## Service Related Research Projects

1. **What is a Service Related Project (SRP)?**

The SRP is a research or evaluation study whose aim is to examine an aspect of service delivery in a local service and ideally to effect quality improvement in that service. Trainees will carry out one SRP to be submitted in Year 2. SRPs are carried out in placement settings and therefore generally relate to a service improvement issue concerning a local service.  Trainees may choose to conduct their SRP within any local service which provides trainee placements. Trainees **do not** have to conduct SRPs in the service where they are on placement, but it is normally most practicable to do so. SRPs may be conducted in any type of placement (adult, child, learning disability etc) as long as the work is handed in by the deadline given in Year 2.

### Aims of the SRP

It is a requirement of health professional training for trainees to contribute to the NHS quality agenda by conducting service related research during training. The aims of the SRP are to provide trainees with experience of completing service-related research within a clinical context and to foster the redevelopment of research awareness and skills.

* To promote awareness of the quality improvement and service development issues in the current health and social care context
* To provide candidates with the opportunity of developing the competencies required for conducting service related projects
* To evaluate the changes in the quality of service provision arising out of the project and subsequent dissemination of the findings
* To promote collaboration with respective stakeholders through the process of conducting the project
* To understand the processes associated with trying to bring about change in a clinical setting
* To contribute to the local service improvement process by conducting a useful and relevant study that will have a direct impact on the local service and contribute to local implementation of NHS policy or service provision

***Any project undertaken should be informed by psychological models.*** Further guidance on this will be provided and trainees are encouraged to discuss this further with their SRP Advisors.

#### SRP design practice

Information and guidance on the SRP is available on Moodle under “SRP design practice”, which also provides links to worked examples of SRP designs.

### Support & Supervision for SRP’s

#### Placement Supervisor Role

The SRP is grounded in clinical contexts and may therefore be directly linked to particular placements (although it is possible that trainees undertake SRPs that are not conducted in the same clinical context as their clinical placement). Generally, therefore, placement supervisors play an important role in SRPs, which can be seen as collaborative ventures negotiated between trainees and placement supervisors. The main role of the placement supervisor is to facilitate and provide general support to the trainee on identifying and carrying out a SRP. Placement supervisors often have good ideas for the types of projects that will benefit the placement or service context and provide practical support to trainees, including gaining support from colleagues for the project and negotiating local R&D approval. In those cases where a trainee undertakes a SRP that is not directly linked to their placement, the role of the placement supervisor in the SRP is fulfilled by another clinician as agreed with the Programme team and clinician.

* 1. **Course Support: SRP Advisor**

The trainees also have a Service Related Project Advisor who will be a member of the course team, who provides more guidance on research design and methods, data analysis, and support with the write up of the project for submission for formal assessment. In addition to overseeing the progress of the SRP, the Advisor can provide guidance in developing the SRP aims and questions and in the planning, design and implementation of the project. Trainees may ask their SRP Advisor to read the entire SRP report once, either section by section or in whole, to provide feedback and advice. This guideline promotes good time planning and allows time for Advisors and trainees to plan their workload prior to submission. Placement supervisors are also encouraged to contact the research tutors at any time to discuss ongoing placement research issues and provide advice on the SRP.

* 1. **SRP Approval Procedure and ethical approval**

**A brief proposal (no more than 1000 words) should be submitted to the SRP Advisor by the coursework deadline, 6th March 2012 (or sooner). Two members of the course team will review the proposal to judge the viability of the project and provide feedback. Trainees should not begin work on their SRP until their proposal has been reviewed and approved by the course team. After the SRP has been approved by the course team, trainees must apply to the relevant Trust ethics or governance committee for approval. Placement supervisors may be able to advise or assist with identifying the correct Trust committee. If the Trust committee decides that the project should be classified as ‘research’ rather than ‘audit’ or ‘evaluation’ then the trainee will have to apply to NRES for ethical approval. After the trainee has received either Trust approval (for audit and evaluation projects) or NRES approval (for research projects), trainees must apply to the University of Essex ethics committee, appending evidence of the Trust or NRES approval.**

**Ethical approval**

**The NHS National Research Ethics Service (NRES) has various resources available on their website (**[**http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/**](http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/)**). In particular, the leaflet *Defining Research* (NRES, 2009) is most helpful for the purposes of deciding what process to follow when applying for ethical approval for SRPs (and indeed for dissertation-related research projects as well). See Appendix 15 for a flow chart based on the table presented in *Defining Research.* This leaflet has been made available on the Moodle pages relating to SRP and Clinical Research modules.**

#### Project Planning

The project is intended to be manageable, within the first two years of training. Planning and designing the SRP should occur in discussion with your SRP Advisor, the relevant placement supervisor and course research staff. Your outline proposal should then be submitted to your SRP Advisor as soon as possible.

