

**Professional in Practice Partnership Committee
 Strategic Workshop**

**Thursday, 5 December 10.00a.m.
 Via Teams**

Confirmed Minutes

Attendance:

Roslyn Dougherty
 Maura McMackin
 Noeleen Higgins
 Eileen McKay
 Elaine Pollock
 Gillian Montgomery

Jennifer Hamilton
 Tina O'Reilly

Chair
 Senior Consultant: HSCNI Leadership Centre
 Professional Officer: British Association of Social Work
 Assistant Director: BHSC
 Interim Head of Service: SEHSCT
 Director of Operations: Probation Board for Northern Ireland
 Head of School: Ulster University
 PiP Lead: Voluntary and Community Sector

In Attendance:

Gloria Kirwin
 Emma Richmond

Marian O'Rourke
 Catherine Maguire
 Gillian McAuley
 Mandy Cowden
 Nicola Lewis

External Assessor
 Chair of Information and Development Forum: Probation Board for Northern Ireland
 Director of Regulation and Standards: Social Care Council
 Head of Workforce Development: Social Care Council
 Professional Adviser: Social Care Council
 Professional Adviser: Social Care Council
 PiP Team Leader: Social Care Council (minute taker)

Apologies:

Adrian Nugent
 Stephen McLaughlin
 Michaela Glover
 Gillian McAllister
 Suzanne Mooney
 Stephen Thompson

Fiona Gunn
 Ciaran Traynor
 Lee Wilson
 Denise MacDermott
 Marita Magennis
 Ursula Crickard

Head of Education Welfare Services: EANI
 Assistant Director: WHSCT
 Head of Social Work Governance: SPPG
 Acting Deputy Director: Youth Justice Agency
 PiP Co-Ordinator: Queen's University Belfast
 Service Manager: Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland
 Assistant Director: SEHSCT
 Community and Voluntary Sector
 Assistant Director: NHSCT
 Social Work Lead: Ulster University
 Assistant Director: SHSCT
 Assistant Director, Children's Court Guardian Agency

		Action
1.	Welcome	
1.1	<p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair noted that this was Marian's last Partnership meeting, and led a tribute to Marian's important contribution and commitment to the PiP Framework.</p> <p>Marian thanked everyone, and highlighted the importance of minding, growing and nurturing the Partnership into the future. Marian also noted the importance of the PiP Framework remaining relevant, responsive to the needs of the profession and fit for purpose.</p>	
2.	Declaration of Interest	
2.1	None noted.	
3.	Chair's Business	
3.1	<p><u>External Assessor to the PiP Partnership</u></p> <p>The Chair confirmed the appointment of Gloria Kirwin as External Assessor to the PiP Partnership. She brings a breadth of experience and knowledge that will be very valuable. The Chair noted that Gloria would join the part of meeting as an observer.</p>	
3.2	<p>A round of introductions where completed.</p> <p><u>Interim Structures within Social Care Council</u></p> <p>Marian gave an overview of the interim arrangements in place within the council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declan McAllister, Interim CEO. • Catherine Maguire and Helen McVicker, Interim Co-Directors of Regulation and Standards on a job share basis. • Gillian McAuley, Interim Head of Fitness to Practice on a job share basis • Tricia Devlin, Interim Head of Work Force Development on a job share basis <p>A fixed term Professional Adviser role has been advertised, it is anticipated the role be filled in the new year. MO'R noted that these arrangements are in place to provide stability and to afford the incoming Chief Executive the opportunity to appoint the Director of Regulation and Standards on a permanent basis.</p>	
4	Approval of Minutes and Actions from previous Meeting	
4.1	The previous minutes were shared in advance of the meeting and confirmed by members.	

