

## **Education and Training Committee, 8 March 2012**

### **Responses to the consultation on draft standards of proficiency for social workers in England**

#### **Executive summary and recommendations**

##### **Introduction**

We consulted between 18 July 2011 and 18 November 2011 on our draft standards of proficiency for social workers in England.

The standards of proficiency are the standards necessary for safe and effective practice for each part of the Register. The standards outline what an individual must know, understand and be able to do when they enter the Register and begin practising their profession.

This paper brings to the Committee a summary of the responses we received to the consultation and identifies the changes we are making to the standards in response.

##### **Decision**

The Committee is invited to:

- discuss the attached consultation responses paper; and
- recommend to Council the text of the attached consultation paper and the standards of proficiency (subject to minor editing amendments and legal scrutiny).

##### **Background information**

None.

##### **Resource implications**

The resource implications include type-setting the final version of the standards.

##### **Financial implications**

The costs of type-setting and publishing the new standards of proficiency are funded by a grant from the Department of Health to cover the transitional costs of the transfer.

## **Appendices**

None

## **Date of paper**

27 February 2012

## Responses to the consultation on draft standards of proficiency for social workers in England

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# 1. Introduction

## About the consultation

- 1.1 We consulted between 18 July 2011 and 18 November 2011 on our draft standards of proficiency for social workers in England.
- 1.2 The standards of proficiency are the standards necessary for safe and effective practice for each part of the Register. The standards outline what an individual must know, understand and be able to do when they enter the Register and begin practising their profession.
- 1.3 We also consulted at the same time on the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register as a social worker in England.
- 1.4 The government has announced that the regulation of social workers in England will transfer from the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to the HPC. We expect that our Register for social workers will open at the end of July 2012. The government has also indicated that, subject to legislation, our name will change to the Health and Care Professions Council.
- 1.5 Our proposals only relate to social workers in England. Social workers in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will continue to be regulated by the relevant Care Council and are not directly affected by these proposals.
- 1.6 We sent a copy of the consultation document to around 600 stakeholders including professional bodies and education providers. The consultation was advertised on our website and newsletter, as well as by other organisations such as the GSCC.
- 1.7 We would like to thank all those who took the time to respond to the consultation document. During the consultation process we also met with the Service Users and Carers group at Kingston University and would like to thank them for their comments on the standards.
- 1.8 You can download the consultation document and a copy of this response analysis document from our website:  
[www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/closed](http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/closed).

## About us

- 1.9 We are the Health Professions Council (HPC). We are a regulator and our job is to protect the health and wellbeing of people who use the services of the professionals registered with us.
- 1.10 To protect the public, we set standards professionals must meet. Our standards cover the professionals' education and training, behaviour, professional skills, and their health. We publish a Register of professionals who meet our standards. Professionals on our Register are called 'registrants'. If registrants do not meet our standards, we can take action

against them which may include removing them from the Register so they can no longer practise.

## About this document

1.11 The consultation had five questions, which were:

1. Do you think the standards are at a threshold level necessary for safe and effective practice?
2. Do you think any additional standards are necessary?
3. Do you think there are any standards which should be reworded?
4. Do you have any comments about the language used in the standards?
5. Do you have any other comments on the standards?

1.12 This document summarises the responses we received to the consultation. The document is divided into the following sections:

- Section 2 explains how we handled and analysed the responses we received, providing some overall statistics from the responses.
- Section 3 summarises the general comments we received in response to the consultation.
- Section 4 outlines the comments we received in relation to specific questions within the consultation.
- Section 5 outlines our responses to the comments we received and the changes we are making as a result.
- Section 6 lists the organisations which responded to the consultation.

1.13 This paper also has three appendices:

- Appendix one lists the standards after consultation (subject to minor editing amendments and legal scrutiny).
- Appendix two lists all the comments we received suggesting additional standards.
- Appendix three lists all the detailed comments we received about the standards.

1.14 In this document, 'you' or 'your' is a reference to respondents to the consultation, 'we', 'us' and 'our' are references to the HPC.

## **2. Analysing your responses**

- 2.1 Now the consultation has ended, we have analysed all the responses we received. While we cannot include all of the responses in this document, a summary of responses can be found in sections three and four.

### **Method of recording and analysis**

- 2.2 We used the following process in recording and analysing your comments.
- We recorded each response to the consultation, noting the date each response was received and whether it was submitted on behalf of an organisation or by an individual;
  - We also recorded whether the person or organisation agreed or disagreed with each question;
  - We read each response and noted the comments received against each of the consultation questions, and recorded any general comments;
  - Finally, we analysed all the responses.
- 2.3 When deciding what information to include in this document, we assessed the frequency of the comments made and identified themes. This document summarises the common themes across all responses, and indicates the frequency of arguments and comments made by respondents.

### **Quantitative analysis**

- 2.4 We received 81 responses to the consultation document. (We have included and taken into account late responses to the consultation if we received them on or before 8 December 2011 but were unable to consider comments made in responses received after this date.) We received twenty responses from individuals and sixty-one from organisations.
- 2.5 We also visited the Service User and Carer Steering Group at Kingston University. We have incorporated their feedback into the quantitative and qualitative analysis.
- 2.6 The table below provides some indicative statistics for the answers to the consultation questions. Please note: some respondents did not clearly indicate the question to which they were responding, or responded more generally. In these cases, we have classified their responses under general comments unless it was possible to classify their responses elsewhere.
- 2.7 Question five did not lend itself to quantitative analysis and so is not included within the table below.
- 2.8 Percentages in the table have been rounded up to the nearest whole number.

## Quantitative results

<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>No answer</b>
Do you think the standards are at a threshold level necessary for safe and effective practice?	48 (59%)	8 (10%)	6 (7%)	19 (23%)
Do you think any additional standards are necessary?	40 (49%)	20 (25%)	3 (4%)	18 (22%)
Do you think there are any standards which should be reworded?	54 (67%)	9 (11%)	0 (0%)	18 (22%)
Do you have any comments about the language used in the standards?	48 (59%)	12 (15%)	0 (0%)	21 (26%)

### **3. General comments**

- 3.1 This section outlines general comments made in response to the consultation. This includes responses to question five of the consultation document. The general comments made by respondents are grouped under specific headings.

#### **The standards of proficiency**

- 3.2 Many respondents to the consultation welcomed the standards of proficiency, commenting that the standards clearly reflected the competencies expected of social workers.
- 3.3 Other respondents questioned whether the standards of proficiency were necessary. Some were concerned that setting these standards might limit social work practice, whilst others were worried that the standards did not reflect social work values.
- 3.4 Many respondents said that the number of standards was appropriate or suggested that we should add additional standards (their suggested standards can be found in appendix two). However, other respondents commented that there were too many standards or that many standards overlapped.

#### **The role of employers**

- 3.5 The GSCC currently produces Codes of Practice for Social Care Workers and for Employers. A number of respondents to the consultation asked whether we would be producing similar standards for employers.
- 3.6 Other respondents to the consultation argued that social workers could only meet the standards of proficiency if they received the necessary support, guidance and resources from employers. It was therefore important that we gave social work employers clear guidance on what was expected of them as employers. Alternatively, we should make clear that we supported and endorsed The College of Social Work's standards for employers. In addition, there needed to be a link between our standards and the standards used to inspect social work employers.

#### **The standards of proficiency and a social worker's career**

- 3.7 In the consultation document, we said that the standards of proficiency are the standards that social workers must meet on entry to the Register. However, as a social worker's practice develops they may not need to meet all the standards of proficiency. Respondents commented that social workers would need to continue to meet all the standards throughout their career.
- 3.8 Other respondents commented that social workers might not be able to meet the standards on entering their profession, as they did not practice autonomously. Instead, newly qualified social workers work within their

employer's policies and would not be fully autonomous when they started practising.

- 3.9 Other respondents commented that the way in which social workers met the standards and the level at which they were practising would change as their practice developed. For example, a social worker's autonomy would grow as they continued in their career. Respondents were concerned that this was not reflected in the standards.

## **Be able to**

- 3.10 A number of respondents commented on the terminology we use in the standards—particularly the use of phrases such as 'be able to', 'understand' and 'be aware of' at the beginning of each of the standards.
- 3.11 Some respondents felt the use of these phrases weakened the legal strength of the standards and their ability to be used. This was because it implies a registrant must be aware of or able to understand or do something, but the perception is they are not necessarily required to put their ability or awareness into action.
- 3.12 Respondents suggested that we should remove the phrase 'be able to'. They gave a number of different suggestions that could be used instead, including 'apply', 'evidence', 'demonstrate in practice' and 'be competent to'. Using these verbs would mean that social workers would have the necessary understanding and be able to demonstrate their competence in practice.
- 3.13 Other respondents proposed that 'be able to' should be replaced with 'must' so that the expectations for registration are clear, by setting out where registrants should be able to demonstrate the action or behaviour required. This would also be consistent with other standards set by the HPC, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.
- 3.14 A number of respondents proposed changes to each standard based on their proposed changes to the language used. We have not recorded these comments individually in appendix three, but have considered them carefully.