* 1. **Presentation and Write-up**

Candidates are required to submit three bound copies of the Service Related Project. These projects should be **no longer than 5,000 words** including figures and tables (but excluding references and appendices). The SRP should be written up in accordance with the latest APA Publication Manual (currently 6th Edition).

#### Content and structure

**Abstract**

You should write an abstract of your SRP which should be a concise summary of the project, covering each section of the report i.e. Introduction, Aim, Method, Results, Discussion, Dissemination.

**Introduction**

You should provide a focused introduction to the service development or quality improvement issue or question with **critical** reference (i.e. employing critical appraisal skills) to the extant literature and any relevant evidence base to provide sufficient background and context for the project. The aim of the project and what it hopes to achieve should be stated and the rationale for the project clearly located in the service context in which it arose.

As with any introduction to a report, you should aim to ensure that you start by presenting the broad context for your report and narrowing down towards the more specific context. The Introduction should clearly delineate the question to be investigated or the aim that is set for the project. The aim or question being addressed in the project should be firmly grounded in the relevant **psychological** literature and service context. The need for the project must be justified well and clearly related to an issue of quality improvement or service development within the setting in which it was done. A concise but critical review of the relevant policy, psychological theory, research, and practice literature should be provided, and other work within the service informing the rationale for the project should be reported. A basic structure for the Introduction might look like the following:

* Broad Context
  + Policy, psychological theory
  + Relevant literature, research – **critically** assessed
* Service Context
  + Describe service & relate to Broad Context
  + Justify need for project
  + Identify quality issue & background in service
* Research Question and Aims
  + Aim grounded in **broad** and **service** context

Note that you must demonstrate (as in other areas of your coursework) your critical appraisal of the literature and this should be evident in the introduction (but also the remainder of the document).

**Methods**

Provide an account of how the project was implemented and the process engaged in to address the questions or project aims. The project method and sample used, and the ethical considerations should be described clearly and succinctly. You should ensure that in writing the Method, you demonstrate that the method chosen is appropriate to the aim or question of interest within that context, and the procedures adopted were well executed. You should demonstrate that ethical procedures have been followed in the conduct of the project. Where aspects of the project did not come off as anticipated, you should demonstrate that this was due to circumstances that could not have been realistically foreseen, and steps were taken where practical to compensate for this so as to improve the validity of the results, including implications for continuing quality improvement work within the service. The choice of methodology should be well explained and appropriate to the project aims or questions. It should follow from the rationale, and aim to generate meaningful and valid results. Appropriate standardised measures should have been identified and employed where appropriate, and where measures have been developed specifically for the purpose of the project, you should provide an evaluation of the appropriateness, strengths and limitations of these. Ethical considerations must be fully dealt with.

A suggested structure for your Method section might be:

* Study Design including why this is appropriate to address the aim
* Measures/instruments used including commentary on reliability and appropriateness of these for your study
* Sample size **intended** & method of selecting
* Data collection method/procedures
* Ethical Considerations

Note that you should not report the actual sample size you achieved as this comes in the Results section. The Method section is how you went about the study (how many cases you intended to include and how you tried to achieve this) and the Results section is what you got from the study including how many cases you were actually able to include. The Ethical Considerations section should be thought about very carefully. It is not sufficient to comment that you received approval from Committee X to go ahead with the study. You must demonstrate that you have thought through any potential ethical issues or consequences, whether or not these concerned any committee. Consider for instance, data protection, confidentiality, coercion to participate (including staff projects), what potential risks were there including risks around data and confidentiality, not just physical or emotional risks to participants.

**Results**

A clear style of presentation should be used to communicate the key findings of the project and how the project led to the desired quality improvement or development in the service, or how the project led to changes in the understanding of the salient quality improvement issues. The emphasis is on the clarity of communication that should be accessible to a broad range of stakeholders rather than on the technical aspects of the methodology and analysis, although the latter should be clearly and well described. You should begin your Results by describing the sample (as distinct from the Sampling method, see above). You should then present appropriate analyses of the data, ensuring your data demonstrates that you have conducted analyses that investigate the aim or questions of interest. You should present your findings clearly, and remain focused on the main aims or questions. Use tables and figures where appropriate, but ensure these are simple, clear and well labelled and numbered and referred to clearly in the text.

A suggested structure for your Results is as follows:

* Describe Sample
* Descriptive/demographic data
* Comparison against standards (if relevant)
* Appropriate analysis (focused on aims)

**Discussion**

Present a discussion of the process and outcome of the project, in the context of service development or quality improvement questions or aims. The discussion should begin by summarising your findings succinctly (this is good practice for any kind of Discussion section). You should then discuss your findings one by one, relating the findings to the issues set out in the introduction and to previous literature. You should be very careful not to over-interpret your findings and remember the small scale nature of the SRP. You should outline the limitations of the method and project as a whole and set out the implications of these limitations. You should provide a description of the feedback and suggestions for quality improvement given to the interested parties, and offer an evaluation of the impact of the dissemination of the findings and any improvement that has occurred. You should show a capacity for critical self-evaluation, an ability to articulate the learning process that was engaged in, and an identification of competencies developed in carrying out the project. There should be a clear sense that the project is seen as part of on-going process of quality improvement or service development. The sophistication of conceptual material and argument should be of a high standard appropriate to a Doctorate level award.

A suggested structure for the Discussion is as follows:

* Summarise findings
* Discuss each finding and relate to aims
  + Base discussion on relating findings to broad policy context and service context
* Implications of findings (broad & local)
* Limitations of methods and findings
* Describe opportunities/recommendations for improvement of service and any steps taken /to be taken to implement change

#### Presentation

In presenting your report, you should aim for high standards in every aspect of the report. You should pay attention to the following in particular:

1. Title page – candidate number must be provided but do not provide your name.
2. Adhere to APA-style guidance (currently 6th Edition of APA Publication Manual) for all aspects of the presentation of the document.
3. Check all spelling and grammar thoroughly.
4. Spell out abbreviations on first use.
5. Check that all references have been included and that all references and the bibliography comply with the latest APA Style guidance (Current Publication Manual - 6th Edition).
6. Appendices must include the following material (where relevant):
   1. Letter confirming ethical and/or Trust approval for conducting the project
   2. Materials used for data collection
   3. Service Report (1000 words)
   4. Materials used for presentation or dissemination
7. Throughout, pay particular attention to anonymise all aspects of the document in accordance with HHS and University of Essex regulations. In particular: All documents in the appendix must have all identifying names, specific details that could potentially identify the service and references blanked out. This includes the candidate’s own name. Any lapse in anonymisation will be treated as an academic offence and dealt with accordingly.
   1. **Assessment of SRP**

The mark sheet used for the SRP appears below. It is imperative that the SRP demonstrates the trainees’ ability to undertake (collaborative) research in a clinical context with the aim of applying psychological models and theory to service contexts, specifically focusing on service delivery and service improvement. Any SRP which presents trivial findings (e.g. due to recruitment difficulties or a lack of demonstration of the SRP’s implications for service delivery) will most likely fail.

#### SRP Formative Feedback

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| **UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX DOCTORATE IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY (DClinPsych)**  **SRP FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK FORM**  **AF5\_1\_SRP\_2011 - FORMATIVE**  **2011-Cohort** | | | | | | | |
| Date: |  | | | Candidate no.: |  | | |
| Title: |  | | | | | | |
| Reviewer: |  | | | | | | |
| **TOTAL MARK**  **0 – 100** | Tick box(-s) | Formative Feedback  Marks are not awarded for any section or for the overall formative assessment | | | | | |
|  |  | PASS (50%+) | | | | | |
|  | FAIL – RESUBMISSION ALLOWED (0-50%) | | | | | |
|  | FAIL - Resubmission can be based on existing material | | | | | |
|  | FAIL - Resubmission must be based on new material | | | | | |
|  | FAIL – Due to breach of confidentiality as confirmed by Course Team | | | | | |
|  | FAIL – 2nd submission failure | | | | | |
| Note : Comment boxes can be expanded in electronic version | | | | | | **Mark** | **Total** |
| **1. Structure, presentation and referencing**  Evidences a systematic, logical approach and stylistically and grammatically correct. Referencing and style in accordance with latest APA guidance. | | | | | | **N/A** | 10 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| **2. Theoretical framework / context**  Throughout, draws on psychological theory critically to inform service-related project; provides critical assessment of relevant literature and research relating to theory and broader policy frameworks informing the study; clearly contextualises project within particular service and in broader context. | | | | | | **N/A** | 15 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| 1. **Rationale and aims**   SRP’s rationale and aims follow from theoretical framework; Clearly states rationale, aims and research questions; Research questions and aims clearly grounded in broader and service contexts. Provides clear statement of hypotheses where relevant, Understanding of the relevant social, cultural, political, legal and organisational contexts. | | | | | | **N/A** | 10 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| 1. **Methods**   Provides detailed description of methods relating to SRP | | | | | | **N/A** | 20 |
| **4.1. Study Design including why this is appropriate to address the aim** | | |  | | | | |
| **4.2. Measures/instruments used, reliability and appropriateness of these for your study** | | |  | | | | |
| **4.3. Sampling method and sample** | | |  | | | | |
| **4.4. Data collection method / procedures and statistical / other analyses**  Understanding, interpretation and critique of quantitative, statistical and qualitative research data and findings. Clear and appropriate plan for data analysis. | | |  | | | | |
| **4.5. Ethical considerations**  Appropriate consideration of ethical issues and evidence of external ethical scrutiny where appropriate. | | |  | | | | |
| 1. **Professional / Practice-related competencies**   Shows awareness of service user issues and diversity, The SRP is related to practice and has implications for service delivery / improvement / practice. Effective communication and collaboration with service users, carers, colleagues and others. | | | | | | **N/A** | 15 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| 1. **Results**   Findings appropriately analysed and reported. Dissemination / reporting of findings clearly described and appropriate for further service development. | | | | | | **N/A** | 10 |
| **N/A for formative** | | | | | | | |
| **7. Discussion and dissemination / impact of project**  Creative and critical- thinking in relation to the development of clinical practice and services in view of research findings. Discussion and conclusion relates to original questions and the literature and draws appropriate conclusions | | | | | | **N/A** | 10 |
| **N/A for formative** | | | | | | | |
| **8. Reflective personal and professional practice**  Considers learning related to piece of work; critically considers strengths and weaknesses of work; demonstrates autonomy and constructive use of supervision; Recognition of future service development | | | | | | **N/A** | 10 |
| **N/A for formative** | | | | | | | |
| **ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS**  IF a FAIL mark is awarded, state reason for FAIL and (for 1st attempt FAIL) what needs to be addressed (also whether resubmission should be based on existing or new material). | | | | | | | |
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#### SRP Summative Feedback

