Qualifications Office

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Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the British Psychological Society's Qualification in Counselling Psychology (QCoP) and thank you for agreeing to be the Co-ordinating Supervisor (CS) or Supervisor for one or more candidates as they work to achieve qualification as a counselling psychologist. The QCoP is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), and successful completion of the QCoP confers eligibility to apply to the Society for Chartered Membership and Full Membership of the Division of Counselling Psychology (DCoP), and also confers eligibility to apply to the HCPC for registration as a Counselling Psychologist. It is a legal requirement that anyone who wishes to practice using a title protected by the Health Professions Order 2001 is on the HCPC Register. The title of Counselling Psychologist is one such legally protected title. For more information please see the HCPC website (www.hcpc-uk.org).

Your role as CS/Supervisor is vital to the professional development of the candidates and contributes greatly to their successful completion of this qualification. We have prepared this Supervisor Handbook to help guide you through the process of supervising a candidate for the QCoP and our requirements.

We hope you will find this Supervisor Handbook helpful. It is regularly revised and any feedback you are able to provide will help us to improve it in future. Your feedback is welcomed by email to qcopfeedback@bps.org.uk. We will also actively seek your feedback through surveys from time to time.

Society Qualifications

The Society’s Qualifications are often referred to as independent routes. This is because candidates are not attached to a particular university. More appropriately, the qualifications should be referred to as professional body qualifications. They have been designed around work-based learning in order to allow candidates to demonstrate that they have developed the competences required for the autonomous practice of their chosen branch of psychology.

The advantages of these professional body qualifications are that they are flexible enough to allow candidates and their CSs to identify appropriate training and development experiences which fit in with the candidate’s work and take advantage of opportunities as they arise. This makes them an attractive option to candidates who are unable to relocate or travel to a Higher Education Institution (HEI) programme. In addition, much of the developmental experience can be gained whilst the candidate is employed in an appropriate position, meaning that most candidates are able to continue working as they train. However, candidates do not have to be employed in order to complete the qualification, provided that they are able to access appropriate supervised experience to meet the requirements of the qualification.

Professional body qualifications are not the same as HEI-based courses. Candidates are not part of a cohort of students working towards a qualification in the same place at the same time. This means candidates can sometimes feel isolated and CSs and supervisors have an important role to play in supporting candidates to reduce this. There are not organised lectures for candidates and, except for assessments, the Society does not set the timetable. Along with the flexibility of the independent route comes a greater responsibility for organising one’s own training experiences and resources. CSs share this responsibility and will guide the candidate through the process.

About the QCoP

The QCoP was established in 2004 and provides an alternative to the Practitioner Doctorates in Counselling Psychology offered by HEIs. It consists of a number of Documentary Evidence Units and Assessment Units. Broadly speaking, the Documentary Evidence Units are about the development of competence and the Assessment Units are about the demonstration of competence.

The Candidate Handbook provides more detail about each of the Documentary Evidence Units and Assessment Units, as well as the learning outcomes associated with the QCoP.

Candidates will normally be enrolled for a minimum of three years. Some candidates will apply for Accreditation of Existing Competence (AEC) and, if this is granted, will have fewer Units to complete. In these cases the minimum enrolment period can be reduced, although never to less than one year.
Some Units are not eligible for AEC. This includes the final assessment of competence which includes an essay about the candidate’s identity as a counselling psychologist, a review of the candidate’s Competence Logbook and a *viva voce* examination which might address any aspect of the candidate’s competence.

**Admissions procedures**

The QCOP admissions procedures are detailed below. Candidates and CSs should ensure they are clear about these requirements before proceeding with the enrolment process and should read the *Regulations for the Society’s Postgraduate Qualifications* Section 3, entitled ‘Eligibility to enrol’. The candidate and CS must discuss these in a preliminary meeting to assess the candidate’s suitability and readiness to undertake the QCOP. The CS and/or candidate may make an assessment to proceed with the enrolment process in which case they should complete the contract for services. Alternatively, the CS and/or candidate may decide that this is not the most appropriate route for the candidate and decline to proceed any further with the enrolment process. The Qualifications Officer and Registrar are available via the Qualifications Office, if required, to discuss further queries resulting from specific circumstances.

**Formal entry requirements**

Applicants must fulfil the following requirements to be accepted into the QCOP:

- Hold current Graduate Membership of the Society with the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership.
- Successfully complete the following forms which, when submitted will be assessed by an Enrolment Assessor and the Registrar (see ‘Enrolment Assessment Guidelines’ available online):
- Enrolment Form including details of two referees (satisfactory references are a condition of enrolment);
- Plan of Training Form to include formal written confirmation of an initial placement;
- A Placement Approval Pack for all placements identified on the Plan of Training (PoT) (see Placement Approval Documentation on page 10 for further details);
- Application for Accreditation of Existing Competence (where applicable) including the completed unit mapping document and supporting evidence;
- Signed copy of the contract in place between the candidate and CS;
- Satisfactory health reference and criminal records check;
- Equal Opportunities Form.