## **Other standards and frameworks for social workers**

- 3.15 Many respondents to the consultation commented on the link between these standards and the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) currently being developed by the Social Work Reform Board and The College of Social Work. Respondents welcomed our statement that we would work with these organisations to ensure consistency between the standards and the framework.
- 3.16 However, some respondents asked why we were developing new standards at this time and not adopting the PCF as our standards for social workers. Several respondents commented that there was currently a lack of clarity about the role and purpose of the standards and the PCF.

They suggested we should work with the College of Social Work to communicate with social workers about the standards and the PCF.

- 3.17 A small number of respondents asked whether we would revise our standards in light of proposals to introduce the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment.
- 3.18 Other respondents asked whether the standards of proficiency would replace the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Social Work. Respondents were concerned that the standards of proficiency lacked the NOS' detail and clarity.
- 3.19 They suggested that we should publish a mapping of the standards of proficiency against the PCF and the National Occupational Standards so that social workers could gain a greater understanding of the standards.
- 3.20 A small number of respondents expressed disappointment that the transfer of regulation from the GSCC to the HPC would not lead to a reduction in the number of different types of standards that social workers or education providers would need to meet.

### **The standards of conduct, performance and ethics**

- 3.21 Several respondents to the consultation commented on the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPE) as well as the standards of proficiency. They argued that we should revise the SCPE to ensure that it reflected social work values.

### **Student social workers**

- 3.22 Several respondents to the consultation asked how the standards of proficiency would apply to student social workers. Respondents recognised that there is ongoing work to improve the quality of social work education. It was important that social work students had clearly articulated standards so that standards in education could be maintained.

### **Concerns about existing practice**

- 3.23 A small number of individuals who replied to the consultation raised concerns about social work practice. In some cases, they gave examples of situations where they felt individual social workers were not meeting the necessary standards. Other respondents raised concerns about the practice of social work managers and employers.

### **Four country perspective**

- 3.25 A number of respondents commented on the importance of ensuring consistency in the regulation of social workers across the UK. Respondents were concerned that the standards of proficiency might lead to inconsistencies in regulation, as the standards would only apply to social workers in England, not in the rest of the UK.

3.26 Several respondents suggested that the HPC should develop a curriculum framework for the social work degree. This would ensure consistency in curriculum design and delivery in England and ensure consistent standards.

## 4. Comments in response to specific questions

4.1 This section contains comments made in response to specific questions within the consultation document.

### 1. Do you think the standards are at a threshold level necessary for safe and effective practice?

4.2 Many respondents agreed that the standards were at the threshold level for safe and effective practice. Respondents commented that the standards reflected existing training provision for social workers.

4.3 Respondents welcomed the standards because they clearly set out expectations of social worker's competence and responsibilities. Several respondents commented that the standards would support the Professional Capabilities Framework.

4.4 However, other respondents to the consultation argued that the standards were not at the threshold level. They gave the following reasons:

- The standards did not recognise the complexity of social work and the challenges practitioners face, including challenging ethical issues.
- The use of phrases such as 'be able to' was too basic and meant that social workers did not have to demonstrate their competence in a particular area.
- Social workers could only meet these standards with support and guidance from their employers, which was not recognised in these standards.
- Newly qualified social workers who were starting practice were not autonomous professionals and would not be able to meet all the standards.

### 2. Do you think any additional standards are necessary?

4.5 A number of respondents commented that additional standards were not necessary because the standards already covered the appropriate areas of social work practice and set appropriate expectations. Other respondents argued that additional standards could prevent social workers from practising creatively and flexibly.

4.6 However, other respondents argued that additional standards were necessary because the existing standards did not adequately reflect elements of social work practice and values.

4.7 All of the additional standards suggested are set out in Appendix two. There were a number of areas which were suggested by several respondents (though sometimes to sit under different generic standards). These were:

- raising and escalating concerns;
- advocating for and on behalf of service users;
- empowering service users;

- working with children and families;
- the role of the employer in supporting and developing social workers;
- safeguarding children and vulnerable adults;
- challenging discrimination and working to ensure equality; and
- identifying child abuse or harm.

### **3. Do you think there are any standards which should be reworded?**

- 4.8 Some respondents argued that the standards did not need to be reworded as they were clear and could be understood by stakeholders.
- 4.9 Other respondents commented that the standards did need rewording. Some suggestions were based on concerns raised about the language used in the standards (for example, the use of 'be able to'). There is therefore overlap between the answers to this question in the consultation and question four. We have listed all the proposed amendments to the standards in Appendix two.
- 4.10 Respondents suggested changes to the wording of the standards for the following reasons:
- to provide greater clarity around HPC's expectations of social workers;
  - to include references to working with families and/or carers;
  - to reflect the role of a newly qualified social worker and the importance of employer support to those social workers; and
  - to ensure that social work values were appropriately reflected within the standards.

### **4. Do you have any comments about the language within the standards?**

- 4.11 Many respondents commented that the language used within the standards was clear and easy to understand.
- 4.12 However, other respondents commented that the language used was not clear. Many of those respondents commented on the use of 'be able to' as set out in paragraphs 3.10 – 3.14 above. Respondents commented that the language used in the standards was too passive and was not accessible to service users.
- 4.13 In the consultation document, we asked respondents for their views on the use of the term 'service users'. Respondents expressed a range of opinions on this topic. Some respondents felt that the term was acceptable, recognising that it would be very difficult to find a term that everyone would be happy with.
- 4.14 However, other respondents said that the phrase failed to reflect working with family, kinship and carers which was a key part of social work. Respondents suggested a number of alternatives including 'service users and carers', 'people who use services', 'those who use services', 'experts by experience' or 'individuals'.

## **5. Our comments**

- 5.1 The following section sets out our response to the comments we received in the consultation and identifies areas for further action. The section starts with our responses to the general comments we received, before commenting on comments about the standards specifically.
- 5.2 We received a range of comments about the standards, which we have carefully considered. We have also looked at recent developments in the social work field, including the Munro report and work of the Social Work Reform Board, to ensure that the standards are appropriate.

## **Responses to general comments**

### **The role of the standards of proficiency**

- 5.3 We recognise that the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB) and The College of Social Work are developing the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) for social work. The PCF acts as an overarching framework setting out key capabilities expected of a social worker as they develop in their career. These include professionalism, values and ethics, knowledge, intervention and skills and professional leadership. The PCF will support social workers throughout each stage of their career, beyond the level of the standards we set.
- 5.4 Whenever we regulate a profession, we must set standards of proficiency for that profession. The purpose of the standards of proficiency is set out in our legislation. The standards are the threshold standards for safe and effective practice, setting out what is absolutely essential or indispensable for practice; they cannot be aspirational. They set out what a social worker in England must know, understand and be able to do following the completion of their social work degree.
- 5.5 The standards of proficiency set out the competencies expected on entry to the profession, whilst the PCF supports social workers throughout their practice. We are working with the SWRB and College to ensure that there is consistency between the standards and the PCF where appropriate. We have produced a joint statement with the College, setting out the roles of the different standards. However, the standards of proficiency have a very different purpose to the PCF and it is not possible to use the PCF in place of the standards of proficiency.

### **The standards and practice**

- 5.6 Some respondents to the consultation expressed concerns that the newly qualified social workers might not be able to meet all of the standards of proficiency. The standards of proficiency are the threshold standards necessary for safe and effective practice. We recognise that the way in which social workers meet the standards will change as their practice develops. For example, a newly qualified social worker may need more

support from their employer and colleagues than a social worker who has been practising for several years.

- 5.7 Respondents were particularly concerned that newly qualified social workers would not be able to meet standard four 'be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement'. When we say that a social worker is autonomous, we mean that they must be able to justify and explain their decisions. However, that autonomy has boundaries at any level of practice. For example, social workers must work within the policies or procedures set by employers, which may support their decision making.
- 5.8 When we set the standards, we look at existing training provision to identify the competencies necessary for safe and effective practice. We believe that the standards of proficiency reflect existing training and that newly qualified social workers can meet the standards.

## **Regulation and employers**

- 5.9 Some respondents to the consultation raised concerns about whether social workers would be able to meet the standards of proficiency without support from their employers.
- 5.10 We are aware that the Local Government Association has agreed to host the standards for employers on their website. We are supportive of these standards. We work with employers to explain how we will regulate individual professionals and to encourage them to support their staff. However, we regulate individual professionals and do not have powers to regulate employers or service providers.
- 5.11 The role of the standards of proficiency is to set out what social workers should know, understand and be able to do on entering the profession. The standards therefore set out the requirements for individual social workers, rather than those of their employers.
- 5.12 We recognise that our registrants do not work in a vacuum and must follow their employer's policies and procedures. Where registrants have concerns about that policy or procedure, they must raise those concerns appropriately. However, we would not take action against a registrant for following their employer's policies or procedures in good faith.

## **Recognition and reciprocity of training in the UK**

- 5.13 We will take over the regulation of social workers in England. Social workers in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will continue to be regulated by the relevant Care Council and are not directly affected by setting the threshold level.
- 5.14 There are currently recognition arrangements in place between the GSCC and the other three UK Care Councils. This means, for example, that someone qualified in Scotland is eligible to register in England, and vice versa.

- 5.15 We have agreed arrangements for recognition and reciprocity of training delivered in the other three countries at the point that our Register for social workers opens. This will ensure that social workers qualified or registered elsewhere in the UK are eligible to apply for registration with ourselves without facing unnecessary barriers.

