

Supervision for occupational therapists and support workforce

An interactive checklist for supervisees

Please click the arrow to the right to navigate forwards through the interactive checklist.



What is supervision?

The definition of supervision has matured over time, taking on additional aspects or qualities, reflective of its context and purpose. Different qualifying adjectives are sometimes added, for example 'professional' or 'clinical' supervision, but it can be difficult to find one common acceptance, understanding or use of these. At its simplest, supervision is a professional relationship and activity which ensures good standards of practice and encourages development.

Supervision is defined as: 'a process of professional learning and development that enables an individual to reflect on and develop their knowledge, skills and competence through agreed and regular support with another professional' (HCPC 2021).

You are strongly encouraged to engage in a form of supervision in which you receive regular support from or with another professional and can be:

1. any form of supervision e.g., one-to-one, peer supervision, group supervision, formal or informal supervision
2. in any role, including as a pre-registration learner whilst completing a practice-based learning module
3. from or with a professional from any discipline (not specific to occupational therapy).



Your current supervision arrangement

What is my current supervision arrangement?			
My current supervision arrangement includes the following (tick all that apply):		This supervisor is an OT (tick if yes)	The frequency of this supervision is:
One-to-one supervision with a line manager or placement educator			
One-to-one supervision with a colleague in a more senior position, but who is not a line manager			
One-to-one formal supervision with a peer (By 'peer' we mean a colleague at a similar level of work hierarchy and/or in a similar role. By 'formal' we mean that this supervision is recognised, planned and happens on an on-going basis)			
One-to-one supervision with a supervisor external to place of work			
Being supervised by more than one person			
Group supervision with peers which is facilitated by a peer			
Group supervision with peers which is facilitated by a more senior colleague or a practice educator			
Other (Any other mode of supervision or process which allows support to develop your knowledge, skills and competencies not listed so far)			
I have received training or guidance to support me to get the best out of my supervision?			Yes
			No



Characteristics of effective supervision

In 2022, the Health Care and Professions Council (HCPC) published a [suite of resources](#) to guide registrants to make effective use of supervision. To inform its resources, the HCPC commissioned a rapid review of the evidence to understand the characteristics of effective supervision in the workplace. This review identified [ten characteristics of effective supervision](#) (Rothwell et al 2019).

Based on the HCPC's ten characteristics, we carried out an audit in 2022 to determine the current supervision experience of the occupational therapy workforce in the UK. This data has established a baseline of activity by which we can measure change following future supervision audits.

The following checklist has been developed using the questions from the audit. It is intended to be used to help you reflect on and evaluate your own experience as a supervisee.



This infographic is interactive. It has been adapted, with permission, from the [HCPC's Key characteristics of effective supervision](#), 2021.

Clicking on each of the characteristics will take you to a checklist specific to that characteristic.

You can navigate through the checklist either by clicking the arrows to either side of the page, or by using the navigation bar at the bottom of each page.

To easily return to this point at any time, click the 'home' icon:



1. When supervision is based on mutual trust and respect

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that supervision should be based on mutual trust and respect

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Is based on mutual trust and respect					
Provides me with constructive feedback on my performance					
Helps me to be reflective					
Notes:					



2. Choice & good match of supervisor (1 of 2, continued on next page)

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that supervisees are offered a choice of supervisor to secure a good match on a personal level, an expertise match and to meet cultural needs

	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Were you offered a choice of supervisor?					
Were you satisfied with the choice of supervisor(s) offered to you?					
As far as you are aware, was there a process in place to help match your supervision needs to an appropriate supervisor?					
Do you believe your supervisor(s) is a good match on a personal level?					



2. Choice & good match of supervisor (2 of 2)

	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Is your supervisor(s) someone with whom you had or were able to build a positive, professional relationship with?					
Do you believe your supervisor(s) is a good match in relation to the competencies required for your role and everyday work practices?					
Do you believe your supervisor(s) is a good match in relation to your professional learning & development needs?					
Do you believe your supervisor(s) is a good match in relation to your cultural needs?					



