

**PQSW CANDIDATE
HANDBOOK**

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1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook aims to equip candidates who have registered for the PQSW with the additional knowledge and guidance they will need to complete the award.

These guidelines are built on the experience of assessors, mentors and candidates since *Advance* assessment activity began in 1996. The guidelines are open to continuous review, improvement and feedback and suggestions about the need for amplification or clarification is welcomed.

2. CANDIDATES ON REGISTERED PROGRAMMES

Candidates registered for awards who are on programmes (eg courses at a university) that are already registered with *Advance* (or another PQ Consortium) will be made aware by the programme provider of which requirements will be met as a result of completing the programme assessments.

Many programmes are being registered with PQ Consortia across the country. Each consortium awards requirements and credits in a slightly different way which means that there can be some variance between similar programmes (e.g. Practice Teacher Awards). There is also variance between different 'showings' of programmes related to course content and assessment requirements which were current at the time (eg courses for Approved Social Workers).

It is important to focus on the **requirements** that a registered programme covers rather than the **credits** that it carries: it may be that similar programmes carry different credit ratings (e.g. a 60 credit or 100 credit ASW) but it is the requirements that all have to be covered (with a minimum of 120 credits) to gain the award and the number of credits achieved over the 120 minimum makes no difference to the final outcome.

The submission of a completion or award certificate for a PQ registered programme is all that is required to be awarded the relevant PQSW requirements, if the number of PQ requirements met is stated on that certificate. If the programme is registered for the whole award, no further work will be required to be awarded the PQSW. Should there be no reference to the PQSW on the certificate, then the course provider will have to complete an *Advance* Form F which is submitted to the Assessment Board for approval. (contact the office for details).

3. EXPERIENCED CANDIDATES WITH RETROSPECTIVE EVIDENCE

As Requirement PQ1 is increasingly becoming part of the entry criteria for new awards coming on stream (eg PQ Child Care Award and Mental Health Award) it is appropriate to start with this requirement. Thereafter evidence can be submitted for requirements in any order. Separate guidelines have been written for candidates submitting for PQ1 only and these can be seen in Handbook H9.

For candidates who are new to the experience of presenting evidence of workbased learning, PQ1 provides the opportunity to 'test the water' and build portfolio skills. It is anticipated that candidates will have identified their 'route' through the award in their *Initial Action Plan* (Form Q).

There is no limit on the amount of retrospective evidence that a candidate can submit in their portfolio (see *Section 6f* for further clarification of the shelf life of retrospective evidence).

4. NEWLY QUALIFIED CANDIDATES

Those candidates starting employment after gaining their DipSW will be working through the PQSW in a more chronological way. Evidence for PQ1 should be ready for assessment (and potentially certification) after about 12-18 months in practice.

The DipSW qualified individual is very well prepared to follow the PQSW path with their experience of competence based learning and evidence gathering. It is precisely this learning readiness and self-awareness that can be channelled into the PQSW which provides the framework by which to plan and evidence continual professional development.

The remaining requirements will be evidenced as the candidate progresses in their roles and career and will probably be evidenced over the following year or two depending upon job roles, employment circumstances, employer interest and candidate motivation. PQ6 is likely to be the last requirement sought as it suggests a more senior or line-management role would be necessary to demonstrate the requirement.

5. THE MENTOR

It is anticipated that many of those coming forward as Mentors may be holders of Practice Teacher Awards, the PQSW itself, TDA (formally TDLB) units, IPD qualifications, teaching qualifications, etc. or indeed they may be actively pursuing their own AASW (Education and Training pathway).

The PQSW mentor is responsible for assisting the candidate in preparing for a portfolio submission: in many ways their role is that of **Portfolio Advisor**. The mentor oversees the candidate's process and progress in building a portfolio and will be required to conduct a first assessment on any submissions made by the candidate. *Appendix 1* offers a fuller description of the role of the mentor.

For some candidates their workplace supervision will also be the place where they are mentored in their PQSW evidence gathering and development activities. Although *Advance* is keen to promote this arrangement for mentoring it is also recognised that PQSW mentoring could be compromised by the reactive and urgent nature of line management supervision and provision needs to be made to guard against this (perhaps by holding mentoring sessions separately from regular supervision). Line managers acting as PQSW mentors will be in a position to verify their portfolio submissions themselves as they have day-to-day knowledge and experience of the candidate's actual work practice.

In contrast, independent mentors may have to probe more deeply to explore practice competence, as verification of evidence submitted to *Advance* is the responsibility of the mentor. This may mean that the independent mentor needs to have access to the line manager periodically and this of course will need to be negotiated with the candidate and employer. Any such arrangements may need to be integrated into a mentoring agreement.

Candidates will have indicated on their application form if they are seeking a mentor and a register will have been supplied. It remains the responsibility of the candidate to contact suitable mentors from this register and make a selection.

5a) THE AGREEMENT

Where mentoring is to be integrated into line management supervision, or provided by the agency, it is important to have a agreement which specifically focuses on the task of PQSW mentoring so that this is not lost amongst other more urgent issues.

At the first meeting (suggested to take about 2 hours) the candidate and mentor will negotiate a written agreement addressing the issues suggested in *Appendix 2*.

The joint negotiation of boundaries and acknowledgment of difference should result in a clear agreement between individuals. A copy of this agreement should be forwarded to *Advance* (for monitoring and quality assurance purposes) and kept by both parties. Where a bursary allowance has been made for mentoring, it is the forwarding of this agreement that will trigger this payment to the candidate (see Section 5d below for further details about payments to mentors).

It may be that a agreement will need to be amended in the course of a candidate's progress through the award. There will also be occasions when a candidate may change their mentor. *Advance* needs to be kept informed of any major changes to the arrangements that are made between individuals.

Conceivably a candidate may have agreements with more than one mentor if s/he is accessing different knowledge and expertise for different requirements.

There will also be modes of mentoring where candidates share a mentor and work as a group.

5b) THE WORK PLAN

Candidates will need to submit an *Initial Action Plan* (Form Q) as soon as they have registered with *Advance* for an award. This *Initial Action Plan* gives an outline of how the candidate intends to pursue the award in terms of submitting evidence and timescales for completion. This plan will need to be refined through mentoring but will act as a useful starting point for looking at strengths and needs.

The candidate and their mentor will agree between them a *Work Plan* which will set short and long term tasks or objectives which will relate to the intervals between mentoring sessions and the needs of the candidate. This *Work Plan* is comparable to ongoing supervision notes and will include consideration of how the evidence is to be gathered so that it will be of a breadth, variety and quality to meet all of the requirements. The *Work Plan* may, for example, include the setting of assignments, research projects, etc. It is anticipated that the use and application of the *Work Plan* will develop and evolve over a mentoring period.

The *Work Plan* should look at long term as well as short term plans for gaining the award as some requirements might be relatively quick to evidence whilst others will need more learning to have taken place. As evidence is gathered and needs change so the *Work Plan* will need to be reviewed and amended.

