**Self-evaluation — Work Experience Report**

I applied to do the PDA in Youth Work at my local college in August 2016 and as part of the course I have to complete a short work placement and carry out a workplace activity. In preparation for the work placement, I was asked to complete a SWOT analysis and I learned that this is a useful self-evaluation tool. The tool helped me to focus on my short, medium and long term goals and my SMART objectives. At the start of the course, I had no idea that all these tasks are part of the Personal Development Planning process and as my tutor keeps reminding us is a “lifelong learning” commitment. I really struggled to identify my weaknesses and to own up to these but once I did I was happy to focus on them in my goal setting and SMART objectives.

I was able to get support in the flexible learning unit to access CV templates and to create an electronic copy which I am able to update regularly. I had real difficulty with the personal statement but I looked at several online and managed to word mine to fit my current situation and I think it reflects an honest profile.

I thoroughly enjoyed my work placement and I soon discovered that I needed to be quite flexible to adjust to the working timetable within the youth project. What we had planned as part of the contract went a bit up in the air, as events took over and I discovered that this is one of their busiest periods, eg the October school holidays. It just felt right to offer and commit to several sessions during this week. I was off college so it worked out for the best. I am proud that I took the initiative as I wanted to create a good impression and think that this definitely helped me to do just that.

**Word Count: 380**

**Short review of personal goals and SMART objectives**

(please refer to how these affect your future personal and career development)

My short term goal is to achieve my PDA and I am on target to graduate in December 2016. I have passed all my assessments and my attendance record was 100% and the tutors have said that they will give me a reference if I need it. I have been nominated for a special award at the Celebration of Learning event by the work placement provider and I am really proud that we raised over £1000 for the skipping rope challenge.

I started volunteering in November as October was a really busy month for me in my work placement. I agreed to volunteer in a local community allotment. I have been helping to clear and prepare the ground over the winter months. Much of my time has been spent clearing the greenhouses and preparing seeds for planting in the Spring. I have learned how to prepare the soil for different types of plants.

I was able to help them to purchase a reconditioned laptop for the allotment and they have been able to save money buying seeds online. I have helped them to set up a web page and to organise the layout. It is quite simple but it is a start: allotment news; seasonal planting; downloading pictures; hints and tips.

Volunteering helps me towards my long term goal as I am gaining experience working in my local community. I have a few contacts now who can vouch for my work record and I have been able to include this on my CV.

I am doing some paid sessional work in the Riverside Youth project and I fit my volunteering around this. I hope to work towards getting a permanent contract in a youth work setting. I am going to volunteer one night per week with a local street project which supports young people to get involved in sports activities like football; rugby and cycling.

**Word Count: 315**

**My own conclusions on the completion of the CPD log and the Personal Development Review**

I completed a one day REHIS qualification in First Aid whilst on placement. I have a certificate now which I am able to show any future employer and I am competent in basic first aid including CPR. This qualification is a definite advantage for someone like me and I am hoping that it will give me an edge when I apply for youth work posts. I intend to complete the REHIS Health and Safety one day course as I have discovered that I can join a community based class for free, as the college will allow me to enrol in this.

I have spoken with Julie about doing the Child Protection course as I know that this is a huge step towards employment if I have this type of training. I am on a waiting list and expect to enrol in this in the next month or so.

I really appreciate the support that I have had, from my placement provider and the college to discuss my continuing personal development. I know that I should keep a yearly record of this and I have already started a file using a template in the youth project.

The personal development review was a real highlight for me as I was able to have a discussion with my college tutor and the placement provider to assess my progress and my future career pathway. I am determined to be a youth worker and I now feel that this is the right choice for me as I get on well with young people and really enjoy planning, delivering and evaluating sessional activities. I understand the importance of forward planning, being organised and adapting to different situations. I have grown in confidence and feel that I have made the right choice. I am more determined than ever to achieve my long term goal of full time employment so that I can be independent of my parents.

**Word count: 320**