In order to oversee the standards applied to enrolment applications, a sample of assessed enrolment files are sent to the External Examiner on an annual basis.

**Personal requirements**

The candidate should be able to demonstrate all of the following to the CS and Registrar prior to enrolment:

- Self-awareness and psychological stability;
- Ability to cope with intellectual and academic requirements at doctorate level;
- Understanding of, and capacity to cope with, the emotional demands of being an independent candidate;
- Ability to make use of and reflect on life experience;
- Ability to form a helping relationship;
- Ability to be self-critical and use both positive and negative feedback.

**Non-standard entry**

CSs should ensure that candidates for whom English is not their first language can meet the rigorous academic requirements of the QCOP before applying to enrol. Evidence of this might include confirmation that they have passed the International English Language Testing System at Level 8. Exemption from this requirement can be provided at the discretion of the Qualifications Board where a candidate can demonstrate an appropriate level of proficiency in the English Language. Please see the *Regulations* (Section 3.3) for further details.

The Society operates an equal opportunities policy; please see the *Regulations* (Section 2.3) for further details.
**Counselling Psychology Qualifications Board**

The QCoP is overseen by the Counselling Psychology Qualifications Board (CoPQB). The Board writes the *Candidate Handbook* and designs the assessments. It appoints the assessors and approves results and feedback. When a candidate successfully completes all requirements the Board awards the QCoP.

The Board is accountable to the Qualifications Standards Committee, which acts on delegated authority from the Membership Standards Board. The Membership Standards Board reports to the Board of Trustees.

The Board has a number of officers who have key responsibilities within the qualification process and is supported by a Qualifications Officer.

**The Qualifications Office**

The Society’s Qualifications Office is responsible for the day-to-day running of qualifications. All contacts are through the Qualifications Office, which keeps full records in relation to all candidates.

Your candidate is advised to contact you in the first instance with any queries. If your candidate raises queries which you are unable to answer then you may redirect these to the Qualifications Office. Each qualification is looked after by a specific Qualifications Officer, who will be able to answer most questions about the qualification. When they are unable to help they will contact appropriate people from the Qualifications Board or elsewhere in the Society to find the requested information. Sometimes they may put you directly in touch with someone to discuss your question and at other times they will find out the answer and get back to you themselves.

You can find out the contact details for the relevant Qualifications Officer on the Society’s website (www.bps.org.uk/qualifications).

**Key Roles and their responsibilities**

**Chair of the Qualifications Board**

The Chair is the Programme Leader and is responsible for running the Qualifications Board. The Chair is not directly involved in the assessment of candidates in order to maintain independence and objectivity. They chair meetings of the Board and take responsibility for decisions, taken on behalf of the Board, in between meetings.

**Registrar**

The Registrar has responsibility for approving the process of candidates’ training. They are responsible for approving CSs and approving training plans. They are able to advise CSs and supervisors throughout the candidates’ training and they are responsible for organising training for CSs and supervisors. Contact with the Registrar should be made via the Qualifications Officer.

**Chief Assessor**

The Chief Assessor is responsible for the assessment process. This includes the recruitment and training of assessors, advising assessors, helping to prepare and finalise feedback for candidates and ensuring the process runs smoothly.

In order to maintain the independence of the assessment process the Chief Assessor is not normally permitted to speak to any candidate about their enrolment or assessment. CSs who need some clarification regarding feedback or results would normally discuss this with the Registrar. Where the Chief Assessor has another relationship with the candidate s/he will not be involved in the assessment of that candidate and one of the moderators will take the Chief Assessor’s role in relation to that candidate’s assessment.
Co-ordinating Supervisor

The main functions of the Lead CS are to review Quarterly Review Forms from candidates, conduct appraisals for CSs and supervisors, and co-facilitate training days for CSs, supervisors and candidates alongside the Registrar and the Chief Assessor.

The role of the CS involves:
- monitoring the candidate’s progress towards the QCoP;
- providing guidance and support to the candidate throughout the period of enrolment and taking overall responsibility for his/her preparation for the QCoP;
- offering feedback and guidance on any written work the candidate prepares prior to submission for assessment;
- advising the candidate in developing the PoT prior to its submission to the Registrar and reviewing it annually for submission by 1 July, or if there are any significant changes;
- advising the candidate on completion of the Quarterly Review Form;
- supporting the candidate in conducting the placement audit for each placement in collaboration with the placement host;
- ensuring that a risk assessment is undertaken for each placement;
- maintaining monthly contact with their candidates, which will include meeting face-to-face with the candidate a minimum of once every three months throughout the period of enrolment to review the previous quarter and plan for the next quarter by means of the quarterly review form. Other means of contact, which must take place at least monthly, will include email and telephone and should be negotiated as part of the contracting process;
- reading and signing the Supervisor’s Reports after the completion of 50, 100, 200 and 300 client hours and providing a final statement after 450 client hours verifying that all interim supervisors’ reports have been seen;
- witnessing the Final Report on supervision and practice in the Competence Logbook;
- verifying Competence Standards in the Competence Logbook;
- reading and signing the Research Supervisor’s six-monthly reports;
- ensuring that the candidate keeps a personal journal that reflects on his/her development as a counselling psychologist;
- monitoring the candidate’s fitness to practise and ethical standards while s/he is enrolled on the QCoP.

