LORETTO SUPPORT, SUPERVISION AND REFLECTION POLICY		No. 22
Date Reviewed: October 2019	**Next Due:** October 2022	**Approved:** July 2018

INTRODUCTION

It is an integral to Loretto's philosophy that all staff are afforded the opportunity to develop professionally, that the organisation has a mechanism for ensuring a professional standard of practice for staff, and that there are systems in place to afford staff support and ensure their well being.

Within Loretto a process of Staff Support, Supervision and Reflection operates, involving all staff throughout the organisation irrespective of job title or job role.

Staff Supervision should be seen as a positive and constructive way in which staff can work in partnership and should be integral to the day to day activities of the organisation.

DEFINITION

For the purposes of this Policy, Staff Supervision is defined as:

A planned, regular and formal conversation or dialogue between manager and staff member, the purpose of which is to:

- Maintain, promote and improve best practice across the organisation

- Offer support and encouragement to the staff member to enable them to function effectively within their job role

- Ensure that the staff member has the necessary competence to do their job effectively

- Facilitate/maintain effective communication between manager and the staff member

RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff have a right to be supervised in accordance with the Policy. Any exception to this requirement will need to be ratified by the Area Care Manager or Section Head.

Both the supervisor and supervisee have a responsibility to ensure that the supervision takes place in accordance with the Policy.

Generally, supervision will be carried out by a staff member's immediate line manager.

If, for any reason, it is deemed inappropriate for the immediate line manager to carry out the supervision of a particular member of staff, arrangements must be made to ensure that a suitable manager or supervisor carries out supervision. These arrangements will need to be ratified by the Area Care Manager or Section Head.

Staff employed on short term, temporary or relief contracts to work within the organisation will normally receive supervision on the same terms as permanent staff unless other arrangements are agreed by the Area Care Manager or Section Head.

Staff employed by agencies will receive supervision from the employing agency and not directly from Loretto.

FREQUENCY and DURATION

One to one formal supervision will normally be carried out at least four times per year, but may occur more frequently if required. Supervisors should be available at designated (protected) times within the Service/Section to provide extra support if required and these times should be made explicit to staff. Staff should indicate to their supervisor if it is their intention to utilise this protected time.

The duration and frequency of supervision sessions will depend on the setting, type of work involved and any current operational considerations.

- All members of staff should receive a minimum of 4 supervision sessions per year, whether individual or group, linking to the annual appraisal. Variations to this frequency should be agreed with the Area Care Manager or Section Head.

- All newly employed staff will receive their first supervision session within 4 weeks of their start date, followed by sessions at 3 months and 6 months' employment to tie in with their probationary period.

- Sessions should be no shorter than 30 minutes and no longer than 2 hours in duration.

- Times and venues should be negotiated and reasonable adjustments made to take account of individual's needs, disruptions, privacy and individual preferences.

RECORDS and OWNERSHIP

Agreement should be reached between the supervisee and supervisor regarding who will record the sessions. Timescales should be agreed of when the minute of the supervision session will be available, any changes required to the minute must be agreed, and made, prior to the next supervision session The record of Supervision must be produced in an accessible format that meets the needs of individuals and must be agreed and signed by both supervisor and supervisee.

General emergent themes will be regularly discussed with line managers. Issues which compromise the support to tenant's / service users, staff wellbeing or the organisation's position will also be brought to the attention of line management and may require to be dealt with outside of supervision. This may include a 3-way meeting which includes the next line manager for the service being in attendance. This can be requested by either the supervisor or the supervisee. Any breach of this confidentiality will be viewed as misconduct.

Supervisors within the service/department will be responsible for making arrangements for the safekeeping and confidentiality of supervision records.

Supervisors will only have access to supervision minutes of their named supervisee, and these will only be accessed by other members of line management with consent, or if there is an identified lack of development or concern relating to work practice.

Supervision records remain the property of the organisation and can be accessed by managers for the following purposes:

- Monitoring quality and content of the supervision process and services provided
- Grievance and disciplinary proceedings
- Managing the performance of staff capability

DATA PROTECTION

The Organisational Policy relating to Data Protection should be adhered to at all times.

Specifically, Supervision records must be kept for two years. In certain cases, (for example if a staff member has left the department and/or there is a possibility of litigation) the records should be kept locally for a longer period. If a member of staff transfers to another post within the organisation the supervision records must be made available to the new manager.

If a member of staff leaves the organisation the supervision records will be kept by the organisation for two years.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In normal circumstances, confidentiality between supervisor and supervisee will be maintained. The content of supervision records should not normally be made known to others outside the supervisory relationship except for circumstances above.

Because the records belong to the organisation, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, particularly in situations where information revealed in supervision relates to criminal acts, acts of misconduct or abuse of tenant's/service users. These will be dealt with through the organisation's investigation, disciplinary, adult support and protection or child protection procedures.

COMPLAINTS/DISAGREEMENTS

Arrangements for dealing with disputes should be agreed and clearly identified in the supervision contract.

Where there is a disagreement between supervisor and supervisee about the content of supervision records or decisions made and actions to be taken, it is the responsibility of both to try to resolve those disagreements before taking any further action. If the dispute cannot be resolved or an agreement cannot be reached between both parties a note will be made on the minute reflecting the disagreement and followed up in writing to the supervisee.

The supervisee shall have the opportunity of raising the matter with the next senior level of management.   If agreement cannot be reached between both parties, the supervisee will have the opportunity to invoke the grievance procedure.

Complaints about the behaviour or conduct of either supervisor or supervisee within the supervision session may be dealt with within the organisation's other relevant procedures.

GROUP SUPPORT

Group support is used to give staff the opportunity to highlight areas of concern regarding tenants, service users, service/section, professional development issues, ongoing training needs and common difficulties which have a bearing on staffing in the context of the workplace.

Group support sessions may be more appropriate for some services/sections rather than individual supervision sessions either because of the nature of the issues being dealt with within the service/section at a particular moment in time or because the service specification and funding does not allow for the level of individual sessions of 4 per year.

If this is the case this should be made explicit to staff and they will be expected to record their attendance at group sessions and the specific outcomes, learning and any action plan arising from the session as evidence of having received supervision.

There is still the requirement for an individual appraisal session during the year.

Group support sessions will normally be during or following team meetings, the frequency of which will be determined by the nature of the issues raised at the service/section and within reflective work logs.

Topics for group support are obtained from staff through observed work practice issues that have a common theme and which come from: -

- one to one supervision
- reflective work logs
- training work logs

- team meetings/agenda

The Service/Section Management team or section supervisors will meet one week prior to the group support to plan the group supervision.

As part of facilitating the group support line managers will encourage staff to actively participate by: -

- generating discussion
- reflecting on issues
- seeking solutions
- devising an action plan
- providing/arranging training as required

If an issue remains unresolved for some individuals it will then be addressed at one to one supervision, or brought to the next group support session. Any issues which are deemed urgent will be addressed by the supervisor at the time.

REFLECTIVE WORKLOGS

The Reflective Work log is an essential tool that can assist with reflective practice and formulation of agendas to raise/discuss issues at group support and one to one supervision.

Reflective Work logs will be used in conjunction with Reflective Work Log Guidelines.

TRAINING LOG

The Training Log is an essential tool that should completed by staff after each training session (internally or externally). These logs promote reflective practice, understanding of the content of the training they attended, how the training will be put in to practice, and can contribute to the agenda for group support and one to one supervision.

TENANT, SERVICE USER AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Information collated through meetings, questionnaires, feedback and other fora will be taken by the line manager into supervision and appraisal where stakeholder views can be explored to shape staff development, performance and training.

GUIDANCE NOTES and TEMPLATES

Guidance notes, supplementary information and template pro-forma's are attached at **Appendix 1**.

| **Support, Supervision and Reflection Policy** |
| **Appendix 1 – Guidance Notes and Templates** |

The functions of supervision

It is generally accepted that there are four functions (or purposes) of supervision, as follows:

Accountability

Sometimes called the managerial or normative function, this refers to the fact that the supervisor is responsible in various ways for the supervisee's work. The supervisor and supervisee will need to discuss the work which the supervisee is undertaking. Where this function is carried out well, it provides a safety net for the supervisee who will recognise and value the opportunities to share their work and the challenges they face with their supervisor. The supervisor can use this discussion to ensure that legal requirements are being met and that organisational policies and procedures are being followed.

Professional Development

Sometimes, called the developmental, educational or formative function of supervision, this involves the supervisor and supervisee discussing the supervisee's learning needs and how these can be addressed. Unskilled supervisors will think they have addressed this function simply by asking the supervisee "and are there any courses you want to go on?"
Learning and Development is about a great deal more than training. Skilled supervision discussion in itself should provide extensive opportunities for reflection and learning as well as support with the Staff Development Portfolio.

Personal Support

Sometimes this function of supervision is referred to as staff care or the supportive or restorative function. Supervision should always involve discussion about what support the supervisee needs. The roles and tasks which employees undertake can be very demanding. Thompson (1996:51) recognised that "*there are many dangers in undertaking people work unsupported, not least because of the emotional demands of this type of work".* Supervision should allow time for staff to explore their feelings about the work they are undertaking. Discussions like these may involve he supervisee sharing aspects of their personal life which may impact on their professional functioning. However, it is important to remember that supervision is not a counseling session and balance needs to be well managed with professional boundaries upheld.

Mediation

This function recognises the fact that the supervisor is in an "intermediate position between the staff he or she supervises and the line management structure". (Thompson 1996:52) As part of this the supervisor needs to
 "mediate" between the worker and the organisational management structure. The manager will need to, for example, support staff through any

organisational changes and feed back staff concerns to managers etc.

This function involves the supervisor making clear what the policy, procedure and expectations of the agency are and why the supervisee needs to apply these to their practice. It might involve negotiation about dilemmas faced by the supervisee in relation to organisational requirements and how these can be managed.

Support		**Accountability**
	Functions of Supervision	
Mediation		**Development**
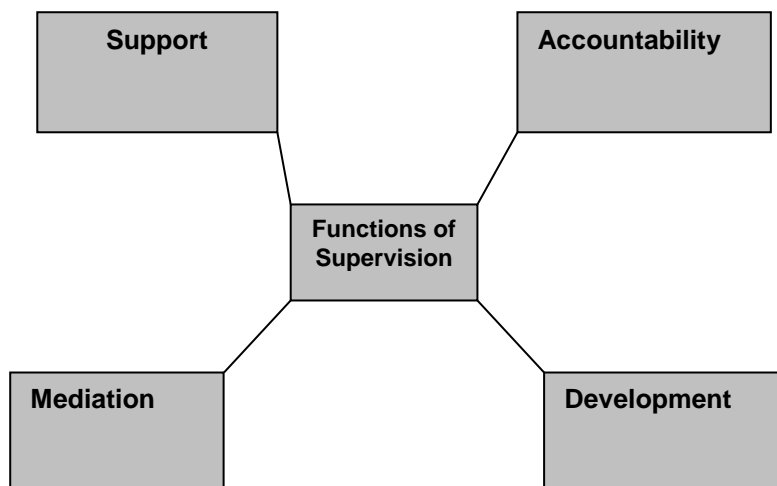
Very often agency supervision policies refer to the various forms of supervision. However, very often managers focus on one function at the expense of others.

Good quality supervision balances all four functions such as social care workers have opportunities to explore their work, organisational requirements, their learning and the support they need.

Good practice in supervision is a joint responsibility and involves the following aspects being in place:

- Supervision should be planned and thorough

- The process of supervision needs to be explicit and there should be a clearly agreed working definition of supervision.