4.2	<p><u>Follow up with Queen's University Belfast (QUB) in relation to Joint Management Board Reporting.</u></p> <p>GMcA provided an update on plans to strengthen the quality assurance and reporting structure for Joint Management Boards. She confirmed that following discussion with QUB it has been agreed that each academic programme co-ordinator will provide a report for annual monitoring. For UU programmes reports will be provided on behalf of the Joint Management Board Chairs. This reporting structure will form part of the Annual Monitoring processes for programmes and support a more strategic focus for monitoring. The revised reporting arrangements will be piloted in 2025 and evaluated with outcomes reported to the Partnership.</p>	
4.3	<p><u>Clarification of TCI approval status</u></p> <p>MC provided an update on the approval of the TCI WBLR Course which came for approval in April 2024. The course was Approved with two conditions and two recommendations. Course co-ordinators continue to be supported to meet these, however challenges with changes in personnel have impacted on timings. The Partnership noted that this is a valuable course and welcomed its recognition within the PiP Framework.</p>	
5	Credit Accumulation Route and Post Registration Training and Learning	
5.1	<p>GMcA provided an update in relation to the CAR redevelopment on the IT system. Progress has been slow due to the availability of the system developer. A change request document outlining the system development was expected in May, but it has not yet been received. A meeting has been scheduled with the system developer to discuss the proposal content and costs. We expect to receive the proposal in mid-January.</p> <p>GMcA emphasised the importance of a slow and steady approach to ensure the system is fully functional. While this approach may take longer, Gillian deemed it as necessary for creating a reliable system. At present, there is no confirmed 'Go Live' date.</p> <p>GMcA assured the Panel that candidates will continue to be supported and encouraged to submit their credits using the Individual Assessment Route.</p>	
6	Updates from PiP Panels	
6.1	<p><u>Information and Development Forum</u></p> <p>ER (Chair of the I&D Forum) provided an update from the recent meeting of the Forum which met in November 2024;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work has been completed with agency partners including employers, the Council and UU to develop a PiP Assessor 	

6.2	<p>Pathway within the IAR. This will support PiP / PQ assessors with a minimum of 5 years' experience to submit for up to three Leadership and Strategic Award requirements. The pathway will be piloted over the next two assessment points in 2025.</p> <p>Action: Handbook and submission booklet to be shared with minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forum noted an increase in the number of social workers achieving their full awards. The provision PiP data has helped employers to identify staff who have already achieved two thirds of an Award and encouraged them to complete the full award. • Work is underway to create a PiP communication plan. A subgroup is currently working to design infographics as part of this work. • An IAR Representative Support Group to planned to commence in March 2025. The purpose of the group is to support improvement, information sharing and to build resilience and relationships. • The Social Care Council have revised internal processes in relation to IAR assessment to allow 20 days for PiP assessment due to growing numbers of submissions, and academic marking requests. • A review of the process for approving Practice Teachers from outside NI is underway. This is to ensure a formal and robust process in place. <p><u>IAR Assessment Panel</u></p> <p>Gillian provided an update from the IAR Assessment Panel in November 2024.</p> <p>A total of 28 submissions were received:</p> <p>Award Type: 22 Consolidation 2 Specialist 3 Leadership & Strategic 1 Advanced Scholarship Award</p> <p>Outcome: 22 Competent 3 Partially Competent 2 Referred 1 Not Assessed.</p> <p>Achievements:</p> <p>2 Full Awards (ASA & Spec) 3 Finished off Awards using IAR</p> <p>17 met their Mandatory 2 Requirements 3 did not meet their requirements – 1 extension, 2 resubmissions by 16 December 2024.</p>	NL
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	<p>5 Submissions were academically assessed.</p> <p>December 2024 Resubmission:</p> <p>Three Candidates have been given the option to resubmit for their referred requirements by Monday, 16 December 2024.</p> <p>GMcA stated that due to increasing submission numbers, and the upcoming pilot of the PiP Assessor Pathway, we will consider introducing processes that help to anticipate the number and type of submissions in advance</p>	
6.3	<p><u>Approval Panel</u></p> <p>Mandy provided an updated on the two WBLR Courses who came for Approval in November for the full NI Specialist Award:</p> <p>Risk and Protectiveness Training for Social Workers: Approved with two recommendations.</p> <p>Signs of Safety: Not Approved.</p> <p>MC advised members that the Panel provided detailed feedback to the Signs of Safety representatives and recommended that an incremental approach is taken to approval. This will be monitored and is expected to be brought back to the April 2025 Approval Panel.</p> <p>MC informed the Panel that the first round of WBLR monitoring visits are due to take place in 2025. These will involve engagement with leaders and candidates to understand their views and experiences of the content and delivery of courses.</p> <p>MC updated the panel on a meeting scheduled with the co-ordinators of the QI WBLR Course to discuss changes made to the course to ensure these are within the parameters of what was approved.</p> <p>CM enquired about progress made to bring the Framework for Integrated Therapeutic Care (FITC) Course for Approval. It was discussed that while training is being rolled out in residential facilities, there has been no further contact in relation to PiP approval. CM noted that staffing changes may have slowed progress. CM to follow up.</p>	
7.	Review of the Research Methods Programme	
7.1	<p>MO'R updated the Panel on the background and developments to date. UU and the Council have now met to plan a way forward. A workshop has been scheduled on 21 January 2025 as an opportunity to hear from employers, understand what is possible within the university and progress towards a plan for the programme.</p>	