CSs must be entered on the Society’s Register of Applied Psychology Practice Supervisors. Whilst you are a CS for one of our candidates the Qualifications Office will pay your fee for this Register. You must also attend a CS workshop at least once every two years. Once a year you will be required to complete an appraisal form specifically in relation to your CS role which will be reviewed on behalf of the CoPQB. This process will be timed to coincide with the annual PoT Update process in order to streamline the paperwork requirements. The feedback received as part of the appraisal process will help to inform the refresher training and support mechanisms provided by the CoPQB.

If a CS fails to undertake the required training they will no longer be approved as a CS and their candidates will need to transfer to a new CS. The Registrar will support any trainees who need to transfer to a new CS under these circumstances.
**Research Supervisors**

The Research Supervisor will usually be a counselling psychologist with sufficient research training and experience, although other suitably experienced researchers will be considered. They must be approved by the Co-ordinating Supervisor and the Registrar. Any proposed change of supervisor is subject to the Registrar’s approval which should be sought at the earliest opportunity. The names, academic and professional qualifications and registrations and a brief account of their experience will accompany the PoT.

All research must be conducted within an organisation which has a research ethics approvals mechanism. This may influence the choice of Research Supervisor, who should have access to such a system in order that the proposed research can be put forward for appropriate ethical scrutiny.

The Research Supervisor is responsible for:

- directing the candidate’s learning in research processes and procedures. This will include:
  - identifying and defining a research question;
  - reviewing the relevant literature;
  - identifying, selecting and understanding appropriate research methodologies;
  - considering ethical issues and seeking approval if appropriate;
  - collecting and analysing data;
  - discussing and evaluating findings or results;
  - reflecting on the research experience;
  - writing up the research in an appropriate form;
- advising the candidate on submission for one of the options in the assessment criteria on research competence;
- meeting regularly with the candidate for supervision;
- providing annual reports to the Qualifications Board through the CS as part of the annual Update to PoT (see Section 3.4 of the *Candidate Handbook* for further details).

**Practice Supervisors**

A Practice Supervisor must be registered as a counselling psychologist with the HPC and must be a Chartered Psychologist and a Full Member of the DCoP with at least two years’ post-qualification experience. They should have appropriate training or expertise in supervision. The CS and the Registrar will both need to approve the choice of Practice Supervisor. The Registrar’s approval is sought as part of the process for approving the PoT; the names, academic and professional qualifications and registrations and a brief account of the Practice Supervisor’s experience will accompany the PoT. A candidate’s Practice Supervisor(s) will need to ensure that they meet the criteria laid out in Section 7.5 of the *Candidate Handbook* before being proposed on the PoT. The supervisor(s) can only be approved if they meet all of these criteria and complete requisite training for the role.

Prior to being approved by the Registrar, new supervisors will need to satisfactorily complete a distance-learning training module. Thereafter, the supervisor(s) will be required to undertake CPD training relevant to the role of supervisor at least once every two years. Once a year the supervisor will be required to complete an appraisal form specifically in relation to their QCoP supervisor role which will be reviewed on behalf of the CoPQB. This process will be timed to coincide with the annual PoT Update process in order to streamline the paperwork requirements. The feedback received as part of the appraisal process will help to inform the refresher training and support mechanisms provided by the CoPQB. If a supervisor fails to attend a supervisor training within a two-year period, they will no longer be approved as a supervisor and their trainees will need to transfer to a new supervisor. The candidate’s CS will be able to support the candidate in locating a new supervisor, and the Registrar is also available to support any trainees who need to transfer to a new supervisor under these circumstances.

The role of Practice Supervisor involves:

- supervising the candidate’s counselling psychology practice at a ratio of one hour of supervision for every eight hours of client contact;
- ensuring that the candidate maintains a log of his/her counselling psychology practice and working with the candidate to provide a joint Practice Report after 50, 100, 200, 300 and 450 client hours;
• verifying that a different client is used for the Essay, Case Study and the Process Report Embedded in a Case Study.

**Designated Practice Supervisors**

All trainees are required to have supervision with a counselling psychologist for the majority of their training. This assists a trainee to develop their own professional identity as a counselling psychologist.