## **Comments on other standards**

- 5.16 We received comments in the consultation on the standards of conduct, performance and ethics and comments on the generic standards of proficiency. These standards were not the subject of this consultation and so we have not reflected them in appendix two or three. However, we will consider these comments when we review the standards. We expect to begin our review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics in 2012/2013.
- 5.17 Some respondents were confused about the role of the different standards we set. In addition, there was also a lack of clarity around the interaction between the standards of proficiency and other standards and frameworks for social work. We recognise that we will need to undertake work in this area to provide clarity about the different standards on an on-going basis.

## **Responses to detailed comments about the standards**

- 5.18 In this section, we have set out our response to suggestions for additional standards or changes to the existing standards. All the proposed additional standards and suggested changes to specific standards are set out in appendix two and three of this document.
- 5.19 We have not responded to every suggestion individually here, but we have explained the general principles we applied when considering suggested amendments. Where respondents were particularly concerned about certain issues, we have addressed those below under the heading of the relevant standard
- 5.20 When we receive suggestions for changes to the standards (including revisions to existing standards or proposed additional standards), we consider the following in deciding whether we should make the change:
- Is the standard necessary for safe and effective practice?
  - Is the standard set at the threshold level?
  - Does the standard reflect existing requirements for social workers on entry into the profession?
  - Does the standard reflect existing training provision?
  - Is the standard written in a broad and flexible way so that it can apply to different environments in which social workers might practice or different groups that social workers might work with?
- 5.21 We write the standards of proficiency in a broad, flexible way and at a higher level of generality so that registrants working in different settings and in different ways can still meet the standards. When making decisions about whether to make changes to the standards, we must also consider

whether the changes would make the standards too specific or would limit the scope of the standards.

- 5.22 The standards set out the abilities necessary to practice in a profession. However, the standards are not intended to be a list of activities which registrants must undertake in any situation. For example, a registrant needs to 'be able to maintain confidentiality' on entry to the Register. However, this is an ability and does not mean that there will not be situations where information might need to be shared with others in the interests of service users or the wider public.
- 5.23 The standards are designed to equip registrants with the threshold skills necessary to practise in a profession. Registrants, as autonomous professionals, then decide how to apply those standards within their practice.

## **Suggested additional standards**

### **Raising and escalating concerns**

- 5.24 A number of respondents to the consultation proposed that we should add additional standards around raising and escalating concerns appropriately. We have considered these comments carefully. Whilst we recognise the importance of raising and escalating concerns, we believe that the decision to raise a concern about a worrying situation is an ethical behaviour, rather than a competency.
- 5.25 We have carefully considered the standards of proficiency as currently drafted. We believe that the standards of proficiency already include several standards setting out the competencies which support being able to raise concerns appropriately and it is not therefore necessary to add anything additional to the standards of proficiency.
- 5.26 However, we will take account of these comments when we review the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (see paragraphs [INSERT] above).

### **Challenging discrimination**

- 5.27 Several respondents commented that we should include additional standards under standard six around challenging injustice, discrimination and oppression. This included suggested standards requiring registrants not to discriminate or to condone discrimination. We consider that the requirement not to discriminate is an ethical one. However, we have made several small changes to standard six in response to the proposed suggestions.

### **Communication**

- 5.28 We received a range of suggested additional standards under standard 8. We have considered the suggestions and believe that most suggestions are already covered within the existing standards. However, we have added one standard around the requirement to listen to others.

## **Interprofessional working**

- 5.29 Respondents suggested adding a range of different standards around interprofessional working and working with service users to standard 9. We have considered the suggested additional standards around working with colleagues and believe that they are covered elsewhere. However, we will include additional standards on empowering and supporting service users.

## **Suggested changes to specific standards**

- 5.30 As set out above, this section does not address every suggested change to the standards, but focusses on responding to overarching themes or areas of concern.

## **General themes**

- 5.31 Some of the general concerns that respondents expressed influenced their comments on specific standards. For example, where respondents commented generally that the standards did not reflect the role of the employer, their suggested changes emphasised the role of the employer. We have not therefore addressed each of these comments as we have responded to them in the general comments section above (see paragraphs 3.5 – 3.6).
- 5.32 Other respondents proposed a series of changes to the standards, removing the phrases such as ‘be able to’, ‘understand’ and ‘be aware of’ and replacing them with a range of different phrases. We have responded to those comments in paragraphs 5.34 – 5.36 below.
- 5.33 Some respondents to the consultation suggested amendments to the current standards to reflect areas where other respondents sought additional standards (for example, around raising concerns). We have responded to those comments in paragraphs 5.24 – 5.26 above.

## **Language of the standards**

### **‘Be able to’**

- 5.34 Many respondents commented on the terminology we use in the standards—particularly the use of phrases such as ‘be able to’, ‘understand’ and ‘be aware of’ at the beginning of each of the standards.
- 5.35 As we stated in the consultation document, we intentionally use phrases such as ‘understand’, ‘know’, and ‘be able to’ rather than ‘must’. This is so the standards remain applicable to current registrants in maintaining their fitness to practise, as well as prospective registrants who have not yet started practising and are applying for registration for the first time. The standards are also written in a similar way to the learning outcomes set for pre-registration education programmes.

5.36 We recognise a number of respondents were concerned about this wording and its practical application, with some respondents preferring the use of the term 'must'. However, it is important to note the current standards of proficiency for the other professions we regulate also use verbs and starting phrases in the same way as the proposed standards of proficiency for social workers. We have not experienced difficulties in applying the current wording of the standards of proficiency in the way some of our respondents anticipate.

### **Service users**

5.37 We used the term 'service users' in the draft standards of proficiency for social workers. A number of respondents to the consultation commented on the use of the phrase and suggested a range of different terms that we should use instead.

5.38 We recognise that different terms are used within the social work field to identify individuals who use social work services and that those individuals use different terms to describe themselves. In addition, there is no one term that would be suitable for everyone. It is important that the terminology we use is clear and can be easily understood.

### **Our decisions**

5.39 We have made a number of changes to the standards based on the comments we received in the consultation. We have also added standards on:

- recognising abuse and responding appropriately;
- managing the power dynamics in relationships with service users;
- considering how personal values affect practice;
- understanding different cultures and their impact on practice;
- active listening;
- empowering service users;
- advocating for and on behalf of service users; and
- working with resistance and conflict.

5.40 We have considered the comments we received and propose that, where appropriate, the standards should be changed to make reference to 'service users and carers' rather than just 'service users'. We will also include a definition of the term within our standards document.

5.41 We will undertake additional work to communicate with stakeholders on the role and purpose of the standards of proficiency and the role of other standards and frameworks.

5.42 We have set out the revised standards following consultation in appendix one.

## 6. List of respondents

Aspect

Association of Directors of Adult Social Services  
Beacon Social Care  
Birmingham City University, Faculty of Health  
Bournemouth University  
Bradford College University Centre  
British Association of Social Workers  
Calderdale Council, Social Workers in the Adults, Health and Social Care Directorate  
Care Council for Wales  
Care Inspectorate (Social Work and Social Care Improvement Scotland)  
Care Quality Commission  
Cheshire East Council  
Children's Workforce Development Council  
City of Newcastle, Adult and Culture Services Directorate  
College of Social Work  
Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence  
Devon Partnership NHS Trust  
Durham County Council  
Durham County Council, Children and Young People Services  
General Social Care Council  
Hampshire Adult Services  
Help the Hospices, Association of Palliative Care Social Workers and National Association of Palliative Care Educators  
Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee, Social Work Policy and Social Work and Association of Professors of Social Work  
Lancashire County Council, Adult and Community Services  
Lancashire County Council, Children's Social Care Services  
Leeds University  
Leicester City Council, Workforce Development Unit Social Care  
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Adult Services  
Merseyside Practice Resource and Support Group  
Northern Health and Social Care Trust  
Northern Ireland Social Care Council  
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children  
Nursing and Midwifery Council  
Oxford Brookes University  
Patients Association  
Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust  
Scottish Social Services Council  
Sheffield City Council, Children, Young People and Families  
Skills for Care  
Social Care Can Do Partners  
Somerset County Council, Adult Social Care,  
Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust  
Stockport Children's Social Care, Newly qualified social workers,  
Stockport Children's Social Care, Social Work Team Managers,  
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust  
South Staffordshire & Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust  
Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust  
Teeside University

The Open University  
UK Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education (CAIPE)  
Unison  
University of Bedfordshire  
University of Bristol  
University of Cumbria  
University of Nottingham, Centre for Social Work  
University of Plymouth, Service User and Carer Consultative Group, BA (Hons)  
Social Work,  
University of Portsmouth  
University of Southampton  
University of Sunderland  
University of Sussex, Department of Social Work and Social Care

We also met with the Service User and Carers Group at the University of Kingston to discuss the standards.

## Appendix 1: The standards of proficiency for social workers in England

New standards are shown in **bold and underlined**. Deletions are shown in ~~strikethrough~~.