- Past experiences of supervision should be acknowledged – in order to clarify current expectations

- Supervision should be accurately recorded and this should be shared – with both party's signatures included

- Power imbalances should be acknowledged and discussed. By virtue of the fact that one worker is accountable to the other in an arrangement formalised within the agency, the supervisor is a more powerful position. However, it is important to remember that other general power imbalances may exist

- A written agreement (a supervision contract) should be in place and this should be regularly reviewed

- A safe environment should be fostered. This basically involves all of the above points being covered.

Types/Forms of Supervision

There are a range of different types or forms of supervision and often a variety

of these are used.

Direct or Indirect?

Supervision can be described as direct or indirect. Direct supervision refers to supervision "on the job" – basically discussion, advice and guidance whilst a worker is actually undertaking a task. Indirect supervision is supervision which takes place in a probate room away from the actual "jobs" at hand.

Whilst it is very valuable for staff to receive some direct supervision, it is vital that indirect supervision takes place on a regular basis, to allow time away from the tasks at hand and opportunities for reflection and private discussion.

Formal or Informal?

Informal supervision is unplanned. Basically, any discussion providing advice, guidance and answers to a supervisee's questions is informal supervision. Formal supervision on the other hand is planned and structured, has a formal agenda and should take place in a private environment with no interruptions. All social care workers must receive formal supervision but all workers, however experienced, will also need opportunities for informal supervision as and when the need arises.

Group or Individual?

Supervision is probably most often carried out on a one to one basis. However, can also take place in groups. Group supervision is not simply a team meeting, but allows time for all four functions of supervision to be addressed.

Using these three subheadings, it is clear that all supervision can be categorised as either:

- Direct *or* indirect
- Formal *or* informal
- Individual *or* group

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

The experiential learning cycle shows the importance of learners reflecting on their experiences in order to learn. However, reflective practice is not just about learning. It's about continually monitoring and improving practice and outcomes for service users/stakeholders. As such, reflective practice is a vital aspect of professional practice. It is therefore vital that everyone has a basic idea of the process of reflection and reflective practice.

Schon (1987) asserts that there are two types of reflection:

- Reflection **IN** action
- Reflection **ON** action

Reflection IN Action

Reflection IN action is the process of reflection when you are engaging in an activity. Essentially it is working and being aware of what you are doing at the same time.
Reflection in action involves:

- Thinking ahead *(Right if that's happened, then I need to ……..")*

- Being critical *("That didn't work very well ……")*

- Storing up experiences for the future *("I could have dealt with that better, next time I will try……..")*

- Analysing what is happening (*"She's saying that to test me - I think I should….."")*

Reflection in action is happening all the time – if your mind is on the task! We all know people who are planning their night out whilst carrying out a task and would all agree that this doesn't constitute good practice. Having your mind on the job is important. Not only is it good practice, but it constitutes reflection in action.

Whilst reflection in action is good practice and can help people to develop their practice, it does have drawbacks. The main problems with reflection in action are:

- You can only see things from your perspective ("I think, I feel, I'm not sure…..")

- You will only have short term reflection. If your mind is on the task at hand, when the task changes so will your thoughts.

These drawbacks can be addressed by making sure that you also use reflection ON action.
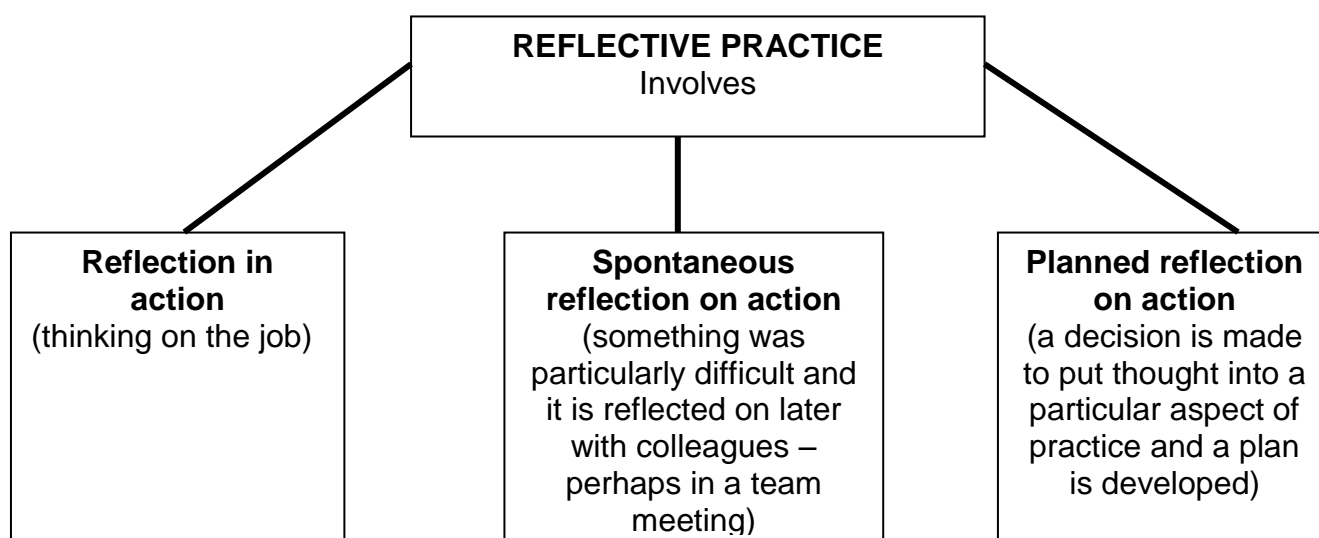
Reflection ON Action

This is the reflecting you do after an event. Reflection ON action refers to the process of thinking through and perhaps discussing the incident with a colleague or supervisor.

Reflection on action is free from urgency and any pressures of the actual event. As such, it allows for longer term reflection. You can also ensure that by seeking feedback you use other people's perspectives in your reflection.

The main drawback of reflection on action is that because of time constraints we tend only to think in this way about more complex or critical work issues. Therefore, in terms of more routine events and work practice, we tend only to "reflect in action ". This can lead us to not making much improvement in our routine work practice. It is important therefore to plan reflection on action to ensure that it covers every aspect of practice.

Planning to reflect, rather than simply doing so when something has gone wrong or has been particularly difficult, is best practice. Planning to reflect, along with reflection in action and some spontaneous (or unplanned) reflection on action, constitutes reflective practice.

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE Involves		
Reflection in action (thinking on the job)	**Spontaneous reflection on action** (something was particularly difficult and it is reflected on later with colleagues – perhaps in a team meeting)	**Planned reflection on action** (a decision is made to put thought into a particular aspect of practice and a plan is developed)

Schon argues that learning will take place if both reflection in action and reflection on action are used. Kolb refers to the stage of "reflective observation "in the experiential learning cycle so it is clear that in order to learn effectively and to develop practice, we need to take a reflective learning approach.

Reflective Practice

In its broadest sense reflective practice involves the critical analysis of everyday working practices to improve competence and promote professional development. A number of frameworks exist to support reflective practice.

The framework which is used within Loretto is based on Gibbs (1988).

Loretto Framework for Reflection

Loretto's six stage process: -   **Description of the event**

Stage 1:

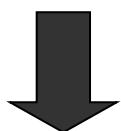What happened? Who did what? What were the results? etc.

Stage 2:

Feelings and thoughts

This stage is essentially about self awareness. The person reflecting needs to think about questions like:
- How they were feeling when the event began? How did their feelings change as the event unfolded?
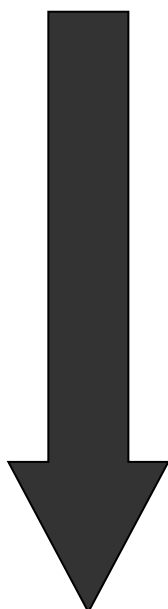- How did they feel about the outcomes?
- How do they feel about it now?

Stage 3:

Evaluation

In this stage the person needs to think through what was good and bad about the experience. What went well? What didn't go so well?

Stage 4:

Analysis

This develops on from stage 3 but involves breaking the event down into component parts so they can be explored separately. It may involve considering more detailed questions than those covered in Stage 3. For example:
- What went well?

Could be followed up with:
- What did I do well?
- What did others do well?

and:
- What didn't go so well?
   could be followed up with
- What didn't turn out as it should have?
- In what way did I contribute to this?
- In what way did others contribute to this?

Stage 5:
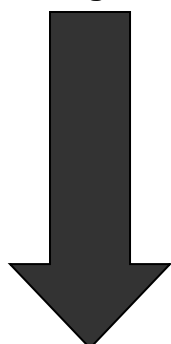
Conclusion

Now the event has been explored from a range of perspectives, the person reflecting should be able to draw some conclusions. This will involve the person asking themselves what they could have done differently and what impact this would have had on the outcome. If the previous stages have not been fully and honestly explored, then the conclusions reached in this stage will be fundamentally flawed. 11

Stage 6:
Action Planning

During this stage, the person reflecting should think what they would do if they encountered the event again. Would they do anything differently or take similar action?

Reflection in a cyclical process, and as such that when the action plan is put into place the event should become the focus of further reflection, as follows:
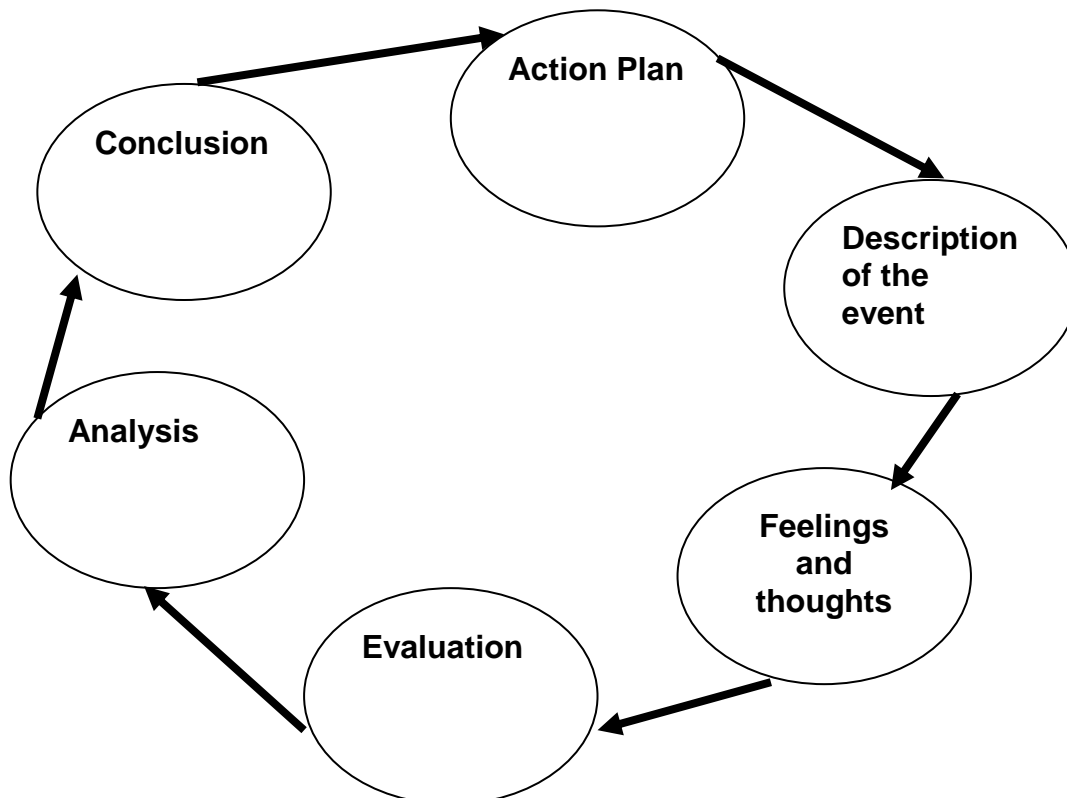
Self Awareness

Whatever model of reflection a person uses they need to be open and honest in their reflection. They also need to be self aware and willing to question their own values and attitudes. Atkins identifies self awareness as essential to the reflective process and defines the concept as the individual being well informed of their own character, including their own values and beliefs.

Reflective Writing

Reflective writing has a long history in learning and within vocational qualifications, perhaps because reflection is widely acknowledged as a vital aspect of the learning process. Increasingly candidates for vocational qualifications are being encouraged to write reflective accounts which can be used as evidence. However, when candidates for particular awards are looking to meet specific standards in their accounts it can lead to a very descriptive "narrative" of an event. To demonstrate how knowledge, values and skills come together, then it is important to write in a truly reflective way.

Describe objectively what happened – Answer the question "What did I see and hear?"

Interpret the events – explain what you saw and heard. (Your new insights; your connections with other learning; your feelings; your hypotheses; your conclusions.)
Answer the question "What might it mean?" or "What was the reason I did this activity?"

Evaluate the effectiveness of what you observed/learned – make judgments clearly connected to observations made. Evaluation answers the question "What is my opinion about what I observed or experienced? Why?

Plan how this information will be useful to you. What are your recommendations? (Be concrete.) Consider: "in what ways might this learning experience serve me in my future? "

Another model for reflective writing is for the writer to work through the cycle of experiential learning.

Concrete experience	-	What was the event?
Reflective Observation	-	What are your personal thoughts and feelings about the experience?
Abstract Conceptualisation	-	How can you draw on previous experiences and on your knowledge to help you "make sense" of this experience?
Active Experimentation	-	If this event were to occur again, what would you do differently?
	-	What additional knowledge do you need to gain?

EXAMPLE OF A SUPPORT & SUPERVISION CONTRACT

Support & Supervision will be used to: -

- ensure quality of work.
- explore pressures.
- develop understanding and skills.
- seek and receive advice/information and another perspective concerning work.
- reflect on content and process of work.
- provide regular and constructive feedback.

The structure we have agreed is: -

- to meet at least four times per year (the fourth session being the formal appraisal session) at ---(time) at ---(place) or a combination of x number of individual sessions and attendance at x number of group sessions
- sessions will be recorded in a supervision file which will be stored in -------- and --------- will have access to your file.
- confidentiality will be maintained apart from (explain the circumstances)
- a minute of the session will be provided by -------- within 7 days of the session

Mutual expectations: -

This will be including discussion on the following: -

- what we want/expect from each other.
- what we are each willing to contribute.
- what we each have responsibility for.

Signed   _____ (Supervisee)

                _____ (Supervisor)

Date   _____

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Supervisor you have the following responsibilities to: -

1. Ensure a contract is agreed at the outset of these sessions.

2. Ensure the venue is appropriate.

3. Be available at the agreed time.

4. Prepare for the session by reviewing previous minutes, agreed course of action and to be familiar with recent work practices; including reflective work logs.

5. Promote reflective practice as part of the supervision process.

6. Maintain confidentiality as agreed in the contract.

7. Be honest with the supervisee.

8. Listen actively.

9. Observe the supervisee for signs of stress and act accordingly.

10. Assess competency levels of the supervisee.

11. Challenge any situations/behaviour which are inappropriate.

12. Be aware at all times of the organisation's obligations to service users, external agencies and staff.

13. Guide the supervisee towards formulating short, medium and long term goals.

14. Highlight any areas of concern to Line Management.

15. Ensure an accurate record of the session is kept.

SUPERVISEE RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Supervisee you have the following responsibilities,

1. Be available at the agreed time and place.

2. Have prepared an agenda for supervision as agreed in the contract and have reviewed the previous minute.

3. Ensure reflective/training work logs are up to date.

4. Bring reflective work logs to supervision.

5. Maintain confidentiality as agreed in the supervision contract.

6. Be honest with your Supervisor.

7. Accept advice / feedback.

8. Participate actively in formulating goals for short, medium and long term at the end of each session.

9. Work within agreed timescales to achieve these goals.

10. Notify your Supervisor in advance if you are unable to achieve the goals set.

11. Provide supervisor with a signed minute of the session within10 days.

SUPERVISION AGENDA

This template can be used to assist in formulating an agenda for each supervision session.