However, in cases where it is not practical for all of the candidate’s practice to be supervised by a counselling psychologist, a Designated Practice Supervisor may be appointed to supervise some of the practice.

Supervisors who are not Counselling Psychologists should be therapeutic practitioners who are fully accredited with a relevant professional body which has a code of ethics and accreditation and disciplinary/complaints procedures. They will also need to be entered on the professional body’s list of supervisors. The reasons for choosing a Supervisor should be given and approval must be sought from the Registrar via the Plan of Training. A Designated Supervisor will need to ensure that they meet the criteria laid out in section 7.5 of the *Candidate Handbook* before being proposed on the candidate’s Plan of Training. The candidate’s supervisor(s) can only be approved if they meet all of these criteria and attend requisite training for the role.

Prior to being approved by the Registrar, new supervisors will need to satisfactorily complete a distance-learning training module. Thereafter, the supervisor(s) will be required to undertake CPD training relevant to the role of supervisor. Once a year the supervisor will be required to complete an appraisal form specifically in relation to their QCoP supervisor role which will be reviewed on behalf of the CoPQB. This process will be timed to coincide with the annual PoT Update process in order to streamline the paperwork requirements. The feedback received as part of the appraisal process will help to inform the refresher training and support mechanisms provided by the CoPQB. If a supervisor fails to complete a supervisor training within a two-year period, they will be removed as a supervisor and their trainees will need to transfer to a new supervisor. The CS should support their candidate in locating a new supervisor, and the Registrar is also available to support any trainees who need to transfer to a new supervisor under these circumstances.

The role of the Designated Practice Supervisor is the same as that of the Practice Supervisor.

**Contracts**

The *Regulations* require candidates to have a contract with their CS. We recommend that supervisors also have a contract with the candidate. This section provides some general guidance regarding contracts.

You should have a separate contract with each candidate who you supervise or for whom you are CS. This contract should set out what is expected of each party. It should include the minimum number of meetings you will have, the means by which meetings or supervision might take place (face-to-face, telephone, email) and the rates at which the candidate will be charged for this (if applicable). It should also set out what is expected of the candidate, for example, their preparation for supervision meetings, information which you expect them to provide you with. The *Candidate Handbook* for the QCoP requires CSs and their candidates to maintain monthly contact, which will include face-to-face meetings a minimum of once every three months throughout the period of enrolment. Other means of contact will include email and telephone and should be negotiated as part of the contracting process. Your contract should ensure that at least these minimum criteria are met. You should also bear in mind that some candidates will need more support and supervision than the minimum specified and should allow for this in your contractual arrangement. Some points in the process may also require more input than others. For example, putting together an enrolment and AEC application may require monthly face-to-face meetings between the CS and candidate for three consecutive months, with no further face-to-face meetings needed until the following quarter.
Sometimes supervision will be external to the candidate’s employing organisation and the need for a contract governing matters such as payment and confidentiality is clear. Sometimes the CS and/or supervisor and candidate will be employed by the same organisation and supervision might be part of the CS and/or supervisor’s normal job role. In such cases the candidate would not normally expect to pay additional fees to the CS/supervisor. However, a contract which sets out the expectations and responsibilities of each in relation to the supervision process is still required. This will help both parties to be clear about what is expected of them and about what is reasonable to ask of the other.

A template contract is available on the Society’s website which you may use, or you may use your own contract. The candidate and supervisor must both have a copy of the contract and a copy must be lodged with the Society at enrolment and if any subsequent changes are made.

### Arranging placements

As part of the overall process for putting together the PoT there will be a responsibility for arranging placements.

At the start of the process the CS should meet with the candidate and discuss placements in order to construct the PoT. The CS should consider any supervised practice the candidate may already have, for which they may be applying for AEC. Taking this into account, the CS should also discuss with the candidate the overarching requirements for modalities, models and settings (for example, NHS). The CS is able to offer advice about how to apply for a placement and any local knowledge they may have about what might be available. It would normally fall to the candidate to draw up letters of application for placements and undertake any application and interview processes.

Although candidates will usually take responsibility for applying for placements, the CS has a responsibility to ensure that the placement will provide an appropriate learning experience. This includes approving the practice supervisor (who must also be approved by the Registrar as part of the PoT), reviewing the candidate’s risk assessment and conducting a placement audit. The learning outcomes of the placement should be identified and a clear plan for achieving these should be in place, including realistic timescales. The CS, candidate and supervisor should all be clear about what is expected and about what evidence the candidate will need to collect. The CS should discuss the placement with the practice supervisor so that they also understand the requirements for the placement and what will be required from them including any role in evaluating the candidate’s performance.

During all of their work the candidate is expected to comply with the British Psychological Society’s *Code of Ethics and Conduct* and the DCoP’s *Professional Practice Guidelines* as well as maintaining an awareness of the HCPC’s *Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics*. Practice Supervisors should also be advised of this and, if necessary, provided with copies (available from the Society’s website and the HCPC’s website respectively).