No.	Standard
1	<b><u>be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice</u></b>
1.1	know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional
1.2	recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources and be able to practise accordingly
1.3	be able to undertake assessments of risk, need and capacity and respond appropriately
1.4	be able to recognise and respond appropriately to unexpected situations and manage uncertainty
1.5	<b><u>be able to recognise the signs of harm and abuse and know how to respond appropriately</u></b>
2	<b><u>be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession</u></b>
2.1	understand current legislation applicable to the work of their profession
2.2	understand the need to promote the best interests of service users at all times
2.3	understand the need to protect, and safeguard <b><u>and promote the wellbeing of</u></b> children, young people and vulnerable adults
2.4	<del>be able to</del> <b><u>understand the need to</u></b> address behaviour <b><u>practices</u></b> which present a risk to or from service users, the public or themselves <b><u>or other professionals</u></b>
2.5	be able to manage potentially competing or conflicting interests
2.6	be able to exercise authority as a social worker within the appropriate legal and ethical frameworks <del>and boundaries</del>
2.7	understand the need to respect and <del>so far as possible</del> uphold, the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of every service user
2.8	recognise that relationships with service users <b><u>and carers</u></b> should be based on respect and <del>openness</del> <b><u>honesty</u></b>
2.8	<b><u>recognise the power dynamics in relationships with service users and be able to manage those dynamics appropriately</u></b>
2.9	understand what is required of them by the Health and Care Professions Council <sup>1</sup>
3	<b><u>be able to maintain fitness to practise</u></b>
3.1	understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct
3.2	understand the importance of maintaining their own health and wellbeing

<sup>1</sup> Subject to parliamentary agreement, the Health Professions Council will be renamed the Health and Care Professions Council.

3.3	understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up-to-date and the importance of career-long learning
3.4	be able to establish and maintain personal and professional boundaries
3.5	be able to manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice
4	<b>be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement</b>
4.1	be able to assess a situation, determine its nature and severity and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with it
4.2	be able to initiate resolution of issues and be able to exercise personal initiative
4.3	recognise where <b>that</b> they are personally responsible for, and must be able to justify, their decisions <b>and recommendations</b>
4.4	be able to make informed judgements on complex issues using the information available
4.5	be able to make and receive referrals appropriately
5	<b>be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice</b>
5.1	be able to reflect on and take account of the impact of inequality, disadvantage and discrimination on those who use social work services and their communities
5.2	understand the need to adapt practice to respond appropriately to different groups and individuals
5.3	<b>be aware of the impact of own values on practice with different groups of service users and carers</b>
5.4	<b>understand different cultures and communities and how this affects the role of the social worker in supporting service users, carers and families</b>
6	<b>be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner</b>
6.1	be able to work with others to promote social justice, <b>equality and inclusion</b>
6.2	be able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination and disadvantage <b>and oppression</b>
7	<b>be able to maintain confidentiality</b>
7.1	be able to understand and explain the limits of confidentiality
7.2	be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users or the wider public
8	<b>be able to communicate effectively</b>
8.1	be able to use interpersonal skills and appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users and

	others
8.2	be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating advice, instruction, information and professional opinion to colleagues and service users <b>and carers</b>
8.3	understand the need to provide service users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions or to understand the decisions made
8.4	understand how communication skills affect the assessment of and engagement with service users and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of <b>a range of factors</b> , factors such as <b>including</b> age, capacity, physical ability and learning ability
8.5	be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by <b>a range of factors including</b> disability, culture, age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status
8.6	understand the need to draw upon available resources and services to support service users' communication, wherever possible
8.7	be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5 <sup>2</sup>
8.8	be able to engage in <b>interprofessional and</b> inter-agency communication and <del>communication across professional and organisational boundaries</del>
<b>8.9</b>	<b>be able to listen actively to others</b>
8.10	be able to prepare and present formal reports in line with applicable protocols and guidelines
9	<b>be able to work appropriately with others</b>
9.1	understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships with service users, <b>carers</b> and colleagues as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively with others
9.2	be able to work with service users <b>and carers</b> to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources
9.3	be able to work with service users to promote individual growth, development and independence <b>and to assist them to understand and exercise their rights</b>
<b>9.4</b>	<b>be able to support service users' rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they</b>

<sup>2</sup> The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests competence in spoken and written English. Applicants who have qualified outside the UK, whose first language is not English and who are not nationals of a country with the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, have to provide evidence that they have reached the necessary standard. We accept a number of other tests as equivalent to the IETLS examination. Please visit our website for more information.

	<b>receive</b>
9.5	be able to support the development of networks, groups and communities to meet needs and outcomes
9.6	be able to work in partnership with others, including those working in other agencies and roles
9.7	be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team
9.8	be able to support the learning and development of others
<b>9.9</b>	<b>recognise the contribution that service users and carers' own resources and strengths can bring to social work</b>
<b>9.10</b>	<b>be able to work with resistance and conflict</b>
<b>9.11</b>	<b>be able to understand the emotional dynamics of interactions with service users and carers</b>
10	<b>be able to maintain records appropriately</b>
10.1	be able to keep accurate, <b>comprehensive and</b> comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
10.2	recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
11	<b>be able to reflect on and review practice</b>
11.1	understand the value of critical reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately
11.2	recognise the value of supervision, case reviews and other methods of reflection and review
12	<b>be able to assure the quality of their practice</b>
12.1	be able to use supervision to support and enhance the quality of their social work practice
12.2	be able to contribute to processes designed to evaluate service and individual outcomes
12.3	be able to engage in evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures
13	<b>understand the key concepts of the knowledge base which are relevant to their profession</b>
13.1	recognise the roles of other professions, practitioners and organisations
13.2	be aware of the different social <b>and organisational</b> contexts and settings within which social work operates
13.3	be aware of changes in demography and culture and their impact on social work
13.4	understand in relation to social work practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social work theory;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social work models and interventions;</li> <li>• the development and application of relevant law and social policy;</li> <li>• the development of social work and social work values;</li> <li>• human growth and development across the lifespan <b>and the impact of key developmental stages and transitions</b>;</li> <li>• the impact of injustice, social inequalities, policies and other issues which <del>impact on</del> <b>affect</b> the demand for social work services;</li> <li>• the relevance of psychological, environmental, <b>sociological</b> and physiological perspectives to understanding personal and social development and functioning;</li> <li>• concepts of <b>participation, advocacy and</b> empowerment; and</li> <li>• the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour.</li> </ul>
14	<b>be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice</b>
14.1	be able to gather, analyse, critically evaluate and use information and knowledge to make recommendations or modify their viewpoint <b>practice</b>
14.2	be able to select and use appropriate assessment tools
14.3	be able to prepare, implement, review, evaluate and revise <b>and conclude</b> plans to meet needs and circumstances and <b>in conjunction with service users and carers</b>
14.4	be able to use social work methods, <b>theories</b> and models to achieve change and development and improve life opportunities
14.5	be aware of a range of research methodologies
14.6	recognise the value of research and analysis and be able to evaluate such evidence to inform their own practice
14.7	be able to demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their practice
14.8	be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts
15	<b>be able to establish and maintain a safe practice environment</b>
15.1	understand the need to maintain the safety of both service users and <del>those involved in their care</del> <b>carers</b>
15.2	be aware of applicable health and safety legislation and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these
15.3	be able to work safely in challenging environments including being able to take appropriate actions to manage risk

## Appendix 2: Suggested additional standards

No.	Standard	
1	<b>be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice</b>	<p>A number of respondents suggested that this standard should include a standard (or several standards) on safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.</p> <p>Several respondents also suggested standards around the concept of risk and how it is managed. They suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘understand the concept of being ‘risk sensible’ as opposed to ‘risk averse’</li> <li>• ‘be able to identify and manage risk’</li> </ul> <p>A small number of respondents suggested standards based on employers or agencies. They suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘know when to inform their employer of any resource or operational difficulties that might adversely impact upon safe service delivery’</li> <li>• an additional standard focusing on multi-agency work</li> </ul> <p>One respondent suggested that this standard should include information on identifying harm and abuse and taking appropriate action in response.</p>
2	<b>be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession</b>	<p>Respondents suggested a number of different standards covering the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• managing or gate-keeping resources</li> <li>• awareness of the power dynamics in any relationship they form with service users</li> <li>• enabling service users to make decisions about their lives and identify and manage their difficulties</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• awareness of how social workers can exercise their power and authority in a positive way to protect service users and improve their lives</li> <li>• a broad knowledge of wider legislation (including legislation not directly relevant to their own area of practice)</li> <li>• the duties of medical professionals when treating service users as vulnerable individuals may not be able to ask questions of their doctor</li> </ul> <p>Respondents also suggested the following additional standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘understand that promoting the rights and safety of some service users can involve acting against what they perceive to be their own best interests and the interests of some others’</li> <li>• ‘understand that even when they are in agreement with decisions, promoting the rights and safety of some service users can involve acting against the interests of some others’</li> <li>• ‘work in children’s’ best interests, be able to identify signs and indicators of child abuse and take action to protect children’</li> </ul>
3	<b>be able to maintain fitness to practise</b>	<p>Two respondents suggested additional standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Be able to identify when their fitness to practice is being compromised and bring these matter to attention of the employer/appropriate person’</li> <li>• A standard requiring social workers to take responsibility for maintaining and improving their professional practice</li> </ul>