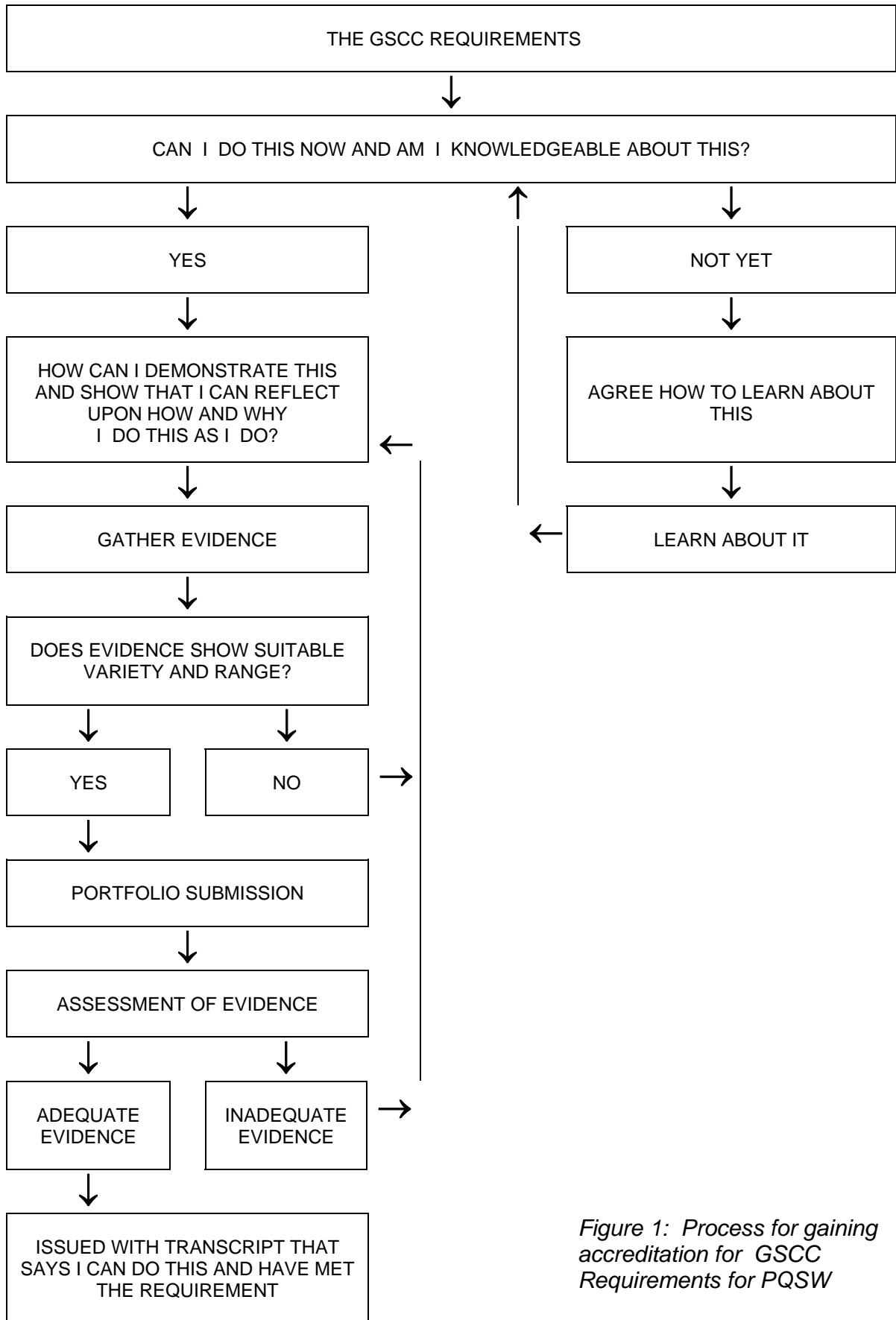


Figure 1: Process for gaining accreditation for GSCC Requirements for PQSW

Where there appears to be no opportunity for showing competence in current work roles or environments, there needs to be a more creative approach on the part of candidate and mentor. This could include simulations, job swaps, reflective accounts (e.g. critical analysis of an intervention), research (e.g. why no black workers are in senior positions in my organisation).

It is anticipated that *Work Plans* will be kept in different formats (e.g. as a learning log) related to the preferences of individual candidates and their mentors. It should however be borne in mind that *Advance* may request sight of *Work Plans* for monitoring or verification purposes.

5c) ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE

Anti-oppressive Practice and Anti-racist Practice are at the heart of the PQSW. It is therefore essential that mentors are excellent practitioners in this respect. A mentor must be able to assist the candidate in incorporating evidence of ADP/ARP throughout their submissions for assessment.

It is essential that the relationship between candidate and mentor is actively empowering for the candidate and mutually respectful. Information will be sought to monitor this in order to support both candidates and mentors, therefore evidence should be present in both the *Agreement* and *Work Plan*.

5d) PAYMENT OF INDEPENDENT MENTORS

Increasingly, employers are using the services of the panel of independent mentors. In these instances payment is made direct by the employer to the mentor. It is essential that a contract is drawn up between the employer and the mentor which details the rate of payment.

Certain groups of candidates may be able obtain funds to pay for a mentor from the GSCC bursary fund administered by *Advance*. Application forms for these funds are issued with candidate registration documentation and applications can be made in subsequent years for top-up funds. **A copy of the candidate-mentor agreement will need to be supplied to the office before mentor money can be made available to candidates.**

Advance suggests that an average PQSW candidate needs 10 one hour sessions of mentoring to put together their full submission for the award. It is likely that some candidates will need more mentoring and others will need less.

At the time of writing, *Advance* recommends that payments are based on an hourly rate of £25 where the candidate travels to the mentor. In the eventuality of travel expenses being incurred by the mentor there may need to be an agreement made with the candidate to meet these. In addition a reading fee (or first assessment fee) is paid to the mentor at a rate of £20 per requirement.

Payments may be sought after each session or by other arrangements made with the candidate. Where mentoring is being paid for from the GSCC bursary fund, evidence will be requested of mentoring activity (e.g. agreements, *Work Plans*) and no top-up funds will be available without such evidence.

5e) DISPUTES BETWEEN CANDIDATE AND MENTOR

It is recognised that there may be disagreements between mentors and candidates related to breaches of the agreement, discrimination, racism, assessment recommendations to *Advance*, etc.

The first place to resolve any such disputes is face-to-face with the individuals concerned. The *Advance* Consortium Manager will advise both parties on this course. Renegotiation of the agreement can be helpful.

Where differences cannot be resolved by these means, the candidates or mentor can use the *Advance* Complaints Procedure see *Appendix 6* for disputes involving independent mentors. Where a mentor is provided by the employer, the procedures for complaint within that agency should be followed.

Candidates who feel unfairly held back by their mentor in making submissions for assessment may, in exceptional circumstances, make a portfolio submission without the endorsement of their mentor. In such cases the candidate will inform the mentor and the *Advance* Consortium Manager beforehand giving reasons for their action.

The contracting of the mentor remains the responsibility of the candidate and dissatisfactions with the quality of PQSW mentoring cannot necessarily be resolved by *Advance* although monitoring mechanisms will continually review the appropriateness of the registration of individual mentors. The monitoring of mentoring arrangements is part of the annual cycle of quality assurance and feedback is sought from both mentors and candidates.

6. PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

A PQSW portfolio is a detailed collection of evidence of an individual's knowledge and performance which is cross referenced with GSCC national requirements in such a way that an assessment can be made about that individual's professional competence

There will be candidates who will already have experience in putting together a portfolio. This personal collection of evidence of an individual's performance at work helps to prove that their performance meets required standards. School children and people coming through NVQ and GNVQ routes will be familiar with the concept of gathering evidence as part of their daily work and learning. It is anticipated that those who already have existing portfolio evidence will be able to reconfigure it against the GSCC Requirements where this is relevant, at the right level and sufficiently current (See *below*).

Advance accepts that experienced candidates will determine themselves the order in which they submit their requirements and the pace at which they will pursue the award. Candidates may therefore submit a portfolio of anything from a single requirement to all 6 to gain the full award. Where candidates are submitting in stages the portfolio contents will be resubmitted each time with the additional requirements added to each submission so that the portfolio is cumulative although assessed in stages.

There is considerable skill involved in assembling a comprehensive portfolio with an adequate range and sufficiency of information. It is a process of trimming, extracting and commenting which leaves assessors with a clearly signposted and summarised task.

Candidates will probably start by gathering more information than they will eventually need but this is necessary if the best examples of evidence are to be extracted. It is also far easier to select from previously gathered material than to search around retrospectively for evidence. Portfolio submissions that have not been properly edited, anonymised and reduced to a manageable size will not be accepted for assessment by *Advance* as this would demonstrate a lack of discrimination and organisation skills on the part of the candidate.

Working at PQSW level a candidate will be expected to evidence through their portfolio their analytical skills, creative thinking abilities, independent judgments and reflective capabilities.

There is an expectation that the candidate will be able to communicate with clarity and effectiveness. The style of the presentation should not impede the reader's progress and there should be a good standard of written English throughout (see Policy Statement on the Use of English in *Appendix 8*).

6a) THE FORMAT

The format and signposting of an *Advance* portfolio is standardised by the use of prescribed forms which the candidate must use. These forms ensure that portfolios can be more objectively assessed and strategically planned. They guide the candidate in the format and cross referencing of their evidence. Samples of these forms are to be found in *Appendix 3* and are outlined below:

- *Form CC* (Contextual commentary on this submission for assessment)
- *Blue Form M* - Submission for a Requirement
- *Yellow Form L* - Overview and Commentary on a Piece of Evidence

All three forms are available on disc (Word 6) or candidates may format the form themselves so long as the overall layout is retained. Forms may be typed, word-processed or hand-written. The **colour coding** of the blue and yellow forms must be retained.

Form CC (Contextual commentary on this submission for assessment)

This form is designed to guide the candidate to provide evidence of **coherence, integration and progression** as required by GSCC. It shows a correlation and unity in the portfolio and links previous and present submissions. The candidate's process and progress through the PQSW can be seen and the assessors have a context to assist them in assessing the evidence. An updated CC form is needed with each submission.

Yellow Form L (Overview and commentary on a piece of evidence)

This form describes and reflects upon the individual piece of evidence. This piece of evidence will be given a unique code (e.g. 'A' or 'B1') by the candidate and might be submitted to substantiate claims for any number of different requirements. This piece of evidence may be a single report or, more comprehensively, may be made up of a combination of documents which relate to a single piece of practice.

A 'Piece of evidence' therefore does not mean a piece of paper but a collection of evidence relating to a piece of practice. A complete piece of evidence should show what the candidate did, how they did it, their ability to reflect theory to their practice, their ability to reflect on and critically analyse their practice, and their underlying social work values. The yellow forms are designed to enable the candidates to do this.

The candidate will arrange their portfolio to have a *Yellow Form L* and the accompanying evidence paired together with the unique code easily identifiable. The *Yellow Form L* is key to the success of a submission and candidates should take care to complete it with a level of depth and sophistication to show their commitment to reflective practice. The *Yellow*

Form L need only be completed once for each piece of evidence, even if the same piece of evidence is to be submitted for several requirements. As a guide the word length of the Yellow Form should be of no more than 2,000 words.

Blue Form M (Submission for a requirement)

The Form M is submitted as a key to the relevant pieces of evidence to explain how they demonstrate competence in a single requirement. It is not anticipated that more than 5 pieces of evidence will be submitted for each requirement claim and it is therefore most important that the evidence is carefully selected to show sufficient range and variety. The commentary side of *Blue Form M* seeks a rationale as to how each piece of evidence relates to the requirement and why it was chosen. This will show the assessors the candidate's process in selecting an appropriate range and different types of evidence.