Before approving the placement for inclusion in the plan, the CS should complete a placement audit as part of the Placement Approval Pack (see below for further details). The purpose of this is to ensure that the placement will provide a safe and effective learning environment for the candidate.

The following sections provide more detail on various aspects of supervised practice which should be taken into account when arranging placements.

For each placement the Placement Approval Documentation should be completed and signed by all parties. This should be sent to the CS, who should countersign the form before the candidate submits it to the Registrar.

### Placement Approval Pack

For each placement, a Placement Approval Pack and supporting documentation must be submitted. The Placement Approval Pack for the first placement must be submitted with the PoT. Placement Approval Packs for subsequent placements must be submitted when approval of the placement is requested. It is
important that we are assured about the settings in which our candidates are undertaking work, so placement approval documents must be submitted for each setting in which supervised practice is undertaken. Placement approval documents must be fully completed. The relevant forms can be downloaded from the Society’s website (www.bps.org.uk/qcop). Placement audits must be reviewed annually and an updated audit form submitted when the candidate’s annual maintenance fee becomes due.

Health and Safety
The CS is responsible for ensuring that placements take place in a safe environment. The candidate should complete a risk assessment using the form available on our website. We ask candidates to complete the risk assessment because this is an important skill for them to develop and it will, we hope, help them to develop a sense of responsibility for their own safety and that of others in the workplace. For many candidates this will be something new, so it is important that the CS reviews the risk assessment with them. The CS should be satisfied that the policies, and their implementation, are adequate to provide for a safe placement environment. Any concerns should be discussed with the Registrar and resolved before a placement is approved. A note of the concerns and action taken to resolve it should be added to the Placement Audit Action Plan.

CSs should also check with the placement provider that the candidate’s induction will include the organisational health and safety policies, lone working policies and any other policies relevant to the safety of the candidate during their placement. The candidate should complete an induction checklist after their induction to ensure that all relevant information has been included.

Placement arrangements
Practical arrangements for the placement should be clear. The candidate should have clear information about time and place and about who they will meet first when arriving at the placement.

If there are any specific requirements for the site, such as advance security clearance or criminal conviction checks, then these must be complied with.

The placement should start with an induction, particularly if the candidate has not worked for that placement provider before or for some time. This should include practical information about the site (fire escapes, toilets, lunch facilities, breaks) as well as information about any workplace policies to which the candidate must adhere. This should include health and safety policies and any precautions around lone working. The candidate should complete the induction checklist (available on our website) after the induction to ensure that all of the necessary elements have been included.

Where a candidate is undertaking their supervised practice within their normal employment this induction may not require all of the above elements, provided that the candidate has been provided with this information previously and is aware of where to find the information again if needed. However, if any of the information or policies change, or new policies are introduced, then the candidate must be informed.

If the candidate is undertaking their supervised practice in the context of their normal employment it is important that their line manager is aware of the requirements for their placement and is supportive in helping to achieve this. It may be helpful for the CS or supervisor, candidate and line manager to meet to agree any particular requirements, such as study time or supervision time, allocation of particular work tasks to help the candidate gain appropriate experience and development opportunities which are likely to arise during the placement period. It is important that the line manager understands the candidate’s status as a trainee and the limitations this may place on their work. For example, there may be issues around confidential information and its use in supervision, the need for which must be acknowledged.

Client consent
The issue of informed consent is central to ethical practice. Supervisors should discuss with candidates any particular issues regarding client consent within the context of their professional role and should
ensure that organisational requirements for client consent are adhered to. Clients should be informed that the candidate is in training and working under supervision, and should highlight the limits of confidentiality within the context.

**Recording sessions**

Some qualifications require that candidates record sessions with clients as part of the process of collecting evidence. Recording sessions can also be a useful tool in the developmental process, enabling a CS or supervisor and candidate to review sessions together to identify learning points. Specific consent should be sought for the recording of sessions. A sample consent form is available from the Society’s website.

**Use of non-encrypted data**

Some organisations and NHS trusts may have policies in place regarding the release of non-encrypted data outside of the organisation or Trust. This may affect a candidate’s preparation for assessment, for example, in relation to the client recording submitted for AU3 Process Report Embedded in a Case Study. CSs and supervisors are advised to discuss with their candidates whether this is an issue for their Trust or organisation at the start of the process of seeking consent for recording client sessions.

**Ethical frameworks**

Candidates are required to work within the British Psychological Society’s *Code of Ethics and Conduct* and the DCoP’s *Professional Practice Guidelines*. These can be obtained from the Society’s website (www.bps.org.uk). Candidates are also expected to maintain an awareness of the HCPC’s *Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics* which are available from the HCPC’s website (www.hcpc-uk.org). CSs and supervisors should ensure that they are also aware of these ethical codes and should take opportunities to discuss ethical issues in supervision.

