

Here are some points that you need to consider. You should have included all of these in your reflective activity.

- When you received the private message from Kelly, you decided to do nothing. However, this meant that there was not an opportunity to identify the risks to Kelly's well-being. If you had taken action, you may have been able to help prevent harm to Kelly.
- Also, by doing nothing you could lead people to believe that you were aware that your relationship with Kelly was not appropriate and that you were trying to protect your own interests before supporting Kelly. This could call into question your suitability to be a social service worker.
- By now telling her worker about the post, you are helping Kelly to get the support and care that she needs. However, you are likely to be asked to explain why you did not tell the worker about your contact with Kelly before now, particularly as this may have prevented the harm to her. It could be regarded that you are now trying to cover your back because the situation is becoming more serious and your social media relationship with Kelly might be discovered anyway.
- Your judgement and suitability to be a social service worker could be called into question as you have shown that you do not have a clear understanding about professional boundaries. Although Kelly is no longer in your direct care and support, you and your organisation may still have statutory responsibilities towards her. By forming this relationship with Kelly, you could place yourself in a conflict of interest. For example, what would happen if she disclosed something to you as a friend and asked you to keep it confidential but you felt you should pass on to a worker?
- If you sent the message in your own time, outside of work, you might think that has nothing to do with your employer or the SSSC. However, the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers states that you must not behave in a way outside of work that calls into question your suitability to be a social service worker. So, you could still find that your actions are investigated.

When you received the initial friends request from Kelly, the right thing to do was to not to respond to it and to contact her through care worker right away.