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| **UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX DOCTORATE IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY (DClinPsych)**  **SRP SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK FORM**  **AF6\_1\_SRP\_2011 - SUMMATIVE**  **2011-Cohort** | | | | | | | |
| Date: |  | | | Candidate no.: |  | | |
| Title: |  | | | | | | |
| Marker: |  | | | | | | |
| **TOTAL MARK**  **0 – 100** | Tick box(-s) | Result Classification (PASS / FAIL) | | | | | |
|  |  | PASS (50%+) | | | | | |
|  | FAIL – RESUBMISSION ALLOWED (0-50%) | | | | | |
|  | FAIL - Resubmission can be based on existing material | | | | | |
|  | FAIL - Resubmission must be based on new material | | | | | |
|  | FAIL – Due to breach of confidentiality as confirmed by Course Team | | | | | |
|  | FAIL – 2nd submission failure | | | | | |
| Note : Comment boxes can be expanded in electronic version | | | | | | **Mark** | **Total** |
| **1. Structure, presentation and referencing**  Evidences a systematic, logical approach and stylistically and grammatically correct. Referencing and style in accordance with latest APA guidance. | | | | | |  | 10 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| **2. Theoretical framework / context**  Throughout, draws on psychological theory critically to inform service-related project; provides critical assessment of relevant literature and research relating to theory and broader policy frameworks informing the study; clearly contextualises project within particular service and in broader context. | | | | | |  | 15 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| 1. **Rationale and aims**   SRP’s rationale and aims follow from theoretical framework; Clearly states rationale, aims and research questions; Research questions and aims clearly grounded in broader and service contexts. Provides clear statement of hypotheses where relevant, Understanding of the relevant social, cultural, political, legal and organisational contexts. | | | | | |  | 10 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| 1. **Methods**   Provides detailed description of methods relating to SRP | | | | | |  | 20 |
| **4.1. Study Design including why this is appropriate to address the aim** | | |  | | | | |
| **4.2. Measures/instruments used, reliability and appropriateness of these for your study** | | |  | | | | |
| **4.3. Sampling method and sample** | | |  | | | | |
| **4.4. Data collection method / procedures and statistical / other analyses**  Understanding, interpretation and critique of quantitative, statistical and qualitative research data and findings. Clear and appropriate plan for data analysis. | | |  | | | | |
| **4.5. Ethical considerations**  Appropriate consideration of ethical issues and evidence of external ethical scrutiny where appropriate. | | |  | | | | |
| 1. **Professional / Practice-related competencies**   Shows awareness of service user issues and diversity, The SRP is related to practice and has implications for service delivery / improvement / practice. Effective communication and collaboration with service users, carers, colleagues and others. | | | | | |  | 15 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| 1. **Results**   Findings appropriately analysed and reported. Dissemination / reporting of findings clearly described and appropriate for further service development. | | | | | |  | 10 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| **7. Discussion and dissemination / impact of project**  Creative and critical- thinking in relation to the development of clinical practice and services in view of research findings. Discussion and conclusion relates to original questions and the literature and draws appropriate conclusions | | | | | |  | 10 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| **8. Reflective personal and professional practice**  Considers learning related to piece of work; critically considers strengths and weaknesses of work; demonstrates autonomy and constructive use of supervision; Recognition of future service development | | | | | |  | 10 |
|  | | | | | | | |
| **ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS**  IF a FAIL mark is awarded, state reason for FAIL and (for 1st attempt FAIL) what needs to be addressed (also whether resubmission should be based on existing or new material). | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |