



# The professional capabilities framework

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# **The Social Work Reform Board**

## **Professional capabilities framework**

In its first progress report, The Reform Board recommended the establishment of a capabilities framework for professional practice.

This national framework will act as a benchmark, ensuring that social work students, educators, practitioners, managers and employers are able to uphold the highest possible standards and deliver the best quality of service.



## **Professional capabilities framework**

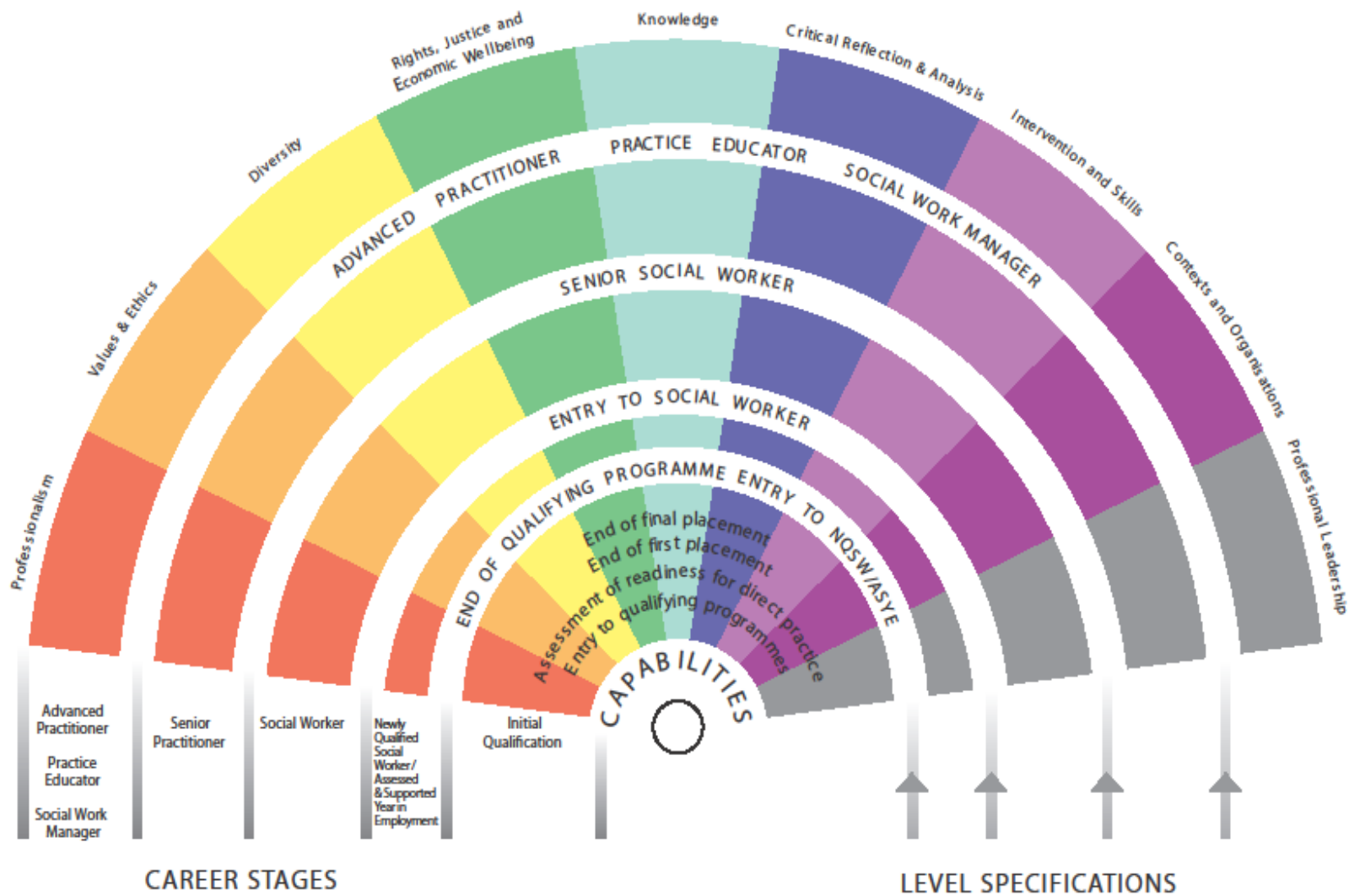
- A single comprehensive set of expectations of social workers at each stage of their career
- Framework proposes nine capabilities that are relevant regardless of level of experience
- Links to:
  - Entry requirements, levels of placement, qualification
  - Assessed and supported year in employment and CPD
  - Performance appraisal/pay and grading structures
- Forms the main stages of national social work career structure
- Capabilities agreed, elements under development