**Insurance**

Candidates are required to ensure that they have appropriate professional indemnity insurance. Often this will be provided by their employer but they will need to check they are covered for all of their supervised practice as a trainee, especially as some may take place outside of their normal employing organisation.

When arranging placements CSs and supervisors should ensure that appropriate insurance is in place. CSs and supervisors may also wish to check that their own professional indemnity insurance covers them for their role.

**Study time**

During periods of supervised practice candidates will require dedicated time to study. This includes reading and reflecting on the psychological literature relating to the current period of supervised practice as well as time to write up reports and other evidence which will later be submitted for assessment.

The supervisor, candidate and, where appropriate, line manager, should agree the amount of study time to be allocated during the period of supervised practice and when it is expected that this will be used. It is beneficial to keep some flexibility in this arrangement, but the candidate’s overall study time should be protected.

Whilst study time during placement is strongly recommended, the Society understands that in some employment contexts it might not be possible to provide study time during working time. In such circumstances this should be clearly stated at the outset and the CS should ensure that the candidate has considered what study time they will need and when they will undertake this. It is important that candidates have realistic expectations about how much study time might be required and when this can be undertaken. CSs should help candidates by discussing these matters and helping them to draw up a realistic plan.
**Group supervision**

Some supervisors may be supervising several candidates and may choose to undertake group supervision. This can have advantages for candidates who can benefit from the shared learning experience.

When supervising a group of candidates together each candidate will be deemed to have received a limited amount of supervision within the session. Therefore, if group supervision is to count towards the total overall supervision hours required it should be apportioned appropriately. For example, a two-hour supervision session involving a group of four trainees might be counted as 30 minutes of supervision for each individual.

Finally, whilst group supervision can provide benefits to candidates it is not a substitute for individual one-to-one supervision. CSs/supervisors should ensure that there is an appropriate balance.

**Private supervision**

Often candidates are unable to obtain supervision from a counselling psychologist within their employing organisation. Other candidates may not be employed whilst training. Whatever the reason, it is not uncommon for candidate’s to engage private supervision from outside of their workplace or placement setting.

Private supervisors must meet the QCOP requirements set out in the *Regulations* and the *Candidate Handbook* for the QCOP and should follow the guidelines provided for CSs/supervisors here. Matters such as the contract are particularly important. CSs/supervisors who are not employees of the organisation where the candidate will undertake their supervised practice will need to ensure that they are able to have access to the placement setting and that commercial sensitivities or confidentiality clauses will not hamper their supervisory relationship with the candidate. Where such problems exist they should be acknowledged and a plan agreed to address any difficulties which arise.

**Placement duration**

Qualification handbooks provide details about the minimum amount of supervised practice which is required. The duration of any particular placement should be agreed and included on the plan of training.

**Communication before, during and after the placement**

CSs should make appropriate arrangements to communicate with the candidate and supervisor before, during and after the placement. How much communication is necessary or beneficial is likely to vary. However, the candidate and the supervisor should each know how to contact the CS if they feel it is appropriate, and should agree to do so in the event of any concerns about the placement. The CS and the supervisor will have some contact before the placement so that the CS is satisfied as to the arrangements for the placement. Contact during the placement is also important. For example, a mid-placement telephone conversation to review progress will help the CS to maintain an awareness of the candidate’s progress and will provide an opportunity for the supervisor to discuss any issues or seek clarification on any matters which may have arisen. At the end of the placement the CS and supervisor should make contact to discuss the candidate’s progress and any issues highlighted in the supervision report.

**Communication with the Registrar**

There may be instances where you would like to speak with the Registrar regarding a particular issue that has arisen with a trainee, rather than communicate in writing. In such situations you may request an appointment at the Registrar’s clinic by emailing the Qualifications Officer, indicating whether this will be a telephone or face-to-face meeting. The Qualifications Officer will confirm a time slot with you. Equally, the Registrar may wish to instigate a telephone meeting to discuss an issue that might have arisen in relation to one of your trainees, or in response to a query raised via a quarterly review, in which case the Qualifications Officer will contact you to arrange an appropriate time.
Procedure for grievances which occur during supervised practice

Candidates for the QCoP will normally be employed during their period of supervised practice. Candidates should have an employment contract, or in the case of unpaid placements an honorary contract, with the organisation. This contract should refer to the institution’s grievance and disciplinary procedures and a copy of the procedures must be provided to the Registrar. Where possible this should be provided at enrolment and, subsequently, whenever supervised practice is arranged with a new employer or institution.

If the grievance or disciplinary procedure is followed by the employer in relation to either the candidate or the supervisor then the Registrar should be informed that the procedure has been followed and of the outcome. Where appropriate Regulation 5.3 (Regulations for the Society’s Postgraduate Qualifications) will be invoked.

