

Reflective Practice for Practitioners Autumn 2025 to Spring 2026

1 Online course - Applications being taken

Enquiries in relation to two other courses

Extended Application closing date – Tuesday 14th October 2025

About the Reflective Practice for Practitioners Programme

This SHEP programme uses the 'Critical Reflection' model (Fook & Gardner, 2007) to create a place for practitioners to reflect on practice. Participants will share in the creation of a space that facilitates a gentle and supportive exploration of the assumptions, values, beliefs and feelings that underpin participants' ways of being active in their respective work settings. This programme will be of interest to a wide range of practitioners, (volunteers or paid) involved in various roles in communities, service organisations or social service agencies (e.g. education, youth and community work, social work, childcare, health-care, early intervention and prevention etc.).

Aim

The aim of the programme is to co-create a space for twelve participants to reflect on their prior and current practice experiences using the 'Critical Reflection' model. The programme aims to enhance participants' capacity to engage in the critical reflective process and to enhance their capacity to co-create the conditions for learning from practice reflection. The focus of the programme will be on the reflective phase of the experiential learning/action planning cycle.

Philosophy

This programme is underpinned by SHEP's philosophy that self-awareness and self-knowledge when combined with a commitment to community action is the basis for personal and social transformation. The programme reflects SHEP's philosophy that adults continue to learn throughout their lives and that life and practice experience is an invaluable source for that learning. It is inspired by SHEP's commitment to equality, social justice, social transformation and the contribution that group spaces can create for learning.

Learning Outcomes

Participants who complete this programme will be able to:

1. Better reflect on their practice at work.
2. Participate in the co-creation of a group reflective practice space.
3. Experience how developing a personal and collective facilitative stance, supports the co-creation of the conditions for an effective reflective practice learning space.
4. Describe the 'Critical Reflection' model.
5. Reflectively write about their practice and their reflective learning processes.
6. Draw up a personal plan as to how they will support themselves in their practice.

The 'Critical Reflection' Model

The 'Critical Reflection' model (Fook & Gardner, 2007) is informed by four key perspectives:

1. There is a value in reflecting directly on experience. (Reflective Practice)
2. There is a value in being open to exploring how we ourselves influence the experience. (Reflexivity)
3. Allowing that there are many views on what is true, and that some of these views are powerful and tend to silence others. How the language we use is important as is how we create difference. (Post-modernism)
4. We can disempower ourselves – important to create an opportunity to free ourselves from dominant ways of thinking and to make a connection between the individual and the wider social world. (Critical Social Theory)

Through facilitated reflection on a 'critical learning situation', assumptions underpinning practice can be surfaced and examined towards bringing about change. A critical learning situation is something which happened to you, which was significant to your practice in some way. It can be significant for many reasons – it might have represented a turning point, a breakthrough, or a point of decision-making – what is important is that an incident is chosen to reflect on, from which it is felt there is something still to be learnt. Most of the course time will be spent on giving time to participants to have an opportunity to process a critical learning situation of importance to them. Through applied reflection on practice areas in the group, using the Critical Reflection model, participants work through applied practice issues, learn from this exploration, and learn experientially about the Critical Reflection distinctive model and approach to structured reflection.

Commitment, Schedule & Location

There are three groups commencing in Autumn 2025 as follows, each involving 30 hours:

Evenings & Facilitators	Where	Months	Sessions	Times
Places Available – Applications being taken up to 14th October '25				
Thursday evenings Mai Kerins and Joan Frawley	On-line Zoom	Oct '25 to April '26	12x2.5hr sessions meeting approx. fortnightly (schedule below)	7.00pm to 9.30pm

Participants will need to schedule a further one hour per week for reflective writing and a small amount of guided reading. This programme is primarily experiential.

Enquires can be made regarding the two other Reflective Practice courses below as places may arise over the coming week

Thursday evenings	On-line Zoom	Sept '25 to Mar '26	10 x 3hr sessions meeting approx. fortnightly	7pm to 10pm
Wednesday evenings	In-person SHEP, Cork City T12 XDH2	Sept '25 to Mar '26	12x2.5hr sessions meeting approx. fortnightly	7.30pm to 10pm

Applications being taken

Schedule of Dates 2025-2026

Thursday Night Group 3, Online

Facilitators – Mai Kerins and Joan Frawley			REFLECTIVE PRACTICE 12 x 2.5 hours = 30 hours	
	October 2025	Thursday 23 rd	6pm to 10pm 1:1 15min intake meetings with Mai & Joan	
1	November 2025	Thursday 6 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
2	November 2025	Thursday 20 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
3	December 2025	Thursday 4 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
4	December 2025	Thursday 11 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
	Christmas Break			
5	January 2026	Thursday 8 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
6	January 2026	Thursday 22 nd	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
7	February 2026	Thursday 5 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
8	February 2026	Thursday 26 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
9	March 2026	Thursday 12 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
10	March 2026	Thursday 26 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
11	April	Thursday 16 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom
12	April	Thursday 30 th	7.00pm to 9.30pm	Online Zoom

Venue Address – Zoom Online

Certification

SHEP certificate in Reflective Practice for Practitioners will be awarded where an 80% attendance record is achieved. There will be no formal assessment in the course. Participants will be asked to prepare a written reflective learning piece towards the end of the course that draws on their learning and their reflective writing done through the span of the course (a personal learning statement) – participants will have the opportunity to explore these learnings together in the group. An input on reflective writing skills will be provided early in the course.

