



# International Society of Counselling and Clinical Supervisors (ISOCSS)

# Code of Ethics

<b>Definitions and Interpretations Used</b>	<b>‘Supervision’</b> is utilized to describe foundation skills relevant to counselling and/or clinical supervisory relationships that can be adopted in a range of supervisory relationships provided by professionals of different training and accreditation background, such as counsellors, psychotherapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health nurses, social workers, or any other professionals in the helping profession.
---	---

The Code of Ethics is an initial guideline for counselling supervisors to aid them in their supervision practice and shall be formally reviewed every year in collaboration with the heads of counselling industry, their members, and by peer supervisors.

### **Client Welfare and Rights**

1. The supervisor shall ensure that supervisees respect the integrity of and promote the welfare of their clients. The supervisor shall ensure that supervisees inform their clients that they are being supervised and that observation and/or recordings of the session may be reviewed by the supervisor if this is part of the supervision process.
2. The supervisor shall ensure that supervisees are aware of client's rights, and as such are protecting client's right to privacy and confidentiality in the counselling/clinical relationship and the information resulting from it, and that their right to privacy and confidentiality will not be violated by the supervisor or the supervisory relationship.
3. Records of counselling/clinical relationship, including interview notes, session notes, electronic storage of these documents, and audio and video tape recordings, are considered to be confidential professional information. The supervisor shall ensure that these materials are used in counselling/clinical research and training and supervision of therapists with the full knowledge of clients and that permission to use these materials is granted by the Organization's counselling/clinical setting offering services to clients. This professional information shall be used for full protection of the client. Written consent from the client (or legal guardian, if a minor) shall be secured prior to the use of such information by the supervisor for instructional, supervisory, and/or research purposes. Policies of the Organization's counselling/clinical setting regarding client record shall also be followed;
4. The supervisor shall adhere to current professional and legal guidelines when conducting research with participants.
5. The supervisor shall make every effort to monitor supervisee's professional actions, and failures to take actions.

### **The Role of the Supervisor**

1. Inherent and integral to the role of supervisor:
  - 1.1. Monitoring Client Welfare;
  - 1.2. Encouraging supervisee's compliance with relevant legal, ethical, and professional standards for counselling/clinical practice;
  - 1.3. Monitoring supervisee's counselling/clinical performance and professional development; and
  - 1.4. Evaluating current performance and potential of supervisees for academic screening, selection, placement, employment and registration purposes.
2. The supervisor shall have formal training in counselling/clinical supervision at either a non-AQF level of training or that results in an AQF qualification.



3. The supervisor shall pursue professional education activities such as advanced courses, seminars and professional conferences in supervision on a regular and ongoing basis. These activities shall include both, counselling, clinical and supervision topic skills.
4. The supervisor shall pursue ongoing supervision for their supervision activities.
5. The supervisor shall ensure that their supervisees are aware of professional and ethical standards and legal responsibilities of the counselling/clinical profession.
6. The supervisors of novices who are members of or seeking membership to a relevant professional body, shall encourage them to adhere to the standards and principles for practice established by the relevant professional body in which they are or seeking membership of, for their practice.
7. The supervisor shall establish and communicate to supervisees procedures for contacting the supervisor, or an alternative supervisor, to assist in handling crisis situations.
8. The supervisor shall review the supervisee's actual work samples via audio and/or video tape, or live observation in addition to case notes, as a regular part of the supervision process.
9. The supervisor shall meet on a regular basis with their supervisees in face-to-face or other modes of supervision, as required by supervisee's relevant workplace and educational and/or professional bodies.
10. The supervisor shall provide the supervisee with ongoing feedback on their performance in a variety of forms, both formal and informal, as applicable to the situation, and include both verbal and written evaluations. The feedback shall be formative during the supervisory experience with a qualified therapist, and both formative and summative with a novice. Feedback shall be formative during supervision sessions and summative at the conclusion of the supervision experience.
11. A supervisor, who has multiple roles (a teacher and supervisor, etc.) with supervisees, shall carefully communicate to the supervisee about the expectations and responsibilities associated with each role.
12. The supervisor shall not participate in any form of sexual contact with supervisee. The supervisor shall not engage in any form of social contact or interaction with supervisee which would compromise the supervisor-supervisee relationship. The supervisor shall avoid dual relationships with supervisee that might impair the supervisor's objectivity and professional judgment and/or shall terminate the supervisory relationship if this arises.
13. The supervisor shall not establish a psychotherapeutic relationship with the supervisee as a substitute for supervision. The supervisor shall address supervisee's personal issues in supervision only in terms of the impact of these issues on clients and on professional

functioning. The supervisor shall refer any other supervisee's psychotherapeutic needs to another professional for further exploration.

14. The supervisor, through ongoing assessment and evaluation of supervisees, shall be aware of supervisee's any personal or professional limitations which are likely to impede future professional performance. The supervisor shall recommend to those supervisees who are unable to provide competent professional services a remedial assistance and of screening from the profession and/or training program, Organization's counselling/clinical setting, or relevant professional bodies. The supervisor shall clearly and professionally communicate in writing their recommendations to supervisees who are so evaluated.
15. The supervisor shall not endorse a supervisee for certification, membership to a relevant professional body, completion of an academic training program, or continued employment if the supervisor believes that the supervisee is impaired in any way that would interfere with the performance of counselling/clinical duties. The presence of any such impairment shall begin a process of feedback and remediation wherever possible so that the supervisee understands the nature of the impairment and has the opportunity to remedy the problem and continue with their professional development.
16. The supervisor shall incorporate the principles of: informed consent and participation; clarity of requirements, expectations, roles, and rules; and due process and appeal into the establishment of policies and procedures of their institutions, program, courses, relevant professional bodies and individual supervisory relationships. The supervisor shall establish mechanisms for due process appeal of individual supervisory actions and shall make it available to all supervisees.

#### **The Role of the Supervisor in Program Administration**

1. The supervisor shall ensure that the programs conducted and experiences provided are in keeping with current guidelines of relevant professional bodies and their divisions.
2. The supervisor shall teach courses and or supervise counselling/clinical work only in areas where they are fully competent and experienced. This means that their skill sets are equivalent or higher than those they teach or supervise.
3. The supervisor shall be an active participant in individual, group, and/or peer review and peer supervision procedures, to achieve the highest quality of training and supervision.
4. The supervisor shall provide experiences that integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application. Supervisors shall also provide opportunities in which supervisees are able to apply the knowledge they have learned and understand the rationale for the skills communicated by supervisor, which reflect current practice, research findings, and available resources.
5. The supervisor shall communicate to the novice supervisee the professional competencies, specific courses, and/or required experience expected of them in writing, prior to the

admission to the training program or placement by the Organization's counselling/clinical setting, in a timely manner.

6. The supervisor shall communicate to a qualified supervisee the professional competencies/qualifications, specific course, professional development activities and/or required experiences expected of them in their continued employment, in writing prior to and throughout supervision, in a timely manner.
7. The supervisor shall accept only those persons as novice supervisees who meet identified entry level requirements for admission to a program of counsellor/clinical training or for placement in an Organization's counselling/clinical setting.
8. The supervisor shall accept only those persons as supervisees who are qualified and registered with a relevant professional body and completed all necessary prerequisites as determined by the relevant professional body.
9. The supervisor shall inform supervisees of the goals, policies and procedures, theoretical orientations toward counselling/clinical work, training, and supervision model or approach on which the supervision is based.
10. The supervisor shall encourage and assist the supervisee to define their own theoretical orientation toward counselling/clinical work to establish supervision goals for themselves and to monitor and evaluate their progress toward meeting these goals.
11. The supervisor shall assess supervisee's skills and experience in order to establish standards for competent professional behaviour. The supervisor shall restrict supervisee's activities to those that are commensurate with their current level of skills and experience.
12. The supervisor shall obtain and/or approve practical and fieldwork sites that meet the minimum standards for preparing students to become effective therapists. The supervisor shall not approve practicum or field work setting unless it truly replicates a counselling/clinical work setting.
13. The supervisor shall limit practicum and fieldwork classes in size according to established professional standards to ensure that each student has ample opportunity for individual supervision and feedback. The supervisor in Organization's counselling/clinical settings shall have an appropriate number of supervisees to ensure best practice.
14. The supervisor in education settings shall establish and communicate specific policies and procedures regarding field placement of students. There shall be a clear differentiation of the respective roles of student supervisee, the university supervisor, and the field supervisor, in areas such as evaluation, requirements and confidentiality.
15. The supervisor in training programs shall regularly communicate with supervisors in agencies used as practicum and/or fieldwork sites regarding current professional practices, expectations of students, and preferred models and modalities in supervision.

