at the same time as a covid affected placement was detrimental to my mental health
- It was a lot of additional pressure
- Learning a sw role, procedures as well as painting a diary, as well as studying was overwhelming at times
- Dissertation and placement 'bottle necked' so there was so much to do at once (as well as having a part time job to cover living expenses)
- My placements in no way prepared me for social work and did not provide much relevant experience
- Dissertation on top of 120 day placement was not a manageable experience.
- I was able to complete all the work but at the expense of spending whole evenings filling in uni folio and then Christmas break on an essay.

- *Far too much to manage - portfolio to submit, presentation to do, case work for placement and another assessment due as part of another module as well. I think the other module has pushed it and is main reason it feels unmanageable as back and forth between focusing on placement and this module, feel like can't fully get into one or the other.*
- *Placement expectations were very demanding, to some extent over demanding for being an unpaid student on-top of completing an honours project*
- *Having to do dissertation alongside 120 day placement along with life circumstances as a mature student was almost impossible.*

Q10: Did you have to repeat your placement?

Answered: 342, Skipped: 2

Yes	20	5.85%
No	322	94.15%

Q11: Were you given opportunities to take on tasks that are specific to the role of a social worker?

Answered: 342, Skipped: 2

Yes	194	56.73%
To a certain extent	91	26.61%
No	57	16.67%

Comments:

- *Yes but I never got a settling in period. I was expected to take on cases very early on when I hadn't had a proper settling in period.*
- *My Practice Teacher was very supportive and identified areas to develop my knowledge of social work practice. I spent a day shadowing a local authority social work team. Within my placement there were limited opportunities to develop my practice due to the nature of the placement being a third sector organisation. I had the opportunity to observe individual supports. I had limited opportunity to carry out assessments.*
- *In my first placement in a voluntary sector there were no opportunities specific to social work role and I felt my first placement was wasted and it did not enhance my learning to become a social worker!*
- *Very limited opportunities presented to me and placement setting reluctant to involve social work students in the most relevant opportunities*
- *In my first placement there was no direct social work practice but my second one yes*
- *Involved in one child planning meeting and writing 4 girfec reports. No opportunity in the other placement, more of a support worker role.*
- *I was supported in my 3rd placement to take part in a couple of learning opportunities in adult support and protection. In my 2nd year placement there were no social worker role opportunities and in my '1st year (college) placement there probably were opportunities but I was not made aware of them.*

- *As a student on placement within my sponsor organisation, I feel as though I'm treated as an additional member of staff at times.*
- *Our team were short staffed and did not have admin, so I ended up doing a lot of the team's admin tasks*
- *No Social Worker role within the setting and very limited involvement with statutory services.*
- *My placement had a lot of good things about it (i.e., support from supervisors and work experience) but it was not a social work placement. No one at my organisation is practising as a social worker in their role and I was not taught social work specific skills or legislation.*
- *You are rarely given enough autonomy on placement, so you do not fully get to perform any of the social work tasks as you do once you qualify.*
- *Acted as the lead professional for a LAC review, attended a pre-birth case conference to represent and support a young dad, completed a court report, took a young man through the process of Diversion from Prosecution.*
- *I pushed to undertake further responsibility in line with a social work role*
- *I felt like an unpaid worker I was managing a full case load unpaid*
- *My PE gave me extra tasks outside of placement that were specifically related to the role of a social worker.*
- *No social workers at my placement, so no. The organisation itself does youth work- not social work- so there weren't even opportunities that could've been created for me to have that experience.*
- *The placement I failed I did not have to opportunity to undertake specific social work. This was the main reason I failed*
- *I felt that I had to constantly ask and to an extent, fight, to get any cases. I think if I hadn't of done this my opportunities would have been extremely limited.*
- *My role in voluntary wasnt clear, i was confused*
- *Currently in a voluntary setting and so roles are slightly different from statutory settings.*
- *my placement was more the role of a support worker, not so much social work*
- *I was treated as a social worker*
- *my placement did not allow me to visit social work departments nor any other professionals. My placement was a sheltered housing complex with no social workers present.*
- *My placement has been great. I believe that being placed within a statutory placement has been most effective towards my learning*
- *Current placement has no SW roles, ability to work on communication skills and relationship building, however I could do this in my substantive post as such feels like the 'short straw' placement.*
- *On statutory placement in 3rd year, i mainly supervised contact. On my voluntary placement, there were no tasks that were specific to a social workers role.*
- *SHANNARRI assessments, risk assessments, case notes, utilising other organisations to support people*
- *I was really fortunate in both of my placements to be given multiple opportunities to thrive in the role for a social worker. I had support in place and this could be accessed as and when needed. I think i am fortunate that my background is in Social Work as a Family Support Worker. My degree was sponsored by my local authority and both of my placement were statutory in very different areas of Adult services.*

- *In one placement I was given far too much work, but this was within a statutory service which wasn't used to having social work students. On my other placement, the balance was much better, allowing me time to research policies, procedures and legislation.*
- *During placement I felt that as I was with a third sector organisation I was limited in what support I was able to provide. After speaking with my peers who has placement within a statutory setting I was sure that the experiences had been vastly different.*
- *I did on the Statutory placement but not on the Third Sector one.*
- *My final year placement was in a social care agency, there were hardly opportunities available and due to high number of students in the course, i had no option but to continue the placement.*
- *I have been able to case hold and produce reports. It has been a very valuable experience.*
- *Being in a residential setting it very much depends on the age of the children, most of the children were young adults in voluntary orders*
- *Not for the third sector, but yes for the statutory.*
- *Lots of PA work with 18-25 year olds. Very limited social work tasks.*
- *Placement started as we were coming out of covid, a lot of workers remained working at home.*
- *Placement role was case work management with asylum seekers not great placement for becoming sw*
- *My final placement was at an organisation that refers social work related cases to social work. No hands on Social work experience I*
- *I had a child care placement with no social work involvement at all*
- *Only in my second placement*
- *Only in my statutory placement*
- *Although I didn't work with a social worker, I was essentially the social worker for my organisation.*
- *I never got to meet any social worker during placement. All my 3 placements were with third sector organisations whose employers had actually come from a variety of fields not related to social work so there was less social work input although they still supported me in the best way they could.*
- *Not in my first voluntary sector but in my second statutory SW placement.*
- *I was lucky at my voluntary organisation. I worked very closely with a complex young person, so I had more responsibilities. The other students didn't get the social work experience that they should have gotten*
- *My final placement was during covid so some direct practice was limited*
- *Yes I had lots of opportunities to do assessments on my own, to conduct home visits and to engage with relevant professionals. I was even lucky to attend a case conference.*
- *Yes within my first placement but not my final placement. There was no role for a social worker within this placement*
- *Court reports*
- *My practice teacher used her networks for me to do that.*
- *My link worker didn't understand the role of a social worker and there was actually a very anti-social work culture in the placement*
- *Limited despite asking for opportunities within the placement remit*
- *Far far too many 3rd sector placements. I had a statutory team I worked with over the summer offer me a placement but I was told I had to go to the placement allocated.*

The manager was a social worker but the placement focussed on art therapy. My first placement was in a court setting with no social workers at all. So I'm left having had no statutory experience from university. It's only because I joined an agency that I got any experience over the summer.

- *This was only applicable in the statutory setting.*
- *I was able to complete risk assessments to a certain extent, but never really social work related aspects.*
- *Both my placements were during covid which affected this slightly but they tried to find as many opportunities for me as they could*
- *I've had fantastic opportunities on placement (local authority adults mental health social work team) and it has made me reconsider my initial plan to work in childcare.*
- *Amazing support on placement from link worker and practice teacher. Had so many learning opportunities which I am extremely grateful for*
- *Placement was more likely social work role. I am 2 years post graduation. In my opinion every social worker should have statutory placement.*
- *All placement can vary - some want you out doing everything task and others like in statutory are less willing to put you in high risk situations - it can be hard balance but it's ideal if students can get to experience things/tasks/jobs that actually relate to the role*
- *Was a case holder with responsibility as a SW would*
- *None of my placements were working with social workers I had to ensure I had a day or two with social workers in other settings through my own contacts otherwise I would not have passed my final placement in particular due to lack of social work tasks*
- *Only in the one statutory placement*
- *CSE work with teenager, background report for SCRA, duty and Initial Assessment reports*
- *During my second placement in a statutory setting, but not in my first placement in a voluntary third sector organisation*
- *Yes in my statutory placement, no in my third sector placement which I did in 4th year*
- *In voluntary sector*
- *My first placement (childrens unit) provided no opportunities so work with social workers despite my asking repeatedly. If I had stayed in that placement as originally planned I would be entirely unprepared for social work.*
- *Online majority placement. Only 5 days in office/community.*
- *With little to no shadowing or guidance.*
- *I was involved in lots of work on a area team*
- *Neither placement offered social work related tasks, they just weren't part of either agency*
- *I was lucky that some families had social work involvement as well and had child conferences and hearings which I could attend as well*
- *I had to complete a wellbeing assessment, this was given to me by the local children and families team. Without this i feel my experience would be much more negative*
- *was just an unpaid worker in a non social work placement.*
- *No social work role in the placement. Was a family support worker*

Q12: Did your placement enhance your understanding of the tasks and role of a social worker?

Answered: 342, Skipped: 2

Yes	197	57.60%
To a certain extent	95	27.78%
No	50	14.62%

Q13: How would you rate your confidence as a social worker following your placement(s)?

Answered: 339, Skipped: 5

Not confident at all	Somewhat confident	Confident	Very confident
43	123	137	36
12.68%	36.28%	40.41%	10.62%

Q14: Did you find your workload manageable during placement?

Answered: 341, Skipped: 3

Yes	208	61.00%
To a certain extent	103	30.21%
No	30	8.80%

Q15: Whilst on placement did you work overtime?

Answered: 342, Skipped: 2

Regularly	61	17.84%
Sometimes	151	44.15%
Never	130	38.01%

Q16: Has your mental health been impacted by your placement experience?

Answered: 341, Skipped: 3

Yes	87	25.51%
To a certain extent	114	33.43%
No	140	41.06%

Q17: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your placement or NQSW experience?

Answered: 172, Skipped: 172

Comments:

- *My practice supervisor on both placements were not available. I was supported on the whole by other staff & my practice teachers.*
- *My link worker was a support worker and I was expected to do tasks that service users had such as clean kitchen wash dishes working in charity shop only experience I got was direct observation work I was told to do my uni work and sit in the corner and make stories up for my reflective accounts. staff treated me badly ignoring me and when I complained they made up stories to get me into trouble with my practice teacher. It taught me how not to practice, and how to speak to the practice teacher if I have any concerns.*
- *I was discriminated against on the basis of disability and now litigating a case in the employment tribunal.*
- *There should be better consideration when deciding practice teachers. There was so much bias in my placement as my pt previously had worked at the service I was a student at. There were many issues and I felt like I was never taken seriously due to them not wanting to look back to their old team. I would never wish a placement experience the way I had mine on anyone. My mental health suffered hugely and my confidence has severely decreased due to it.*
- *This was the first time that the organisation had taken on social work students and the link workers had recently undergone the training. These individuals were not social workers and they had limited understanding of their responsibilities. I work within a third sector organisation myself and I hoped to get a placement in a different agency. I was very disappointed as I felt I wasn't going to learn anything. I have developed my knowledge on Autism but not as much as on social work practice.*
- *Placements really need to be offered to give opportunities to enhance learning. There needs to be realistic work opportunities to prepare you for entering the social worker role and actually given a placement where you can meet the learning outcomes! I had to ask for a split placement to be able to meet my learning needs, but the fences I had to climb to get that was stressful! I nearly gave up my degree because I did not feel I could pass on the placement I was given! Placements need to be realistic to what we will be thrown into in the social work world!*
- *The placement setting takes on multiple social work students and has no specific role for us, or thought given to the opportunities we will have. A lot of my 80 day placement has been with very little opportunity or challenge. It's somewhere between observing and finding my own things to do. The placement setting is a residential school for autistic children, there are LAC reviews and other opportunities that social work students could be getting involved in, but some have passed by without any of the 6 students being allowed to attend. I keep being told that I'm doing well and the students respond very well to me but I'm not being given any responsibility or opportunity really, I just come on shift and follow the students routines but as a supernumerary there's a big limit to how much I can actually do. I really don't know how this could be considered the best way to train me to be a social worker. I'll meet*

my standards, and I'll pass, but I'll be qualifying in a year and this 4 months is a wasted opportunity to prepare me for that.

- I think it would be beneficial if there was an authoritative member overseeing PE and students get the opportunity to undertake SW role in every placement.*
- It was good to gain hands on experience*
- The placement although very informative and supportive did not prepare me for the high workload levels as a newly qualified social worker.*
- All of the above answers are related to my student placements and not to my NQSW experience.*
- I would say that my placements (I entered Uni in 2nd year via college thus have undertaken 3 placements) have taught me how to be a great support worker and only a small amount of how to be a social worker.*
- Had an excellent first placement, heading out again in a few days for my 2nd placement*
- Had to defer as no time to study and wasn't prepared. Think when free time students should be able to study and work on assessments, as this has effected personal life.*
- While it was regularly communicated that non statutory or third sector placements are just as valuable as statutory placements due to transferable skills in my experience this simply is not true. While certainly there is value in non statutory placements it was my experience that statutory placements were massively more valuable and impactful preparing me for my career as a NQSW today. In my opinion two contrasting statutory placements should be offered.*
- Often due to staffing levels, I had to provide support to Social Work colleagues on things like joint visits. Where these were excellent learning opportunities, there were days when I felt that I had no choice in the matter and it took over from other critical tasks such as time allocated for my writing up evidence.*
- NQSW pressure on LA means my learning of role has been impacted.*
- My manager had gone off on sick and my two colleagues had been moved to children and families due to their lack of staff. This meant that for the last month I was the only person on the team. Luckily my practice educator was amazingly supportive and went above and beyond to support me.*
- My practice teacher had 19 students on his caseload leaving no flexibility for me to change supervision times and was at times to the detriment of my clients. Also his behaviour at the beginning was inappropriate to myself and I had to have a conversation with him regarding language he used towards me, speaking inappropriately about link workers in other organisations and embarrassing myself in a room full of other students and his wife (an other practice teacher), who joined us at group supervisions.*
- No support from Link Worker (ex prison guard), no support from the organisation. Very much left to get on with working with the children involved.*
- I was totally not happy for not having the opportunity to undertake any of my placement in a statutory setting. Most times, it was so boring for me because there were no much activities or any case to handle. I was able to pull through with the support from my practice educators who engaged me with lots of materials that broaden my knowledge on policies and legislations that supports me while compiling my reports. I will suggest that social work students should be posted to statutory for one of their placement.*
- We need to have social work placements with actual social work agencies and social workers. Again, the people I work with her helpful and experienced but I did not receive a placement in social work, which is what I signed up for and I am paying for.*

- University doesn't prepare you.
- Some sort of student social work bursary needs to be established for placements.
- It was evident that the placement, as most settings, was hugely impacted by the Covid19 and even though I believe that most of the staff members were adjusting and doing their best, students in general felt that the atmosphere at times was too tense and the support was not always there where needed.
- Lack of support with childcare costs made the placement experience very difficult financially and added a lot of stress. 2nd placement spanning the full of the summer holidays was difficult logistically when it came to childcare.
- Having to working a part time job on top of placement took a physical, mental, and emotional toll on me
- Because there are so many areas of social work you will never know the job you are applying for unless you have had a placement in that agency. SW education should be doing more to explain what each role entails otherwise NQSWs wont be ready for practice.
- My first placement was really challenging because at the beginning I had issues with linking theory to practice. As my placement progressed I started understanding this
- I have thoroughly enjoyed my time so far with the Child protection Duty Team in [...]. I have the opportunity to be involved in home visits, Childs plan meetings and IRD's. I have had the opportunity to write chronologies for families and be involved with writing Social Background Reports.
- During covid, so placement experience was significantly disrupted which in terms of service use contact and practice experience
- I think there really needs to be a bursary for the full time placement especially when it was 5 months. The pressure to financially survive was equally as tough as the course itself. Being told to stop working is not helpful.
- Not sssc or care commission registered
- I had the opportunity to participate in two 3rd sector homeless charities. my first placement broke down due to concerns over student safety. My second placement was a very positive experience, I was able to use transferable skills however I had no contact with other social workers or had the opportunity to participate in direct tasks related to the social worker role.
- Not being paid for my normal (assistant social worker) job by my LA while I was on placement with a different SW department in same LA is stressful and frustrating as I know another student in same LA is being paid by her manager. Apparently its at managers discretion but HR told my manager its not an option.
- My placement has been uninspiring to say the least. I am doing youth work at a community centre - something I was paid to do at home in Canada. I have a clear vision of what kind of work I want to do, and that is in the criminal justice field. My wants and needs were never considered and I just wasted an extraordinary amount of money to do something that I have been doing for the past 3 years.
- Q 16, 20 & 22 = I am a DL self-funding student and full time LA employee. I was required to read and sign my employers policy for extended unpaid leave for approval from HR (100 days). The policy stated that my acquiring paid employment within the leave time was not allowed. Therefore, I had to secure loans from my bank and family (£10,000 total) so that I could meet my daily living costs. I am repaying them for the next 2 years. Otherwise Q18 would be yes.
- As an international student I am paying a lot of money to be here in Edinburgh, and I've spent years gaining experience in the field and now that I'm here I'm deeply disappointed. There's an overwhelming sense of grief that comes with the hope of

getting a placement that's interesting, and an even deeper sense of loss and demoralization that comes with getting a placement where you've already done that work before, for years, and there's nothing you can do to change it. Then on top of all that, not getting paid. It's like I've been deceived then told to "figure it out" financially.