The *Contextual Commentary* and the *Blue Form Ms* will all be placed together at the beginning of the portfolio because this is where the assessor will start when viewing the submission.

It is anticipated that these forms will limit the volume of paperwork submitted in portfolios, encourage the candidate to make the evidence clear and help the candidate to focus on specific portfolio building activities in order to reduce what can become an onerous task. It is important that candidates are clear about the distinct purpose of the two forms which should not repeat each other in the information that they contain. The *Yellow Form L* will probably make no direct reference to specific requirements, beyond listing which requirements it may be used for, all that signposting happens on the *Blue Form M*.

There is a temptation when portfolio building to put everything in plastic wallets. There is no need for this where the evidence can be hole punched and put in a ring binder. It certainly makes assessment easier and more efficient if assessors do not have to struggle to pull papers in and out of folders. Each candidate will have to decide how best to present their evidence. Dividers are useful or by placing the *Yellow Form Ls* in plastic wallets, these can then become dividers in themselves. *Figure 2* lays out the contents of a portfolio submission for 2 requirements.

Figure 2 indicates that a CV should be included at the beginning of the portfolio. Initially *Advance* did not request the inclusion of this chronology, but the assessors expressed difficulty in contextualising portfolios and in offering advice to candidates when this information was not available to them. The format of the CV is left to the candidate, but as a general rule it should not merely be a list of dates and job titles. It should act as an explanatory guide as to how one job, course or life experience linked to the next, what rationale lay behind job and career moves / breaks and appraisals of performance and roles. Such a commentary will also support the assessment of 'coherence, integration and progression' as specified by GSCC as a key component of the PQ framework.

Those candidates undertaking PQ1 as an entry to another award are required to submit a Critical Career Review which would take the place of a CV and Form CC. This would need to be some 3,000 words in length and can be a good starting point for an experienced candidate who is returning to learning. (see separate PQ1 guidance – available from office)

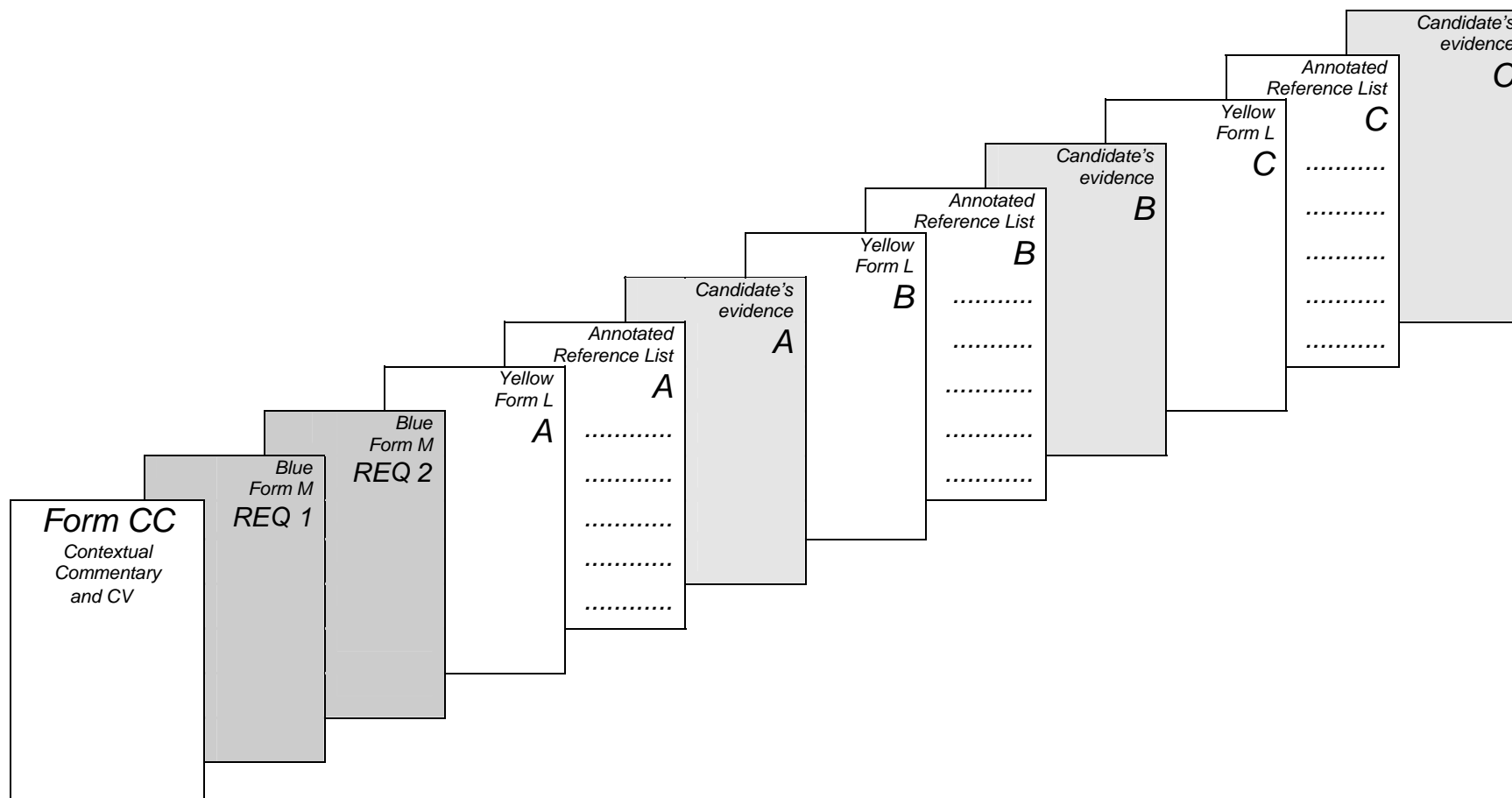
6b) THE RANGE AND TYPES OF EVIDENCE

It is essential that the evidence submitted should as far as possible reflect a diversity of client groups and needs, and variety in work roles and contexts. *Advance* requires up to 5 pieces of evidence for each requirement sought, so candidates must ensure that the range that they show is as wide as possible. A good way to ensure that an appropriate range is demonstrated is to unpick the PQSW requirement at an initial stage to consider its breadth and the opportunities that you might have to gather evidence.

For example taking PQ3 where the candidate must demonstrate ***competence in exercising the powers and responsibilities of a professional social worker, including the appropriate use of discretion and the management of risk***, questions can be used to unpick the range of skills and knowledge which could be demonstrated.

- in what ways do you exercise power?
- what are your responsibilities?
- in what situations do you use your discretion?
- what are the boundaries on using your discretion?
- what risks do you encounter?
- risks to whom or what and in what situations?
- how do you manage risk?
- what guides and informs you in your management of risk?

Figure 2: Contents of a Portfolio where a candidate is submitting for 2 Requirements using 3 pieces of evidence (A, B and C)



Different types of evidence should be gathered so that an assessment can be made on the basis of several sources. It is important to remember that evidence need not all be formal and 'neat' end products. Some evidence will demonstrate process more than product and may for example include rough notes.

This could lead to an experienced social work practitioner submitting a combination of the following evidence for PQ3 (adapted from *Mentors in Post Qualifying Education* by Hazel Rumsey. CCETSW 1995):

- two assessments of risk from live situations done at least 6 months apart (e.g. a case conference report). Knowledge evidence would be demonstrated in writing. Models of risk assessment would be clearly identified and their translation into practice evaluated with reference to issues of anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice
- analysis of a case study with a substantial legal content demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the law and the implications on practice.
- reflection on the personal impact of the assessment of risk and a demonstration of the ability to work with that material in supervision.
- transcript of a video of candidate working within the guidelines of the Memorandum of Good Practice accompanied by a commentary and evaluation by the candidate.
- analysis of a case study identifying issues of oppression
- report submitted by a service user with whom the candidate has worked demonstrating how the candidate has empowered rather than oppressed the user (e.g. report from a group of women survivors of abuse with whom the candidate has been working).

Responsibility lies with candidates to ensure that their pieces of evidence selected to demonstrate a requirement show a variety of types and sources.

It is important to have work verified by more than one person and to include at least two pieces of evidence produced by the candidate themselves

6c) KNOWLEDGE

The evidence presented for PQSW requirements PQ1-6 must also demonstrate that the candidate can *evaluate the effectiveness of their practice using a relevant knowledge base, including an understanding of legal and policy contexts and appropriate research (Core Requirement (a))*. The candidate will need therefore to demonstrate how s/he has come to their current level of competence whether through formal education/training, unassessed education/training or, perhaps most likely, through experiences gained outside this.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

- case records
- court reports (*with permission of the court*)
- assessment reports
- client feedback (written/questionnaire/interview etc.)
- report/testimonial by colleague, manager, other professional (see *Appendix 4*)
- own written reports
- minutes of meetings
- published articles
- descriptions/reflections on what you have done
- exercises/activities you have experienced
- charts/graphs
- appraisal reports
- memos
- published articles
- notes taken during or after a meeting
- references
- transcripts of audiotapes/videos (not the tapes themselves)
- letters of validation
- witness reports
- assignments, dissertations, reflective summaries (see section k below)
- learning/experience from outside professional arena (e.g. magistrate)
- observation report from direct observation by assessor
- log book
- completion of schedules of competence

It is not enough to know the theory or have the knowledge: portfolios are about demonstrating how this is put into practice. Likewise it is not acceptable to claim to be an excellent practitioner without being able to link this practice to theoretical frameworks and current policy and research.