16. The supervisor at an educational setting shall establish clear lines of communication between themselves, the field supervisors, and the student supervisees.
17. The supervisor shall establish and communicate to supervisees and field supervisors' specific procedures regarding consultation, performance review, and evaluation of supervisees.
18. Evaluation of supervisee performance in educational settings and in Organization's counselling/clinical settings shall be available to supervisees in ways consistent with the Australian Privacy Act.
19. The supervisor who conducts training that focus primarily on self-understanding and problem resolution (e.g. personal growth groups or individual counselling) shall not serve simultaneously as a supervisor of supervisees involved in the training.
20. The supervisor may recommend participation in activities such as personal growth groups or personal counselling when the supervisor has determined that a supervisee has deficits in the areas of self-understanding and problem resolution which impede supervisee's professional functioning. The supervisor shall not be the direct provider of these activities for the supervisee.
21. The supervisor shall, when a training program conducts a personal growth or counselling/clinical experiences involving relatively intimate self-disclosure, eliminate or minimize potential role conflicts for faculty and/or agency supervisors who may conduct these experiences and who also serve as teachers, group leaders, and clinical directors.
22. The supervisor shall use the following prioritized sequence in resolving conflict between the needs of the client, the needs of the supervisee, and the needs of the program or agency. Where laws and ethical standards are not present or are unclear, the supervisor shall consider relevant legal and ethical standards (e.g. duty to warn, state child abuse laws, et.) and exercise good judgment guided by the following list:
  - 22.1. Client Welfare;
  - 22.2. Supervisee Welfare;
  - 22.3. Supervisor Welfare; and
  - 22.4. Program and/or agency service and administrative needs.

### The Role of the Supervisor When Using Technology in Supervision

23. The supervisor will apply the same definition of supervision and its processes regardless if supervision is provided face-to-face or by other methods using technology, in all disciplines and modalities.
24. The supervisor will ensure that the Informed Consent (during contracting) will include:
  - 24.1. The method of delivery and the mode of communication
  - 24.2. Steps for technological glitches,
  - 24.3. Boundaries relating to scheduling sessions and immediate availability,
  - 24.4. Record keeping, methods, storage, ownership, and disposal,



- 24.5. How misunderstandings will be negotiated,
- 24.6. Clear rules and sanctions for group supervision,
- 24.7. The method of authentication of the identity of both supervisor-supervisee
- 24.8. Confidentiality. This should include:
  - Specifics, related to the use of technology, to supervisee's client. The supervisees' clients have the right to know if the details of their case will be discussed with the supervisor via distance using technology.
  - Encryptions or equivalent levels of security need to be incorporated if communication is transmitted via the internet. If not possible, the lack of encryption and risk of confidentiality should be part of the informed consent process.
  - Verbatim material – data protection issues and issues of confidentiality - encryption software should be used to preserve privacy for both client and therapist or anyone else who is directly related to the case,
  - An awareness of confidentiality issues when using mobile phone or SMS texting for conversation.
25. The supervisor will ensure that both supervisee and supervisor have competency and proficiency with technology being used.
26. The supervisor will ensure portability, versatility, ease of use and cost effectiveness of technology used.
27. The supervisor will ensure to have liability (malpractice) insurance which include coverage when supervision is delivered via technology.

**References:**

- Campbell Jane (2000), *Becoming an Effective Supervisor*; Publisher: Routledge
- Feltham & Dryden (2004). *Developing Counsellor Supervision* - Sage Publications
- Henderson Penny (2009), *Supervisor Training: Issues and Approaches: Guide to Supervision Volume 2*; Publisher – Karnac Books
- Holloway Elizabeth, Carroll Michael (1999), *Training Counselling Supervisors: Strategies, Methods and Techniques (Counselling Supervision)*; Publisher - Sage Pubns Ltd
- Holloway Elizabeth, *Clinical supervision : a systems approach*, Sage Publications, 1995.
- Inskipp, F. and Proctor, B. (1993) *The Art, Craft & Task of Counselling supervision : Pt. 1:*
- Making the Most of Supervision . Twickenham, Middlesex: Cascade Publications*
- Inskipp, F. and Proctor, B. (1993) *The Art, Craft & Task of Counselling supervision : Pt. 2: Becoming a Supervisor. Twickenham, Middlesex: Cascade Publications*
- Ladany Nicholas, and Bradley Loretta J. (2010) *Counselor Supervision (fourth addition)*; Publisher Routledge
- Pelling Nadine, Barletta John, and Armstrong Philip 2009: '*The Practice of Clinical Supervision*'; Publisher - Australian Academic Press,

**Articles:**

- Casey, J. A. (1999). Computer Assisted Simulation for Counselor Training of Basic Skills. *Journal of Technology in Counseling*, 1. [On-Line]. Retrieved from [http://jtc.columbusstate.edu/vol1\\_1/simulation.htm](http://jtc.columbusstate.edu/vol1_1/simulation.htm)
- Casey J, Bloom J, & Moan E.: Eric Digest: EDO-CG-94-25. Retrieved from: <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~drbryce/Use%20of%20Technology.pdf>
- Chapman, R. A. (2008, November). Cyber-supervision of entry level practicum supervisees: The effect on acquisition of counselor competence and confidence. *Journal of Technology in Counseling*, Retrieved from [http://jtc.colstate.edu/vol5\\_1/Chapman.htm](http://jtc.colstate.edu/vol5_1/Chapman.htm)
- Coursol, D. H., & Lewis, J. (2000). Coursol, D. H., & Lewis, J. (2000): Close encounters in the new millennium. *Cybercounseling* [On-line], 1-12. Retrieved from: <http://cybercounseling.uncg.edu/manuscripts/cybersupervision.htm>
- Engels, D., Caulum, D., and Sampson D. (1984) Computers in counselor education: An ethical perspective. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 24, 193-203. Retrieved from: <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~drbryce/Use%20of%20Technology.pdf>
- Hays B J (2012). Computer Education: Integration of teaching strategies *Journal of Technology in Counseling*, 5. [On-Line]. Retrieved from [http://jtc.columbusstate.edu/Vol5\\_1/Hayes.htm](http://jtc.columbusstate.edu/Vol5_1/Hayes.htm)

McMahon, Mary (2002) Structured Peer Group Supervision by Email: An Option for School Guidance and Counselling Personnel. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 12(1), pp. 1-10.

Myrick, R. D., & Sabella, R. A. (1995). Cyberspace: A new place for counselor supervision. *Elementary School Guidance and Counselling*, 30, 35-44. Retrieved from: <http://www.schoolcounselor.com/pubs/cybervision.pdf>

Nelson, J. A., Nichter, M., & Henriksen, R. (2010). *On-line supervision and face-to-face supervision in the counseling internship: An exploratory study of similarities and differences*. Retrieved from: [http://counselingoutfitters.com/vistas/vistas10/Article\\_46.pdf](http://counselingoutfitters.com/vistas/vistas10/Article_46.pdf)

Olson Michael M., Russell Candyce S. & White Mark B. (2002): Technological Implications for Clinical Supervision and Practice, *The Clinical Supervisor*, 20:2, 201-215 Retrieved from: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J001v20n02\\_15](http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J001v20n02_15)

Phillips S. D. (1984). Contributions and limitations in the use of computers in counseling training. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 24(2), 186-192

Watson, J. (2003). Computer-based supervision: Implementing computer technology into the delivery of counseling supervision. *Journal of Technology in Counseling*, 3. [On-Line]. Retrieved from [http://jtc.columbusstate.edu/vol3\\_1/Watson/Watson.htm](http://jtc.columbusstate.edu/vol3_1/Watson/Watson.htm)

#### **Websites**

American Counseling Association: Ethical Guidelines for Counselling Supervisors. Retrieved 26<sup>th</sup> February 2012 from [http://files.acesonline.net/doc/ethical\\_guidelines.htm](http://files.acesonline.net/doc/ethical_guidelines.htm)

Australian Counselling Association (ACA) Inc. Retrieved 1<sup>st</sup> March 2012 from: [www.theaca.net.au](http://www.theaca.net.au)

Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia Inc. (PACFA). Retrieved 1<sup>st</sup> March 2012 from: [www.pacfa.org.au](http://www.pacfa.org.au)