

# Code of Practice for Supervisors of Psychotherapy and Counselling Practitioners

**It is BCPC's policy that BCPC graduates will not be carrying out supervision until they have been qualified for a minimum of 2 years as psychotherapists or 3 years as counsellors and ideally much longer. For the purposes of this document, supervisors are those who are tutors supervising students, or are on the approved list of psychotherapists and supervisors.**

This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the BCPC Statement of Ethical Principles. The Ethical Principles are the basis from which this Code of Practice has evolved to provide guidelines for good practice. All supervisors will adhere to this Code of Practice.

## 1. Issues of Responsibility

- 1.1. The primary purpose of supervision is to ensure that the psychotherapist and counsellor works well with the client.
- 1.2. The supervisor will also ensure that students have the opportunity to understand their client work in relation to the general training of BCPC
- 1.3. Supervisors are responsible for setting clear boundaries between a supervisory relationship and friendship or other relationships.
- 1.4. Supervisors are responsible to ensure that practitioners work ethically and do not collude with unethical practice. This must be confronted and if necessary brought to the attention of the Standards and Ethics Committee.
- 1.5. Supervisors recognise the value and dignity of practitioners irrespective of origin, status, gender, sexual orientation, belief, class, colour, disability/ability or any other distinguishing factor.
- 1.6. Supervisors will make clear arrangements with practitioners and inform them of changes in advance.
- 1.7. Supervisors will review the effectiveness of the supervision and discuss any difficulties with colleagues. If appropriate practitioners may be referred to a different supervisor.
- 1.8. Supervisors will continually seek ways of increasing their own professional development and be aware of the limits of their competence.
- 1.9. Supervisors will not engage in sexual activity with their supervisees.
- 1.10. Supervisors will ensure that practitioners are given regular opportunities to discuss and evaluate their experience of supervision.

- 1.11. Supervisors will take steps to resolve difficulties with practitioners and where necessary involve another member of staff or other supervisor in helping with this.
- 1.12. Offences and Criminal Convictions: All BCPC members have an obligation to report according to the laws of the land to the Chairperson of the Standards and Ethics Committee any criminal convictions that they have been found guilty of, as well as any other offences or actions that may bring the profession into disrepute. This information will be held in confidence except for purposes affecting registration or re-accreditation, but the UKCP Registration Board requires that information regarding criminal offences is reported to them, and they will decide upon action following recommendation from the Standards and Ethics Committee. Failure to inform the Standards and Ethics Chair may result in the members being struck off the Student and Professional Register.

## **2. Confidentiality**

- 2.1. Appropriate confidentiality must be maintained with regard to information of a personal nature obtained by the supervisor.
- 2.2. Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of confidential information relating to practitioners when this regards a break in ethical standards and concerns an assessment of the practitioner.
- 2.3. Confidentiality regarding practitioner's clients must be kept except in the following circumstances:
  - a information is given to the supervisor's supervisor
  - b it is clearly stated that this is acceptable to all parties
  - c when the supervisor considers the breach of confidentiality is necessary to prevent serious emotional or physical damage to the client or to a third party.
- 2.4. Information about specific practitioners may only be used for publication in appropriate journals or meetings with the practitioner's permission and with anonymity preserved when the practitioner so specifies.
- 2.5. Discussion by supervisors of their practitioners with professional colleagues should be purposeful and not trivialising.

**April 1996 - Standard and Ethics Committee  
November 1996 - Adopted BCPCA  
Amended and Approved Nov 2001  
Amended July 2011**