Candidates will need to be able to make explicit links between their practice and the relevant theory, policy, legislation, research etc. in order to demonstrate their knowledge base. There is an expectation that the candidate will be able to analyse critically any research, policy or theory that they refer to and be able to reflect upon its relevance, coherence and acceptability in relation to their practice. *Figure 3* presents some useful descriptors of the PQSW level that may offer further guidance.

Some sources of knowledge will be internal to the organisation or area of work some will reflect a wider knowledge of social work theory and literature. It is essential that sources and the knowledge base show a level of currency.

Each portfolio should contain a full bibliography using the Harvard method of referencing.

Plagiarism or failure to cite relevant literature, research, theories, etc will be penalised. Assessment of portfolios where plagiarism is evident will cease immediately and the acceptance of subsequent submissions will be at the discretion of the Assessment Board.

6d) REFLECTION AND EVALUATION

The portfolio should demonstrate the candidate's ability to reflect upon their learning and practice and a section of the Yellow Form is assigned to this. There must be evidence of self-awareness and acknowledgment of the impact on the candidate of the work in hand. The candidate should take care to record and reflect upon what actually happened rather than what s/he anticipates the assessors might want to read. Some candidates develop learning logs to get into the habit of recording their reflections.

It is the ability to follow concise description with thorough evaluation that is the key to a good portfolio. Portfolios will differ most from each other in these personal reflections and *Advance* seeks to promote such individuality. The portfolio itself becomes an active tool for reflective practice rather than a potentially cumbersome means for gaining an award.

It often seems appropriate in such reflections to speak in the first person as 'I' and honesty about shortcomings as well as achievements is essential. It can be most beneficial to reflect upon interventions or situations that did not go well so long as the reflection acknowledges where the problems lay and what learning took place. Reflection should also show recognition of suitable alternative approaches.

Reflection: some helpful questions

- what assumptions and prejudices lie behind mine and others actions?
- what strategies am I / are they employing
- why did I feel the way I did and how did that affect what I did?
- are there any other ways of looking at this (eg in a political/social/medical way)?
- am I acting as the organisations intend me to act? Are there conflicts in the role?
- in what alternative ways might I have acted?
- what did I learn?
- how did what I intended to do match with what I actually did?
- what would I do in another similar event?
- how did I recognise and work with the power imbalances?
- what did others think of my practices? What do I think of what they thought?
- what theory and knowledge am I using to inform my practice and where do I depart from it and why?

Figure 3: General Level Descriptors for Level 3 (PQSW)

The locations of the core requirements for the PQSW are shaded on this table. (GSCC *The Accreditation Handbook* April 1998)

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES	PROCESSES	RESPONSIBILITIES
<p>DEMONSTRATION Demonstrate understanding of a framework and coherent body of knowledge and professional skills</p> <p>UTILISATION Utilise basic technical, professional, scholastic and research knowledge and skills across a discipline or profession.</p> <p>DEVELOPMENT Critically evaluate new information, concepts and evidence from a range of sources within a discipline or profession.</p> <p>INTERDISCIPLINARY APPLICATION Demonstrate knowledge of the contribution of other professions, disciplines, and political and social processes to the development of knowledge and practice</p> <p>INTERNAL APPLICATION Demonstrate knowledge of the contribution of other societies to the relevant discipline or profession in the development of knowledge and practice</p> <p>CRITIQUE Demonstrate knowledge of the provisional and open-ended character of the contribution of a discipline or a profession to knowledge, understanding, and practice</p>	<p>CONCEPTUAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) apply research knowledge and technique to conceptual and professional practice b) review and utilise significant elements of the literature of a discipline or profession c) prepare dissertation, report or presentation derived from secondary sources <p>PROFESSIONAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) exercise judgement and competence in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or supervisory functions related to products, services, operations or processes, including resourcing b) transfer and apply creative skills in a range of situations under supervision c) develop a self-critical awareness of the impact of professional intervention. Adjust professional role accordingly (PQSW Core a) d) be aware of innovations in professional practice and introduce them when appropriate under supervision e) work constructively with others in situations of relative autonomy f) take account of the perceptions and needs of others and integrate them rationally into work processes and objectives 	<p>ACCOUNTABILITY Accept accountability under supervision for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes</p> <p>ETHICAL PRACTICE Accept responsibility under supervision for understanding and complying with the code of ethical conduct appropriate to the discipline or profession (PQSW Core b).</p>

6e) SOCIAL WORK VALUES

Much of the reflection that the PQSW should encourage relates to social work values. In demonstrating each general requirement, the candidate must *demonstrate an explicit adherence to the values of social work and to the provision of ethically sound practice (Core Requirement b). Yellow Form L* seeks specific comment on where and how, in the evidence presented, these values are **explicitly** demonstrated in the 'Self Evaluation of your Practice', section A and candidates are asked to do this.

The six social work values, as identified by CCETSW in AQPQ are:

GSCC require that the candidate demonstrates their adherence to the values of social work by:

- a) identifying and questioning their own values and prejudices, and their implications for practice
- b) respecting and valuing uniqueness and diversity, and recognising and building on strengths
- c) promoting people's rights to choice, privacy, confidentiality and protection, whilst recognising and addressing the complexities of competing rights and demands
- d) assisting people to increase control of and improve the quality of their lives, whilst recognising that control of behaviour will be required at times in order to protect children and adults from harm
- e) identifying, analysing and taking action to counter discrimination, racism, disadvantage and injustice, using strategies appropriate to role and context
- f) practise in a manner that does not stigmatise or disadvantage either individual groups or communities

In considering this range of social work values, candidates should ensure that these are reflected in the range of evidence presented for each requirement. In addition *Advance* requires that at least **one piece of evidence for each requirement should contain an extra piece of work of 500 words concentrating on demonstrating anti-discriminatory / anti-racist practice.**

To demonstrate ADP/ARP in a portfolio, the candidate will need to give consideration to the following :

- their knowledge and understanding of the operation and impact of discrimination and how it can be alleviated
- their reflection upon the practice to include their own attitudes and responses
- the action taken to promote ADP/ARP

Reflection upon one's own prejudices and practices is perhaps the most challenging aspect of ADP/ARP. For the PQSW, candidates will need to critically evaluate their own practice in the light of increased understanding. They should be able to demonstrate how stereotyped thinking can distort assessments and adversely affect practice, either their own or others. Often the greatest learning comes from recognising and acknowledging mistakes and being able to develop different practice responses as a result. Self-awareness and the ability to evaluate feedback from others are critical to being able to develop and demonstrate ADP/ ARP.

Candidates should be able to describe how they developed their practice in response to increased knowledge and self-reflection. This includes being able to promote ADP/ARP in a variety of settings, being aware of the operation of discrimination, being able to challenge appropriately and develop strategies to counter discrimination. It also includes being able to cope with difference in an anti-oppressive way, acknowledging power differentials in relationships. Examples of the promotion of ADP/ARP could be:

- an account of direct work with a service user who suffers discrimination showing how resources have been used to alleviate the impact of discrimination (e.g. using an interpreter, individual work on identity and self esteem, advocacy and empowerment)
- acknowledgment and incorporation of anti-discriminatory perspectives in reports and assessments
- account of anti-discriminatory issues being addressed in supervision, within a staff team or an interprofessional group
- account of developmental work (e.g. in producing policy or guidelines, project work in the workplace or community)
- evidence of raising concerns about examples of discrimination within an organisation
- participation in the organisation or delivery of a training event that addresses ADP/ARP

6f) CURRENCY

Portfolio evidence must be 'current' (less than 5 years old is a good guide). Where evidence goes back further than 5 years it will need to be substantiated by more current evidence that competence has been sustained and updated (e.g. a reflective critical analysis of a past piece of research in the light of political, procedural or legal change). For candidates who have a Practice Teacher award or who completed (a post-1993 regulation) ASW training which have completion dates prior to this 5-year currency guideline, it would seem appropriate to produce a 500 word commentary to show how knowledge and practice in this area has been developed and extended.

Retrospective evidence is not necessarily easier to obtain and many candidates find that it is simpler and more interesting to present a combination of past and present evidence for each requirement. If the shelf life of some retrospective evidence is about to expire, candidates should ensure that the

requirements for which it is to be submitted, are submitted first for assessment.

The date of any evidence submitted should be clearly indicated.

6g) CONFIDENTIALITY

As candidates are using evidence from work practice to substantiate their claim for competence issues of confidentiality are obvious. Every effort must be made to protect the identity of any people (colleagues, users, other professionals) and places referred to in evidence submitted to *Advance*. Evidence which has not been suitably anonymised will not be signed off by the mentor or accepted for assessment.

To date it experience of assessment shows that portfolios are often not anonymised enough and have to be sent back for further work on this important aspect.

