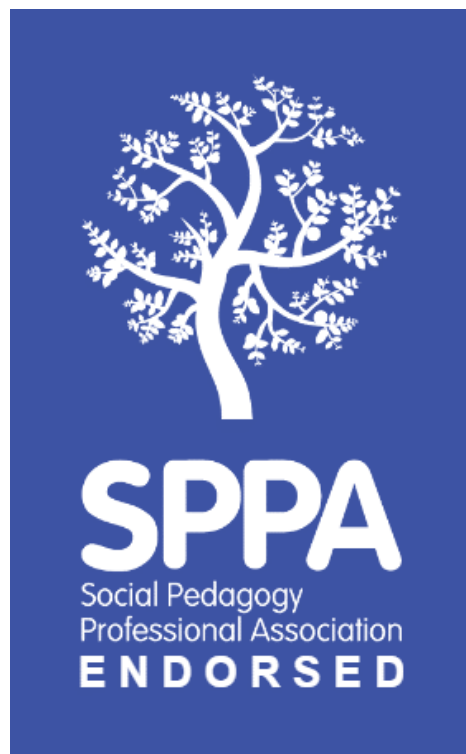

Social Pedagogy Practice Learning Handbook for Category 1 and 2 Endorsed Learning Programmes

A Handbook for Learners, Practice Supervisors and Tutors



Social Pedagogy Professional Association

www.sppa-uk.org

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1. Introduction

The [Social Pedagogy Professional Association](#) (SPPA) is a membership-based organisation established to uphold standards of social pedagogic practice in the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland).

SPPA holds a register of learning programmes (courses and qualifications) which demonstrate that they offer high quality learning in Social Pedagogy. SPPA upholds Standards of Education and Training [SETs] to ensure that Social Pedagogy qualifications, courses and other learning programmes are consistently facilitated to this standard by providers across the UK and Ireland.

Organisations whose learning programmes are approved by SPPA have demonstrated that they meet these SETs and in the case of Category 1 and 2 learning programmes, equip learners to meet the Standards of Proficiency [SOPs] in Social Pedagogy.

This guide is designed to provide key information about the requirements for **practice learning [PL] for Category 1 and 2 Endorsed learning programmes**. It also provides details about the support that is available for learners, practice supervisors, and tutors. It should be read in conjunction with guidance provided by learning programmes.

Learning programmes and the qualifications received fall into three distinct categories that relate to the use of the titles 'Social Pedagogue' and 'Social Pedagogy Practitioner', these are organised as follows:

Programme Categories

Category 1 programmes are **Bachelors (level 6)** or **Masters (level 7)** degrees in Social Pedagogy, which include a minimum of 200 practice learning days (**approximately 1,400 PL hours**) and afford the learner the **title of Social Pedagogue** upon completion.

The title **Social Pedagogue** qualifies the bearer to apply for recognised equivalence with the legal title of Social Worker as follows: in England, as regulated by [Social Work England](#); in Northern Ireland, as regulated by the [Northern Ireland Social Care Council](#); in Ireland as regulated by [CORU](#); in Scotland, as regulated by the [Scottish Social Services Council](#); and in Wales, as regulated by [Social Care Wales](#). It is at these regulators' discretion that equivalence is decided, and legal titles conferred.

Category 2 includes programmes that are a mid-level qualification, which must have a **minimum of 41 practice learning days (approximately 300¹ PL hours)** and may be at **level 3, level 4, level 5, or level 6.**

On completion of a **category 2 programme**, learners are afforded the **title Social Pedagogy Practitioner** that matches the qualification level, for instance:

at level 3: **Level 3 Social Pedagogy Practitioner**

at level 4: **Level 4 Social Pedagogy Practitioner**

at level 5: **Level 5 Social Pedagogy Practitioner**

at level 6: **Level 6 Social Pedagogy Practitioner**

Please note that SPPA does not prescribe the distribution of practice learning hours across levels, however it is expected that the number of practice learning hours increases with each level.