3. Shared understanding of purpose

A key characteristic of effective supervision is both supervisors and supervisees have a shared understanding of the purpose of the supervisory sessions.

	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
In your opinion, do you and your supervisor have a shared understanding of the purpose of the supervisory sessions?					
Did you and your supervisor(s) establish a supervision agreement which makes expectations and/or responsibilities clear?					
Does each formal supervision session have a clear set of objectives?					



4. Focuses on sharing and enhancing knowledge and skills

(1 of 3, continued on next page)

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that supervision focuses on sharing and enhancing knowledge and skills to support professional development and improving service delivery.

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Provides me with opportunity to focus on sharing and enhancing knowledge and skills to support my professional development					
Supports me to use new knowledge and skills in practice					
Provides an opportunity to focus on enhancing knowledge and skills to improve service delivery					
Helps me to use my knowledge and skills to support service improvements					



4. Focuses on sharing and enhancing knowledge and skills

(2 of 3, continued on next page)

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Helps me to identify my learning and development needs					
Helps me to meet my learning and development needs					
Has included the analysis of my learning needs					
Has included the development of a plan to meet my development and/or learning needs					



4. Focuses on sharing and enhancing knowledge and skills

(3 of 3)

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Supports me to meet and develop competencies related to my role and everyday work practices					
Supports me to deliver new models of practice in response to local or national policies and drivers					
Helps me to meet my objectives identified within my annual appraisal					
Supports me to meet the CPD requirements of HCPC (if applicable)					



5. Regular and based on the needs of the individual

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that supervision is regular and based on the needs of the individual, and ad hoc supervision is provided in cases of need.

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Provides a frequency of regular support that is appropriate for me and my individual needs					
Provides me with opportunity for ad hoc supervision in cases of need					

Notes:



6. Models based on the needs of individual

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that supervisory models are based on the needs of the individual, such as one-to-one, group, internal or external or distance.

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Combines models based on my needs as an individual					
Promotes my wellbeing					

Notes:



7. Protected time and private space

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that the employer creates protected time and private space to facilitate the supervisory session.

	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Is protected time made available by your employer for your supervision?					
Does supervision take place in a private space?					

Notes:



8. Training and feedback is provided for supervisors

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that training and feedback is provided for supervisors.

	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
As far as you are aware, has your supervisor undergone supervisory training?					
Are you offered opportunity to regularly feedback to your supervisor, to help shape and modify their approach?					
Do you feel able to offer feedback to your supervisor?					
If you have offered feedback, do you think it has helped your supervisor to shape and modify their approach?					



9. Flexible and accessible; ad hoc if needed

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that supervision is delivered using a flexible timetable to ensure all staff have access to sessions regardless of working patterns.

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Is flexible around my working pattern and/or commitments					
Supports me to respond to the stresses and demands of my work environment					

Notes:



10. Different types of supervision delivered by different supervisors

A key characteristic of effective supervision is that different types of supervision, including practice, professional and managerial supervision is delivered by different supervisors, or by those who are trained to manage the overlapping responsibility as both line manager and supervisor.

In my opinion, my current supervision arrangement:	Yes	To some extent	No	What is your evidence for this?	Is there any action to be taken? If so, by whom and by when?
Includes different types of supervision; different by different supervisors					
Improves outcomes for those I provide a service to					
Improves the work environment and culture					
Improves understanding of organisational functions and objectives in relation to my role					



Notes/Reflections What? So what? Now what? (Rolfe , Freshwater, Jasper, 2001)



References

Health and Care Professions Council (2021) Key characteristics of effective supervision. London: HCPC. Available at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/meeting-our-standards/supervision-leadership-and-culture/supervision/approaching-supervision/key-characteristics-of-effective-supervision/>

Rolfe G, Freshwater D, Jasper M (2001) Critical reflection in nursing and the helping professions: a user's guide. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rothwell C, Kehoe A, Farook S, Illing J (2019) The characteristics of effective clinical and peer supervision in the workplace: a rapid evidence review. Newcastle: Newcastle University. Available at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/resources/reports/research/effective-clinical-and-peer-supervision-report.pdf?v=637147781260000000>