It is important that client names, addresses, dates of birth, school names, teacher names, names of colleagues etc are not given in evidence presented. One way of doing this may be to give fictitious names. Another may be to use terms eg '*client*', '*client's address*', '*client's parents*', '*client's headteacher*' etc. Care must given to consistency in both these examples so that the assessors find the evidence is easy to follow.

If you decide to fictionalise names etc, it is important to state this clearly at the beginning of the portfolio.

All portfolio evidence given to *Advance* will be confidential to the Consortium and its External Assessors. No information revealed about an individual or agency will be revealed by any assessor, employee, or committee member of *Advance*. The only exception to this could be where portfolio evidence suggests that clients/users or others might be at risk. In such exceptional circumstances the Management Committee will decide upon any action to be taken.

Note: *The Consortium is under obligation to notify the relevant employer of breaches of confidentiality.*

6h) CONSENT

Consent and agreement on protecting identity will usually be sought for evidence presented to *Advance*. This means the consent of all the people included in the piece of evidence (e.g. colleagues, manager, client/user, other professional). Where evidence is the property of the agency, consent must be obtained from a manager at the appropriate level. Where the information is from, or concerns, a third party, the consent of that party should be obtained.

There will however be times when it will not be possible or appropriate to gain consent. There may be good reason for this, for example, when a colleague has moved to an unknown address or when it may cause a client distress or difficulty. If the candidate chooses to present such evidence then they must demonstrate why consent was not obtained on *Yellow Form L*. For example:

“I discussed with my manager whether to seek consent from the client to use this case material. The distress, anxiety and confusion that arises from her dementia led us to believe that she would not be able to give informed consent and indeed that making this request could well distress her further. I therefore sought consent from her daughter who was assured that her mother would not be identified or disrespected in the case material.”

For all cases, guidance on consent and confidentiality should be sought from the employing agency by the candidate to ensure that agency policies are adhered to.

6i) VERIFICATION

All evidence will need to be verified and some of this verification should be from an observer of practice. Verifiers will probably be managers, colleagues or mentors. It is anticipated that line managers will be involved in portfolio progress even when they are not acting as mentor to the candidate. Verification by service users may also be relevant in some evidence submitted, although *Advance* recommends that the candidate does not negotiate this themselves with the user to avoid the potential for collusion or coercion.

Candidates should ensure that their evidence is verified by more than one source in any submission for a requirement in order to show that there is a shared perception of competence, although each individual piece of evidence needs only one verifier. The verifier signs *Yellow Form L* having read the completed form and attached evidence. They should also show their context and add a comment. Good verification adds enormously to the overall coherence of the portfolio.

Evidence needs to be signed and dated by the candidate where appropriate.

6j) DEVELOPING SKILLS IN PORTFOLIO BUILDING

It is recognised that compiling portfolios is a skill in itself which needs to be learned. In particular candidates need skills in

- identifying a range of appropriate opportunities for gathering evidence
- recording evidence efficiently
- storing and sorting relevant information
- obtaining feedback
- cross referencing information
- selecting best evidence to demonstrate competence in a requirement
- writing concise commentary on evidence to be submitted
- critically reflecting on practice
- presenting evidence to an assessor unfamiliar with the area of work
- presenting a coherent and complete portfolio submission
- identifying and critically evaluating appropriate research
- referencing

With this in mind, *Advance* has sample portfolios available for viewing and has distributed copies to each member agency which are lodged with the individual taking the agency lead for PQ. An open learning manual is available on *Getting Started with your Portfolio* (please request this from the office). This manual can be completed alone, with a mentor or with other candidates. Ongoing portfolio support is provided by the mentor.

The responsibility for collecting evidence, making the necessary links and organizing a coherent portfolio lies with the candidate. Advice and support will be offered by the mentor but all work submitted must originate from the candidate not the mentor.

Getting started on a portfolio is the most difficult part of the experience. With time the collection and collation of evidence becomes easier and faster and although the first submission may take considerable time to get together, it is likely that subsequent submissions will be more efficient as they will reuse the evidence already presented (one piece of evidence could be used for several requirements).

Key to the formation of an *Advance* portfolio is the correct use of the forms (see *Appendix 3*). But completing the forms is only necessary as the submission date draws near. In the mean time the evidence can be collected and filed on an ongoing basis for editing and sorting at a later stage. A day set aside to do this drawing together and completing the forms will be far more successful if the evidence is all to hand.

6k) SELF-SET ASSIGNMENTS

When preparing their portfolio candidates may well find it useful to consider producing self-set assignments which will further evidence their competence in one or more requirements especially related to evidencing the depth and currency of knowledge. Such assignments are likely to be a requirement for those planning to gain academic as well as professional credits at some point in the future (see Section 11).

Some suggestions follow as to the type of titles that might be used. Keywords to incorporate at this level are **analysis and evaluation**. Your knowledge, competence and reflection should be **demonstrated** in the assignment through the links made with practice.

The academic expectation for any assignments is that there will be reference to a wide range of social work literature demonstrating a capacity for analysis and criticism.

Assessment will take account of

- clarity of expression
- analysis, application and evaluation of appropriate literature
- demonstration of how theory and own practice are related
- evaluation and reflection upon own knowledge, values and practice
- consistent and correct use of referencing (all references, whether direct or indirect, must be acknowledged)

Assignments will vary in length but a good guide would be 2500 to 3000 words. Further assistance in the mechanics of writing assignments can be found in a suitable study guide (e.g. *How to Win as a Part Time Student* by Bourner and Race, Kogan Press 1990; *The Good Study Guide* by Northedge, Open University 1990) or through discussions with the mentor.

Assignments must be submitted with the accompanying *Yellow Forms L* and *Blue Forms M* which will act as signposts to the assessors and also provide verification and address issues of confidentiality and consent. All assignments must be read and verified by a Line Manager or other appropriate person on *Yellow Form L*.

Mentors must guard against influencing too heavily the outcome of these assignments. It is entirely appropriate to help at the formative stage of discussing the range and scope of the title and in assisting the candidate in selecting examples from their practice. Mentors should not however comment on a draft other than in broad terms to point out why the assignment may not provide sufficient evidence. If a Mentor becomes over involved in the assignment, s/he will not be able to sign the declaration on *Blue Form M* that the work is authentic.

SAMPLE TITLES FOR SELF-SET ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT 1: PQ3 and PQ6

Describe and evaluate your performance in undertaking a significant management task where you are accountable for the work of others.

ASSIGNMENT 2: PQ5

Describe two specific tasks which demonstrate how you communicate across settings, contexts and disciplines. Using specific examples from your practice, evaluate your skills and the effectiveness of your performance

ASSIGNMENT 3: PQ6

Describe and evaluate your use of supervision as a tool for developing others' practice using a range of examples from your experience.

ASSIGNMENT 4: PQ3 and PQ4

Give an account of a specific intervention with families, groups or an individual which demonstrates how current and relevant research was identified, analysed and applied in planning an intervention or designing service delivery

7. CHECKLIST FOR PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

This self help checklist (self-assessment) can be used by candidates to review a portfolio before submitting it to *Advance* for assessment. It is hoped that this process will assist the candidate in identifying and addressing any areas of weakness in the submission and therefore increase the likelihood of a successful outcome. You will notice it corresponds to the assessment checklist (*Appendix 5*). The checklist relates back to the guidance given in previous sections.

1. Is your registration with *Advance* complete?
2. Have you included a CCR at the beginning and included a word count?
3. Is there sufficient depth and sophistication in your comments on *Yellow Form L*?
4. Have you shown on Blue Form M why you chose the evidence and how it relates to the Requirement?
5. Do you show a level of self-awareness in your commentary and reflection, which acknowledges a range of issues and your learning outcomes?
6. Do you acknowledge and reflect upon the anti-discriminatory issues for at least one piece of evidence? (500 words)
7. Have you identified the values issues in each piece of evidence?
8. Have you identified and accurately referenced relevant and recent theory, legislation, models, literature, research etc. and made sufficient links with your practice?
9. Have you critically evaluated the research used?
10. Have you included a reference list? (using the Harvard method of referencing)
11. Has evidence been fully anonymised and has appropriate consent been obtained?
12. Is it clear how the evidence demonstrates your practice (as opposed to the practice of other professionals who may be involved)?
13. Is your role clear in all the evidence?
14. Do the pieces of evidence selected show enough range and variety?
15. Does a different person verify each Yellow Form L?
16. Have you provided an appropriate mix of current and retrospective (up to 5 years old) evidence?
17. Is the portfolio in a logical order with clear signposts?
18. Is all (yours, the mentor's or the verifier's) handwriting legible?
19. Do you need to check any grammar or spelling?

8. DEADLINES FOR PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

Each candidate will set their own pace for making portfolio submissions. Submissions can be for a single requirement, a combination of requirements or for the whole award. Assessment is offered several times a year (generally in March, June and December) and it is anticipated that candidates will work to the deadlines that will be set related to these assessments. It would be reasonable to assume that to gain the whole award, a candidate might make 1-4 submissions for assessment over a period of 1-3 years. More submissions may be necessary if some are unsuccessful or they may extend over a longer period if the candidate takes a break or works at a slower pace.

Candidates taking a portfolio route are informed by *Advance* of every forthcoming submission deadline. They are asked to return an *Intention to Submit* (Form Q) by a certain date to assist *Advance* in booking assessor time. Submissions for assessment will not be accepted unless this form has been returned by the deadline.