- **Category 3** endorsement is for those programmes that are assessed below level 3 and do **not require any practice learning hours**, therefore **do not confer either of the above titles**. Since these programmes do not require practice learning hours for endorsement, they are not included in this Handbook.

Qualification levels

Nomenclature of study levels may vary by nation; equivalent level titles should be applied in accordance with those used in the awarding nation.

- **Qualification levels in England, Wales and Northern Ireland**

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

- **The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework**

<https://scqf.org.uk/about-the-framework/>

- **Comparison of Qualifications in the UK and Ireland**

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaas/news-and-events/qualifications-can-cross-boundaries-guide-to-comparing-qualifications-in-the-uk-and-ireland.pdf?sfvrsn=3715c981_4

¹ From 20th September 2023 the practice learning hours required to get endorsed at **Category 2** changed from 400 to **300**.

2. SPPA Requirements for Practice Learning

This section provides an overview of the main professional requirements for practice learning. These are the **Social Pedagogy Standards** and the [Charter for Social Pedagogy](#) in the UK, developed in collaboration with UCL Institute of Education, ThemPra Social Pedagogy, and Jacaranda Development.

2.1 Social Pedagogy Standards

Philosophy and <i>Haltung</i>	Practice
<p>These threshold standards address the philosophy underpinning of Social Pedagogy and the <i>Haltung</i> we expect Social Pedagogy Practitioners and Social Pedagogues to develop and maintain in their practice. These standards should be held in a person's heart and guide their way of living and working.</p> <p>As a Social Pedagogy Practitioner / Social Pedagogue, I agree to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and nurture an attitude of empathy and regard for people and cultures and the world of which we are a part 2. Foster relationships that respect human dignity and promote human rights, mutuality and well-being 3. Recognise the inherent resourcefulness and potential of human beings to bring about change 4. Appreciate that human relationships, in all their complexity, are intrinsically valuable and therefore central to Social Pedagogy 5. Enable people to use their voices and effect change within their own lives and wider society 	<p>These standards represent the threshold level of practice for Social Pedagogy Practitioners and Social Pedagogues. We expect their employing organisations to provide a working culture and support that enables Social Pedagogy Practitioners and Social Pedagogues to apply these standards within their practice.</p> <p>As a Social Pedagogy Practitioner / Social Pedagogue, I agree to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage with others in ways that respect their equal value and human dignity, understanding the part played by personal communication in supporting this 2. Make decisions with a high degree of situation awareness, recognising the complex factors involved in different circumstances 3. Recognise and respect that personal histories, characteristics and social and political contexts have brought each person and group to their current understanding of the world 4. Invite, consider and integrate multiple perspectives in decision making as a means of deepening social justice, community and well-being 5. Create opportunities and contexts for people to actively participate in society, express their own views and listen to those of others

<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Understand and work with the tensions inherent in valuing individual autonomy and social interdependence7. Engage with social and political aspects of human development, childhood and community8. Educate for community through community9. Develop an attitude of professional curiosity and critical self-reflection10. Be open to and informed of new theory, research and good practice relevant to social pedagogical practice11. Use situated professional judgment and maintain appropriate confidentiality12. Understand issues relating to the protection of vulnerable individuals, groups and communities and address social inequalities13. Recognise the value of creativity, playfulness and adventure14. Be accountable for my practice, engage in meaning-making and know when to seek advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Hold my relationship with the people I work with and support in the foreground in all my practice7. Value the opportunities that everyday activities provide for developing relationships8. Facilitate learning processes that enhance well-being and enable individuals to find meaning and purpose in their everyday lives9. Work collaboratively and be willing to both support and challenge colleagues10. Use theory and research in my everyday practice11. Support the individuals, groups and communities I work with to realise their hopes and aspirations by identifying, with them, the steps required to meet their goals12. Adapt my practice to take account of the physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social and cultural needs and strengths of individuals, groups and communities, in keeping with the principles of Social Pedagogy13. Practice safely and competently within the legal and ethical boundaries of my profession14. Take into account relevant social policy and at the same time bring critical awareness to any tensions existing between our values and such policies.15. Support community development by encouraging networking and connections through participatory processes that draw on the community's resourcefulness.16. Promote inter-professional dialogue and co-operation across settings and agencies.
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A Charter for Social Pedagogy in the UK & Ireland