- Having the opportunity to be part of a student hub model gave me the opportunity to experience different sectors of within social work practice. I was able to utilise transferable skills, as well as identify my strengths and what area of practice they are suited to.
- Really enjoyed my first placement, however I feel 80 days is quite short, you end up feeling comfortable in your role then it comes to an end.
- I feel a universal programme for students on placement needs to be implemented. I was left with no support or guidance from staff in my office, was not taken to shadow anyone and therefore there was very little opportunities for learning. I was not given an induction and lacked basic knowledge due to this. My experiences were not uncommon when speaking to classmates also in a statutory placement.
- Feel as though i wasn't listened too, asked multiple times for more clients and had nothing u til now. I am 6 weeks away from finishing placement, and my workload has only been upped to 3 clients now. Feel like my learning was held back a lot. This fears me for my next placement.
- I had a very positive first placement experience with excellent support and relevant experience
- A supported year once you have qualified would be great for everyone to ensure there is a baseline that everyone meets in their first year, a fair experience so to speak.
- Working in the 3rd sector has allowed for a different perspective and a richer learning experience, without the same pressures and stresses. So far has been a valuable learning experience and look forward to using this learning in my role as a qualified social worker.
- I personally enjoyed my placement in a third sector charity organisation but overall I would say it can be difficult from students from university to meet all their practice standards there and therefore the placement would be more suitable for college students, aiming to qualify as a support worker
- Very stressful
- Having two third sector placement for a final placement really affected my own confidence in feeling competent to go for local authority posts. I felt there were definitely gaps in my knowledge compared to my classmates who were in social work placements.
- Being placed in a voluntary sector without social workers in the organisation I felt I had to constantly remind my placement that I was a student and NOT an extra pair of hands.
- Practice Educator's should be better selected for the role. For instance, mines was a senior and setting up a new service at the same time. They did not have the time required to support, give regular supervision and my mental health was effected due to this. Also we did not get travel expenses and I was expected to use my car which I couldn't really afford and also had an impact on my mental health due to financial stress
- Financial burden - As a master student I was not entitled to any mileage. I was in a community care team so travelling often which was a huge financial strain
- Placement was a great experience. What made it very difficult was the lack of financial support as well as the time commitments of other academic work

- *My placement in a statutory service has been excellent.*
- *We need to understand that it is difficult to get support as it is within a busy time but even more difficult for people in my position who are on their first and final placement due to all being online. People in LA teams expected more from me and I had to keep explaining that this was my first and final placement*
- *I enjoyed my placement, but there was no social workers so often did find it hard to consider the social work aspect of my placement at times. I had a change of practice educator 4 weeks to the end, I had a difficult relationship with my first practice educator but got on great with my second practice educator as he took the time to meet with me and go through each evidence example and he also took the time to listen to me and support me to reflect, something I felt I didn't really have with my first practice educator.*
- *The particular needs of international students such as learning and integration should be considered in placements matching. International students should be given opportunities to undertake statutory placement to enrich their knowledge and build professional confidence.*
- *My final statutory placement was great but a lot for someone who had never had a statutory placement before. Because I only had the 1 I really struggled gaining employment following my graduation as well. The 2 other placements were not related to social work at all. I was lucky my tutor from uni gave me extra work to complete my criteria for passing..*
- *I feel I only gained direct social work experience and understanding from the statutory placement.*
- *My first placement was a social care role, supporting tenants with personal care and doing their housework. When I said to a team leader I was not there to do those things the reply was "well, what are you here for". The placement has an extra person so it makes sense to use them in any way which is how I was made to feel.*
- *I have thoroughly enjoyed placement. However as I have previously mentioned, it had been difficult trying to balance everything.*
- *If the university/ placement coordinators were able to place NQSW where they want to go / as opposed to just filling biggest vacancies, there may be more retention afterwards. I feel an element of the council is paying for my course so I will do the mandatory 2 years then look for a post which I actually want to be in.*
- *My Practice educator was not supportive, she was very challenging and made me feel incompetent. she had so many expectations she expected me to do tasks I had never done before. I was expected to visit families by myself with little or no supervision.*
- *Covid had a massive impact on placement and I feel to an extent placements have not recovered to pre covid opportunities*
- *My practice teacher built on my confidence and knowledge without me even realising.*
- *No support or guidance*
- *My placement was good, the team were all nice and welcoming, approachable and I felt I could ask them questions and for direction and guidance without feeling I should know how to do things.*
- *I was lucky in getting a statutory placement in a children and families team. You are restricted in not being able to lone work n child protection cases, so i did not feel overwhelmed. I enjoyed working duty and at times felt i could have had more cases, but there were NQSWs in the team needing cases. Due to covid more shadowing*

and agency visits were impossible, so hopefully that helps now and students get a broader experience.

- It has been extremely difficult managing without any real financial support from student bursaries, this has caused me some distress and pressure throughout my time on placement.
- My statutory placement was informative however this would have been beneficial on my last placement before graduating and joining the workforce. My second placement was completely virtual due to Covid, however this was not a suitable placement for a 4th year student as there were no learning opportunities and there was no scope for social work learning regarding intervention which is the aim for 4th year placements.
- My placement experience was greatly enhanced by the commitment, flexibility and competence of my practice educator, who met with me in person every week for 1.5 hours
- The financial support for international students are non existent while they pay higher fees. They also don't receive funding from SSSC which results in them needing to work while on placement and could lead to burnout
- I have thoroughly enjoyed both my placements, and I have been extremely well supported due to an ongoing physical health problem, the team around me from the [university] to supervisors within Social Work, have been so supportive and pro active in supporting me to successfully complete my placements. I cant thank them enough. I have been given excellent pieces of work to meet my learning needs, which have challenged me to think about theories and implement these in practice, this has really strengthened my knowledges and skills.
- Having a dedicated day for studying is all very well except I had to use it to work as I didn't get a bursary last year and this year I only got £400 for the semester, more needs to be done to provide social work students the opportunity to carry out a placement without financial concerns.
- Being a mother and being on a full-time placement is very difficult. Childcare in our area is very hard to come by and very expensive.
- My placement has been excellent but it is a prolonged period of long hours, high workload and thus, high stress. The expectation to do a 100 day placement without any days off is also unhealthy. I am also very lucky that I am being paid through my work to be on placement, but most others are not. I cannot imagine how stressful this experience would be with the addition of financial strain and sacrifice on top of it. I do usually work a second job at the weekends though, and had to reduce this in order to keep up with the workload.
- I think my mental health improved as a result of my placements. I was office based for Placement after starting my Postgrad during Covid where I was primarily working from home and feeling very isolated.
- My mental health was affected not by the placement but the work on top of placement
- I have had two placements within the statutory sector, but both were very different. In one service, the team was used to having students, and employed a high number of trainee social workers, therefore they were aware of the workload and limitations. In contrast, in the other service, as a student there was very limited mentoring, colleagues working mainly from home - this was manageable only because I had a fantastic practice teacher. I think the most effective learning is on the job, and that Scotland needs to consider 'Growing their own' - this would be better for social work teams and for students.

- *I had 120 day placement and around half way I found myself really struggling mentally and financially.*
- *I feel I was very lucky to get a job after qualifying despite having a first class degree due to having no statutory experience - no experience actually being in or seeing a social worker in action. I feel never being a social worker within placement and qualifying on that basis is madness. In the job, it has been hard but I have been extremely lucky to have a really good manager, otherwise I would have felt I could not do the job to the lack of experience and knowledge of the role.*
- *1. since my organization uses students as full time workers, whilst the regular staff is only part time, and I have had little supervision, I feel as if the organization is using students as free labour. 2. Staff has no means of protection in the event that a service user becomes aggressive. Whilst there are always supposed to be two workers in the centre, there is no room with reinforced locking door, no panic button and no other safety measures for staff. My concerns have been dismissed by the placement link supervisor.*
- *I feel that as I was given two third-sector organisations I am at a major disadvantage to those with statutory experience. During my placement there were no discussions regarding legislation and regulatory context of social work it was all focused on the theory side of social work. I also felt that the role, although important, was more of a 'buddy system' rather than a social worker role.*
- *I am currently enjoying my placement.*
- *Didn't feel it gave me enough social work direct work for example assessment writing, case notes. My sw experience has come from being a sw assistant in a summer job*
- *In my first year, the placement allocated for four hours away on a daily basis. The team manager believed that I am a nurse student. They were completely unaware about the social work standards. The university had to be convinced to find an alternate placement. There has never been an attempt from the university to specifically link the learning opportunities to the social work standards. If they would conduct this exercise, they won't send us to agencies that don't even know 's' of social work. My final year placement was in a social care agency. I am yet to understand what a final year social work student would achieve from working in a place that requires SVQ Level 2/3 qualification. I am not demeaning their work, as I understand that the support offered to service users makes a lot of difference. Again, there were gaps in the learning opportunities and a training team meeting was convened. There was no relationship with link worker and it was obvious that I was accepted due to 'payment' from the university to the agency for 'arranging' the placement. It impacted my learning as there was no option to exit, which affected my knowledge and skills. I am grateful to statutory placement arranged by the university in Year 1 that actually lands me a job offer. I had a poor experience on the placement and wish that no other student should be sent out without the university taking responsibility for 'finding' and 'ensuring' that learning opportunities 'exist' in real life and not just on 'paper'.*
- *I feel like I haven't really been pushed enough, I've had two third sector placements and there isn't very much work to do you have to make your own work*
- *It was a very different, educational, and overall positive experience*
- *I wish we had more opportunities for placements as Nurses do.*
- *I was treated terribly by both my supervisors throughout my placement. I was belittled, bullied, disparaged and given impossible targets. Everyday was a horrible*

experience. Behaviour towards me lacked any semblance of professionalism and the environment was toxic.