4	<b>be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement</b>	<p>One respondent proposed that the standard should include a recognition of the need for social workers to make themselves aware of how the health system works and the roles of various medical professionals.</p> <p>Another respondent suggested that this standard should balance autonomy with accountability and proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'be able to demonstrate that they are an accountable worker and that this accountability is to the organisations within which they work, to colleagues and to people who use services'</li> </ul>
5	<b>be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice</b>	<p>Respondents suggested a range of different additional standards to be included. They were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'be aware of the values of social work and the person centred approach'</li> <li>• 'be aware of unintentional discrimination and the impact of own values on practice with different groups of service users.'</li> <li>• 'be aware of the positive impact of diversity'</li> <li>• 'understand different cultures and communities and how this affects the role of the social worker in supporting the service-user and family'</li> </ul> <p>One respondent commented that the standard needed to make specific mention of respect for human rights, empowerment and protection of vulnerable people.</p> <p>Another respondent suggested that the standards should reflect the contribution social workers make to addressing poverty and inequality.</p>
6	<b>be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner</b>	<p>A number of respondents commented that this standard required additional standards in relation to equal opportunities, challenging injustice and</p>

		<p>discrimination and anti-oppressive practice. Respondents also commented that social workers needed to demonstrate a more explicit commitment to practice in a way that minimises and challenges the effects of oppression on service users lives.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following additional standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘registrants must promote equal opportunities for service users and carers’</li> <li>• ‘registrants must use established processes and procedures to challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice, always treating service users, carers and colleagues with respect’</li> <li>• ‘registrants must not discriminate unlawfully against service users, carers or colleagues’</li> <li>• ‘registrants must not condone any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by service users, carers or colleagues’</li> <li>• ‘respect diversity and different cultures and values’</li> <li>• ‘promote the independence of service users and assist them to understand and exercise their rights’</li> <li>• ‘help service users and carers to make complaints, taking complaints seriously and responding to them or passing them to the appropriate person’</li> </ul>
7	<b>be able to maintain confidentiality</b>	<p>One respondent suggested the additional standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘understand the principle of information sharing on a need to know basis’</li> </ul> <p>One respondent suggested that this section should make reference to the standard on confidentiality in the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.</p> <p>One respondent commented that social workers should recognise the need to share information about children’s needs when giving support to parents/carers.</p>

		One respondent said that the standard covered how to share information but did not cover the complementary need to understand when not to share information.
8	<b>be able to communicate effectively</b>	<p>A number of respondents commented that this section focussed on communicating to, rather than with, service users. There should be equal emphasis on listening skills and developing a dialogue.</p> <p>Several respondents commented that this standard should also reflect written communication as this was a key part of a social worker's role. The standard should reflect the need to write within different contexts, for different audiences and drawing on different sources of information.</p> <p>One respondent commented that there was no mention in the standards about communication with individuals with sensory abilities. Another respondent commented that this standard needed to reflect the use of IT within communication.</p> <p>Another respondent said that social workers need to be able to communicate with disabled service users effectively. This was important to ensure that any concerns were identified and followed up appropriately.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following additional standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'understand the process by which information is transferred from one person to another and is understood by them'</li> <li>• 'be able to understand the emotional dynamics of interactions with service users and how to build and use relationships to effect personal change'</li> <li>• 'demonstrates empathy and understand the feelings and emotional needs of service users, children and young people and their families'</li> </ul>

9	<b>be able to work appropriately with others</b>	<p>Many respondents argued that this standard should include specific reference to the role of social workers in empowering service users and advocating for the independence of service users. One respondent suggested the following additional standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘support service users’ rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive’</li> <li>• ‘promote the independence of service users and assisting them to understand and exercise their rights’</li> </ul> <p>A number of respondents commented that there should be a specific standard within this section on working with families and carers as this was a specific part of a social workers’ role.</p> <p>Several respondents remarked that this section needed additional standards on working with other professionals incorporating a number of different areas of interprofessional work. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the importance of working with other professionals and drawing on their expertise to ensure that concerns about a service user were acted on appropriately;</li> <li>• the role of interprofessional, collaborative practice within social work practice;</li> <li>• the need to uphold social work values and principles when working with others;</li> <li>• the ability to work with others to plan for person-centred outcomes;</li> <li>• the need to challenge the views of colleagues and professionals where necessary; and</li> <li>• the role of social workers in co-ordinating groups of professionals, particularly in relation to child and adult protection.</li> </ul> <p>Respondents suggested the following additional standards:</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'recognise the contribution that service users and carers' own resources and strengths can bring to social work'</li> <li>• 'be able to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers'</li> <li>• 'be able to work with resistance and conflict and use negotiation skills'</li> <li>• 'be able to consult with service users individually and strategically'</li> </ul>
10	<b>be able to maintain records appropriately</b>	We received no suggestions for additional standards under this standard.
11	<b>be able to reflect on and review practice</b>	<p>Two respondents suggested additional standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'be able to reflect on their own team working and interprofessional skills to support service users and teams to make safe, timely and appropriate decisions'</li> <li>• 'recognise the need to create and use time for critical reflection as a legitimate part of their role to ensure that the reflective process is both meaningful and productive'</li> </ul>
12	<b>be able to assure the quality of their practice</b>	<p>One respondent suggested an additional standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to manage and be accountable, with supervision and support, for their own social work practice within their organisation</li> </ul>

13	<p><b>understand the key concepts of the knowledge base which are relevant to their profession</b></p>	<p>One respondent commented that this section should expect the student and practitioner to be able to locate, understand and draw on the research base for practice.</p> <p>Respondents suggested a number of additional areas that should be understood in relation to social work practice. They were knowledge of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the identification, assessment and management of risk;</li> <li>• ethics (including ethical and anti-discriminatory practice);</li> <li>• human rights;</li> <li>• knowledge of power dynamics in family and group care situations in order to ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults' rights;</li> <li>• evidence based practice/research;</li> <li>• organisations and the policy processes which impact on them;</li> <li>• how international models of social work can inform and improve social work practice in the UK;</li> <li>• the value base of social work practice;</li> <li>• concepts of good authority and cycles of change;</li> <li>• child development and its impact on the need to act promptly;</li> <li>• recovery principles; and</li> <li>• addiction, substance abuse and mental illness and its impact on service users (particularly children).</li> </ul>
14	<p><b>be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice</b></p>	<p>Respondents suggested a number of different areas to be covered under additional standards. They were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to disengage at the end of social work involvement;</li> <li>• the importance of building relationships to support co-planning; and</li> <li>• a standard reflecting the importance of holistic and ecological assessment.</li> </ul>

15	<b>be able to establish and maintain a safe practice environment</b>	<p>Many respondents commented that there should be additional standards on raising and escalating concerns. This included standards on identifying concerns about poor or dangerous practice and abuse, the requirement to report those concerns and how to report those concerns appropriately. Respondents stressed that the safety of service users had to come before personal and professional loyalties.</p> <p>One respondent suggested that there should be additional standards in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raising issues, including lack of resources, which may get in the way of delivering safe care to service users</li> <li>• raising concerns with employers and regulators in relation to colleagues whose health or practice may be putting service users at risk</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: Detailed comments on the draft standards

Respondents' proposed deletions are indicated in the text by ~~strikethrough~~ whilst additions are shown in **bold**.

This section does not include comments received about the generic standards, as they were not within the scope of the consultation. We received a number of comments about the language used in the standards. These comments are set out in paragraphs 3.10 – 3.14 and responded to in paragraphs 5.34 – 5.36.

No.	Standard	
1	<b>be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice</b>	
1.1	know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional	<p>Several respondents commented that individuals would only be able to know the limits of their practice with appropriate support and supervision.</p> <p>One respondent commented that this standard could be taken out of context to avoid work.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• know the <del>limits of their practice</del> <b>limit of their role</b> and when to seek advice or refer to another professional</li> <li>• know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional <b>and exchange information with relevant others</b></li> <li>• know the limits of their practice, <del>and when to</del> seek advice or refer to another professional <b>when appropriate</b></li> <li>• know the limits of their <del>practice</del> <b>knowledge and skills</b> and when to seek advice or refer to another professional</li> </ul>
1.2	recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources and be able to practise accordingly	Several respondents commented that employers played an important role in determining and managing a social worker's workload. One respondent suggested that the standard should be supplemented with 'and know when to

		<p>raise concerns with their employer or appropriate authority if workload capacity and resources are insufficient’.</p> <p>Respondents commented that it was important that social workers managed their own workload, rather than just recognising the need to do so.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources and be able to practise accordingly, <b>including refusing to accept allocations over and above an agreed upper limit</b></li> <li>• <del>recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources and be able to practise accordingly</del> <b>accountable for your work in conjunction with your manager</b></li> <li>• <del>recognise the need</del> <b>their personal responsibility</b> to manage their own workload and resources and <del>be able to practise accordingly</del> <b>to prioritise according to levels of risk</b></li> </ul>
1.3	be able to undertake assessments of risk, need and capacity and respond appropriately	<p>Several respondents commented that the term capacity was unclear. One respondent suggested it should make reference to ‘decision making capacity’ whilst another respondent commented that mental capacity was an important issue in its own right.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to undertake assessments of risk <b>to both individuals and others (the broader public)</b>, <del>need and capacity</del> and respond appropriately <b>to ensure safeguarding measures are put in place</b></li> <li>• be able to undertake <b>holistic</b> assessments of risk, need and capacity and respond appropriately</li> <li>• <del>be able to undertake assessments of risk, need and capacity and respond</del></li> </ul>

		<p>appropriately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to undertake assessments of risk (<b>including the identification and management of risk</b>), need and capacity and respond appropriately</li> </ul>
1.4	be able to recognise and respond appropriately to unexpected situations and manage uncertainty	<p>Several respondents commented this standard was not achievable or measurable and it would be more appropriate to expect an individual to know how to escalate appropriately or seek additional support as required.</p> <p>Respondents commented that social workers should demonstrate that they can recognise and respond appropriately to unexpected situations, not just have the ability to do so.</p>
2	<b>be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession</b>	
2.1	understand current legislation applicable to the work of their profession	<p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>understand</del> <b>working knowledge of</b> current legislation applicable to the work of their profession</li> <li>• understand current legislation <b>and statutory guidance</b> applicable to the work of their profession</li> <li>• understand, <b>adhere to and appropriately apply</b> current legislation applicable to the work of their profession</li> <li>• <del>understand</del> <b>demonstrate understanding and the application of</b> current legislation applicable to the work of their profession</li> </ul>
2.2	understand the need to promote the best interests of service users at all times	<p>A number of respondents commented on the use of the phrase 'at all times'. Respondents argued that social workers might not be able to meet a service user's needs. Alternatively, in some situations, service users may make decisions that are not in their best interests or social workers may have to act in a way that is not in the service user's best interests. One respondent</p>

		<p>suggested that the phrase should be replaced with 'so far as possible'.</p> <p>Respondents commented that social workers should demonstrate that they can promote the best interests of service users, not just demonstrate an understanding of the need to do so.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the need to promote the best interests of service users at all times, <b>balanced against the needs, interests and rights of others in their informal, community and formal networks</b></li> <li>• understand <b>and evidence in practice</b> the need to promote the best interests of service users at all times</li> </ul>
2.3	understand the need to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults	<p>Respondents commented that social workers should demonstrate that they can protect service users, not just demonstrate an understanding of the need to do so.</p> <p>One respondent suggested that we should use the term 'adult at risk' rather than vulnerable adult, in line with recent guidance.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the need to protect and safeguard <b>and promote the wellbeing of</b> children, young people and vulnerable adults</li> <li>• understand the need <b>and means</b> to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults</li> <li>• understand <b>and evidence in practice</b> the need to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults</li> </ul>
2.4	be able to manage potentially competing	A number of respondents commented on difficult situations social workers face

	or conflicting interests	<p>where there are a number of competing interests. Several respondents gave the example of social workers, supporting an adult service user, who become aware of child protection issues. It was important that this was reflected in the standards and one respondent suggested that the standard should be reworded to say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise and understand how interests may conflict and compete and decide how to act in the best interests of the service users involved</li> </ul> <p>Respondents also suggested that competing or interests may not merely be potential, but actual, and suggested that the word 'potential' should be removed.</p> <p>One respondent commented that it was unclear whether the standard referred to declaring personal conflicts of interest or something else, for example, the conflict between management instruction and the duty of care. They suggested that the standard should be made clearer.</p> <p>Respondents suggested a number of amendments to the standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to manage potentially competing or conflicting interests <b>within family, community and group care settings</b></li> <li>• <del>be able to manage potentially competing or</del> <b>address any potential conflicting conflicts of interests and ensure that they do not influence judgement or practice</b></li> </ul>
2.5	be able to exercise authority as a social worker within the appropriate legal and ethical frameworks and boundaries	<p>One respondent commented that the standard should be reworded as students could not exercise authority as a social worker whilst in training.</p> <p>Several respondents commented that they did not understand the difference between frameworks and boundaries and suggested that 'and boundaries'</p>

		<p>should be removed.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> exercise authority as a social worker within the appropriate legal and ethical frameworks and boundaries</li> <li>• be able to exercise authority as a social worker within the <del>appropriate</del> legal and ethical frameworks and boundaries</li> </ul>
2.6	<p>understand the need to respect and so far as possible uphold, the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of every service user</p>	<p>A number of respondents commented that the phrase ‘so far as possible’ should be removed from the standard because social workers should only fail to uphold rights and dignity in certain circumstances where it was necessary to protect service users.</p> <p>Several respondents argued that social workers should not have to respect the values of service users if those values were illegal or raised concerns around the protection of other service users.</p> <p>One respondent commented that the term ‘autonomy’ was not appropriate and suggested ‘mature interdependence’ instead, as this reflected social work values.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>understand the need to respect and so far as possible uphold, the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of every service user</del></li> <li>• <del>understand the need</del> <b>be able to demonstrate the ability</b> to respect and <del>so far as possible uphold, the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of every service user</del> <b>at all times, according to their circumstances</b></li> <li>• understand the need to respect and so far as possible uphold, the rights, <del>and dignity, values and autonomy</del> of every service user <b>and their</b></li> </ul>

		<p><b>autonomy unless capacity to make specific decisions is assessed to be seriously compromised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>understand the need</del> <b>be competent</b> to respect and so far as possible uphold, the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of every service user</li> </ul>
2.7	recognise that relationships with service users should be based on respect and openness	<p>Several respondents commented that there were times when it was not appropriate to be open with service users (for example, in issues of child protection). Two respondents suggested that ‘openness’ should be replaced with ‘honesty’ whilst another respondent proposed that the phrase ‘where appropriate’ should be added.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>recognise</del> <b>demonstrate</b> that relationships with service users should be based on respect and openness</li> </ul>
2.8	understand what is required of them by the Health and Care Professions Council <sup>3</sup>	<p>A number of respondents were unclear about the purpose of the standard and its meaning.</p> <p>Several respondents also commented that social workers should not just understand what was required of them, but be able to comply with those requirements.</p>
3	<b>be able to maintain fitness to practise</b>	
3.1	understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct	<p>Respondents asked for clarity around the phrase ‘high standards’ and how this would be interpreted.</p> <p>A number of respondents also commented that social workers should not just</p>

<sup>3</sup> Subject to parliamentary agreement, the Health Professions Council will be renamed the Health and Care Professions Council.

		understand the need to maintain high standards but should be able to demonstrate that they can practice in a way which meets those standards.
3.2	understand the importance of maintaining their own health and wellbeing	<p>A number of respondents commented that social workers should not just understand the need to maintain their own health but should be able to demonstrate that they can maintain their own health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Other respondents commented that employers had a responsibility to support registrants to maintain their own health and this should be reflected in the standard.</p>
3.3	understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up-to-date and the importance of career-long learning	<p>Several respondents suggested that 'career long learning' should be replaced with continuous professional development. In addition, the standard should set out the number of CPD hours social workers should complete.</p> <p>A number of respondents commented that social workers should not just understand the importance of career-long learning, but also engage in or demonstrate a commitment to that learning.</p>
3.4	be able to establish and maintain personal and professional boundaries	<p>Respondents commented that this standard was not clear and could be made more explicit.</p> <p>One respondent commented that social workers should understand how to maintain personal and professional boundaries, as well as be able to establish those boundaries.</p>
3.5	be able to manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice	Respondents argued that this standard should reflect that social workers needed supervision and support from their employer in order to be able to manage the impact of their practice. Respondents suggested that the standard should make reference to 'seeking support or help' from employers to help social workers to manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice.

		<p>Several respondents commented that this standard did not make clear about who was affected by the physical and emotional impact of practice. Was it the social workers themselves or service users?</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to manage the physical and emotional</del> <b>recognise the</b> impact of their practice <b>on their physical and well-being and take action as appropriate</b></li> <li>• <del>be able</del> <b>understand the need to recognise and seek support</b> to manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice</li> <li>• be able to manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice <b>on themselves and service users, including the issues of power in relationships with clients</b></li> <li>• be able to <b>recognise and</b> manage the physical and emotional impact of their practice <b>on themselves and seek support as necessary</b></li> </ul>
4	<b>be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement</b>	
4.1	be able to assess a situation, determine its nature and severity and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with it	<p>Respondents commented that social workers should be able to draw on their own knowledge and experience but also should be able to refer to other professionals when appropriate. It was unclear whether the standard referred to calling on others or their own knowledge and experience.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able</del> <b>collect and analyse information</b> to assess a situation, determine its nature and severity and call upon the required knowledge and experience</li> </ul>

		to deal with it
4.2	be able to initiate resolution of issues and be able to exercise personal initiative	<p>Respondents commented that there were constraints on social workers' roles that meant it was not always possible for them to resolve issues. In addition, resolving issues did not reflect the complexity of social work practice.</p> <p>One respondent commented that the phrase 'initiate resolution of issues' was unclear. Did initiate mean take the initiative and make a start before referring to others or did it mean implying and take responsibility for resolving the issue?</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> initiate resolution of issues and be able to exercise personal initiative</li> <li>• be able to initiate resolution of issues <b>in partnership with service users</b> and be able to exercise personal initiative</li> </ul>
4.3	recognise where they are personally responsible for, and must be able to justify, their decisions	<p>A number of respondents commented that the language used in this standard was awkward and unclear. Respondents suggested that, for clarity, 'where' should be replaced with 'what' or 'that'.</p> <p>Several respondents commented on the phrase 'personally responsible', recognising that ultimate decision-making may lie with managers and that social workers may need support and supervision to make decisions.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>recognise where they are personally responsible for, and must be able to justify, their decisions</del> <b>the basis on which they exercise authority, and work within the limits of their authority</b></li> <li>• recognise where they are personally responsible for, and must be able to</li> </ul>