SPPA
Social Pedagogy
Professional Association

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-  1. We consider ethics and social justice to be the foundation for practice.
-  2. We believe in the importance of engaging with others and the world of which we are a part, in ways that are congruent with our values and beliefs (Haltung) and informed by theory.
-  3. We value the capacity of all to foster compassion, community, love, care, and empathy.
-  4. We believe in walking alongside others, recognising their uniqueness and, with them, co-creating meaning and purpose.
-  5. We understand the value of our participation in everyday activities as a basis for creating human connection, enhancing a person's sense of wellbeing and quality of life.
-  6. We endeavour to develop authentic and reliable relationships.
-  7. We believe in relationship-centred practice that recognises and engages with the whole person and the networks, systems and communities that impact upon their lives.
-  8. We value creative and playful approaches to lifelong learning that are theoretically informed, risk sensible and draw on people's potential.
-  9. We value professional curiosity in our work with every individual, group, and family.
-  10. We use theory, critical reflection, and self-awareness to inform practice.
-  11. We value teamwork, mutual aid, and collaboration with others.
-  12. We strive to bring about positive change for individuals, groups and families and communities, built on an understanding that practice is affected by political, social, and cultural contexts as well as by individual differences.
-  13. We believe in the social and political agency of individuals and groups to make significant choices about their lives and to contribute to their community.

This is the value base that informs Social Pedagogy practice in the UK & Ireland

www.sppa-uk.org
info@sppa-uk.org

The aims of practice learning for Social Pedagogy are:

- To provide learners with appropriate learning opportunities that enable them to evidence the SOPs;
- To enable learners to meet the requirements of the Charter for Social Pedagogy in the UK.

Most learning programmes require learners to declare if there are any physical disabilities, learning disabilities and/or mental health conditions that may affect them whilst on placement. Learners are encouraged to mention any support needs or adjustments they may require (e.g., provision of specialist equipment, adaptation to IT resources and/or use of specialist software). Whilst placements will make every effort to make reasonable adjustments, they may not have the resources or agency agreement to make all the required changes, in which case the learning programme should source another placement that can do so. It is learners' responsibility to notify their learning programme if there are any changes in their circumstances in relation to their physical or mental health, or their criminal record.

Learning programmes are responsible for ensuring placements meet learners' needs in accordance with the Social Pedagogy Charter and the SOPs. In line with this, they are required to check:

- that each placement offers a safe and supportive environment for the learner;
- that the placement provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to learners and that these arrangements are implemented and monitored;
- that there is a suitably skilled practice supervisor with relevant knowledge and experience available to work with the learner throughout the duration of the placement.

Learning programmes should visit all placements in the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise [VCSE] and private sector prior to learners being placed. Learning programmes should also keep a record of each placement provider, including details of the placement setting, the learning opportunities provided therein, and any other essential information.

If learners wish to source their own placement, they can do this, so long as the learning programme quality assure it to ensure it meets the requirements for Social Pedagogy practice learning.

A practice learning agreement meeting (or similar) should be held at the placement setting, attended by the learner, practice supervisor, and tutor; this must take place prior to the learner beginning their placement. A record of this should be kept by the learning programme.

Important for learners is an environment that supports their social pedagogic development as practitioners; this includes both the flexibility to seize everyday learning opportunities as they arise, and the structure to encourage critical reflection and integration of theory into practice. It is recommended that placement providers and learning programmes consider the following:

- **An induction programme** - provided to the learner at the start of the placement to help them establish context.
- **Supervision arrangements** - informal and formal supervisory support that encourages critical reflection and facilitates the linking of theory to practice.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The quality of practice learning is critical to raising standards in Social Pedagogy education. It is the learning programme's role to ensure that placements are audited and provide learning environments and opportunities that align with SPPA's requirements (please refer to the Charter and Standards above).