	JH informed members that Consumer Protection Law now applies to Higher Education, which has changed the landscape in relation to what universities are expected to deliver.	
8.	Reform Work and Impact on PiP	
8.1	<p>CM gave a summary and led a conversation in relation to the wide range of system wide reform work which is currently underway. CM noted that it was important for the Partnership to consider stitching the learning and development arising from the reform work into the Framework and PiP accreditation to ensure that connections are made at an early stage.</p> <p>TO'R thanked CM for the update. She stated that this information is important as often the voluntary sector can find it difficult to access training in areas around reform work.</p> <p>NH noted the challenge in keeping abreast of all of the systemic changes. GMcA suggested that the strategic session of the PiP Partnership in September 2025 should offer an opportunity for a detailed discussion around the scope of change resulting from reform work, and the impact on PiP. It was agreed that key people involved in the reform work could be invited to inform the discussion.</p> <p>CM shared the below links with the panel during the meeting;</p> <p>Children and Young People Care Services and policies Department of Health</p> <p>Social Care Collaborative Forum - Key documents Department of Health</p>	
9.	Strategic Action Plan	
9.1	<p>GMcA gave a detailed update on the work being completed within the five areas identified in the PiP Strategic Action Plan. The update document will be shared with the minutes of the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged the update noting the scope of the work that is being completed in each of the areas.</p> <p>Action: Strategic Action Plan to be shared with minutes.</p>	NL
10.	Terms of Reference	
10.1	<p>The Chair advised that currently the Terms of Reference are reviewed annually, and proposed to move this to a BI-Annual Review.</p> <p>The Panel agreed this change. The current TOR will be shared in advance of the February 2025 meeting for review before moving to Bi-Annual monitoring.</p>	

11.	Matters for Reporting to the Board	
11.1	<p>The Chair agreed that the following items will be brought to the Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Action Plan • Impact of the Reform agenda on PiP <p>MO'R advised that the Accountability Report that incorporates all of the Workforce Development Team's regulatory activity will be presented to the Social Care Council Board, and made available to the Partnership after the next Board meeting.</p> <p>Action: Accountability Report to be shared</p>	NL
12.	AOB	
12.1	The Chair noted that the PiP calendar for 2025 has been shared and asked that all members ensure that dates are added to their diaries.	
13.	Date of Next Meetings	
	<p>Strategic Meeting: 19 February 2025</p> <p>Business Meeting: 21 May 2025</p> <p>Strategic In Person Meeting: 3 September 2025</p> <p>Business Meeting: 11 December 2025</p>	

Signed: Roslyn Dougherty, Chair of Partnership Committee



Date: 19 February 2025

5 December 2024:
NB the item 6.1.1 – 6.1.7 below have been carried over from the September 2024 meeting

Item	Owner	Action	Status
6.1.1	AMcG/MOR	The Chair articulated the role of the Research and Evidence Partnership in taking forward strategic position and funding issues with a need to establish a productive working relationship with the PiP Partnership as part of a workplan	Ongoing as part of Strategic Plan
6.1.2	CM/DOH	MC suggested consideration be given to the evidence associated with AYE (and potentially PRTL Audit) as a starting point for establishing a career continuum with links to PiP recognition.	Ongoing
6.1.3	CM/DOH	The Chair noted the discussion on links between career progression and research methods. Follow up with the work of the DOH is required to discuss potential opportunities.	Open
6.1.4	JH/MOR	A priority for the Research Methods Programme at Ulster University is to find a model that better fits with their structures whilst continuing to meet the needs of employers and the profession. A group is to be established with members from UU, the Social Care Council and employers to take forward re-design.	Ongoing
6.1.5	MOR/DoH/CT	Consideration should be given to how active research can be incorporated into contract and governance requirements where appropriate	Open
6.1.6	JH/CM	User involvement on the research methods programme is a key priority. Whilst sitting outside of the direct scope of the Partnership there was consensus that this was invaluable for the profession and intrinsically linked to social work values	Open
6.1.7	MO'R/IMG	Proposal for a Social Work Award to be developed to recognise an individual or team's active commitment to research and evidence.	Open
6.1.8	NL	Assessor Pathway Handbook and Submission Booklet to be shared with minutes.	Open

Item	Owner	Action	Status
7.1.1	All	A workshop to be held on 21 January 2025 to listen to voice of employers, hear what is possible within the university and progress towards a plan for the Research Methods Programme at UU.	Open
9.1.1	NL	Strategic Action Plan to be shared with minutes.	Open
10.1.1	NL	Terms of Reference to be shared for review in advance of next meeting.	Open
11.1.1	NL	Accountability Report to be shared following Board meeting.	Open