		<p>justify, their <b>recommendations and</b> decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise <del>where they are personally responsible for, and must be able to justify, their decisions</del> <b>the limits of their personal, professional judgement and the need to involve others in making complex decisions</b></li> <li>• recognise <b>situations</b> where they are personally responsible for, and must be able to justify, their decisions</li> </ul>
4.4	be able to make informed judgements on complex issues using the information available	<p>Respondents commented that the standard seemed vague as currently written. One respondent suggested that the phrase 'and seek further information as necessary' should be added to the end of the standard for clarity. Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> make informed judgements on complex issues using the information available</li> </ul>
4.5	be able to make and receive referrals appropriately	<p>Some respondents felt that referrals were only one small part of social work practice and questioned why there was a specific standard on this area.</p> <p>A number of respondents commented on the use of the phrase 'appropriate', which they considered was vague. In addition, employers would not expect social workers who had just started practice to make or receive referrals autonomously. The ability to refer autonomously would only come after time in practice.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> make and receive referrals appropriately</li> </ul>
5	<b>be aware of the impact of culture,</b>	

	<b>equality and diversity on practice</b>	
5.1	be able to reflect on and take account of the impact of inequality, disadvantage and discrimination on those who use social work services and their communities	<p>Respondents commented that this standard was not sufficiently strong. It was important that social workers take timely and appropriate action when considering the impact of discrimination on service users.</p> <p>One respondent commented that social workers should also consider the impact of positive discrimination and advantage on service users.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to reflect on and take account of the impact of inequality, <b>stigma</b>, disadvantage and discrimination on those who use social work services and their communities</li> </ul>
5.2	understand the need to adapt practice to respond appropriately to different groups and individuals	<p>Respondents commented that social workers should have the understanding and the ability to adapt practice to respond appropriately to different groups.</p> <p>One respondent said that the standard should be replaced with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practice in a way which takes account of people's individuality, needs and outcomes that the service user wants</li> </ul>
6	<b>be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner</b>	
6.1	be able to work with others to promote social justice	Respondents commented that the term 'social justice' was unclear, value laden and open to different interpretations. They were unclear why this element was highlighted above other parts of social work practice.

		<p>Respondents suggested the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to work with others to promote social justice <b>and equality</b></li> <li>• be able to work with others to promote social justice <b>and inclusion</b></li> <li>• <del>be able to work with others to promote social justice</del></li> <li>• be able to work with others to promote social justice</li> </ul>
6.2	be able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination and disadvantage	<p>One respondent commented that meeting this standard might lead to workers experiencing a conflict of interest within their workplace.</p> <p>Several respondents stated that social workers must use practice in this way at all times, not just have the ability to do so.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to use practice to <b>appropriately</b> challenge and address the impact of discrimination and disadvantage</li> <li>• be able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination and disadvantage <b>whilst not allowing cultural relativism to endanger the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children</b></li> </ul>
7	<b>be able to maintain confidentiality</b>	
7.1	be able to understand and explain the limits of confidentiality	One respondent commented that this standard needed to include a reference to the limits of confidentiality based on statutory duties to share information.
7.2	be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users or the wider public	<p>One respondent suggested that the standard should be replaced with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands the principle of sharing information on a need to know basis</li> </ul>

		<p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users or the wider public</li> <li>• be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information <b>in particular</b> to safeguard service users or the wider public</li> </ul> <p>Respondents commented that standard 7.1 and 7.2 needed to give stronger recognition of the importance of confidentiality alongside a clearer indication of when it is acceptable to breach confidentiality for the safety of a service user.</p>
8	<b>be able to communicate effectively</b>	
8.1	be able to use interpersonal skills and appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users and others	<p>Several respondents commented that this standard should refer to the use of social media in social work practice, as social workers needed a different skillset when using it.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> use interpersonal skills and appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users and others</li> </ul>
8.2	be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating advice, instruction, information and professional opinion to colleagues and service users	<p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating advice, instruction, information and professional opinion to colleagues <del>and</del> service users <b>and others</b></li> </ul>

8.3	understand the need to provide service users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions or to understand the decisions made	<p>Respondents commented that there was no reference in this standard to the capacity of the service user, which was important in deciding whether to share information with the service user or people acting on their behalf. In addition, the standard does not make clear whether service users would want their information shared.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>understand the need to provide service users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions or to understand the decisions made</del></li> </ul>
8.4	understand how communication skills affect the assessment of and engagement with service users and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as age, capacity, physical ability and learning ability	<p>Several respondents commented that this standard was convoluted and could be made clearer.</p> <p>Respondents commented that social workers should understand how communication skills affect assessment and engagement and be able to practice accordingly.</p> <p>One respondent commented that the list of factors excludes ethnicity, language, religion, gender and sexuality. They commented that the list should be made comprehensive or it should be clear that the list was not exhaustive.</p> <p>Respondents proposed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘capacity’ should be replaced with ‘decision making capacity’</li> <li>• learning abilities should be replaced with ‘intellectual abilities’ or ‘cognitive abilities’</li> </ul> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand how communication skills affect the assessment of and</li> </ul>

		engagement with service users and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as age, capacity, physical ability and learning ability, <b>sensory ability, race, ethnicity and cultural difference</b>
8.5	be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by disability, culture, age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status	<p>Respondents asked why this list of areas of oppression was included within this standard and not within standards 5 and 6. Several respondents suggested that ‘sexual orientation’ and ‘spirituality’ should be added to the list.</p> <p>One respondent commented that the standard was too broad and should instead focus on assessing individual need rather than a more general awareness.</p>
8.6	understand the need to draw upon available resources and services to support service users’ communication, wherever possible	<p>One respondent commented that the phrase ‘wherever possible’ did not apply to this standard.</p> <p>Respondents commented that social workers should be able to draw on available resources, rather than simply understand the need to do so.</p>
8.7	be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5 <sup>4</sup>	One respondent asked whether it would be more appropriate to ask social workers to provide evidence of a GCSE grade in English, rather than an international qualification.
8.8	be able to engage in inter-agency communication and communication across professional and organisational boundaries	<p>One respondent suggested that this standard should be made more active and replaced with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to engage with and understand professional and agency cultures</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests competence in spoken and written English. Applicants who have qualified outside the UK, whose first language is not English and who are not nationals of a country with the European Economic Area (EEA), have to provide evidence that they have reached the necessary standard. We accept a number of other tests as equivalent to the IETLS examination. Please visit our website for more information.

		<p>and the barriers and enablers of competent professional communication</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to engage in <b>interprofessional and</b> inter-agency communication <del>and communication across professional and organisational boundaries</del></li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> engage in inter-agency communication and communication across professional and organisational boundaries</li> </ul>
8.9	be able to prepare and present formal reports in line with applicable protocols and guidelines	<p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to prepare and present formal reports, <b>both in writing and verbally</b>, in line with applicable protocols and guidelines</li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> prepare and present formal reports in line with applicable protocols and guidelines</li> <li>• be able to prepare and present formal reports <b>in plain English</b> in line with applicable protocols and guidelines</li> </ul>
9	<b>be able to work appropriately with others</b>	
9.1	understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships with service users and colleagues as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively with others	<p>Several respondents commented that social workers should be able to sustain and build professional relationships, not just understand the need to build and sustain them.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships with service users, <b>carers</b> and colleagues as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively with others</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>understand the need</del> to build and sustain professional relationships with service users and colleagues <b>and other professionals</b> as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively with others</li> </ul>
9.2	be able to work with service users to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources	<p>Respondents proposed a number of different amendments to the standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to work with service users to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources, <b>unless to do so would increase the risk to children</b></li> <li>• be able to work with service users to enable them to <b>understand their rights and to</b> assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources</li> <li>• be able to work with service users to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, <b>choice preferred options</b> and resources</li> <li>• <del>be able to work with service users to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources</del></li> <li>• be able to work with service users <b>and carers</b> to enable them to assess and make informed decisions about their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options, <b>outcomes</b> and resources</li> </ul>
9.3	be able to work with service users to promote individual growth, development and independence	<p>Respondents proposed a number of different amendments to the standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to work with service users to promote individual growth, development and independence <b>and achieve change</b></li> <li>• be able to work with service users to promote individual growth <b>and development and independence</b></li> <li>• be able to work with service users to promote individual growth, development, <b>decision making</b> and independence</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to work with service users <b>and carers</b> to promote individual growth, development, <del>and</del> independence, <b>rights and entitlements</b></li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> work with service users to promote individual growth, development and independence</li> </ul>
9.4	be able to support the development of networks, groups and communities to meet needs and outcomes	<p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to support the development of networks, groups and communities to meet needs and <b>achieve</b> outcomes</li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> support the development of networks, groups and communities to meet needs and outcomes</li> <li>• be able to support the development of networks, groups <b>individuals, families</b> and communities to meet needs and outcomes <b>of service users</b></li> </ul>
9.5	be able to work in partnership with others, including those working in other agencies and roles	<p>Several respondents suggested that there was overlap between this standard and 9.6.</p> <p>Respondents also commented that the need to work in partnership with service users was more likely to be overlooked than the need for partnership with other professionals.</p> <p>One respondent suggested that this standard should be replaced with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working openly and co-operatively with colleagues and treating them with respect</li> </ul>
9.6	be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team	<p>Several respondents said that the term ‘multi-disciplinary team’ was not used in social work practice.</p> <p>One respondent commented that the standard was unclear. As currently written, the focus of the standard is on the individual contributing their work to</p>