- Number of students at a particular agency needs to be limited when only having one practice tutor to give all students relevant experience, especially when opportunities for social work tasks in residential care.
- Since there's no question dedicated to this - The [Local Authority] doesn't sponsor skilled worker visa right away and asked the students to apply for the grad visa first. This should be consider as another barrier to workers retention and failure to address the severe shortage, as the NQSW would likely seek elsewhere to practice (like England or going back home afterward) after the end of the 2 years' visa instead of staying.
- My practice Educator was incredibly supportive [...]. I always felt listened to and supported. Her ability to link theory to practice and teach me how to do this has made me more confident in this area. She was always flexible.
- This was difficult to fill out as I had one amazing placement and practice educator and one good placement with an absolutely horrendous practice educator. The survey only allows to describe one.
- Placement should be a learning processing where we get to learn and unlearn. The organisations/agency where students are sent to should learn to communicate to students before going to their practice educator and also be aware that University [...] has international student (different culture). Practice educators should support students through their placement experience and also listen to their complains. Furthermore, Practice Educator are to give students a benefit of doubt when an issue is raised and not make an unfair decision because he/she has a personal relationship with someone in the organisation/agency.
- Fantastic practice and link during voluntary sector placement, awful experience with practice teacher in statutory placement due to inconsistent rules and workload compared to other students in same placement
- Placement learning opportunities were good. Placement supervisor had not been in the service long and had not had a sufficient induction themselves to induct a student. Supervision was per permanent staff standards. I highlighted areas that I felt I was not equipped to deal with as a student which was ignored by management and it was clear from emails that I was being used as a "creative" resource to a staffing issue. Requests for extra support was often not met by supervisor and there was little feedback in terms of strengths and development areas. The social workers i worked with were inspiring and helpful in terms of intervention ideas and support with assessments. Without them I would have been lost. My placement educator was external to the placement and was thankfully amazing and helped bridged the gaps with theory. I would have benefited from weekly case supervision from my supervisor.
- In my 80 day placement I had two supervisions with my practice teacher. The second was at my request after being really emotional the day before. We went for weeks at a time without any contact from her. We didn't have a link to fall back on either. I was routinely working 50-60 hours a week, then being expected to be on call from 9am Sunday to 9am Monday.
- I have gathered from attending interviews that child/Adult protection experiences on placement is important. My placements did not present me with this opportunity
- My placement in voluntary sector was average, giving me limited opportunities to apply my social work knowledge and undertake tasks. However, my placement in a statutory setting was exceptional and I really feel this has prepared to undertake my

first role as NQSW in the next couple of months, and I hope to return to this placement setting.

- *Both my placements were third sector. The first in a childcare setting was very poor and involved childcare, cleaning and washing up duties. My second placement was much better at a Carers Support Service.*
- *My first placement was with a third sector organisation where I gained minimal exposure to what social work actually is. I feel I should be compensated for how much of a waste of time it was and how little I learned.*
- *In both placements I often felt emotionally drained and often found it difficult to maintain motivation*
- *My first placement was terminated due to a rapid decline in my mental health, I took a year out and repeated the placement. Which was good, but everything I have learned in practice has been down to my employment which has been more valuable in learning social work processes, and the skills needed to work confidently as a social worker. Although I am hoping for a statutory placement in my final year*
- *It would be helpful if placement organisation have a social worker or have an understanding of the students focus there other than meeting and ticking boxes for the standards. Additionally, student can be offered part-time jobs during the course to support them and help them grow in the career. Similarly to what nursing students get 🤔 Furthermore, upon qualifying students should be given supports with getting their first job as they is always news of shortage of social worker but graduates have to scout around for jobs.*
- *Universities need to make the role of student social workers clearer. My placement were clueless until I had a change in link worker which made all of the difference.*
- *For my last placement, i was placed at an organisation that had not had students before. My link worker didnt know her role. Didnt know about the social work standards and wasnt sure od what i was supposed to do. It was like i was training her to some extent! Had to explain to her the standards, she didnt know what direct observations were, they are not trained at all and its left to us the students to teach them.*
- *I have felt that the consistent and unrelenting pressure of working for 6 months in a new environment, having a busy home life, concerns about finances (as I am not getting paid on placement) and worries about academic work created a lot of additional stress and anxiety. All together, there were days when I struggled with my MH. Its been tough.*
- *I had to leave my job because the workload was unmanageable*
- *Every social work student should get the opportunity to have a statutory placement before they graduate*
- *Support from the placement was fantastic but the organisation from the university was lacking.*
- *In my experience I started the placement super anxious and shy due to my anxiety but with the support of my Practice Educator specifically I was able to get help for my anxiety and have been on medication since, which has changed my life for the better. I am more confident and eager to go out of my comfort zone and talk to people and engage with not only service users but other professionals. I am grateful for my experience, the biggest thing for me was peer support and supervision. I work well after reflecting and talking things through. I had 3 other students in my specific placement with me and having other people going through the same thing but from different universities was so helpful. I would recommend trying to have students in*

the same placement where possible as peer support is such a huge thing during placement, especially knowing you are not alone is wonderful for mental health.

- *My placement has been an excellent experience however due to the requirement of a 100 day placement, with no annual leave allowance throughout, burn out is expected. Particularly due to the pressures of full time working at placement, university work/reading requirements, weekly reflective logs for practice educator, preparation for midpoint meetings, preparation for 2x weekly supervision. This does not allow for time for self-care/home life or to even really process or appreciate my placement. There should be allowance for annual leave throughout placement.*
- *The lack of finance is a issue*
- *Just love it*
- *The shift from university learning to placement is quite drastic, so sometimes it was mentally challenging to cope with the change of pace*
- *My final placement was only confirmed to me 2 days before it was due to start. This caused me a lot of anxiety. When I raised this with the university my tutor was unsupportive and rather rude. My final placement was in a setting with no social worker roles available. I also had no experience of a statutory role even though my first placement practice educator stated this was a learning requirement for me. Other students on the course had two statutory placements.*
- *Incredibly difficult to be continually motivated with no financial support in place for the whole of the placement.*
- *I was told I was unemployable as a disabled individual*
- *Due to being unpaid and full time this has reduced my income significantly and placed so much pressure on family life*
- *The way placement is structured with only a two week extension available encourages students to mask illness and mental ill-health. I became sick with glandular fever three weeks before the end of my second placement. While I was able to take time off, I had to conceal the chronic fatigue I experienced following my illness in order to complete the 100 days of placement. This also had a knock-on effect on my mental health.*
- *In my first placement I was sexual harrassed by the adults with mental health difficulties I was working with and the I was blamed by the organisation for the harrassment because I was told smiling at the service users was encouraging them. In my final placement, The staff at the placement were not very welcoming and made it clear on occasions that they did not want me there. I was also involved in Solihul Training very friday for 10 weeks and the staff used this as an opportunity to Isag off social workers and say how much they don't like them and find them arrogant and hoe they would do a much better job without them in their work lives. There were lots of other issues on placement and there's too much to put into this. It was literally horrendous and even my practice educator stated that she would not send anyone else back there again.*
- *There's is limited social work involvement in my placement so I've finished a placement with no understanding of the social work role in the placement context*
- *The statutory placement were really supportive and provided lots of learning opportunities, both within the actual placement as well as with other parts that link in with the organisation.*
- *There must be an obligation from the university to get at least 1 statutory placement. We get told that local authorities are haemorrhaging staff but here I am, having found a statutory placement on my own and I was told 'no'. If your first placement was not statutory, then regardless of the client base in the second placement, that is what*

should take precedence. When I go for a job interview, one of the questions will be 'what statutory experience have you had?'. I'm lucky that I had a good team over the summer when I worked as a CCA that gave me social work tasks and treated it like a placement. I don't think any of my classmates were as lucky.