Item 1 (Review)

> A review of action points/progress agreed at previous supervision session

Item 2 (Performance)

> Discuss overall work practice including concerns for any problem areas.

Item 3 (Reflection)

> Discuss practical and emotional issues that may be presenting difficulties for the worker – explore solutions

Item 4 (Professional Development)

> Identify any development needs that may be required to enable supervisee to become competent or more effective in his/her performance – agree strategy/plan to address these needs. Identify essential qualifications and set timescale for application/completion.

Item 5 (Personal Development)

> Identify personal goals and future plans – explore ways of facilitating these and set targets/agree frameworks.

Item 6 (Any other Business)

Item 7 (Session Review)

> Recap on the session and explore any perceived negative or positive factors that may impact on the progress.

Sources:

Item 1:   Information is recorded in the minutes of the previous supervision session and also any "ad-hoc" or group supervision since the previous supervision.

Item 2:   Direct observation of work practice and indirect sources such as written work and feedback from others.

Item 3:   Reflective work-logs and agenda items brought to supervision.

Item 4 & 5: Staff Development Plans and Staff Training Logs

CHECKLIST FOR SUPPORT & SUPERVISION
(SUPERVISEE)

If possible the agenda should be made up in advance of the meeting. It needs to reflect both your own and the supervisor's individual agendas. This checklist could be used to help focus your thoughts on which areas you want to work on.

Check minute of last meeting

- report on progress made/action taken (both supervisor and supervisee).
- examine any problems encountered.
- are timescales still on target?

Work Practice

- talk through any incidents or issues that have concerned you.
- update on implementation of organisational policies and procedures.
- give feedback on work projects - both positive and constructive criticism.
- use reflective work logs to identify issues to discuss within supervision.

Service Users/ Tenants/Stakeholders

- are you having any difficulties (practical or emotional)
- do you have any ideas or suggestions you want to talk through?

Practical Issues

- Rota's
- hours/time back
- workload
- time management

Professional Development

- personal goals
- future plans
- identify areas for development
- explore ways of developing these areas e.g., reading, attending short training courses, long term courses
- set targets - agree frameworks

Any Other Business

Brief evaluation of the session

Date of next support and supervision session

CHECKLIST FOR SUPPORT & SUPERVISION
(SUPERVISOR)

If possible the agenda should be made up in advance of the meeting. It requires to reflect both your own and the supervisees individual agendas. The checklist should be used to help focus your thoughts and areas which you wish to discuss.

Check minute of last meeting

- report on progress made/ action taken
- examine any difficulties encountered
- check out timescales are on target

Work Practice

- discuss any incidents or issues which have raised concern
- consider effectiveness of the implementation of organisational policies and procedures
- give feedback on work projects (positive, constructive criticism)
- look at reflective work logs and identify any issues that require discussion

Tenants/Service Users/Stakeholders

- discuss any difficulties the supervisee may be experiencing (practical or emotional)
- provide feedback on good work practice / approaches
- discuss any suggestions or ideas you may have to improve practice

Practical Issues

- Rota's
- hours/time back
- workload
- time management

Professional Development

- discuss and plan for supervisees personal short, medium and long-term goals
- identify any areas for development
- explore ways of developing these areas, e.g. reading, attending short and longer term training courses
- set targets and agree frameworks with supervisee

Any other business

Brief evaluation of session

Agree date of next support and supervision session

SUPERVISION SESSION

Supervisor: - [   ]   **DATE:** [   ]

Supervisee: - [   ]

<u>**Agenda**</u>

<u>**Notes on discussion**</u>

Goal: Short Term By when		By whom	
Medium Term			
Long Term			

Date of Next Session -

Projected in Diary   **Yes/No**

Signed [   ]   **Date** [   ]

Signed [   ]   **Date** [   ]