

REPORT FOR FPSA

Name: Adam Shepherd

Course: Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Studies (Leadership and Management: Higher Specialist Award)

Duration: 1 year

Location: Southampton University

This course is the first year of the MSc in Professional Studies (Leadership and Management: Higher Specialist/ Advanced Award). Completion of the first year allows me to exit with the postgraduate certificate and on completion of a portfolio the Higher Specialist Social Work Award.

This first year is split into 3 modules;

- Leadership, Management and Governance
 - The aim of this module is to analyse critical theories, concepts, research and the practice of leadership, management and governance
- Managing People, Performance and Resources
 - The aim of this module is to explore critically the process of managing individuals, teams and resources in organisations providing services to the public
- Reflective Practice
 - The aim of this module is to develop the capacity of reflective practice at the leadership and teaching level and critically analyse the relevant theoretical frameworks

For each module we have to write a 3500 word assignment, complete a 500 word reflective piece on the module. I also have to be observed in practice.

I am currently employed as senior practitioner within children's residential service, and my role contains an ever growing amount of management responsibility hence my need and keenness to undertake this study.

Each module has been a massive learning opportunity and has given me a whole new set of tools for the work I do. Built on knowledge and skills I had, challenged the way I have undertaken some tasks and helped me look at situations a fresh. I am working in a climate of much change and ever increasing budget restraints. The

lectures around managing change and creating motivation have given me a wealth of information to use.

The course has looked at the difference between leadership and management, the differing qualities, skills and traits. Within this we have looked at organisational culture, ethical management, service user involvement.

Within module 1, one of the concepts we explored was distributed leadership and looked at the work of Spillane (2006). This tied in with my view of effective leadership and management but gave me a theoretical framework to understand why I believed in this. It gave me the evidence that what I was doing was effective and gave me ways to critically analyse and reflect upon this and able to adjust it. It was not just about shared leadership, but about giving others opportunities and not being afraid to share power with others.

Within Module 2, I spent a lot of time researching and critiquing performance management. Not a subject I ever thought would be of interest to me, I think this may have been the way the message was sent previously! Actually, found it very interesting looking at the challenges of focussing on outcomes and not just processes. Of particular interest was Friedman's (2005) matrix looking at quality and quantity with effect and effort, to focus on positive outcomes.

Module 3 has presented more of a challenge in many ways, not helped by a change of lecturer half way through the module, meaning a change in focus. Currently trying to get to grips with critical reflection, which is interesting, will be beneficial but quite challenging.

All in all the course has been excellent, I feel like I have learnt loads that will certainly benefit the work I do, and help me focus on positive outcomes for staff and service users. So a big thank you to FPSA for the funding.

Freidman, M. (2005), Trying Hard is Not Good Enough: How to Produce Measureable Improvements for Customers and Communications, Trafford Publishing

Spillane, J P. (2006), Distributed Leadership, San Francisco: Jossey Bass

Adam Shepherd, DipSW, PQCCA, Practice Teacher Award