Course Fee

The courses are funded through a grant from the **Mercy Ministry Fund** and the support from SHEP and the HSE. There is a small €45 fee from participants to cover the cost of the course book and materials. This is payable when offered and on acceptance of a place.

Enquires can be made in relation to the two other Reflective Practice groups below as places may arise over the coming week.

Wednesday Night Group, In-Person Cork City

Facilitators – Margaret Fenton and Liam Mc Carthy			REFLECTIVE PRACTICE 12 x 2.5 hours = 30 hours	Venue EirCode T12 XDH2
	September 2025	Wednesday 24 th	6pm to 10pm 1:1 intake meetings with Margaret & Liam	SHEP, ASH Room
1	October 2025	Wednesday 8 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
2	October 2025	Wednesday 22 nd	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
3	November 2025	Wednesday 12 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
4	November 2025	Wednesday 26 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
5	December 2025	Wednesday 10 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
Christmas Break				
6	January 2026	Wednesday 7 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
7	January 2026	Wednesday 21 st	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
8	February 2026	Wednesday 4 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
9	February 2026	Wednesday 11 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
10	February 2026	Wednesday 25 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
11	March 2026	Wednesday 11 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room
12	March 2026	Wednesday 25 th	7.30pm to 10pm	SHEP, ASH Room

Venue Address - The Social and Health Education Project CLG The Old National School, Ardfoyle Avenue, Ballintemple, Cork T12 XDH2

Thursday Night Group 2, Online

Facilitators – Frances Day and Deirdre O’Sullivan			REFLECTIVE PRACTICE 10 x 3 hours = 30 hours	
	September 2025	Thursday 25 th	6pm to 10pm 1:1 intake meetings with Deirdre & Frances	Online Zoom
1	October 2025	Thursday 9 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
2	October 2025	Thursday 23 rd	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
3	November 2025	Thursday 13 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
4	December 2025	Thursday 11 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
Christmas Break				
5	January 2026	Thursday 8 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
6	January 2026	Thursday 22 nd	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
7	February 2026	Thursday 5 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
8	February 2026	Thursday 26 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
9	March 2026	Thursday 12 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom
10	March 2026	Thursday 26 th	7.00pm to 10pm	Online Zoom

Venue Address – Zoom Online

Entry requirements

Candidates must be adults (18 and over) who:

- Have a strong commitment to promoting social change, inclusion, equality and justice and are active in their community or organisation in either a voluntary or paid capacity.

- Are volunteering or working in a Community and Voluntary organisation, social service agencies, public or local authority (e.g. education, youth and community work, social work, community development, childcare, health-care, housing, inter-agency work, counselling, advocacy ... etc.).
- Have a willingness to be open in a group setting, sufficient for a process of reflection on the assumptions, values and feelings underpinning their volunteering or paid work.

Progression

SHEP has recently reconfigured its third practitioner training programme in Applied Facilitation in Community & Organisational Settings. The aim of that part-time programme is to contribute to **resourcing practitioners, local communities and organisations** to become more effective, resourced and grounded practitioners, active citizens and communities, through supportive training programmes - **leadership, facilitation, participatory methods, advocacy, reflective practice**. The Reflective Practice for Practitioners course is one of five modules currently comprising that programme. For more detail, please refer to the SHEP website www.socialandhealth.com.

Booking

Interested applicants should complete the Application Form attached or contact the SHEP Project Centre on 021-4666180 to inquire further and look to speak with Liam McCarthy or Jess Bowen (089 6100906). The courses will run subject to sufficient applications to form a group of 10-12 participants.

Data order and quality of the application are considered in offering places. Note that Individual applicant intake meetings of 15min will be scheduled and your particular time will be scheduled with you by the office staff. Applicants will be formally offered places within one week of completion of these meetings.

Further Information

Contact course co-ordinators Liam Mc Carthy or Jess Bowen (089 6100906) or on 021 4666180. For further information please see the Training and Development section of the SHEP website.

<https://www.socialandhealth.com/training/reflective-practice/>

Completed application forms preferably emailed to
info@socialandhealth.com

Or if posting to

**SHEP Project Centre, Old National School, Ardfoyle Avenue, Ballintemple,
 Cork. T12 XDH2**

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