



IACP Code of Ethics and Practice for IACP Supervisors

Supervision is seen by the IACP as a collaborative process, vital for the well-being of the client and the development of the practitioner. Supervision is a formal mutually agreed arrangement within which the supervisee discusses his/her work on a regular basis with their Supervisor.

All IACP practitioners are bound by the IACP Code of Ethics and Practice to monitor their work through regular Supervision to ensure competency, efficacy, ethical standards and ongoing learning & education.

The term “Supervision” encompasses a number of functions including supporting, developing and monitoring practitioners in their work with clients. To this end, Supervision is concerned with:

- Monitoring and safeguarding the interest of the client
- Providing support, challenge and a reflective learning space for practitioners
- Ensuring that ethical standards are maintained

The purpose of this code is to establish and maintain standards for Supervisors in their supervisory work with practitioners. This code applies to all supervision models and arrangements. This code is encompassed within the IACP Code of Ethics and Practice for Practitioners

The Code of Ethics seeks to inform and protect Supervisees seeking Supervision. By agreeing to comply with this code, Supervisors and Supervisees reaffirm their assent to the IACP Code of Ethics and Practice for Practitioners. Supervisors accept their responsibilities to Supervisees and their Clients, their agencies, their colleagues, the wider community and this Association.

S1 The Supervisory Relationship

- a) The Supervisor should strive to create and maintain a collaborative relationship that nurtures the Supervisees’ professional competence.
- b) The Supervisor must be aware and make explicit the power differential in the relationship and not exploit this power.
- c) The Supervisor should be able to balance support with challenge so that the supervisee can benefit from new learning as appropriate to the Supervisee’s stage of professional development.
- d) The Supervisor must clearly set, define and maintain ethical boundaries between professional, personal and social relationships with their Supervisees.
- e) The Supervisor may not enter into any sexual relationships with Supervisees.
- f) The Supervisor should refrain from engaging in dual relationships where possible bias and role confusion may occur.

S2 Issues of responsibility

Given that the primary purpose of supervision is to ensure the supervisee is addressing the needs of the client and their own professional learning needs; Supervisors are responsible for:

- a) Helping supervisees reflect on their work
- b) Adhering to the principles embodied in this Code of Ethics and Practice.

- c) Making sure Supervisees are not exploited financially, sexually, emotionally or in any other way in the supervisory relationship.
- d) Establishing clear working agreements and contracts, indicating the role of the Supervisor and the role of the Supervisee, and clarifying the responsibility of Supervisees for their own continued learning and self-monitoring.
- e) Declaring their specific areas of competencies and non-competencies.
- f) Recognising the value and dignity of Supervisees and their Clients irrespective of age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, party politics, race, religion, sexual orientation or social standing.
- g) Holding appropriate malpractice and professional indemnity insurance as well as public liability insurance for their supervision work.
- h) Satisfying themselves that their Supervisees (other than trainees) have the following measures in place
 - They belong to a Professional Counselling/Psychotherapy Association
 - They subscribe to and adhere to the code of ethics and practice of that Association
 - They are subject to the Association's complaints procedure
 - They have appropriate malpractice and professional indemnity insurance as well as public liability insurance cover.
 - That their client practice is appropriate to their level of competence and training.
- i) Monitor their own professional supervisory competency. Supervisors are required to engage in supervision of their own supervisory practice, as well as ongoing continuous learning and development in relation to their supervisory competence.
- j) Where a Supervisor has serious concerns regarding the quality of a Supervisee's work, they should take all reasonable steps to address and resolve the situation. This process includes options such as:
 - Bringing these concerns to the attention of the Supervisee
 - Seek Professional Consultation
 - Encouraging the supervisee to seek personal therapy or other professional help.
 - Referral of the matter, if necessary, to the Supervisee's accrediting body

Both Supervisor and Supervisee have a shared responsibility for:

- k) Setting and maintaining clear boundaries between the Supervisory relationship and friendships or other dual relationships.
- l) Making explicit the boundaries between supervision, consultancy, therapy and training.
- m) Distinguishing between supervising and counselling of the Supervisee.
- n) Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the supervision arrangement and changing it where necessary.
- o) Considering their respective responsibilities to the client and to each other in relation to the Supervisee's employment, training or placement organisation (if any).
- p) Ensuring that maximum benefit is gained from supervision time.
- q) Adhering to and implementing mandatory reporting guidelines.

r) While it is the role of the Supervisor to facilitate the Supervisee to explore and reflect on their therapeutic work with clients, there is an understanding that the ethical and legal responsibility for the work remains with the Supervisee.

s) Supervisees are responsible for their work with the Client, and for honestly presenting and exploring that work with their Supervisor.