9. ASSESSMENT

The Advance assessors will make assessment of the candidate's portfolio evidence. The assessors make a recommendation to the Assessment Board about each candidate's submission. The member of the Quality Assurance Committee responsible for overseeing portfolio assessments discusses each assessment decision with the assessors and as a member of the Assessment Board, responds to any queries or issues raised there. The final decision rests with the Assessment Board. Any appeals against assessment decisions should be made through the Appeals Procedure (see *Appendix 7*).

Candidates will make a portfolio submission of retrospective and/or current learning/practice after it has been checked by the mentor to endorse that it is of a **quality, range, authenticity and appropriately confidential** to meet the requirement(s) being sought. This initial assessment ensures that the assessors only view submissions that are likely to meet the requirements. A candidate may still make a submission to *Advance* without this endorsement in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when a mentor is off sick for a long period or where s/he feels that the mentor is being unfair - see Section 5e).

The candidate will be informed of the outcome of the assessment after the recommendation of the assessors has been considered by the Assessment Board. Written feedback on the submission (see *Appendix 5*) will be provided indicating areas of sufficiency and insufficiency in the submission. Where additional work is needed to evidence the requirement in full, the candidate will be informed of this and invited to resubmit. (see Section below).

Two External Assessors are paid by GSCC to sit on the Assessment Board and monitor the assessments undertaken by *Advance*. They will sample the assessments made on candidate submissions and feed into the Assessment Board's decision making process. These External Assessors also comment on any areas for improvement in *Advance's* guidance, systems and procedures and will influence and direct amendments to these arrangements.

Once Assessment Board has agreed the assessment decision the candidate will be eligible for a transcript detailing the requirements and credits that they have been awarded.

10. RESUBMISSIONS

Candidates may submit up to 3 times for a single requirement.

Care should be taken to include at the beginning of the resubmitted portfolio the relevant Assessment Form P from the previous assessment showing the feedback given by assessors on areas of insufficiency.

The additional evidence supplied should be clearly indicated.

Guidance will be given with the Form P as to when resubmission of work may be made. Candidates will be given two dates by which to resubmit their work and will choose an appropriate date according to several factors which are likely to be amount of additional work to be resubmitted; availability of mentor support; work/family commitments; application deadlines of further training (*applicable where PQ is an entry requirement*).

Where a candidate has been deemed not to meet a requirement on two successive occasions, the services of a 'consultant mentor' will be offered in order to give an objective overview of the portfolio and further advice.

11. CREDIT RATING

The credit rating of portfolio submissions is agreed by the Assessment Board, **once all the requirements have been met to a minimum of 120 professional credits.**

As yet *Advance* has not established the bridges between **academic** and **professional** credits which could enable PQSW award holders to also be awarded with an academic degree. It remains a goal of *Advance* to facilitate this opportunity with the Higher Education institutions who are members. If an individual candidate is keen to aim for this dual accreditation, then they must ensure that the portfolio evidence that they submit has sufficient 'academic' content (see *section 7k*).

Although each PQ consortium accepts the credit rating and requirements awarded by other consortia, it remains the case that each consortium allocates credits in a different way and candidates need to be aware of this if they are transferring into or out of *Advance*.

Role Description of the PQSW Mentor

- 1 assist the new candidates to understand what is required and to develop a *Work Plan***
 - 1.1 help the candidate to understand the PQSW framework
 - 1.2 clarify the role of *Advance*
 - 1.3 clarify the role of the mentor
 - 1.4 review the *Initial Action Plan* with the candidate
 - 1.5 assist the candidate in developing a *Work Plan*
 - 1.6 provide guidance on preparation for assessment including agreement as to the range, type and volume of evidence required

- 2 assist the candidate in identifying areas of learning need and development opportunities**
 - 2.1 assist the candidate in an assessment of current competence and learning needs
 - 2.2 encourage candidate's progress towards self directed learning
 - 2.3 guide candidate towards appropriate learning experiences

- 3 ensure that the candidate can learn and develop**
 - 3.1 provide professional advice / opinion from self or others
 - 3.2 identify obstacles to progress and suggest strategies to overcome them
 - 3.3 suggest ways for candidates to develop useful links with colleagues, agencies and other professionals
 - 3.4 assist the candidate in understanding policies and procedures (at agency, local, national levels)

- 4 encourage reflective practice**
 - 4.1 support candidates reflecting on own practice through prompting, suggesting and questioning
 - 4.2 develop relationship of trust where weaknesses and ideas can be explored openly
 - 4.3 assist candidate to integrate and demonstrate ADP/ARP (anti-discriminatory/anti-racist practice) skills within their work
 - 4.4 feed back observations

- 5 assist candidate in adhering to their *Work Plan* and evaluating their progress**
 - 5.1 set priorities together
 - 5.2 set objectives/targets together
 - 5.3 evaluate progress against objectives/targets
 - 5.4 assist in workload management and problem solving
 - 5.5 assist the candidate in setting up and maintaining accurate and efficient systems for recording
 - 5.6 offer feedback to assist in the writing of Form CC

- 6 provide information required to *Advance***
 - 6.1 authenticate all evidence submitted by candidate
 - 6.2 endorse that any evidence submitted for assessment is of an appropriate quality and range
 - 6.3 keep ongoing records of supervision which show process and progress
 - 6.4 provide information for monitoring purposes

- 7 liaise with verifiers as and when appropriate**
 - 7.1 ensure that any evidence submitted is substantiated by a witness of practice

Exemplar Mentoring Agreement

Name of Candidate:	Name of Mentor:
Requirements to be covered by this agreement:	
Arrangements that have been / will be made to gain any further requirements:	
Number of sessions to be booked:	Length of sessions:
Arrangements for payment of sessions:	
Arrangements for payment of reading / assessment fees:	
Arrangements for cancellation of session by either party:	
Procedure in cases of dispute or complaint by either party:	
Grounds for the agreement to be declared void:	
Review date for agreement:	Date agreement to terminate:

Statement about responsibility for process

Mentor:


Candidate:

Statement about focus of the sessions:

Statement about diversity and discrimination, power and empowerment, experience and expertise and commitment to explore and evidence such factors in roles, relationships and wider socio-political contexts

Details of any other comments / agreements / special arrangements:

Signature of candidate	Signature of Mentor
Date	Date

	<p>Form CC 09/03</p> <p>Contextual Commentary On This Submission For Assessment</p>
Name	DATE
Employer	WORK ROLE
Requirements Sought (Circle Any Resubmissions)	
Requirements Already Gained	

1) Did you encounter any difficulties in putting this portfolio submission together and (if applicable) how far did any previous submissions inform your process?

2) How do the different pieces of evidence that you present here link with your work practice and with each other?

3) Comment on any skills and/or knowledge which are consistently demonstrated in the evidence that you present and indicate where skills and/or knowledge develop or progress from one piece of evidence to another.

4) What NEW learning (e.g. training, mentoring, research since qualifying and most recently) has influenced the work that you evidence here?

5) How did you use feedback and/or self evaluation to improve or develop the work that you evidence here?

Signature of Mentor	Signature of Candidate
Date	Date

Candidate Name	Registered for
----------------	----------------

Mentor Name

Requirement Number	Requirement description

Which, if any, other Requirements have you already gained?

Brief description of evidence submitted	Portfolio reference	Date of work evidence
1.		
2.		
3.		
4		

To be completed by the mentor

- I endorse that the evidence submitted here is of a **quality, range and authenticity** and properly **anonymised** to meet the requirement.
- I consider this candidate to have met the following specific criteria for the requirement as follows:

	<u>Portfolio Ref</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Anti-racist and anti discriminatory practice		
Demonstration of current practice		
Demonstration of current theory		
Integration of theory and practice		

Mentor Signature..... Date

Comment:

Candidate Signature Date

	Portfolio reference	Candidate's Rationale for how each piece of evidence relates to this requirement and why it was chosen
1		
2		
3		
4		



Yellow Form L 09/03

OVERVIEW AND COMMENTARY ON A PIECE OF EVIDENCE

Word Count: up to 2,000 words
(preprinted word count for this form is 350)

This form is available on disk so the various sections can be expanded if necessary.
If a computer is not used candidates may hand-write separate sheets using the same headings.
Please ensure that yellow paper is used.

Candidate Name	Portfolio reference:
----------------	----------------------

Requirement No:

Date(s) of Evidence:	Description and Source of Evidence

Have all the steps been taken to anonymise the people referred to in the evidence? YES / NO

Measures taken to gain consent to use this evidence

Comment of Verifier to endorse that this piece of evidence is typical of the work practice of this candidate.

Verifier Signature Date

Name of Verifier	Verifier's Context
------------------	--------------------

Candidate Signature Date.....