## **Underpinning Principles - the PCF should:**

- Be owned, maintained and used by the profession, and applicable to higher education and employers
- Be cost effective, feasible and sustainable
- Support progression and the national career structure recommended by the Social Work Task Force
- Fit with and influence the development of the other Social Work Task Force recommendations
- Be straightforward
- Be informed by current practice and developments, including from social work internationally and from other professions
- Be a professional rather than occupational framework

# THE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

## Proposed Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Workers





## How the PCF should work in practice

- Each capability will be broken down into elements to represent expectations at each level of a social worker's career
- Despite this, the framework should be seen as holistic and is not a set of competences or assessment measures
- The capabilities are not a curriculum for continuing professional development, but will provide a backdrop against which cpd will take place
- The statements provide a benchmark for both planning and measuring professional and career development

## **Interdependencies**

- Admissions criteria, practice learning and curriculum content
- Draft capabilities for ASYE level
- Development work arising from Munro Review of Child Protection
- The HPC work on developing social work Standards of Proficiency and Standards for Education
- The revision of the National Occupational Standards in the rest of the UK
- The QAA benchmark statement for social work
- The new CPD framework

**1. Professionalism:  
Identify and behave  
as a professional  
social worker,  
committed to  
professional  
development**

**Professional demeanour**

**Managing personal/professional boundaries**

**Use of supervision**

**Planning own continuing  
education and training**

**Use of self**

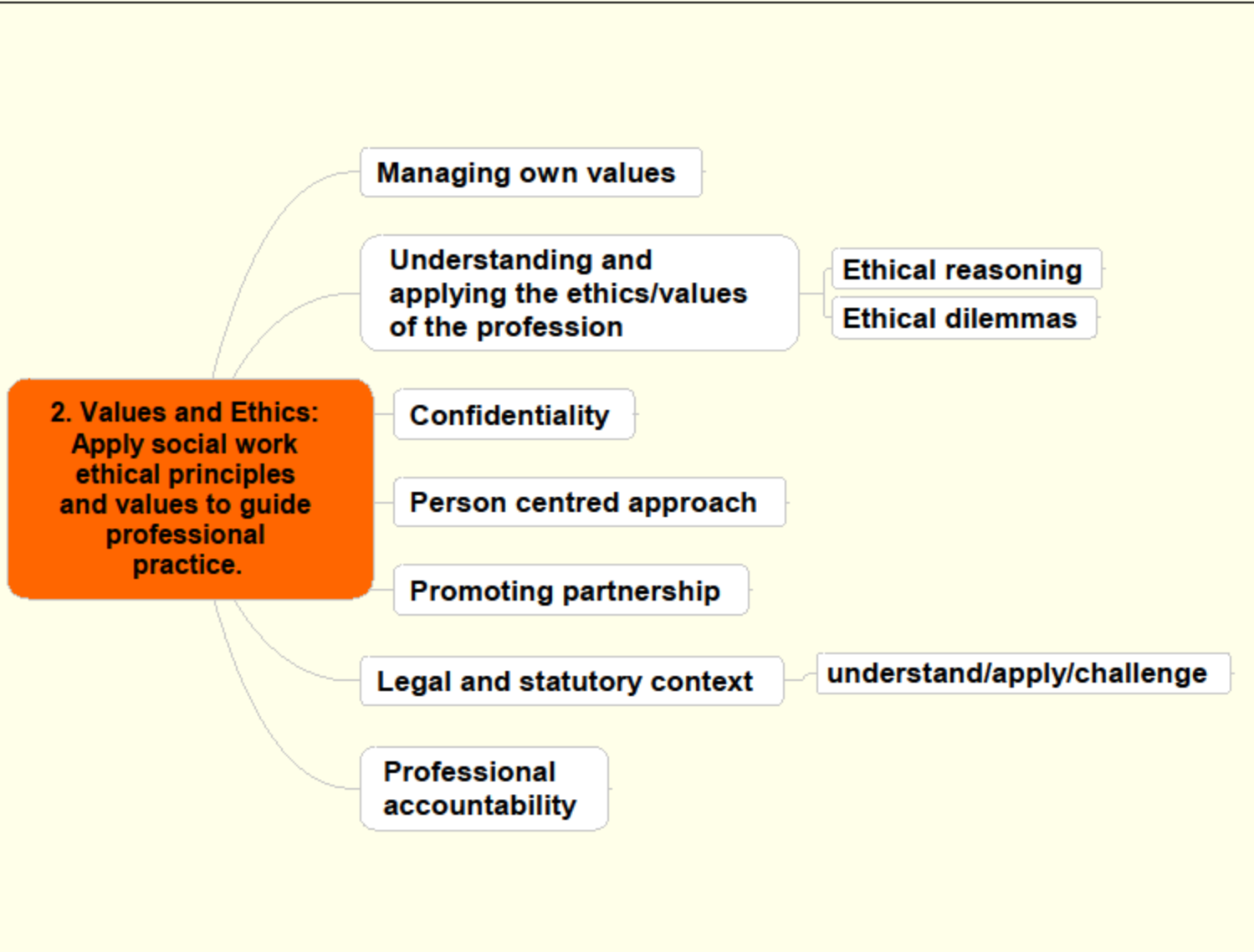
**Ensuring personal well-being  
and safety whilst being an  
effective social worker**