S3 Contracting and Management of Supervision

a) The Supervisor takes responsibility for establishing a supervision contract with their supervisees.

b) When a contract is being co-created, there is an opportunity to clarify in more detail the expectations of both/all parties regarding tasks, roles, responsibilities and competencies.

c) Supervisors and Supervisees should make explicit the expectations and requirements they have of each other. This should include the manner in which any formal assessment of the Supervisees' work will be conducted. Each party should assess the value of working with each other and review this regularly.

d) The Supervisor informs their Supervisees of their supervision qualifications, theoretical approach and method of working.

e) A contract should cover an agreed time span and provide ongoing reviews

f) The Supervisor should be explicit regarding practical arrangements for supervision and ensure that this is an agreed arrangement by all parties. It will cover such practical arrangements such as:

- Fees
- Length of contact time and frequency of contact
- Confidentiality and exclusions to confidentiality
- Process of dealing with exclusions to confidentiality
- Arrangements in the event of the illness or death of the Supervisee or Supervisor
- How to monitor and report if there are concerns about professional competencies and fitness to practice.
- Supervisee notes, Supervisor notes (ownership, storage, use, research).
- In relation to a Trainee Therapist, the establishment of a 3-way contract between Supervisor, Supervisee and the Training Institution including responsibility for written assessments.

S4 Evaluation and Feedback

a) The Supervisor provides regular feedback to supervisees on their work. The Supervisor clarifies that the purpose of feedback is to facilitate learning. Supervisors should provide feedback that is direct and clear while at the same time protecting the supervisory relationship.

b) Supervisors should seek feedback from their Supervisees about the quality of the supervision they offer and use that feedback to improve their supervisory competence.

S5 Competence.

IACP Supervisors are required to:

a) Be experienced Counselling/Psychotherapy Practitioners.

b) Have undertaken professional training as a clinical Supervisor, as set out by IACP.

- c) Continuously seek ways of increasing their professional competence and development of their supervisory skills.
- d) Make explicit their specific areas of competencies & non-competencies.
- e) Make arrangements for their own consultancy and support to help them monitor and evaluate their supervision work. This includes having supervision of their supervisory work.
- f) Monitor and maintain their own effectiveness. They may need to seek help and or withdraw from the practice of supervision if their competence and capacity to supervise is impaired.
- g) Maintain an active current practice in Counselling/ Psychotherapy and Clinical Supervision.

S6 Supervision Online Competency

- a) Knowledge and Competency

The Supervisor who engages in distance supervision using on line technology, and/or social media must develop the necessary skills and knowledge with regards to the technical, ethical, and legal considerations of such Supervisory encounters.

- b) Standards re Competence re online Supervision.

The Supervisor will adhere to the ethical principles and values set out in this code of ethics whether working online, electronically, face to face or using any other methods of communication, in delivering services to a professional standard.

- c) The Supervisor must be aware of potential risks and take precautions to protect and safeguard the online Supervisory process.

S7 Supervising Students

The Supervisors role with students incorporates all the requirements as set out for supervising accredited and pre-accredited practitioners with the addition of the following:

- a) The Supervisor should be acutely aware of the power differential in the dynamics of his/her work with student Supervisees. The Supervisor should not exploit this power particularly in relation to the increased role of evaluation and assessment.
- b) The Supervisor must familiarise themselves with the criteria of the course providers and ensure that the student works within those standards.
- c) The Supervisor understands that their role as an educator is of primary significance in working with students.
- d) The Supervisor provides the student with ongoing feedback regarding their work. They also schedule formal evaluative sessions throughout the supervisory period as required by their course provider.
- e) Where a Supervisee exhibits a lack of professional competence, the Supervisor has an ethical responsibility to discuss this with the supervisee in a direct and supportive manner and if necessary refer this to the course provider.
- f) Before reports on the student's work are forwarded to the course provider, these reports should be co-evaluated by both the Supervisor and Student. The Supervisor must ensure that the student understands fully what is contained in the report.
- g) If the Supervisor has concerns about a student's ability to achieve satisfactory counselling competencies the supervisor should

- Address these concerns with the student
- Seek professional consultation on the matter
- If required address these concerns with the course provider

End of code

February 2017

IACP Ethics Committee

Gillford D'Souza

Rita O'Quigley, Secretary

Ann McDonald, Chair of the Ethics Committee

In late 2014, The IACP Ethics Committee was given the task of updating and revising the IACP Code of Ethics by the Board. On review of the existing code, the Committee agreed that the well-defined core structure would be kept in place. After a stringent process of research, analysis of codes from other international psychotherapy accrediting bodies, many meetings and a lengthy process of public consultation with IACP members and committees, the updated code was devised.

Changes include ethical consideration of new technology, online work and more on competency, professional responsibility and self-care in the interests of the welfare of clients and practitioners.

We would like to thank the Members of the Ethics Committee, Ann McDonald, Gillford D'Souza and Rita O'Quigley, and all IACP members who wrote with their suggestions and revisions. We hope that the revised Code will meet the needs of practitioners in their work with clients and supervisees.

Please note that the revised Code of Ethics is now available to download on the IACP website under:

<http://www.iacp.ie/iacp-code-of-ethics>

The revised Code of Ethics and Practice will replace previous version of the IACP Code of Ethics and Practice from 1st January 2018.