3.1 Roles

Practice Supervisor	<p>Each learner should have a practice supervisor who is a qualified and experienced practitioner in the placement setting.</p> <p>The practice supervisor enables the learner to access learning opportunities at the placement, provides teaching and learning to promote effective Social Pedagogy practice, and holistically evaluates the learner's development, providing developmental feedback through supervision.</p>
Tutor	<p>Each learner should have a tutor to provide a bridge with their learning programme while they are on placement.</p> <p>The tutor is a point of contact between the learner and practice supervisor, and as such it is they who should attend and facilitate the Learning Agreement Meeting (or similar).</p>

3.2 Responsibilities

Practice Supervisor Responsibilities
<p>The practice supervisor will be an experienced member of staff within the agency. They will be responsible for the day-to-day work of the learner within the practice learning setting.</p> <p>Specific responsibilities of the practice supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be the learner's main support within the placement and act as someone they can turn to at a professional level for help and assistance when needed

Practice Supervisor Responsibilities

- To be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the learner, for example in relation to group work/key work/projects/case work
- To be responsible for the learner's workload in their absence
- To provide supervision arrangements, both formal and informal
- To operate within agency policies/procedures, and in alignment with SPPA requirements
- To work towards establishing an open and constructive learning environment
- To provide experience and practice opportunities for the learner, relevant to the placement requirements
- To allow the learner reasonable access to records, in keeping with the agency's policy of such access and confidentiality
- To provide constructive and developmental feedback to the learner

Tutor Responsibilities

The tutor is employed by the learning programme to provide support, guidance, and tuition to the learner.

Specific responsibilities of the Tutor:

- To operate within the learning programme's policies/procedures and in alignment with SPPA's requirements
- To ensure the placement is appropriately quality assured and provides sufficient learning opportunity
- To work with the learner to help establish their learning needs and assist them in integrating Social Pedagogy theory and practice
- To attend and facilitate a Learning Agreement Meeting (or similar)
- To attend the placement if concerns or difficulties arise that cannot be dealt with solely by the learner and practice supervisor, and to facilitate a three-way meeting to address these

Learner Responsibilities

- To operate within agency policies/procedures and SPPA's requirements
- To undertake work in the placement as agreed with the practice supervisor
- To ensure confidentiality and data protection of those using the service at the placement are not breached
- To take responsibility for identifying their own learning needs and to use supervision constructively
- To let the practice supervisor and tutor know immediately of any problems or difficulties that may impact on their performance on placement

Practice learning providers encourage learners' development and should work holistically with learners, as they do with those using their service. In rare circumstances, there may be serious and significant concerns about a learner's suitability in the placement. Placement providers may end a learner's placement, in agreement with the learning programme, if any of the following are evidenced:

- the learner's behaviour is significantly and consistently unprofessional,
- their behaviour is damaging to those using the service,
- their behaviour is damaging to other learners,
- their behaviour is damaging to themselves,
- their behaviour is damaging to members of the public, staff, or the organisation as a whole.

Central to Social Pedagogy is a supportive, inclusive, and holistic approach to empowering people and helping them realise their potential. It is with this in mind that everyone involved in Social Pedagogy practice learning should approach this shared journey. Creativity, spontaneity and flexibility are encouraged in all Social Pedagogy practice learning, as in Social Pedagogy itself, and we hope that in this spirit this Handbook is not a prescriptive document, but rather a helpful guide.

If you have any questions, please contact SPPA at endorsement@sppa-uk.org

Glossary of terms

PL: Practice Learning

SETs: Standards of Education and Training

SOPs: Standards of Proficiency

SPPA: Social Pedagogy Professional Association

VCSE: Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise



**We are building a social pedagogy community of practice
across the UK and Ireland**

www.sppa-uk.org

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