In some cases the problem or issue which arises may fall outside of the organisation’s procedures. For example, the candidate or supervisor may be concerned that the other party is not fulfilling their side of the supervision contract or there may be issues which relate specifically to the QCoP which are not considered by the employer to fall under its procedures.

As a general rule the supervisor and candidate should always seek to resolve any issue in the first instance. In cases which do not include the CS either party may approach this person to facilitate such discussions. The CS may seek the advice of the Registrar if they feel this is appropriate.

If the problem cannot be resolved informally, and the institution’s own procedures do not apply, then the following procedure can be invoked.

(i) Where the grievance does not involve the CS, the candidate and/or the supervisor should raise the issue with the CS and advise them that either the problem has not been resolved informally or that the problem is so serious as to preclude an informal resolution. If the CS is involved in the grievance then step (i) should be omitted.

(ii) The CS should inform the Registrar that the issue has been raised (if the CS is raising the issue then step (i) will be omitted). When doing so they should provide information about the nature of the problem and any action or discussions which may have already been taken in order to attempt an informal resolution. The CS should also provide an explanation about why the problem is not being dealt with by the employing institution’s own grievance and/or disciplinary procedures.

(iii) If the issue pertains to the CS then the supervisor or candidate may raise this directly with the Registrar.

(iv) The Registrar will discuss the issue with the Chair of the Board and together they will decide whether

   a. In the case of a matter related to the conduct of the candidate whether Regulation 5.3 (Regulations for the Society’s Postgraduate Qualifications) should be invoked. In such a case the provisions of that regulation will apply to the remainder of the case.

   b. In the case of a matter related to the conduct of the supervisor, whether or not the matter should be reported to any regulator or professional body.

   c. In any case whether there should be a change of supervisor or CS.

   d. Whether or not the placement remains suitable in meeting Qualification requirements and, as a consequence, whether any changes to the plan of training are required.

(v) In all cases the Registrar and Chair of the Board may seek any information they need in order to inform their decision from any of the parties involved (which may include the institution in which the placement is taking place) before reaching a decision. They will attempt to reach a decision and inform the parties involved within six weeks of being informed of the issue by the CS. Where this is not possible (for example, because requests for further information have not been responded to in a timely manner) the parties involved will be kept informed about any delays and, where possible, a likely date of resolution.
**Competence Logbooks**
Candidates are required to keep a Competence Logbook. Supervisors will be asked to sign off competences which are demonstrated under their supervision. The CS is also asked to verify each witness statement and to sign off the Competence Logbook when it is complete.

CSs should regularly review the Competence Logbook with the candidate to ensure that progress is being made. The CS and candidate may discuss plans for achieving outstanding competences to assist the candidate’s progression and how to provide evidence of achievement at the point of the final assessment of overall competence (AU9). Development and demonstration of the full set of competences at the requisite level is vital for the QCoP to be awarded.

**Evidence requirements (Assessment and Evaluation)**
The evidence requirements for the QCoP can be found in the *Candidate Handbook*.

The CS should ensure that they are familiar with these and the QAA Master’s and Doctoral descriptors and should review all evidence which the candidate intends to submit. An important part of the CS role is to advise on submissions to assist the candidate in their preparation. Understandably, there are limitations to the CS role in this respect. For example, a CS may advise a candidate that they do not feel the work is demonstrating the standard expected of a counselling psychologist and Chartered Member of the Society, in which case the candidate would be best advised to delay submission until the standard has been improved. However, when work is submitted it will be assessed by two independent assessors and will then go through a moderation process. CSs should be aware that whilst they might advise candidates in a general way about submissions, they will not be involved in the assessment of the work and cannot provide any guarantees about the outcome of the assessment.

CS training days provide more information about this part of the role.

**Quarterly review of development objectives**
Candidates are required to have contact with their CS at least monthly. A record should be kept of this contact. Contact can be face-to-face, by telephone or by email but once a quarter the contact must be a face-to-face meeting. When commencing the QCoP, the first quarterly meeting will agree the plan for development activities in the first three months and the learning outcomes (competences) which the candidate will aim to develop. Subsequently the CS and candidate will have a face-to-face meeting once a quarter at which they will review progress against the previous plan and agree the plan for the coming three months, and identify the personnel who will support the candidate in development of the next set of competences. This will be recorded on the Quarterly Review Form, which also has a final section for the candidate and the CS to note any comments or concerns they wish to present directly to the Registrar and/or any feedback for the programme team.

Candidates must submit their Quarterly Review Form by 1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October each year. Quarterly Review Forms are reviewed by the Registrar or their representative, and if there are any issues the Registrar will raise these with the candidate and their CS.

**Supervisor’s Reports**
The *Candidate Handbook* sets out the requirements for Supervisor’s Reports. These must be provided to the CS by the practice and research supervisors. The CS should read and sign these off and the candidate will then include them with the annual Update of the PoT.

Supervisors may also report to the CS any concerns they may have about the candidate’s progression, any issues which have arisen, or any concerns about the candidates conduct, health or fitness to practice. If such matters arise the CS should seek advice from the Registrar about how to proceed.
Concerns about candidate progression
During the course of the candidate’s enrolment, the CS may develop concerns about the candidate’s progression, any issues which have arisen, or any concerns about the candidate’s conduct, health or fitness to practice. If such matters arise the CS should seek advice from the Registrar about how to proceed.

Further information
CSs and supervisors can access further information via the Society’s website, where there are pages devoted to the QCoP. These can be found at: www.bps.org.uk/qcop.
Glossary

This glossary is organised in alphabetical order. If there is a term which you do not understand but which does not appear in this glossary please contact Bethan Carley, Qualifications Officer (bethan.carley@bps.org.uk).

**AEC:** Accreditation of Existing Competence, where an applicant can present relevant post-GBC experience at enrolment to offset some of the requirements of the QCoP.

**Assessor:** A suitably qualified and experienced counselling psychologist appointed by the CoPQB to assess submitted pieces of work.

**AU:** Assessment Units, the written units of the QCoP, such as case studies, academic papers, research and a written examination.

**Chair:** The member of the CoPQB who has overall responsibility for the QCoP.

**Chartered Membership:** Full recognition by the Society of an individual’s competence as a professional practitioner of psychology.

**Chief Assessor:** The member of the CoPQB who has overall responsibility for the assessment process for the QCoP.

**CoPQB:** The Counselling Psychology Qualifications Board, which manages all aspects of the QCoP.

**CS:** Co-ordinating Supervisor, who supports and guides a candidate from enrolment through to completion of the QCoP.

**DCoP:** Division of Counselling Psychology, the Society’s professional community for those who are undertaking or have undertaken accredited training in counselling psychology.

**DEU:** Documentary Evidence Units, the QCoP units which are more practically focused (for example, attendance at courses, providing therapy to clients or attending personal therapy yourself).

**Enrolment:** The process by which candidates are accepted onto the QCoP which involves working with your approved CS to prepare a suitable plan of training and, where applicable, an application for AEC.

**Enrolment Assessor:** A suitably qualified and experienced counselling psychologist appointed by the CoPQB to assess enrolment applications.

**GBC:** Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership, the minimum threshold for entry to Society-accredited postgraduate training in applied psychology and the Society’s postgraduate qualifications.

**Health Reference Form:** A form completed by your GP confirming that you have no health issues which may preclude you from completing the QCoP.

**HCPC:** Health and Care Professions Council, the regulatory body for practitioner psychologists in the UK. Registration with the HCPC is required to entitle a psychologist to use the relevant protected title from the list of those protected by law (see www.hcpc-uk.org for further information).

**Independent Route:** Generic term for the Society’s own postgraduate qualifications (as opposed to traditional university routes).

**Lead CS:** A member of the CoPQB who assists CSs in their role and reviews quarterly review forms from candidates.
**Placement Approval Process:** The process whereby a candidate seeks approval of a new placement through completion of various forms including a risk assessment and placement audit form; these forms will be completed in conjunction with the CS, practice supervisor and placement host.

**Placement host:** The provider of the placement where you undertake a period of supervised practice towards the QCoP.

**PoT:** Plan of Training, which outlines how you intend to fulfil the various AUs and DEUs of which the QCoP comprises.

**PoT Update:** The annual process whereby a candidate updates their PoT for the coming year in conjunction with their CS.

**Practice Supervisor:** A suitably qualified and experienced counselling psychologist, or other appropriately registered individual, who will provide supervision for some of the client work that you undertake on the QCoP.

**QAA:** Quality Assurance Agency, an independent body which reviews the performance of universities and colleges of higher education.

**QCoP:** Qualification in Counselling Psychology, sometimes known as the independent route to training as a counselling psychologist.

**Quarterly Review Process:** The process whereby a candidate meets with their CS quarterly to review their progress and plan objectives for the next quarter, which will be documented on the Quarterly Review Form.

**QSC:** Qualifications Standards Committee, which acts on delegated authority from the Membership Standards Board to consider matters of policy and implementation regarding the Society’s postgraduate qualifications.

**Registrar:** A member of the CoPQB who liaises between the CoPQB and the candidates. The Registrar approves enrolment applications, annual PoT Updates and any interim changes to a candidate’s arrangements for completing the QCoP.

**Registration for Assessment:** The process through which candidates register to submit AUs and DEUs for assessment.

**Research Supervisor:** A suitably qualified and experienced counselling psychologist, or other appropriately registered individual, who will provide research supervision for the piece of research that you undertake for the QCoP (this will not apply if you are granted AEC for the research unit).