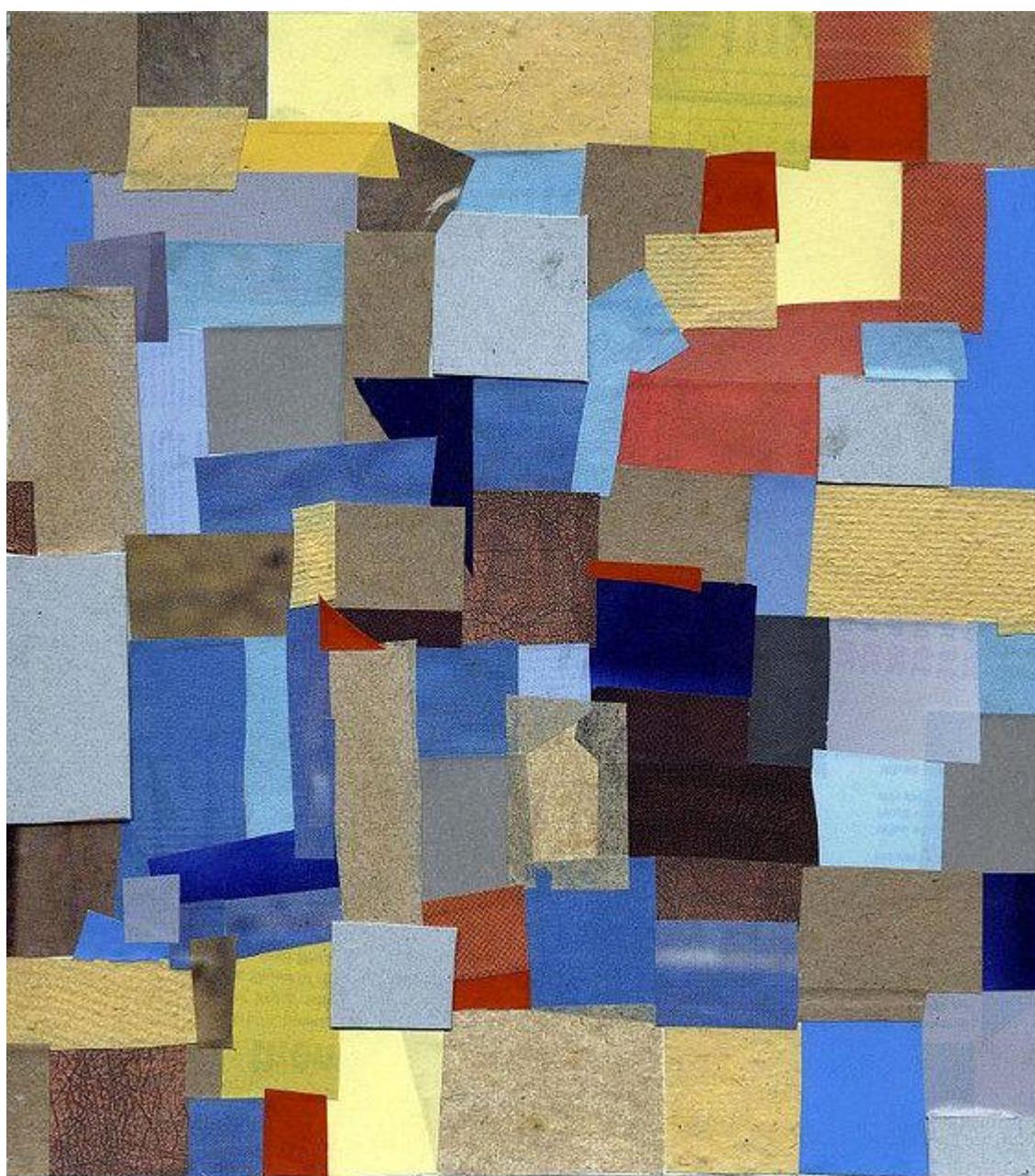




The Supervisors' Handbook: 2016-17



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Introduction

This Handbook is intended for supervisors of students on the BA(Hons) in Informal Education Programmes (Youth Work and Community Learning & Development/Education and Learning/Social Pedagogy) and also for supervisors of students on the qualifying route to the PGDip/MA in Youth Work, Community Learning and Development, offered by the YMCA George Williams College in association with Canterbury Christ Church University.

