

Before considering to offer a Practice Placement opportunity to a Student CLD Practitioner

This document is designed to prompt you to consider the impact that a Practice Placement Student CLD practitioner will have on your organisation and why certain criteria/guidelines are in place.

The Student CLD Practitioner will supply a link to the CLD Professional Practice Placement Standards document to you when they approach you to ask you to consider providing them with a placement opportunity. Please note that the Educational Provider may already have supplied you with a copy of the document that this template forms part of. If you have not received this please get in touch at contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk . The CLD Professional Practice Placement document will be used throughout the placement and forms part of the Student CLD Practitioners assessment. Please note that the Educational Provider may provide you with their individual requirements/documents and that the CLD Professional Practice Placement Standards document is considered the minimum interaction required. The important aspect is that within the CLD Sector we wish to ensure a consistent approach is taken by all Educational providers, Placement supervisors and Student CLD practitioners. By putting the Student CLD Practitioner at the heart of the process we aim to ensure that Student CLD Practitioners are acting in a professional manner from the very beginning of their learning programme and are taking responsibility to support and improve the standards of that learning experience.

Students undertaking qualifications approved through CLDSC Professional Approved Degree routes, must undertake a minimum amount of practice in order to achieve the professional qualification. This is based on the QAA Benchmarks for Youth & Community Work which advise that:

“Students have significant involvement in community and youth projects as well as in other, more formal, settings. Learning through working with experienced practitioners of youth work, community education and/or community development, as well as other professional staff, is a central feature of courses in this subject area.”

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmarkstatements/subject-benchmark-statement-youth-and-communitywork.pdf?sfvrsn=5e35c881_4

Your involvement as a role model is vital not only to the success of the Student CLD Practitioner but also ensuring the quality of the CLD Sector in the future.

Practice Placement Providers

A good placement agency is one that has thought seriously about the implications of taking a Student CLD Practitioner into their organisation. Students almost always add to the capacity of the organisation by bringing extra resources but they also create demands in terms of staff time and space.

Staff time – students require the attention of their qualified practice supervisors on a regular basis in the form of regular, structured supervision sessions. In the case of full-time block placements this can require one to two hours of a supervisor's time each week. This means that supervision cannot be simply added on to a supervisor's workload but must be accommodated into the supervisor's working week. Time must be created to accommodate the supervisory role.

Space – Host agencies are asked to think about the physical accommodation of the student CLD practitioners. Where possible the student CLD practitioners should be offered their own work space and technology but we recognise that there may be particular arrangements that apply to all staff and student CLD practitioners would normally be expected to fit into these arrangements.

Beyond these practical considerations there is also a need for the agency to prepare itself as the context within which a student CLD practitioner can be supported. Student CLD practitioners often challenge convention, ask awkward questions and propose apparently naïve solutions. All of these things can challenge the openness of any agency to think differently about itself and the way it does things. It is not just the supervisor who needs to prepare for these eventualities but the whole of the agency's staff, all of whom may be required to take on a tutoring, mentoring or coaching role in relation to the student CLD practitioners in their midst.

The central commitment from the agency is of course the time of the placement supervisor. This commitment will vary depending on circumstances but what follows is an indication of the kinds of multiple roles the supervisor may be called on to perform.

Roles of the Placement Supervisor

There is no one correct way to be a Professional Practice Placement Supervisor. How we undertake the role depends on many things, not least your own style of supervision and the learning needs of the student. Supervisors perform many different roles during the process of enabling a student's learning some of which are listed below:

- **Facilitator:** Depending on the experience of the student, the supervisor might simply be required to facilitate the placement learning process by providing the context to enable the student CLD practitioners to reach their goals.
- **Role Model:** Students will look to their supervisors as role-models as they learn through observation of the professional in practice, shadowing their supervisor and other professional staff to see how they deal with the challenges of practice.
- **Coach:** It is often crucial to the student's learning that they are offered the opportunity to work alongside their supervisor on shared projects in order that the supervisor can advise and coach in the midst of the practice setting.
- **Motivator:** Student CLD practitioners often come to the placement experience unsure about their abilities and feeling inexperienced and vulnerable. In these circumstances supervisors become a crucial source of motivation in helping to build student CLD practitioners confidence by affirming the student CLD practitioners abilities while positively pointing them towards developing their skills and thinking for the future.
- **Mentor:** It is crucial to the student's development that they receive good advice to help them develop their analysis of practice situations. Supervision which helps

them to share their analysis and get well-structured feedback is key to the student's development.

- **Educator:** It is really important that professional practice supervisors see themselves as professional educators and as teachers for periods of the placement period. Student CLD practitioners benefit from structured teaching sessions in which professional staff engage them in critical dialogue about things like the latest policy developments or the methods that they use in their work.

Additionally, being a supervisor is about carrying out the following roles:

- **Manager:** ensures a smooth, planned and motivating placement
- **Observer:** actively monitors student CLD practitioners performance, participants response and student CLD practitioners participant interaction; acknowledges learning style
- **Instructor:** allow opportunity for questions, carefully listening; attention to learning style; teaching new skills; giving clear explanations.
- **Counsellor:** allows time for support and feedback; is a mutually educative exchange, offers problem-solving, ensures privacy, maintains appropriate role boundaries.
- **Assessor:** analyses performance merits and problems; timely in identifying learning needs; relies on keen observation and documentation of observations; expectations are clear, certifies pass/fail assessment.
- **Feedback:** provides recommendations for improvement, is timely; relates to remediable behaviours; takes place in written, verbal, direct, indirect and peer feedback styles.

Each of the partners in the professional practice placement process has a particular role to play in ensuring the success of the learning opportunities offered throughout the placement experience.

CLDSC will shortly be launching further documents to support Practice Placements which will include templates and checklists to support the process.

This document will form part of that information and includes the following pointers to consider:

Some things to consider before considering offering a CLD Professional Practice Placement Opportunity:

- What does your organisation need to consider in advance of accepting a Student CLD Practitioner into your agency?
- Do you have a CLDSC Approved Qualification and 2 years practice experience?
- Have you completed a Practice Placement Supervisor Training course?
- What work can you make available to the Student CLD Practitioner during their placement? What time will this involve? How can you protect this time in your own calendar?
- Are you comfortable advising a Student CLD Practitioner that your organisation may not be suitable placement for them. This could be due to the work focus, hours or possibly other employee related criteria. It is important that both parties are able to gain a quality experience.
- Are you comfortable in assessing the work of the Student CLD Practitioner or do you need to seek support and guidance to complete this?
- Are you prepared to undergo Practice Supervisor Learning? (if required)
- Has your employer agreed for you to take on the responsibility of a practice placement Student CLD Practitioner?
- Do you have a clear understanding of the areas that the Student CLD Practitioner will require to be involved in?
- Are you ready to meet with the potential Student CLD Practitioner and create the working contract?
- Does your organisation wish to be added to a database of placement opportunities held by CLDSC?

The Student CLD Practitioner will be required to share the contract agreed with you to their Educational Provider.

They will be unable to start the placement opportunity until this is done AND will be unable to start their placement until they have the appropriate PVG in place.

For further information please email CLDSC at contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk