Part 2: Written Assignments for Multi Element Behaviour Support – A Short Course 2013

What is an ECTS Credit?
ECTS stands for the European Credit Transfer & Accumulation System. This is a European programme that allows students to get recognition for their learning from different participating colleges in Europe which can facilitate the accumulation of credits towards qualifications.
(See www.ec.europa.eu./education/programmes/socrates/ects/index_en.html). The credits awarded for Multi Element Behaviour Support – A Short Course are at Level 9 (Masters Level). 10 ECTS credits are currently awarded for successful completion of the Multi Element Behaviour Support – A Short Course. This is equivalent to one module at Masters Level.

How do I earn 10 ECTS Credits?
Firstly, you need to complete an applied case portfolio (or present evidence that you have done so previously). This earns you the first 5 credits. The additional 5 credits are earned by completing two short written assignments. These written assignments will only be considered if your applied case is complete and has achieved a mark of at least 85%. The case is still the basic building block of your study.

Do I have to submit these written assignments?
Callan Institute remains committed to Practitioner Based Learning with meaningful outcomes for Service Users. Therefore, the primary outcome of the course is that a Service User is provided with a Multi-Element Behaviour Support Plan and that you are skilled to provide this support. You can opt out of the written assignments and submit only the applied case portfolio. However, you will then be eligible to only 5 ECTS credits if successful. You can submit the written assignments in a subsequent year and be awarded the 5 additional ECTS credits then. For further information contact callan@sjog.ie.

What are the written assignments:
To facilitate your individual learning style, we offer a range of five written assignments, of which you need only select two to complete. They need to be 1,750 words each. The choices available are:
> 1. Reflective Practice
> 2. Journal article critique
> 3. Observational Study Assignment
> 4. Plan for generalisation and maintenance for the next 12 months
> 5. Essay

1. Reflective Practice:

Think of one learning experience you have had as a result of this course. A learning experience is most commonly a time when we are faced with a challenge which we use our new learning to overcome, or a time in which we develop a new solution to an existing problem. Now reflect on this experience and answer these questions

- Did you spend time thinking about the learning experience as/after it happened? Did you think about what you had learned from it or what implications it may have on your practice?
- How did you apply the learning you gained on the course to this situation?
- Where could draw further information on this issue if it arose again (consult the current literature)
- What did you do as a result of this experience? Did you research or read into the area concerned? Did you discuss it with colleagues? Did you apply your learning elsewhere?
- How will this experience influence your practice in the future – what would you do differently now than what you would have done prior to this experience

Word count 1,750 (excluding references)

2. Journal Article Critique:

Read the required journal article and critique it in light of the learning you have undertaken on this course. For 2013, the selected article is:

Johnston, J.M.; Foxx, R; Jacobson, J.W; Green, G & Mulick, J.A. (2006) Positive Behavior Support and Applied Behavior Analysis. *The Behavior Analyst Vol. 29,* pp. 51 – 74. (Available free of charge at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2223172/pdf/bhan-29-01-51.pdf)

Consider the following:

- Is the theoretical framework in the article similar to Multi Element Behaviour Support or not? Explain your reasons why / why not.
- Does the abstract / title correctly reflect what is written in the paper?
- How is the argument structured? Does it provide clear information ?
- Do you feel the authors have a particular agenda, and if so, what is this? Do you feel it is justified?

Some additional guidelines on how to complete a journal article critique are available at http://www.uis.edu/ctl/writing/documents/jrnlcrtq.pdf

Word count 1,750 (excluding references)

3. Observational Study Assignment:

This assignment requires you to record an observation, ask a question or questions about it, gather information on what you observed by either conducting further observations, interviewing or asking people for their own opinions and grounding your observations in a theory or framework that assists in your understanding and analysis of your observation.

- Think about a specific type of behaviour that you have observed?
- What question do you have or would like to test out?
- Determine which locations would yield the best results. How much time should you spend there? Do you need to evaluate several different places?
- Plan what you will do, what data you will observe for, Set goals for work to be done. What tasks need to be done initially?
- Identify a theory or framework that assists in your understanding and analysis of your observation.

Word count 1,750 (excluding references)

4. Plan for generalisation and maintenance for the next 12 months:

Identify a plan of action for the next 12 months for the Multi Element Behaviour Support Plan you have developed. Consider the following:

- Who are the key stakeholders, and what responsibilities will they need to undertake?
- Will the stakeholders need any resources to do so and how will these be accessed / lobbied for.
- How will the review process be structured? Who will be involved and why? How will the service user be involved in these reviews to ensure social validity?
- How will clinical input be obtained to ensure the plan remains relevant and accurate?
- How will you use the skills you have developed to further the culture and ethos of Multi Element Behaviour Support in the place that you work?
- What does the literature suggest for optimising the maintenance of behaviour support plans?

Word count 1,750 (excluding references)

5. Essay:

The essay is intended to focus you on a theoretical aspect of Multi Element Behaviour Support.
In writing an essay, ensure that you consider:

- The question – do you know exactly what is being asked? Have you answered the question asked?
- The structure – has it a clear beginning, middle and end, and is it presented in a coherent manner?
- The content – have you included references to current literature to back up your statements?
- Presentation – Is it neatly presented and is the referencing correct?

See DIT Guidelines on essay writing for detailed information on how to structure it http://social-sciences-law.dit.ie/?Social_Sciences:Student_resources.

The essay title for 2013 is:
Multi Element Behaviour Support plans need to exist in a supportive structure. Who are the key stakeholders and what should their responsibilities be?
Word count 1,750 (excluding references)