

Tips from previous practitioners to pass on to the next generation

These tips were generated by practitioners at the end of their time on the scheme to give you the benefit of their experience.

1. Don't underestimate what it involves, even if you are an experienced practitioner
2. You will get lots out of it but it will be hard work (see the quotes below)
3. Use all of the support on offer including the commentary writing days (CWD's). The practitioners who miss a Portfolio group or don't attend the CWD's tend to be the ones that get delayed and lose momentum
4. If you have limited experience in PH or are relatively new to PH do consider it:
 - ✓ It can act as a springboard to widening your experience in PH
 - ✓ It will give you access to masterclasses and other opportunities to develop your wider knowledge in PH
 - ✓ It may take you longer but will be worthwhile
 - ✓ The network of practitioners in other areas is invaluable
 - ✓ It will help you be a more effective in your role and boost your confidence
 - ✓ It will enhance your professional standing and could help with job security and career progression
5. Consider doing it, even if you have a Masters in PH:
 - ✓ It is a useful way of updating knowledge
 - ✓ It offers something different to a Masters, more practical, across the broad scope of PH practice
 - ✓ It can help you link knowledge gained in your masters to other work
 - ✓ It has a valuable outcome, professionally
6. At the beginning, it is difficult to work out where your knowledge gaps are. Some of us overestimated and some of us underestimated them. Be honest with yourself in relation to the technical competences and flag up ones you know you need to get some development in. Doing this early on means you can fill the gaps without affecting your deadlines
7. Be organised
 - ✓ Keep all your evidence, guidance and notes in one place
 - ✓ Don't underestimate the need to organise and structure your work
 - ✓ Map out the guide timeframe, set yourself realistic deadlines and stick to them
8. Start collecting evidence as early as possible. Save emails, reports etc and dig out certificates
9. Find out who else has done their portfolio locally and ask to see how it is organised and written
10. Make sure you have the support of your line manager and keep them in the loop
11. Allocate time
 - ✓ Negotiate dedicated time at work if you can
 - ✓ Be realistic about doing quite a bit in your own time

*I feel more credible as a practitioner which can only be helpful moving forward
It has exposed me to more development opportunities that I have been able to take advantage of
Writing commentaries has made me realise what I have achieved- a real confidence boost
It has been helpful in thinking about our careers moving forward
I am surprised by how the process of writing in a more reflective way has made me think differently
Getting to know others working in different areas of practice and understanding the scope of their work has been valuable and the network is one we can take forward with us*