CANDIDATE COMMENTARY AND ANALYSIS

Contents: *[When you have put your evidence together please number the pages and list them below].*

Context of the piece of work and summary of candidate's involvement

SELF EVALUATION OF YOUR PRACTICE:

a) How does this piece of evidence demonstrate your adherence to social work values and the provision of ethically sound practice? *[Please make explicit reference to one or more of the values identified by GSCC and listed in the handbook. Remember that there should be one substantial account (approx. 500 words) of ADP issues for each Requirement – if you are choosing to do this in relation to this evidence this section can be used].*

b) What social work skills did you demonstrate in this piece of work?

c) Reflection: What are the issues arising out of this piece of work? What are your thoughts, ideas, opinions and /or feelings? What did you learn about your performance?

d) How might you have done / do it differently to enhance your performance on another occasion?

e) Links between theory & practice: *[Every piece of evidence must indicate the knowledge and theoretical basis that you drew upon and how this informed and helped you to evaluate your practice. A reference list should be attached to this form - see handbook].*

SAMPLE TESTIMONIAL REQUEST


 GUIDANCE FOR LINE MANAGERS
 ON WRITING A TESTIMONIAL FOR PQ2 and PQ4

The PQSW (Post Qualifying Award in Social Work) is a GSCC professional award based on demonstration of competence in the workplace measured against a range of 6 Requirements.

You are asked to write a testimonial for the PQSW candidate which will support their claim that they have met the Requirements PQ2 and PQ4 by demonstrating:

- competence in working effectively in complex situations
- ability to make informed decisions

Your testimonial will be considered by *Advance* as part of the assessment of this candidate's evidence of professional competence.


Your testimonial should therefore convey enough detail to satisfy the assessors. In your confirmation of the candidates abilities and competence, you will need to acknowledge and comment specifically on :

- the sorts of complex situations that the candidate deals with
- what skills and knowledge they employ to be effective in such situations
- how far they make appropriate and well informed decisions
- their understanding of the legal and political context of their work
- their adherence to social work values

Your testimonial will need to make clear the context of your knowledge of the candidate, your professional qualifications and your work role. You will give it to the candidate who will then submit it to *Advance* along with any other portfolio evidence for assessment.

Your candidate will have information which they can share with you about PQSW but if you would like to know any more about the GSCC post qualifying awards (which are available at both post qualifying and advanced levels) please contact *Advance* on 01707 285875.

SAMPLE ASSESSMENT FORM

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Assessment Form P</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">January 2003</p>		
Candidate Name: <i>John Smith</i>	Assessment Date: <i>2001</i>		
This is a <input type="checkbox"/> First Submission <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	Requirements already awarded:		
1. Recommendation to Assessment Board			
Requirement Number (® for resubmissions)	Met	Further work required (see Section 6:What next?)	
<i>PQ1</i>		✓	
Name of 1 st Assessor <i>Andy Jones</i>	Signature of 1 st Assessor	Name of 2 nd Assessor <i>Carol Edwards</i>	Signature of 2 nd Assessor
Signature of Quality Assurance representative: <i>Gill Smith</i>		Date: 15.01.03	
2. Decision by Assessment Board			
Award of Requirements		Award of credits (if applicable)	
Comment of Assessment Board <i>This is a well though out portfolio of evidence which should meet the requirement with the improvement outlines in Section 7.</i>			
Signature of Chair of Assessment Board <i>Jim Bloggs</i>			Date 30.01.03

3. Assessment Sheet		
<i>Assessor Note:</i> <i>If evidence is sufficient for some requirements but not others, specify this next to tick (e.g. √PQ6)</i>	SUFFICIENT	FURTHER WORK REQUIRED see Section 6 for what next guidance
1. Anonymity protected, appropriate consent and disclaimers produced		√
2. All evidence verified by range of verifiers	√	
3. One full commentary of up to 2,000 words for each requirement	√	
4. Minimum of 2 pieces of evidence (per req) produced by candidate themselves	√	
5. Logical ordering and signposting	√	
6. Legible with accurate grammar and spelling	√	
7. Role of candidate clear in all evidence (own practice as opposed to joint)		√
8. Appropriate issues identified and discussed for each piece of evidence	√	
9. Values issues identified for each piece of evidence	√	
10. At least 1 piece of evidence per req that thoroughly demonstrates ADP?		√
11. Convincing evidence of theory and research and how this has been integrated into practice		√
12. Depth and sophistication on Yellow Form L indicates self-awareness and reflective practice		√
13. Detail, range and variety of evidence appropriately selected for each req (Blue Form M)		√
14. Demonstration of coherence, integration and progression.		√

4. Assessment of Core Requirements			
Assessor Note: Both core requirements must be evidenced in each general requirement		SUFFICIENT	FURTHER WORK REQUIRED
PQSW CORE (a)	Has effectiveness of practice been evaluated using relevant knowledge base (to include legal, policy, and research contexts)?		√
PQSW CORE (b)	Have social work values been explicitly adhered to and was practice ethically sound?		√
AASW CORE (a)	Have analysis and critical reflection informed practice, policy and provision		
AASW CORE (b)	Have social work values (in context of social and political change) been sustained? Have policy and practice been defined and developed accordingly?		

Assessor comments on Core Requirements: *You raise profound and vital issues on the interaction between society, social workers and their clients. However we have found it unclear how these issues affect your actual clients on the actual day and need fuller evidence on your analysis of your work. The observation of practice clearly shows how your work is seen by a senior colleague and is excellent.*

5. Assessor comments

We could see the names of the child and school beneath the shading in some of your evidence (evidence 2). Hopefully further photocopying will address this.

We think it will be very important to involve your mentor in your resubmission. There is such a range of good material which needs extra analysis.

Self-evaluation of your practice. Your write - "I have demonstrated an ability...." (evidence 1), but don't go on to say what you actually did; why, how, the effect and outcome of the work. I felt that the child got 'lost' - was unsure what his ideas or outcomes were (although, thankfully, the appeal was successful). Also the effect of having a terminally ill sister.

Theory to practice. You have read extremely widely but you need to relate the theory to your actual practice. At the moment it seems like theory on the page rather than relevant to the work you did or would like to do.

Social work values. You need to refer explicitly to the Social Work values. I would feel that you have very strong ideas about the social work value base but you need to signpost the reader more clearly to values 1 - 6.

6. What next? Guidance notes for the candidates who has NOT met the requirement from the Assessors and Assessment Board

1. *Evidence 1. Expand the section in Yellow Form L to explain what you did; why; how and the effect and outcome of the work.*

2. *Explain how the theories you have read relate to your actual practice*

3. *Signpost where you have used the Social Work Values and which value you are relating to*

In Summary, we suggest that you rewrite the appropriate sections in Yellow Form L relating to the above guidance and resubmit the portfolio.

If you have any queries about this assessment please contact the Consortium Manager as soon as possible (01707 285875). You have a copy of the Appeals and Complaints Procedure (in the Candidate Handbooks, H2, H4 or H9) to be used should you feel that **this assessment has not been carried out in accordance with the Advance assessment regulations** (for example, if this form has not been signed off by a moderator). If you have a complaint (for example, about the any discrimination in the comments made on this assessment form) you are advised to use the Complaints Procedure.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

1. Extent of complaints procedures

- 1.1 These procedures apply to anyone who is involved in Post Qualifying or Advanced Award processed for which *Advance* Consortium is responsible. This includes candidates, assessors, mentors and course providers.
- 1.2 The right of access to *Advance* complaints procedures arises in respect of activities of the Consortium undertaken by its paid employees, paid agents, approved independent or mentors, or any member of its boards, committees or sub-committees.
- 1.3 If a complaint arises about activities that involve individuals in a role not directly managed by the consortium, for example a mentor provided within an employing agency, the complaints procedures that exist within the employing organisation normally should be used.
- 1.4 Where a complaint relates to participation in a course that is accredited by *Advance* for PQ or AA credits, it normally should be taken up with the course provider through their complaints procedures.
- 1.5 Where a complaint is made within an employing agency or to a course provider, it will be the responsibility of the employer or course provider to deal with the matter according to their own procedures. If the complaint becomes a formal matter, it will be the employer or course provider's responsibility to notify the outcomes to The Consortium, through the Consortium Manager, as part of the overall monitoring process.

2. Operational Principles

- 2.1 The procedures have been formulated according to principles that reflect:
- natural justice
 - equity
 - independence
 - equal opportunities
 - anti-racism and anti-discrimination
 - consideration of special needs
- and aim to provide a fair and effective means of allowing anyone participating in activities or processes of the Consortium to make complaints about the quality and/or nature of their experience.
- 2.2 *Advance* Consortium believes that the process of dealing with complaints can have a beneficial effect through the opportunities they present to explain, clarify, review or if necessary modify or change practices and therefore, should be viewed positively in the organisation and development of the Consortium.
- 2.3 All complaints whether made in person, by telephone, in writing or by proxy will be taken seriously.
- 2.4 These should be no barriers to anyone making a complaint for fear of discrimination on any grounds outlines in the Consortium equal opportunities policy, nor for fear of potential discriminatory consequences in relation to their progression to awards.
- 2.5 There should be no barrier to anyone making a complaint on the grounds of lack of knowledge or information about the relevant procedures. A copy of these procedures will be include in all *Advance* handbooks and will be made available to anyone on request through the *Advance* office.

3. Procedures for dealing with complaints

- 3.1 It is generally preferable to seek resolution of complaints informally at the level at which it originates, and often resolution can be reached in this way through verbal contact.

3.2 Where informal resolution has not been achieved, a formal complaint should be made. Once a complaint has reached this stage, in order for it to be investigated formally, it must be made in writing.

A complaint about any aspect of the operation or activity of the Consortium that comes within these procedures will be dealt with by the following process:

1. Notification of complaint and formal record made
2. Investigation of complaint
3. Appeal, if the complainant remains dissatisfied

Stage 1 NOTIFICATION OF COMPLAINT

- i. Complaints should normally be made to the Consortium Manager at the *Advance* Office address or telephone number. Where the complaint is about the Consortium Manager, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of the Consortium.
- ii. A letter of acknowledgment will be sent to the complainant normally within 3 working days setting out the stages of complaint and statement of information received.
- iii. The nature of the complaint and background information will be recorded and logged in the Complaints Log Book.

Stage 2 INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS

- i. The Consortium Manager or Chair of the Consortium, will investigate the complaint and respond in writing, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint
- ii. Information concerning the appeals procedure will be included with the formal written response
- iii. Outcomes of investigation of complaints will be recorded in the Complaints Log Book

Stage 3 APPEAL

- i. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint they should make a formal written request to the person who investigated their complaint for an immediate referral.
- ii. The request for referral will be acknowledge by the Consortium Manager or Vice-chair of the Consortium normally within 3 working days and the complainant informed of the names and address of the person considering their appeal.
- iii. the referral of complaint will be made to the Vice-chair of the Consortium (where the complaint was investigated by the Consortium Manager) or the Chair (where the complaint was investigated by the Vice-chair of the Consortium).
- iv. Written notification of the outcome of appeal will be sent to the complainant normally within 15 working days of the referral being made. At this point the decision is final.
- v. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal they should make a formal written complaint to GSCC.

4. Review of Procedures

These procedures will be monitored by the Quality Assurance sub-committee of the Management Board and will be reviewed annually in March.

Address for further information or to register a complaint: *Advance*, c/o the University of Hertfordshire, Meridian House, 32-36 The Common, Hatfield, Herts. Tel: 01 707 285875

APPEALS PROCEDURE

1. Extent of appeal procedures

- 1.1 These procedures apply to anyone who is involved in Post Qualifying or Advanced Award assessment processes for which *Advance* Consortium is responsible. This includes candidates, assessors, mentors and course providers.
- 1.2 The right of access to *Advance* Appeals procedures arises in respect of assessment activities undertaken by the Consortium. An appeal may be brought against the decision of the Assessment Board regarding a candidate or programme submission **where it is believed that the assessment was not carried out in accordance with the regulations or the Assessment Board were not in receipt of all the relevant facts/materials relating to the assessment decision.**

2. Operational Principles

- 2.1 The procedures have been formulated according to principles that reflect:
- natural justice
 - equity
 - independence
 - equal opportunities
 - anti-racism and anti-discrimination
 - consideration of special needs
- and aim to provide a fair and effective means of allowing anyone making a submission for assessment to the Consortium to appeal against the quality of the assessment.
- 2.2 *Advance* Consortium believes that the process of dealing with appeals can have a beneficial effect through the opportunities they present to explain, clarify, review or if necessary modify or change practices and therefore, should be viewed positively in the organisation and development of the Consortium.
- 2.3 There should be no barriers to anyone making a appeal for fear of discrimination on any grounds outlined in the Consortium equal opportunities policy, nor for fear of potential discriminatory consequences in relation to their progression to awards.
- 2.4 There should be no barrier to anyone making a appeal on the grounds of lack of knowledge or information about the relevant procedures. A copy of these procedures will be included in all *Advance* handbooks and will be made available to anyone on request through the *Advance* office.

3. Procedures for dealing with appeals

- 3.1 An appeal about an Assessment Board decision will be dealt with by the following process:
1. Notification of appeal made by candidate(s), programme provider(s), mentor(s) or assessor(s) with a formal record made
 2. Investigation of appeal
 3. Notification to appellant(s) of outcome of appeal and formal record made of appeal

Stage 1 NOTIFICATION OF APPEAL

- i. Appeals should normally be notified to the Consortium Manager at the *Advance* Office address or telephone number. Appeals should be addressed to the Chair of the Consortium and be received within 20 working days of the notification of the Assessment Board's decision.
- ii. A letter of acknowledgment will be sent to the appellant, normally within 3 working days, setting out the stages of appeal with a statement of the information received.
- iii. The nature of the appeal and background information will be recorded and logged in the Appeals Log Book.

Stage 2 INVESTIGATION OF APPEALS

- i The Chair of the Consortium, will investigate the appeal and respond in writing, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal
- ii The appellant is invited to submit written material in support of their appeal to the Consortium Office at least 5 working days before the Appeals Panel meets.
- iii The Chair of the Consortium will appoint an Appeals Panel consisting of 3 individuals from the Management Committee (to include one employer and one HE institution member) who do not sit on the Assessment Board nor have been involved in the assessment of the appellant's submission in any way. The Appeals Panel will be convened on the day that the Management Committee meets (March or September). The Consortium Manager will act as Secretary to the Panel.
- iv The appellant is invited to attend the Appeals Panel and make verbal and written contributions. The appellant may bring a supporter with them. The appellant (and supporter) will leave the meeting for the Panel to make its decision.
- iii Outcomes of investigation of appeals will be recorded in the Appeals Log Book. Outcomes may be
 - Appeals Panel recommends to the Assessment Board that it reconsiders the award of credits/requirements within 28 working days of the Appeals Panel meeting.
 - Appeals Panel upholds the decision of the Assessment Board
 - Appeals Panel recommends that regulatory or procedural changes be made to the Consortium in the light of the appeal.
- iv The appellant will be informed of the decision of the Appeals Panel by the Chair of the Consortium within 10 working days of the Appeals Panel meeting.
- v There are no further routes for appeal against the findings of the Appeals Panel.

4. Review of Procedures

These procedures will be monitored by the Quality Assurance committee of the Management Board and will be reviewed annually in March.

Address for further information or to register an appeal: *Advance*, c/o the University of Hertfordshire, Meridian House, 32-36 The Common, Hatfield, AL10 0NZ. Tel: 01 707 285875.

POLICY STATEMENT ON THE USE OF ENGLISH IN PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

Advance considers that the accurate (in terms of grammar and spelling) use of English is an essential component in the performance of a social work professional. From qualifying level, there is an expectation that good standards in written presentation, spelling and grammar are necessary skills to develop and maintain for social work professionals.

Assessment of PQSW and AASW portfolios will therefore include assessment of these skills in that evidence put forward to demonstrate professional competence and standards (e.g. court reports, comprehensive assessments, correspondence, training handouts). It is less relevant to assess this standard in reflective accounts or informal notes written at the time.

It is acknowledged that for candidates whose first language is not English, the presentation of evidence (and indeed reports and records at work) may require additional efforts. It is recognised that English is spoken and written in different ways due to regional, cultural and educational backgrounds. These differences are to be taken into account when assessing portfolio evidence so long as basic rules of grammar and spelling are observed.

There are candidates whose social work practice is largely conducted in languages other than English. Evidence of their interactions with other professionals, however, will normally need to demonstrate communication skills which include accurate use of English. Where such candidates present evidence in languages other than English, it is the responsibility of the candidate to provide the necessary translations and verifications for an assessment in English to be viable.

Candidates who have identified specific difficulties that they have in reading or writing which may affect the accuracy of their written evidence (e.g. dyslexia, concentration deficit, physical disability, visual impairment), are asked to notify *Advance* prior to any submission for assessment so that appropriate advice is given to assessors.

Where the pursuance of the PQSW or AASW highlights for a candidate an area of need in relation to their standard of English, this is not regarded as reflecting upon poor practice or a lack of competence in their knowledge, attitudes or skills. The highlighted need presents the candidate with the opportunity to address the need which will benefit not only their presentation of evidence but, perhaps more importantly, it will improve work practice in terms of how they present themselves in writing. As a framework for continuous professional development, the requirements of the PQSW/AASW assist workers in identifying need as well as demonstrating competence.

It is anticipated that many candidates who identify this need have already found helping strategies for themselves and within their work setting. Using a reader, spellchecker or typist to correct mistakes is entirely legitimate. The PQSW/AASW mentor should also assist the candidate in presenting the portfolio in an appropriate way.

This policy statement will be reviewed on an annual basis in March each year.

The PQSW - the Post Qualifying Award in Social Work

The PQSW has an academic equivalence to the final year of an honours degree and the quality and quantity of evidence will equate with this. This level of professional competence should be achievable by all qualified and experienced social workers who have been offered appropriate induction, support and development opportunities.

The PQSW is structured into 6 general requirements and two core requirements. The core requirements are assessed in an integrated way as a thread or theme running through each of the 6 general requirements. The core requirements ask that the candidate:

- a) evaluate the effectiveness of their practice using a relevant knowledge base, including an understanding of legal and policy contexts and appropriate research; and
- b) demonstrate an explicit adherence to the values of social work and to the provision of ethically sound practice

The candidate must evidence each of the 6 general requirements as described below:

Part One

- PQ1** demonstrate improved and extended level of competence acquired by the point of qualification

Part Two

- PQ2** demonstrate competence in working effectively in complex situations
- PQ3** demonstrate competence in exercising the powers and responsibilities of a professional social worker, including the appropriate use of discretion and the management risk
- PQ4** demonstrate the ability to make informed decisions
- PQ5** demonstrate competence in identifying and maintaining purposeful networks and collaborative arrangements
- PQ6** demonstrate competence in enabling others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching or direct contributions to education and training