- I would have benefitted massively from a statutory placement or at least working in an organisation that employed social workers to gain a better understanding of the role. Even within these placements, on the first I had no interaction with social work and on the second, minimal interaction. My first role was not a social work or care role at all. My second placement was a support worker role which whilst important, is very different from the role I wish to be employed in. I ultimately have no experience of the statutory role, risk assessment processes, professional meetings etc.
- The statutory placement was more helpful in terms of understanding the social work role. It was a steep learning curve, but useful in my development.
- I enjoyed both my placements and found my university tutor and practice educator very supportive. However, the roles were not as a social worker. IT was a outreach worker and social care worker. I am somewhat unsure what an actual social work role hold.
- I did more work as a carer.
- I was working in a youth work setting for Roma children and although this gave me excellent life experience and opportunity to develop my cultural competence, it in no way prepared me for a social work role. This left me totally disengaged from Social Work, lacking in self confidence and esteem and ill prepared for a career in social work. Having no statutory experience has left me on the back foot and I am struggling with confidence in my new role.
- I'm a single parent who usually works part time to accommodate my young sons school pick up and drop off times so manage fine financially as I usually have no childcare costs. I have been lucky enough to have been sponsored student meaning I continued to be paid my regular part time social work assistant wage whilst on placement. This did not however cover the extra costs of childcare that I had as a result of my placement being full time. As it is a 6 month placement this has been over a prolonged period. I am just over the threshold for universal credit following last years pay rise which means I do not get any government help towards childcare costs and do not qualify for university childcare funding schemes which are require universal credit eligibility. I am far from the only person in this position. Whilst on placement I feel that I have added value to my team and whilst money is not the reason I've gone into social work, being adequately recompensed for the work put in is important and adds to a feeling of being valued. Experiencing financial strain because no financial support is given to undergrad social work students on placement has the opposite effect. I could not work alongside placement due to my childcare responsibilities so financially this has not been an easy time.
- Competing demands of a split placement. Had to integrate into two teams and had three different people to report to. Boundaries got blurred towards the end
- I was placed at the positive outcomes team in [voluntary organisation]. The manager has a significant issue with power trips, speaks down to the students and changes the goal posts last minute. I have found a significant increase in my anxiety and have found the manager to be unsupportive of the work life balance that working mothers face. This has come in the form of demanding students in the office with a days notice and placing the well being of student social workers at risk of comprise due to a heavy work load

- *I was extremely lucky to have two supportive placements who supported my needs and gave me lots of opportunities - I think university could support students more (receiving a bursary so students do not feel under pressure in terms of finances) but also to support students mental health and take responsibility to explain what placement are expecting and will be like as this is extremely daunting and anxiety provoking University seems to often forget that students must access paid work but are often told that university comes first*
- *Placement was amazing, but it is not directly related to social work so if my second placement is either then I will have no direct work under a social worker.*
- *Social work placement does not truly reflect your social work role upon graduating. My mental health was impacted during my one year of NQSW training. I struggled to cope with report writing and the work load. There were occasions I took annual leave to complete my report.*
- *Sometimes students get caught up when they get given a 3rd sector placement as they feel it doesn't provide them with the skills and opportunities that they may have in a statutory service. While both types of placement are completely valid and provide students with good experiences it may be helpful to review some of the 3rd sector placements on offer to students - ones such as food banks, care companies may not quite be reaching the mark in preparing students for the realities of social work/stress/caseload - it may be helpful for academic staff to recognise this but I appreciate that this can be tricky especially when trying to secure enough placements for all students and their learning needs.*
- *My placement was exactly what I needed it to be and couldn't have picked it better myself*
- *staff treating you like a free labour, less rights than a volunteer has, but much more responsibility. no way of disagreeing with management. power imbalance.*
- *I got lucky I think, I really enjoy my placement experience and feel I learnt and developed so much, however I am in the minority of my class*
- *My placement experience was not good. I was not supported or provided guidance for my role.*
- *Placement was stressful and overwhelming, poor support and team dynamics made it very hard.*
- *Support differed depending on who your link worker/practice teacher was there did not appear to be standardised guidance that was being followed. Poor choice of placements with many students receiving no statutory placements and no placements working with social workers however I am aware of students on my course who has multiple statutory placements.*
- *Universities need to consider more about writing assessments rather than writing essays. Even though the skills are transferable. An outcome focused assessment needs to be written and practiced early in the beginning of our training.*
- *I had brilliant experiences with all my placements so was lucky compared to some of my fellow students*
- *I was very fortunate to have two excellent placements. Although I did have to work every weekend to support myself throughout my second placement. 12.5hr shifts on a Saturday and Sunday alongside a full time placement was too much. Given most social work students are mature students with caring responsibilities, it is financially impossible to cease working. NHS students are given a bursary. Access to this type of support would be beneficial to social work students.*
- *Felt the having an independent practice educator for one of placement offered a far better level of support. As this allowed for my link worker (a social worker from the*

team) to be able to concentrate my supervision with them to practical case discussions. Whilst my time with the independent looked at theories and legal frameworks that underpinned my practice. My PE was also able to act as an advocate to ensure that my workload was manageable and offered good quality of learning. I know some other students in my year that didn't have a independent practice educator work, ended up getting tasks that none of the other team members wanted to do such as repeatedly supervising family time or making home visit to settled cases to meet the statutory requirements measures of their legal orders.

- I have recently started a NQSW role and I while the local authority stated that I would be part of a programme to support newly qualified social workers and improve staff retention, I have not received emails regarding this and mentoring sessions have been cancelled due to my mentors other commitments. I also feel like supervision with my team leader has been inadequate as meetings are often cancelled at short notice and not rescheduled.
- 2 statutory placements are key to becoming a good well rounded social worker like they do in England!
- It was terrible and I have lost my confidence.
- We feel under valued and over worked before we even finish university and start our roles. I was a single mother of 2, who worked part time while on placement. I didn't drive at the time and so the financial burden was extreme for me and my family. Expenses were paid in arrears which also was an issue. We were only allowed to claim the least expensive travel method, even if this meant adding on extra hours to commute. An example of this- I was told to get a first bus pass to allow bus travel as this was the cheapest option, however the bus stop directly outside my sons school was for a different bus company [...]. I was advised to travel to a different bus stop on foot so I could get a first bus, this meant a further 20 min walk, and a longer bus journey, adding on 40 mins each way to my journey.
- I feel every fourth year student should have a statutory placement. Although I had a statutory in third year it was during covid so I was remote working and I feel I did not get as many opportunities as you normally would (care management). I know several students in my year are leaving uni without a statutory placement which I feel is wrong. As far as I am aware none of these placements employed social workers. We miss out on completing statutory assessments and risk assessments, attending multi agency meetings and leading meetings. In particular meetings where sensitive decisions are made I feel I have had no experience of. eg I have not been part of any child or adult protection meetings. I feel less confident than other students who had a statutory placement in my abilities due to not having the experience. I studied at [university], just finished 4th year. We also missed a placement due to covid.
- The need for statutory placement is so important, i felt i got a true idea of social work policies/procedures and working with service users and professionals. Very positive
- As mentioned, my first placement was a terrible experience. It impacted my mental health to the extent that I almost left the course. It was a non-traditional placement, and to be honest, not a social work placement at all. I was told I would not be able to shadow social workers and all my work would be done in the childrens unit. This was my only placement. If I had remained, I would have had no direct social work experience when graduating. From my experience and that of my peers, a lot of the problems come from the lack of good quality, social work team placements. Once I was in a social work team, I felt I was doing the work I had been trained to do and was given proper support. If I had remained in my first placement, I would not have

been prepared to practice as a NQSW. If you want social workers to stay, you need to give them proper placements or they will enter the workforce entirely unprepared.

- 1st placement in Voluntary Sector was an amazing placement with lots of support and learning opportunities. 2nd placement in statutory children and families, the team had no interest in helping a student far less helping a student who was working under covid restrictions. Such little support was given, high link worker absence, had to learn how to write Form F and Kinship assessments alone. Was blamed for struggling and almost failed due to mistakes in assessments that were submitted without anyone reviewing them nor helping throughout the writing process. Felt condescended and unsupported the entire time.*
- We need more placement's I had 1 placement due to covid.*
- The new learning developed my sense of the role in both services.*
- I was a COVID graduate so I only had one placement instead of 2. I felt this really limited my knowledge and skills going into practice.*
- Fortunately, as a nqsw I am in a very supportive statutory team and it has been a very positive experience. Placements seemed to be a tick box exercise for the university.*
- NQSW programmes of support are failing due to the lack of workers. There is no protection for NQSW in terms of caseload which often makes it unmanageable at early stages of your career.*
- Your next questions ask if I had to work luckily my family were supportive and I managed to avoid needing to work at the same time but at the same time it was difficult and couldn't afford to do much outside paying bills and groceries*
- Placement was daunting due to only having one 120 day placement. My placement setting was fantastic at giving different learning and training opportunities.*
- Inappropriate placements sets students up to fail as worker. This phase "transferable skills" just doesn't cut it. Being a food bank does not teach you the role of a social worker or the skills to provide intervention etc.*
- I enjoyed my placement however, did feel that my practice educators expectations of students in their first and only social work placement due to covid was quite high. Such as advising of "time management issues" and that i should not work past my working hours and should be able to complete workloads in a day. However, also contradicted this by suggesting I work over the weekend to complete a report if it was due a Monday.*
- My experience was severely impacted by extenuating life circumstances which were exacerbated by a PE who did not show understanding at all and did not take this into consideration when grading my work.*
- Having a virtual placement wasn't a good experience I felt very limited with my learning. The only time I got to see my other colleagues in person was if they were attending a home/ school visit with me. Lack informal supervision experience like chats in staff rooms. It always felt formal asking to organise a meeting to discuss anything.*
- A part time option, for a longer period, still within the academic year, would be more beneficial.*

Q18: Did you have to work outside the placement for financial reasons?