**Promoting and safeguarding the  
reputation of the profession**

**Challenging poor practice**

**Emotional resilience**

**Accountability line**



**3. Diversity:  
Recognise diversity  
and apply  
anti-discriminatory  
and anti-oppressive  
principles in  
practice.**

**Understanding  
differences in self and  
others**

**Respecting difference**

**Repertoire of personal  
presentation**

**Challenging  
discrimination and  
oppression**

**Challenging cultural  
assumptions (not  
colluding)**

**4. Rights, Justice and Economic well-being: Advance human rights, and promote social justice and economic well-being.**

**Legislative framework**

**Understanding impact of poverty**

**Promoting economic well-being**

**access to benefits, education and work**

**Empowerment and advocacy**

**Practicing from a rights perspective**

**Social Justice**

**Challenging practice and policy**

**5. Knowledge: Apply knowledge of social sciences, law and social work practice theory.**

**Social sciences**

**Law**

**Social Work practice theories and methods**

**Policy**

**Understanding and accessing other expertise**

**6. Critical Reflection and Analysis : Apply critical reflection and analysis to inform and provide a rationale for professional decision-making.**

**Use critical thinking**

**Use multiple sources of knowledge and evidence**

**Apply creativity and curiosity**

**Creating hypotheses**

**Rationale for judgements and decisions**

**Adult learning theory**

**7. Intervention and Skills: Use judgement and authority to intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support and prevent harm, neglect and abuse.**

**Communication**

**Building relationships**

**Assessment and planning**

**Prevention**

**Therapeutic Change**

**Recording and information sharing**

**Use of authority**

**Protection of vulnerable individuals**

**Promoting independence**

**Testing hypotheses**

**Review and evaluation**

**8. Contexts and Organisations:**  
Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing contexts that shape practice. Operate effectively within own organisational frameworks and contribute to the development of services and organisations. Operate effectively within multi-agency and inter-professional settings.

Knowing your organisation

H&S

Knowing your role and responsibilities

autonomy

Contributing to organisational policy and practice

Working with other people/professionals

Team working

Working with other organisations

Working with changing contexts

**9. Professional Leadership: Take responsibility for the professional learning and development of others through supervision, mentoring, assessing, research, teaching, leadership and management.**

**Informing and influencing policy and practice**

**Leading and inspiring others**

**Managing**

**Supervising**

**Educating**

**Research**

## **The Professional Capabilities Framework**

### **The College will:**

- Develop a vision of professionalism that does justice to the skills, knowledge and values of social work
- Support social workers in updating their knowledge and skills
- Work with social workers to ensure practice standards are being met
- Champion and articulate the highest professional standards
- Help social workers to understand and adhere to ethical principles and values.

# **The Professional Capabilities Framework**

## **What will The College do?**

- Practical standards for public protection in social work.
- Working with the inspectorates.
- Development of a recognition scheme and incentives for employers.
- Provision of expert advice to social workers regarding employer issues.
- Provision of access to learning resources and encouraging CPD.



Thank you

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