		<p>part of a multi-disciplinary team, rather than the individual working effectively within a team.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a <del>multi-disciplinary team</del> <b>interprofessional teams and networks</b></li> <li>• be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary <b>and multi-organisational teams, networks and systems</b></li> </ul>
9.7	be able to support the learning and development of others	A number of respondents commented that students and newly registered social workers would not be able to meet this standard. Respondents felt that registrants would need time in practice before they could demonstrate they met this standard.
10	<b>be able to maintain records appropriately</b>	
10.1	be able to keep accurate, comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines	<p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to keep accurate, <b>comprehensive, legible, timely and</b> comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines</li> <li>• be able to keep accurate, <b>up-to-date</b> comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines</li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> keep accurate, comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines</li> </ul>
10.2	recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with	Respondents proposed that the standard should be changed to:

	applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines</li> </ul> <p>A number of respondents commented that standards 10.1 and 10.2 should be combined.</p>
11	<b>be able to reflect on and review practice</b>	
11.1	understand the value of critical reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately	<p>One respondent commented that this standard should require registered social workers to be able to critically reflect on their practice, prepare for and engage effectively with supervision and case reviews and complete agreed actions arising from these discussions.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand the value of critical reflection on <b>and in</b> practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately</li> <li>understand the value of critical reflection on practice and <del>the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately</del> <b>and demonstrate evidence of its use in practice</b></li> <li>understand the value of critical reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately <b>in line with applicable protocols and guidance</b></li> <li><del>understand the value of critical reflection</del> <b>be able to critically reflect</b> on practice and <del>the need to</del> record the outcome of such reflection appropriately</li> <li><del>understand the value of</del> <b>use</b> critical reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately</li> </ul>
11.2	recognise the value of supervision, case reviews and other methods of reflection	Respondents proposed the following changes:

	and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>recognise the value of</del> <b>be able to use</b> supervision, case reviews and other methods of reflection and review <b>and other modes of review to critically reflect on further develop approaches to practice</b></li> <li>• recognise the value of <b>and contribute to</b> supervision, case reviews and other methods of reflection and review</li> <li>• <del>recognise the value of</del> <b>be able to use</b> supervision, case reviews, <b>CPD opportunities</b> and other methods of reflection and review</li> </ul>
12	<b>be able to assure the quality of their practice</b>	
12.1	be able to use supervision to support and enhance the quality of their social work practice	<p>One respondent commented that the standard should set out specific requirements for the amount of professional supervision social workers should undertake.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> use supervision to support and enhance the quality of <del>their</del> social work practice</li> </ul>
12.2	be able to contribute to processes designed to evaluate service and individual outcomes	<p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> contribute to processes designed to evaluate service and individual outcomes</li> </ul>
12.3	be able to engage in evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures	<p>Several respondents suggested that this standard should make reference to obtaining feedback from relevant others to evaluate practice.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to engage in evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice</li> </ul>

		<p>systematically and participate in <del>audit procedures</del> <b>research, monitoring and development processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> engage in evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures</li> </ul>
13	<b>understand the key concepts of the knowledge base which are relevant to their profession</b>	
13.1	recognise the roles of other professions, practitioners and organisations	One respondent commented that this standard should be strengthened as social workers were expected to have an understanding of organisational and management theory, not just recognise the roles of other professions, practitioners and organisations.
13.2	be aware of the different social contexts and settings within which social work operates	<p>Respondents proposed the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be aware of the different social <b>and organisational</b> contexts and settings within which social work operates</li> </ul>
13.3	be aware of changes in demography and culture and their impact on social work	One respondent commented that they were not clear about the purpose of this standard.
13.4	<p>understand in relation to social work practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social work theory;</li> <li>• social work models and interventions;</li> <li>• the development and application of relevant law and social policy;</li> <li>• the development of social work and</li> </ul>	<p>Several respondents suggested that this standard should refer to the curriculum framework for social workers or the QAA Benchmark statement.</p> <p>Respondents also commented that the standard should say 'understand and apply in relation to social work practice'.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p>

	<p>social work values;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• human growth and development across the lifespan;</li> <li>• the impact of injustice, social inequalities, policies and other issues which impact on the demand for social work services;</li> <li>• the relevance of psychological, environmental and physiological perspectives to understanding personal and social development and functioning;</li> <li>• concepts of empowerment; and</li> <li>• the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand in relation to social work practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social work theory <b>relevant to their practice</b>;</li> <li>• social work models and interventions <b>relevant to their practice</b>;</li> <li>• the development and application of relevant law and social policy;</li> <li>• the development of social work and social work values;</li> <li>• human growth and development across the lifespan <b>and the impact of key developmental stages and transitions</b>;</li> <li>• the impact of injustice, social inequalities, policies and other issues which <del>impact on</del> <b>affect</b> the demand for social work services;</li> <li>• the relevance of psychological, environmental, <b>sociological</b> and physiological perspectives to understanding personal and social development and functioning;</li> <li>• concepts of <b>participation and empowerment</b> (or <b>concepts of power and empowerment</b>); and</li> <li>• the relevance of sociological perspectives to understanding societal and structural influences on human <del>behaviour</del> <b>actions</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
14	<b>be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice</b>	
14.1	be able to gather, analyse, critically evaluate and use information and knowledge to make recommendations or modify their viewpoint	<p>Respondents suggested that “modify their viewpoint’ could be reworded to read ‘change or challenge their viewpoint’ or that ‘viewpoint’ should be changed to ‘practice’.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> gather, analyse, critically evaluate and use information and knowledge to make recommendations or modify their viewpoint</li> </ul>
14.2	be able to select and use appropriate	Respondents proposed the following amendments:

	assessment tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to <b>understand</b>, select and use appropriate assessment tools</li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> select and use appropriate assessment tools</li> </ul>
14.3	be able to prepare, implement, review, evaluate and revise plans to meet needs and circumstances	<p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to</del> prepare, implement, review, evaluate and revise plans to meet needs and circumstances</li> <li>• be able to prepare, implement, review, evaluate and revise plans to meet needs and circumstances <b>in conjunction with service users and carers</b></li> </ul>
14.4	be able to use social work methods and models to achieve change and development and improve life opportunities	<p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to use social work methods, <b>theories</b> and models to achieve change and development and improve life opportunities</li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> use social work methods and models to achieve change and development and improve life opportunities</li> </ul>
14.5	be aware of a range of research methodologies	<p>A number of respondents commented that this standard required further clarity as it was unclear about how effective practice depended on this understanding. They proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be aware of <b>and have an understanding of</b> a range of research methodologies; or</li> <li>• be aware of <b>and apply</b> a range of research methodologies</li> </ul>
14.6	recognise the value of research and analysis and be able to evaluate such evidence to inform their own practice	<p>One respondent commented that it was imperative that social workers drew on research and suggested that the standard should be amended to require application of research and included a specific reference to international research.</p>

14.7	be able to demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their practice	<p>One respondent commented that the use of technology to enhance practice required its own standard covering a range of areas.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their practice <b>and the applicable protocols and guidance</b></li> <li>• <del>be able to demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their practice</del></li> </ul>
14.8	be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts	<p>Respondents proposed the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts</del></li> </ul>
15	<b>be able to establish and maintain a safe practice environment</b>	
15.1	understand the need to maintain the safety of both service users and those involved in their care	<p>Respondents commented that it was important that social workers maintained the safety of service users and carers, not just understood the importance of doing so.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the need to <b>be competent</b> to maintain the safety of both service users and those involved in their care</li> </ul>
15.2	be aware of applicable health and safety legislation and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to	<p>Several respondents asked whether this standard was applicable to individuals not yet registered.</p> <p>Respondents also asked whether it was the role of the registrant to be aware of</p>

	act in accordance with these	<p>these policies or the employer to make staff aware of health and safety policies.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>be aware of</del> <b>adhere to</b> applicable health and safety legislation and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these</li> </ul>
15.3	be able to work safely in challenging environments including being able to take appropriate actions to manage risk	<p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to work safely in challenging environments including being able to take appropriate actions to <b>evaluate and</b> manage risk</li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> work safely in challenging environments including being able to take appropriate actions to manage risk</li> <li>• be able to work safely in <del>challenging environments</del> <b>situations that challenge us</b>, including being able to take appropriate actions to manage risk</li> </ul>
15.4	be able to address behaviour which presents a risk to or from service users, the public or themselves	<p>One respondent suggested that the standard should be replaced with 'recognise situations which pose a risk to their personal safety and act appropriately'.</p> <p>Respondents proposed the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to address behaviour which presents a risk to or from service users, the public <del>or</del> themselves, <b>colleagues or other professionals</b></li> <li>• <del>be able to</del> address behaviour which presents a risk to or from service users, the public or themselves</li> </ul>