Answered: 341, Skipped: 3

Yes	207	60.70%
No	134	39.30%

Q19: If yes, Was the placement supportive/flexible regarding your other work?

Answered: 222, Skipped: 122

Yes	136	61.26%
No	86	38.74%

Q20: Were you advised to stop paid employment during placement?

Answered: 313, Skipped: 31

Yes	173	55.27%
No	140	44.73%

Q21: Are you in receipt of funding through (tick all that apply):

Answered: 292, Skipped: 52

SAAS	154	52.74%
University	22	7.53%
SSSC	85	29.11%
Other (please specify)	60	20.55%

Other:

- *Funded by employer - Was also paid my salary when on placement.*
- *The SSSC paid half of my fees and they provided me with a bursary.*
- *sponsored student through workplace*
- *work*
- *Self funded*
- *During my first placement i did not receive any funding but in my second placement, my travel expense was reimbursed by the University*
- *Support from family*
- *I got the hardship fund support during my placement*
- *Sponsored by [Local Authority]*
- *Employer*

- Half of course fees were paid by SAAS, thank goodness. Only because my income was less than £25,000.
- Sponsored Student via employer studying with [university]
- employer paying for course
- Local council
- sponsored by employer
- None
- SFNI
- I received a one off hardship fund, as I am from Ireland I am not entitled to other funding
- student loan through saas
- Sponsored student, able to keep salary from substantive post whilst on placements.
- social work bursary
- Emploer
- sponsored student
- Full time employment
- None; I'm an international student
- Student Finance England
- Work sponsored degree programme
- My Degree was Sponsored by my local authority. I dropped £500 per monly to complete my degree over a 20 month period. Whilst i am fortunate that i continued to receive a wage, I am single and have financial responsibilities which took a hit during this time. The cost of Fuel crisis following the outbreak of War in Ukraine also impacted on my finances as my second placement was a 120mile round trip.
- Sponsor
- None pay my course myself
- My local authority sponsors my social work training, guaranteeing me a post at the end of my course. Otherwise, financially I would have really struggled.
- Sponsored student
- I am a sponsored student.
- Sponsored by employer
- SLC Loan
- Myself
- Employer sponsoring degree
- I was funded through my employer.
- I am an international student and I am not entitled to public funds. However cost of living skyrocketed. 🤔 🤔 🤔
- Part time learning fee grant
- none as doing a distance learning course
- Sponsored via work
- Sponsored by place of work
- Local authority sponsored
- Employer
- NHS funded trainee position
- other loans
- Sponsored student through work
- Career Development Loan
- I paid half fees

- *Student finance*
- *Home country student loans. No other support.*

Q22: Have your finances been adversely impacted by your placement?

Answered: 339, Skipped: 5

Yes	213	62.83%
To a certain extent	72	21.24%
No	54	15.93%

Q23: If you are a NQSW, how prepared did you feel for the work as a result of your placement(s) (if you are a student skip to question 26)?

Answered: 90, Skipped: 254

Very	27	30%
Somewhat	45	50%
Not at all	18	20%

Q24: If you are a NQSW, do you feel supported at work?

Answered: 78, Skipped: 266

Very	46	58.97%
Somewhat	25	32.05%
Not at all	7	8.97%

Q25: As a NQSW, do you have sufficient learning opportunities and time that allows for learning?

Answered: 81, Skipped: 263

Yes	40	49.38%
Somewhat	29	35.80%
No	12	14.81%

Q26: Are you

Answered: 339, Skipped: 5

Male	26	7.67%
Female	308	90.86%
Other	2	0.59%
Prefer not to say	3	0.88%

Comments:

- Non-binary
- Genderqueer

Q27: How would you define your race or ethnicity?

Answered: 306, Skipped: 38

White (British)	252	73%
White (other)	15	5%
African	25	7%
Asian	7	2%
Mixed	3	1%
Jewish	1	0.30%
Latin-American	2	1%
Not answered	39	11%

Q28: The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. Do you consider yourself to fall under any of these protected characteristics (tick all that apply)

Answered: 112, Skipped: 232

Disability	52	46.43%
Gender reassignment	1	0.89%
Pregnancy and Maternity	4	3.57%
Race	22	19.64%
Religion or belief	9	8.04%
Sexual orientation	27	24.11%
Age	21	18.75%
Sex	27	24.11%
Mariage and Civil Partnership	9	8.04%

Q29: If you feel that having a protected characteristic was relevant to your placement experience, was this taken into consideration at your placement?

Answered: 115, Skipped: 229

Yes	61	53.04%
No	54	46.96%

Comments:

- *I was discriminated against during placement.*
- *I was able to relate to some of the LGBT+ service users who use the service*
- *In one placement yes but definitely not in the other.*
- *I am type one diabetic and this was supported throughout placement*
- *Dyslexia*
- *I have dyslexia*
- *Age is not a factor that is taken into consideration on placement however you are constantly doubted. People do not believe that you can be a qualified professional especially in children's services but the workers there are more open to younger colleagues.*
- *Adjustments made on non working day mid week*
- *My link supervisor said at the end of my placement she was reluctant to take me on as I am neurodiverse and needed minor adjustments. Even though adjustments were in place they were not always followed which made the experience more stressful than it needed to be.*
- *I had to remind my placement multiple times that I am deaf on one side and find driving others difficult, I was continually asked to drive people around and struggled to hear them in the car.*
- *Learning difficulty, access to required software was facilitated*
- *I was given a call by occupational health to discuss what could be done to ensure that I was able to be able to manage my work*
- *As above, there were reasonable adjustments made to both my placements, and nothing was missed when planning my placements, completing my PLO form, and carrying out my work whilst on placement.*
- *Dyslexic support*
- *I told both the university placement coordinator and the link supervisor that I am unable to be on the floor with children, but this has not been accommodated.*
- *My health condition was not taken into consideration at all. In fact it was wilfully ignored. My mental health was explicitly given as a reason for failing me on the placement*
- *It was not really mentioned as an issue or something that needed to be mindful of as it did not interfere with my day to day practice.*
- *No need to take sexuality in to consideration.*
- *Using one religion to evaluate their practice is totally wrong and unfair. Each parties (agency and student) should learn to respect each other culture and be accommodating of that. I experienced an unfair treatment because of my race and religion which didn't make my placement experience not so good.*
- *I am dyslexic and this effects my learning to a certain level. This was considered in my current placement*

- There were no issues regarding my protected characteristics and I did not feel any need to seek support for these
- It was by the placement but not by the university
- My practice educator and link worker were great at allowing me to be myself and we had an initial conversation about my sexuality and gender and they were welcoming to allow me to use my pronoun badge. During supervision my practice educator would allow me to discuss any issues that came up regarding my race during any visits or conversations with people and she made it clear that I should stand up for myself and I am allowed to terminate a meeting etc if there is any issues.
- Very supportive in relation to this along with peers. If I needed any additional support to let them know.
- Other staff were supportive of the fact I am younger, and still encouraged me that I had the right skills and was just as capable as someone older
- No allowances made for my dyslexia
- I had good support but was then told they would not employ me as I'm disabled
- I have an uncurable illness, it didn't majorly impact on my placement experience, however pain can be triggered by stress. My second placement were very aware of this and regularly done well being check ins and help with case management.
- I was given a placement closer to home so I could more easily commute. I was allowed holidays (added on to the end of placement) to allow for the school holidays that occurred during placement. My link worker and practice teacher were amazing and let me work as flexibly as possible to accommodate for my son. This was not always possible however as I needed to make the most of the learning experiences available.
- My placements were amazing at providing me support in regards to my anxiety disorder
- Cultural barriers were not taken into consideration.
- Learning agreement plan was put in place and a carers plan was put in place due to caring responsibilities
- I am dyslexic. all my colleagues were happy to proof read my work.
- I have a long term mental health condition and this was also not considered by my PE.
- I'm very small in stature, this was considered and amends to task etc were made.

Q30: Discrimination means treating one person worse than another because of a protected characteristic. Harassment is when someone repeatedly behaves in a way that makes another person feel scared, distressed or threatened. Victimisation is being treated unfairly because you made or supported a complaint to do with a protected characteristic, or someone thinks you did. Do you feel you experienced discrimination, harassment or victimisation on placement?

Answered: 299, Skipped: 45

Yes	28	9.36%
No	271	90.64%

Q31: If yes, did you report it and to whom? What was the response?

Answered: 30, Skipped: 314

Comments:

- *I reported it to my university and the council. The university failed to support me and the council denied the claim. I reported it to my solicitor who helped me take legal action.*
- *There were comments in my first placement discriminating against different gender identities which I reported to my supervisor, my reports were taken seriously resulting in training*
- *I was forced to quit my placement due to lack of support and harassment/threats of failure*
- *Yes but never reported. I could see the person had a personal issues with me not professional and I was able to manage this.*
- *Reported harassment from a member of staff at placement agency. Reported to practice educator and tutor who both had good responses.*
- *I spoke about it in supervision with my Practice Educator, Link Worker and Line manager. Age discrimination is not dealt with. Services perpetuate this if you are NQSW or Student.*
- *I reported it to my practice educator, the response was "well, that's just Scottish banter, you'll have to get used to it"*
- *Discriminated as a student by a senior*
- *No*
- *One of the team leaders barely spoke to me, often ignored me, sometimes they would leave the room as I entered. They showed me nothing and gave me nothing to do nor any support, especially when I said I was not there to do housework and perform personal care. I reported it to the link supervisor at the end of my placement. I raised it with another team leader, nothing was done about it.*
- *Yes. Took voluntary suspension*
- *I felt intimidated by managers. I witnessed bullying of a NQSW, and it seems to be part of the culture within social work teams. I mentioned it to a manager but my concern was brushed under the carpet, as were those of other witnesses. I think this is perhaps a big part of the difficulties in retaining staff - how does a NQSW discuss concerns during supervision when management do not exemplify social work values that the profession espouses. A good supportive manager, who listens can make all the difference!*
- *I reported this to my manager - a meeting was held to resolve the situation. It was utterly ineffective and I wanted to leave. It was a horrible experience.*
- *No*
- *No*
- *My practice educator on placement two was bullying me. I told my practice teacher at university who told me to deal with it myself.*
- *No, I put it in feedback form to university but never received a response.*
- *My Practice Educator. My complains were totally ignored when I raised it during supervision.*

- Otherwise student experienced similar behaviour and was failed for speaking up, so I didn't report my experience with this practice teacher. Link was supportive within the confines of his power.
- Supervisor
- I didn't report and I was discriminated for fasting as a Christian.
- Reported to university and practice educator. They advised to take it further but this would have put me in a difficult position
- I reported it to my link worker who did nothing so I then reported it to my practice educator. still nothing was done so i ended up going to the university. In the end the organisation only acted to stop one of the people harrassing me and the other person was let off.
- I thankfully did not experience anything like the things me tokens above on placement but did experience gaslighting from staff during my final placement. I felt singled out alot f the time and that the team weren't interested when I raised concerns about needing more support on placement. I felt a sense of gang mentality from the staff team on placement which was incredibly challenging. This, among other comments about my appearance/demeanour being "too professional" was difficult and chipped away at my confidence in trying to form my own identity as a social worker
- No
- I reported it to my lecturer. It was my word against the link worker and practice educator. The outcome was that I will have a mentor and that I will receive support.
- Bullying - ie "the student" told to do awful tasks.

Q32: Were there any personal circumstances that impacted on your placement? (e.g. mental health, bereavement, care responsibilities, care experience)

Answered: 330, Skipped: 14

Yes	160	48.48%
No	170	51.52%

Q33: If yes, did you feel supported?

Answered: 169, Skipped 175

Yes	108	63.91%
No	61	36.09%

Comments:

- My best friend passed away during placement and I had to carry on or I would have had to find alternative placement
- I was made to feel like I wasn't coping rather than supported. So glad the placement is over.

- *My aunt had a stroke and nearly died, something that I witnessed. My dad and uncle and dog passed away 2 years ago which all came back when my Aunty had a stroke. The first thing my practice teacher said was we need to talk about resilience. She's also told me that she didn't believe in mental health until her partner suffered from poor mental health which I felt undermined my mental health issues.*
- *My background/ethnicity as a minority student played a factor to being labeled and not to complain and do as one is told*
- *I buried my ex long-term partner who I still provided support for. During placement he passed and I was left to view his body, clean his flat and arrange and attend his funeral. I had 4 days off. My PE phoned me when I was at the mortuary and expressed that she was really concerned about the short time I was having off! No consideration for the place I was in or what I had to endure.*
- *During my final placement I experienced an identity crisis which impacted negatively on my mental health, this was due to the discovery that my father was not my biological father. I was supported emotionally and practically by both placement and university and my placement was extended and access to counselling.*
- *I had to start late not because of me and was told I would finish late this had an impact on going back to work and care responsibilities.*
- *Placement organisation fully supportive and allowed flexibility to meet caring needs. Tutor, educator and learning network less so putting pressure on working hours without accounting for a blended / hybrid working*
- *To a certain extent, placement was too far away, no time to self, didn't know area I was working in. staff not taking enough time to let me process information.*
- *grandparent terminally ill through placement and was supported fantastically.*
- *I feel like if I was honest about how I was doing, there would be a serious risk of being failed or having my placement delayed an extra year. I do not need to delay my studies, I need support through them.*
- *Definitely great peer support with those within the course*
- *From five students that had started, two of us had caring responsibilities and even though the other student left, I was the one assigned two group work sessions that started after 5pm. With the help of my PE I was able to negotiate to have just one of the evening group work sessions, but to be able to do that, I had to rearrange the childcare, which did not personally work best with my former partner. Working past 5pm was not something discussed before the placement and before starting there was no such information shared. Duty day would often run past 5pm as well.*
- *My dad was terminally ill while I was on placement in a hospital discharge setting. He passed away a couple of months after my placement ended. I felt fully supported by my link worker and tutor during this difficult time and was able to take time off if needed.*
- *My grandad who I was caring for died near the end of my final placement. I was expected to use up my annual leave to support my family through this time and was not given extensions on my written deadlines. I was handing in poorer quality work because I was stretched that was not my best and pushed to finish quickly. I submitted my final written work late due to this and had to retraumatise myself by going through mitigating circumstances that are not guaranteed to be accepted. Placement colleagues were more supportive than university staff but overall I did not feel well supported to deal with my family circumstances.*
- *Experienced bereavement and Covid-19 during placement, and felt fully supported throughout.*

- Practice Educator provided reassurance and guidance. Lecturer advised and facilitated my application to hardship funding
- To some extent
- Both placements were accommodating to support childcare arrangements
- Requested a local placement due to caring commitments but was given one with a 40 minute commute meaning I could not visit my elderly Mum or do tasks for my very ill daughter in my lunch break as I usually would.
- There hasn't been anyone that offered any type of support during my placement besides my classmates.
- My brother passed away two weeks before placement finished. I felt that I was supported in my placement but I made the decision to continue working. After placement, I had to resubmit my practice analysis assignment, but I received 1-1 support for self-reflective analysis with a tutor, which was very much needed.
- The response I received from placement was something to the effect of "ok, take a day off, but know you'll need to make it up at the end of term" and the response from the university was "well, if it's impacting your mental health this much, take a leave from your studies and come back next year to try placement again" which felt like a threat and was not helpful it just signalled to me that I shouldn't ever go to the university for support.
- My practice educator and link worker were very supportive - i experienced two bereavements whilst on placement and found them to be very supportive. University didn't really get in touch after the initial message of letting them know what happened.
- I went largely unnoticed in my placement setting, no one attempted to get to know me and I was viewed solely as a "student". Therefore I did not feel comfortable approaching other staff to speak about such topics.
- By PE but not organisation
- I felt fully supported throughout my placement
- My Papa died and my practice teacher was understanding.
- offered some time off
- I have children and the placement was very supportive to schedule my shift around bank holidays or strike actions
- Was able to work school hours on 3 days when childcare was unavailable
- I became unwell over the festive period and needed respite to recover. This respite was impossible given the fact I would have had to prolong my placement or even consider restarting placement the following year. I had to juggle other academic requirements as well. I cannot understand how social work masters students are expected to look after themselves during the academic year given the fact we were advised not to work, or when we could work we had to accept our academic studies would be negatively impacted. it seems only fair that students undertaking placement, effectively undertaking an employment role, should be paid a living wage. I have no savings left and have to rely on parental and friends to support me financially. Considering I am going to work in the statutory social work sector I feel very aggrieved at the vulnerable situation i am now in trying to become a social worker
- allowed a few days off to deal with issues however still felt the pressure of work due both academic and for placement was unmanageable when i returned which adversely impacted me
- Not understanding of having to be absent due to my own illness or my children's
- Bereavement - was well supported during this period.

- *I found it all quite overwhelming to be honest, my mental health has struggled , and i found it difficult to juggle work, placement, uni all at the same time. I feel like I have not learned to the best of my ability due to financial and mental health concerns*
- *Although I was supported by my external practice educator. The LA team I was in did not appear to accept I had to take time off due to my grandfather being unwell and then passing away. I was made to feel like I had to update everyday when I felt I had updated all appropriate channels that were required. I think sometimes placements forget that you are not being paid at times. Also some people are quick to forget how it feels to be a student and under immense pressure*
- *I was diagnosed with anxiety during my second placement. It was an awful experience and the member of staff overseeing my placement continued to do the same things. My tutor at uni tried intervening also but this did not help.*
- *I went through a bereavement during one of my placements and my practice teacher/link worker could not have been more supportive.*
- *flexible working from home option provided*
- *my practice tutor was excellent and extended my placement by 3 days so I could attend a close member family funeral*
- *I had an emergency surgery, and my placement had been more than supportive to integrate me back in after taking time off.*
- *I have a young child and care for a family member and placement were so supportive to help me juggle it all*
- *I cannot fault my placements and my experience of this. One of the challenges for me was the lack of communication around my placements in relation to my career moving forward. I feel this was more in relation to the my circumstances as a sponsored student, rather than specific to my placements. Whilst I do feel i have good support now, when i first started in my new job as a social worker, my support was limited (No one even met or contacted me on my first day), again possibly because i have worked in the department before and already knew my way around. It just didnt feel very welcoming. At present, Staffing is in absolute crisis, and this is undoubtedly having an impact on protected time and caseloads for all the newly qualified staff, not just myself. Our department have held focus groups and support sessions but sadly things are not going to improve until we have more staff. I am concerned we are working at a very dangerous staffing level which is also impacting on the meaningful work we are all trying to do. I love my job, but this is a crisis.*
- *was supported by my practice teacher*
- *I suffer from anxiety which my practice educator knew. I was open and honest about my struggles and had discussions within supervision regarding this. My practice educator asked me if I was autistic as I displayed similar traits, this resulted in me being quite self conscious about habits I have, further affecting my mental health.*
- *I was hospitalised for over a month during my final placement with a life-threatening condition and did not at all feel supported as a student. The placement themselves were very supportive but there was no support or advice offered from the university.*
- *Physical health - hospitalised twice.*
- *My treatment was universally the polar opposite of supportive . My supervisors seemed to be trying to make life as difficult for me as possible, and to be as unpleasant as they could get away with*
- *Caring responsibilities impacted my flexibility, my placement organisation were great, unlike my university.*
- *My practice educator was mindful of my care responsibilities and ensured that I was able to work from home some days to accommodate.*

- *My initial placement was unsuitable. I felt listened to. I also felt the University kept me up to date on any progress when trying to find a resolution.*
- *I didn't feel like I could take the time I needed off when my gran died. I put this pressure on myself. If I'd asked for support, I assume I'd have been given it.*
- *I have two babies, aged 1 and 2 and they experienced sickness and severe separation anxiety. I was told I was not ready to return to placement and that they were concerned about my days off (3 days of my annual leave due to norovirus).*
- *I struggled with childcare. During my 1st placement I had to bring my kids to work for 2hrs and I was asked to take them to them outside*
- *The linker worker most of the time are not trained for the work as they don't know how to support one, which makes it difficult for them to know where to come in, leaving the both parties frustrated and the student overwhelmed. All my placement has been in a third sector without a social work which didn't give me a professional experience. The University [...] should be more supportive to students when they are on placement, listening to complain and find out facts about situations and not being unfair in choosing a party to listen to.*
- *Very supportive link teacher*
- *Although those in my placement were supportive at a time I was struggling, they were also unsupportive and felt that although I explained it wasn't workrelated issues I was struggling with it was personal, this was taken as my inability to be able to do the job when I qualify and have a full case load and advisement to apply for jobs in other teams which really knocked my confidence when infact I was nearing burn out due to having to work overtime due to financial issues at home and therefore was working a high amount of hours and was mentally and physically exhausted, hearing that I should not take on a role I was actually enjoying really impacted my choices once I qualified*
- *My mother died 4 weeks prior to my 60 day placement and my sister died the day my 100 day placement was due to start. Both times I felt supported by both my work environment and [university]. This was especially appreciated as both times it was a new work teams I was going in to directly after the loss.*
- *mental health due to stress of placement*
- *I didnt ask for support.*
- *My brother died during my first placement and the placement was extremely supportive. The university not so much!*
- *I have anxiety and supervision allowed me to explore my mental health, my practice teacher encouraged me to seek help from a GP and I have been on anxiety medication since and it was the best thing for me. I am also a carer for my disabled mum and my practice educator, link worker and peers have been so supportive of ensuring that I do not feel stressed by being a carer and allowing me to work through any feelings that occur when engaging with other carers and hearing about the feelings that arise.*
- *Still required to take on full work load*
- *My practice educator required weekly submissions of work from me. There were two weeks where I was ill or struggling with personal circumstances that impacted on my mental health. Instead of offering to ease the workload, they asked me to submit two pieces of work the next week to make up for the work I missed. I found this approach very punitive and difficult to manage.*
- *I have based these answers on my first placement which was not a statutory role and no social workers present either. I think it is an absolute waste of time placing social worker students in such placements. My second placement was statutory and gave*

me more of an idea of what will be expected of me when I qualify. Another placement like this would have benefited me more as I gained much more in this placement to support me to move over to the role of NQSW. I have been a social work assistant for many years so have an understanding what to expect anyway - people that don't would feel so far removed from what the role is and very underprepared

- Given everything that happened on placement I didn't feel comfortable enough telling anyone. Besides when ever I asked my link worker for help I was told 'no' and she would walk away. I don't know who I would have turned to in the organisation even if I had wanted to.
- The university, my work and my placement were all supportive of my mental health and need for leave at times during placement as the result of a bereavement the year previous.
- I had to work to support my family (1 years old) and I was working 9 to 5 Monday to Friday then having to pull shifts as a Residential child care worker on weekends. There needs to be greater support for students with families (on top of the SSSC bursary). I asked for funding from the uni hardship fund and I was given about £1000. That doesn't cover all my bills for even a month. You want social workers? Let us earn or give us an equivalent living wage to study.
- The cost of living has risen to an unmanageable high. I have two children who both access morning and after school provision. The placement manager stated that Monday's and Friday were from home and since beginning placement I am yet to have worked a day from home, often being told you are in the office tomorrow at 9am. This has had significant repercussions not only to me but for my children as I have had to scramble to get last minute provision for them as well as making extra payment that I would not have incurred had I been working from home on these days. It feels exhausting and unmanageable as a student who is in unpaid placement
- it was more punitive and gave me more stress than actually helped me with my mental health
- I really struggled with some issues that I didn't realise were impacting on my focus and anxiety. I was so close to finishing the placement but when I disclosed the anxiety I was feeling I was told I couldn't be assessed properly as I hadn't been focussed. I was also told I needed a lot of help. This totally blew my confidence out of the water and I was told my placement was declared null and void. With less than 2 weeks to go. I'm prepared to go back in the summer and try again. I'm hopeful things will go well this time.
- Somewhat supported. Particularly in my first placement the demands from the practice educator were high and not consistent with other students on our course.
- I have a son and had a couple of incidents whereby I had to start later or leave earlier for appointments but the workplace was supportive
- The final placement took place from May until October. As a parent, this was not ideal.
- My long-term relationship ended and I had to move house. The changes significantly impacted my mental health and my practice teacher and link worker recommended I take time off to get things organised. Everyone was very supportive.
- As a student and NQSW I feel I am expected to muddle through any issues I have. As previously mentioned I was a single mother of two, so this had a massive impact on my placement. I felt I was stressed before I even got to placement most days. The nature of the role means planning for any type of child care is unrealistic.
- Care experienced- spoke with PE in depth about dealing with similar situations to what I experienced in the care system

- *Bereavement. Left at lunchtime and was pulled into a meeting to explain myself. Was made to feel the bereavement was not close enough or important enough to warrant leaving placement after finding out.*
- *Practice educator and link worker supported me*
- *I have a disabled son, my placement and my tutors were very supportive*
- *I am a carer for two family members*
- *Carer, placement and uni not interested in this*
- *My sister was diagnosed with a terminal illness in month 2 of my placement. I also have a mental health condition and a very small baby. I felt no considerations were made for this.*
- *I have attended two placements within two different services within statutory services. I experienced a stark difference between the two services particularly where the social work team had little experience of social work students, and saw them as just another worker. I appreciate that most teams are under pressure, therefore having a student to mentor only adds to the pressure. I had an external Practice Educator who I will never forget because of their dedication, and passion for social work - their support gave me the confidence to continue. From speaking to other students and NQSW, the quality of placements are very hit and miss, with different expectations of students. The [...] University programme that I am completing is a fantastic resource, but I do find the pace and level of written work for two modules limits the time to think and consolidate and appreciate placement. I do wonder if it is a conscious drive to test the resilience of trainees so that by the time they qualify, they are already used to the intensity of social work. There is one aspect of social work practice on placement that made me question whether I could continue as a social worker, and that is the culture in certain social work teams, which can be unsupportive. Without realising, some managers attitudes create a culture of intimidation, which means that if a social worker is struggling, they are unlikely to seek support in supervision. As students, the social work values of respect, non-judgement, empowerment and partnership are drummed in to us, but social work managers too need to adopt these values to create a more supportive ethos for NQSW. I also think that sponsorship of students is the best way to learn. I have listened to NQSWs mention that they feel unprepared for practice in the statutory sector. Of course, there is the other difficulty within social work that a complete lack of resources for early intervention, means that students and NQSWs may feel disillusioned with the profession, when their aspirations to support people through therapeutic relationships are thwarted by constant fire-fighting and heavily bureaucratic work.*

Summary report:

SASW Findings from Student Placement Experience Survey.

<https://new.basw.co.uk/policy-and-practice/resources/social-work-placement-experience-report-sasw>

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