The BA(Hons) and MA programmes are endorsed by the National Youth Agency (NYA) and the Standards Council for Education in Scotland as professional qualifications.

The Handbook has been designed to be helpful in two ways:

- as a reference for the use of supervisors; and
- as an introduction which will give some idea of what is contained within the Programmes.

Changes are continually being made to the handbook as a result of feedback from supervisors, line managers, and assessors.

If you need further clarification or can suggest ways in which we may improve this Handbook, please let us know.

The College reserves the right to make alterations to the aims and content, learning methods, assessment procedures, programme requirements and fees. Other administrative matters related to the Programme, and the Handbook will be revised accordingly.

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Assessment Dates

Due dates when Students hand their self-assessments to Supervisors (3rd Column) and when Supervisors hand their assessments/statements back to students (4th Column)

Programme Title	Assessment/ Statement Title	Date for Student's Self-Assessment to be given to Supervisor	Date for Supervisor's Assessment/ Statement to be given back to the Student	Year
Full Time: – Level 5 September 2016 to July 2017	End of Level 5 Assessment	1 st May 2017	15 th May 2017	2017
Full Time: – Level 6 September 2016 to July 2017	End of Level 6 Assessment	24 th April 2017	8 th May 2017	2017
Distance Learning: - Level 4 – September 2016 to November 2017	Level 4 Interim Statement	23 February 2017	9 th March 2017	2017
	End of Level 4 Assessment	5 th October 2017	19 th October 2017	2017
Distance Learning: - Level 5 – January 2017 to March 2018	End of Level 5 Assessment	4 th January 2018	18 th January 2018	2018
Part Time :- Level 7 year 2 (15/17) PGDip/MA (Qualifying Route) October 2016 to November 2016	End of Level 7 Assessment	13 th October 2016	27 th October 2016	2016
Part Time :- Level 7 year 1 (16/18) PGDip/MA (Qualifying Route) October 2016 to November 2017	Interim Statement	23 rd February 2017	9 th March 2017	2017
	End of Level 7 Assessment	12 th October 2017	26 th October 2017	2017

Aims, Rationale and Content of the Programmes

Aim

The aim of the programmes, informed by the College's Christian base and commitment to social justice, is to produce reflective, professional practitioners of informal education (youth work and community learning & development). With a strong emphasis on the integration of theory and practice, the programme aims to:

- cultivate practice that is informed, just, open and enhancing of human flourishing
- encourage students to explore a range of theories, beliefs and practices reflective of the diverse social, cultural, religious and individual nature of the student group and the situations in which they may work
- develop and enhance students' personal, interpersonal, practical and intellectual abilities
- foster, in students a continuing enthusiasm for and a commitment to, lifelong learning and development.

The reflective, professional practitioner

Effective professional practice involves something more than the acquisition and exercise of technical knowledge and skills. It is dependent on practitioners cultivating a particular kind of artistry and frame of reference. Without a developed appreciative system and the ability to think professionally, practitioners will not be able to offer a service to their clients that is just, appropriate and enhancing of human wellbeing.

Reflective practitioners are able to:

- develop their own analytical frameworks;
- connect these with broader values and theories and to the concrete situations at hand;
- translate their thinking into action while critically assessing the situation and the applicability of their intervention and the adequacy of their theorizing; and
- make any necessary and possible adjustments as they act.

By the term 'professional' the College means that the practitioner takes responsibility for the work done. They have a care for the standards of their work and for the work of colleagues; they take responsibility for the way they relate to other workers: and have an understanding of their practice

that enables work to be done in a range of different settings. This means that students need to be able, among other things, to:

- understand their own constituency as workers and its limits;
- understand what work can be done, being neither impotent nor omnipotent;
- develop the personal power and authority appropriate to carrying professional responsibility;
- be able to handle their own mistakes; and
- relate to others whom they meet in the course of their work in a manner consistent with the above values and attitudes.

A professional person should therefore:

- know when to assume responsibility
- know when to delegate
- know when to seek specialised help.

Informal education

The designation 'informal education' is used to distinguish thinking and practice from the more overtly structured and directed forms of intervention associated with schools and colleges. The work of informal educators has a number of distinctive characteristics including the range of settings in which it takes place; variability in timescales; voluntary participation; emphasis on dialogical processes and mutual respect; and an active appreciation of, and engagement with, participants' cultures and networks. Such work draws upon those traditions of education that emphasise the liberation of human intelligence and human sympathy. It is not directed towards therapeutic or social action or formal instruction, although these may arise out of the work. While the primary orientation is towards informal forms of intervention, informal educators also have to utilize formal approaches that entail the use of syllabuses, study programmes, and structured sessions.

Community education

The term 'community education' has been used in such a wide variety of ways that is necessary to interrogate very closely what particular 'speakers' mean by the term. It can simply apply to the dual use of school buildings; it may encompass a much wider vision of educational and social life such as that of Henry Morris in relation to Village Colleges; it can be used to describe more selective forms of intervention to assist people experiencing various forms of disadvantage (i.e. the Educational Priority Areas); and it is used with regard to locally-based initiatives with adults and young people. While practitioners undertaking our courses would be expected to be able to operate within all four contexts, it is the latter that is the focus. We are happy to endorse the purpose of community education as set out by the Standards Council for Education in Scotland which is:

A process designed to enrich the lives of individuals and groups by engaging with people living within a geographical area, or sharing a common interest, to develop voluntarily a range of learning, action and reflection opportunities, determined by their personal, social, economic and political needs.

An Outline of the Structure of the Full - Time Mode

The BA(Hons) by full time learning Programme takes three years full time study which is the recognised professional qualification for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The full time Programme consists of three levels, starting with level 4 then level 5 and finally level 6 with each level being of an academic year's duration (September to July).

College sessions

Full time students may expect to spend five or six sessions in College each week. (A session is a morning, an afternoon or an evening). These sessions are for lectures, seminars, tutorials, study circles, year group meetings, research and practice and other College activities. The academic year begins in September and ends in the following July. This consists of three terms totally a period of 36 weeks.

Professional Practice

Students organise and carry out 480 hours of professional practice at each level. At least 360 hours must be face-to-face sessions with the remaining time for associated practical and research assignments related to the programme. This includes preparing for, undertaking and recording supervision and preparation and recording of practice and study groups. Students also need to carry out 75 hours of alternative professional practice as part of the 360 hours.

The content of Level 4 & Level 5

The content of the programme for level 4 sees the programme take account of the changing context of informal education while recognising three evolving traditions of practice. These are: Youth Work; Community Work; and Social Pedagogy which is a term used in the *Children's Workforce Strategy (DfES 2005)* to describe a generic role for workers supporting childrens' overall development across the institutional boundaries of school, health, social welfare and recreation.

The programme is structured around an exploration of what it is to be a reflective, professional practitioner of informal education when:

- working with individuals
- working with groups
- working in and with organisations
- working within communities.

The Content of Level 6

At level 6 the programme is centred more around the development of a critical understanding of informal and community education, which should provide students with a framework in which to analyse practice.

An Outline of the Structure of the Distance Learning Mode

The BA(Hons) by distance learning Programme is based on the following studies of Youth Work & Community Learning, Development/Education and Learning Social Pedagogy. It consists of three levels: level 4 (September to November of the following year), level 5 (January to March of the following year) and level 6 (April to July of the following year).

Study Sessions

The part-time mode makes use of written learning materials (study packs) which students can gain direct access to by logging onto the College's Ymoodle site. Students have to undertake regular written assignments. These are essays, reports or extended projects. As with the full-time mode the student will be expected to do regular written recordings of practice.

All students meet regularly, in a regional group. There are also three residential periods, two during level 4 and one during level 5 of the BA(Hons) programme.

Professional Practice

For those students who are already in employment, the professional practice is carried out at their place of work. The student will use experiences of day-to-day work as material for the programme.

Individuals, groups and organisations do not exist in a vacuum. They are part of particular networks and social systems; operate within asymmetrical relations of power; and express different cultures. There is, therefore a considerable emphasis within the programme on placing practice in this context, on developing an active appreciation of, and engagement with, the social systems and networks through which people operate and the cultural forms they use.

How is the Programme Assessed?

Assessment is continuous throughout the Programme. The process has two purposes:

1. To enable students to identify their knowledge, attitudes and skills, and to understand the changes that have occurred in these; to increase students' ability to assess their learning and performance.
2. To enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of the programme of study and achieved the standard required for the award they seek.

Three key principles lie at the centre of the assessment process:

First, that since students are required to gain ability in assessing their own learning and performance, each student must be fully involved in the process.

Second, students engage in a continuous process of self-assessment. At certain points formal assessments will be made.

Third, as far as possible, all the evidence on which the Board of Examiners bases its decisions must also be available to the student.

Management of the Programme

The Board of Governors

The Board is the governing body of the YMCA George Williams College. The Board consists of a Chair, representatives and nominees from various parts of the YMCA movement, co-opted members from other areas of the youth work, community education and community work field, people with specific areas of expertise and representatives of the staff and students of the College. Its Executive Officer is the College Principal & Chief Executive.

The Academic Board

The Academic Board consists of the Principal, and such other College staff members and students as may, from time to time, be approved by the Board of Governors. It is chaired by the Principal.

The Distance Learning & Full-time Programme Committees

These are sub-committees of the Academic Board and are chaired by the respective Programme Organisers

They are responsible for monitoring the operation of the Programme and students' performance. In this role, the Committees examine all assessments, reports and comments that may be submitted to the Board of Examiners.

The Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners has the task of evaluating the evidence presented to it concerning students' progress on the Programmes and making appropriate judgements. The Board safeguards the standards of the informal and community education profession by ensuring only those who have demonstrated their ability to meet programme requirements and standards are given the awards for which they are candidates.

Guidance to Supervision

Programme Requirements for Supervision

The programme requirements are that students meet with their supervisor for 8 separate one hour sessions on the BA(Hons) full time programme and the PGDip of the Masters qualifying route. The PGDip of the Masters by Blended Learning is a programme which attracts 12 separate one hour sessions over a two year period which is split into 6 sessions per year. For the BA(Hons) by distance learning programme the students meet with their supervisor for 12 separate one hour sessions per level of study.

Where problems arise in relation to the functioning of others e.g. the supervisor, line manager, and agency policies, students are encouraged to explore what the appropriate professional response may be on their behalf. Subsequent, or in addition to that response, the College may take action. The College may contact other parties involved in order to establish their views and to see how the situation may be resolved. A report will be made to the programme committee. Further action may be necessary.

Professional Supervision

All students are allocated an individual supervisor. It is the task of this 'professional' supervisor to enable students to reflect upon their experiences to develop an understanding of them and to apply these understandings to new situations. The process involves bringing together theory making, reflection on values and dispositions and practice. Exploration is followed by analysis and evaluation by the student and the supervisor.

The focus of supervision is the student's professional practice. The responsibility for arranging and attending supervision and tutorial sessions rests with the student. Students are required to provide written evidence that they have met programme requirements for attendance at supervision, fully, by the date on which they submit their end of level professional assessments to the College. The student will travel to the supervisor. The supervisor is completely independent of any involvement with the organisation for which the student is undertaking professional practice.

Supervisors are directly employed by the College and must meet the person specification and possess the relevant qualifications and experience as part of the criteria for appointment to the post of College Supervisor. **For the purpose of professional development, College appointed supervisors should be aware that the College offers the professional qualification centred around supervision practice of Professional Studies in Supervision which is undertaken at Masters level 7.**

Supervisors write assessments of the student's learning at the same points in the programme that students write their assessments. These assessments are written to the framework provided by the Self Assessment of Learning guidelines and requirements in light of the assessment criteria.

Supervisors must indicate whether the standard of work demonstrated by the student is appropriate to the level for which they are being assessed.

For supervision to be effective, the student needs to undertake preparatory and follow-up work.

In addition to supervision, students may arrange individual tutorials with College tutors. These may be to explore particular aspects of the programme or to deal with particular problems. Each student has a personal tutor.

Recordings

Students need to reflect continually upon their work and experiences during the programme. One of the most important ways of enabling this reflection is to keep written records of working sessions. The programme lays strong emphasis on the use of recordings. Students will make personal use of recordings as well as using them with their supervisor and/or tutor in order to explore their work. Since the recordings represent some of the evidence of the nature of the work done, appropriate extracts from them will also be expected in the assignments that the students undertake.

Supervision: Confidentiality and reflection on professional practice

As part of a commitment to continual professional development, supervisors and line managers are invited to take up training opportunities with the College through partaking in one of the Reflective Practice Workshops that the College offers at different points in the academic year. Part of this may require supervisors/line managers to share their practice with colleagues to support reflections and the development of practice. Students should be aware that careful attention is given to issues of confidentiality in such instances so that the integrity of the supervisory/managerial relationship with students is not compromised.

Attendance and participation in the supervisory process

Those students who fail to complete their required supervision sessions by the date for submitting end of level assessments, will be considered not to have met the programme requirement for attendance at supervision. Mitigation may be allowed for illness or for other relevant reasons.

Students will not be able to meet programme requirements for attendance at supervision if they fail to attend any pre-arranged sessions, without providing the supervisor with reasonable notification (usually 24 hours). Therefore, in order to meet the programme requirement for attendance at supervision students will be expected to undertake any additional sessions beyond the twelve offered and may be liable for any additional costs incurred.

Professional assessments - submission

All written professional assessments and reports must be submitted to the College by the respective due dates. A schedule of these dates is issued to all parties.

Supervisors must let students have a final copy of their report or assessment at least three working days before the due date. It is then the responsibility of students to forward these documents to the College along with their self-assessment. All assessments and reports must be signed and dated by the writer. In addition the student must sign and date their agreement with the contents of the assessment or report. This must also be dated. Where the student does not agree with specific

points, they may write a statement of disagreement on a separate sheet. This must be appended to the relevant assessment or report and must contain a signed note from the student stating that such a document is appended. A copy of any statement must be given to the writer of the assessment or report.

Any statements of disagreement must be lodged with the College by the due date, or within three working days of the student receiving the assessment or report, if it has been acquired after the official due date.

Information for the Student:

Approaching Supervision

Participating in supervision for the first time can be a strange experience. Often we are not used to having an hour just to ourselves. Sessions can be threatening as we are being asked to reveal something of ourselves.

How you feel about supervision may well depend on whether you have been involved in supervision before. If you have then you may have some idea of what to expect. However, no two supervisors or students are the same and the situations are different.

The main contrast you may find is the difference between supervision from your line manager and supervision from your professional supervisor.

While similar processes can occur in both managerial and non-managerial supervision, there are different priorities in each. The manager's first responsibility is to the organisation or agency. Their task is to enable you to work to meet the aims of the organisation in the most effective way. Your professional supervisor has a different central responsibility. Their task is to work with you so that your actions are good, which is to say that they foster human well-being.

What is a supervision session?

From what has been said supervision sessions are meetings which have the specific purpose of enabling you to think about your work, in order to further your learning and future practice. As you talk about the experiences that you are involved in, supervisors will encourage you to:

- reflect upon your experiences;
- become more objective about them;
- analyse them;
- plan your work, decide what to do next and how to do it;
- evaluate and assess what you have done;
- the focus of supervision, therefore, is you and your work.

What is not a supervision session ?

Having now considered what a supervision session is, we can now consider what it is not.

Firstly, it is not a chat with a friend. This is not the place for getting to know a supervisor by finding out about their background, work, interests, family, opinions etc. The focus is you and your work, not the supervisor.

Secondly, it is not a question and answer session where students pick their supervisor's brains. Supervision encourages you to think for yourself rather than to receive answers.

Thirdly, it is not a formal teaching session, in the way that we may be used to thinking of it. You will not be told what to learn. The session will be based on the material which you bring and your thoughts about it

Fourth, a supervision session is not just about problems and crises, although it may be at times. If we regard supervision as only for problems, then what happens when things are going well?

Preparing for sessions

The focus of supervision is your learning, in relation to your professional practice as workers, which in this case, is as informal and community educators. This should provide you with substantial material and experiences to choose from.

To be useful supervision sessions need some thought and preparation. Three areas are of special importance.

Firstly, you need to be thinking about your work. Here keeping a journal or notes/records of events and experiences is a special help. It is then easier to look back at them and to identify issues that could do with some thought and work.

Secondly, you need to keep up with your reading and the learning materials. This will help to deepen your understanding of the key ideas that underpin the work.

Thirdly, you need to be thinking about the reports and other paperwork you have to complete. Exploring these within sessions with the supervisor can be very helpful.

All this says something about time management. Your work will need careful planning and an eye needs to be kept on what is to be done and when. This is likely to be an area that will feature in many supervisory relationships.

Where and when

The responsibility for arranging and attending sessions rests with the student. Students are provided with information which will give them the contact details of their allocated supervisor. Students usually travel to their supervision sessions, whilst the Supervisor should provide a relevant venue in which the sessions can take place (e.g. quiet, undisturbed, comfortable etc.).

The relationship of Supervision to Other Elements of the Programme

The process of supervision is common to all levels of the Programme, no distinction being made between supervising in one or another level.

In this chapter, we explain the place of supervision in relation to the Programme as a whole.

Students who join this Programme are adults of 18 or over. The task of the College is really quite simple. It has to accept students as they are and what they bring; and facilitate, to the best of its ability, experiences that will enable them to integrate their existing knowledge into a framework that they can use consciously and consistently.

Although some of the Level four students may lack formal qualifications in education, they have, before they join the Programme, a variety of work experiences including informal education. They have built up a range of skills, albeit limited, and many of them have some intuitive feel about working with young people and adults.

As with knowledge, the student's skills need to be honed by practice and reflection, so that their use in the past, and availability for the future, can be consciously acknowledged. The student needs to be helped to acknowledge the feelings he or she brings to a situation, and, more importantly, the attitudes in self that such feelings evoke.

Briefly, then, what the College has to do is to facilitate a student's learning in three areas: knowledge, attitudes and skills. It does so not only by accepting and working on what the student has brought but also by offering further opportunities to acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes. This task involves all the different groups of people who work for the College, paid or voluntary. They include full-time and part-time tutors and lecturers, supervisors, librarians, professional practice managers, administration staff, residential tutors, line managers, regional group tutors and so on.

The point of listing all these groups is to indicate that although different roles have been created, one goal is in sight: to enhance a student's learning. It must be clear that no one role can do the entire job. However, all roles lead to the same goal. It is because of this unity of goal that it is important that each role understands its function and stays within its boundaries. Adherence to this tenet has another beneficiary effect.

The College firmly believes that process is as important as product. So no matter what the process, it is a vital ingredient in the student's learning. Discussions in the Year Group meeting about who should wash up the coffee mugs, the lecturer demanding academic refinement in a seminar, the supervisor demonstrating the value of punctuality by keeping time boundaries at both ends of the session, are all processes that the student can see, participate in and learn from.

The outcome of these processes is that the student begins to see that he or she is at the centre of the learning stage. It is the student who knows everything that is happening; no one else can, since all other roles have boundaries to their functions. For example, a lecturer offers the theories of a particular domain, while the supervisor's task is to enable the student to reflect on practice. In the student's mind, theory and practice may - and indeed should! - come together in relation to a particular event, but the lecturer and the supervisor may never know this, because the student may choose not to reveal it. If this point is sufficiently grasped, the anxiety felt by different groups about 'not being in the total picture' will diminish quite significantly.

In order to keep the student at centre stage, it is necessary that these boundaries be maintained. We do not therefore have group meetings between supervisors, tutors, line/placement managers and students where the focus would be on collectively assessing the student. We believe that this can lead to collusion in the assessment process and a loss of autonomy for the student. This is not to say that a supervisor cannot bring an anxiety or query to a training meeting or discuss this in his or her supervision. However the focus here would be on the supervisor's learning and how they are functioning with the student. If a supervisor has concerns about a student's performance these have to be given to the College in writing, and a copy sent to the student. (See *Concerns about students' performance*)

Two points need to be reiterated at this stage. As has been said, all students on this programme, particularly on Levels four and five are training to work in the main with non-adults. If process is as important as the product, then it is vital that the student gets an opportunity to understand this adult role by owning it and exercising it. For it is by exercising and exploring it that he or she will understand and handle it best, and in turn, enable the non-adults in his or her charge later on to grow into and handle their adulthood.

This brings us straight to the second point: a student needs to acknowledge the responsibilities that go with this role as an adult student. Whenever such responsibilities are assumed by others on behalf of the student, he or she is deprived of adulthood, however temporarily, and turned into a non-adult, dependent on an adult such as a tutor or a supervisor - but possibly also the parent in them. The outcome of such a shift is that the student is also deprived of the process of accepting and handling the functions and boundaries of the adult role, and turned into a dependent child, however temporarily and for whatever good purposes. A rather gross example would be for the supervisor to say 'Don't worry. I'll open the club for you this evening'. Quite legitimately then, the student does not own the consequences either: 'it's not my fault!' This is not the model we would wish young people to adopt, and therefore **it is important that the students do not see it as a model operated by the College.**

We see the role of the supervisor as assisting the student to understand and accept their own (student's) legitimate responsibilities and their boundaries. This process helps them to handle any feelings of impotence and omnipotence that they may have. Process, as often as not, determines what the product will be.

Given the above, what is the specific contribution of supervision to the learning environment of the student? Its contribution is similar to that of a tutorial, viz. to enable the student to integrate theory with practice by means of the exploration of practice. The College does not, in its model of learning,

see theory as divorced from practice. Nor does it see one as more valuable than the other. At least in our field, i.e. working with people, no theory exists that is not refined by practice, and no practice exists that is not soaked in theory. In short then, there is a strong relationship between the two if not a downright merger.

Contempt of theory only leads to misinformed practice, often leading to disastrous consequences, and not being passionately meticulous about practice can only demonstrate our disregard for other human beings. Supervision, like the tutorial, is a setting in which, by our own handling of things, we can indicate what we want the students to experience and learn from. By treating the student's own practice - no matter how trivial in content - with respect and sensitivity, we can help the student to see the value of treating ALL practice with delicate care rather than dismissing it as worthless. By exploring a student's action without either approval or condemnation, we can help the student to develop criteria for judging the behaviour of the self, and, in doing so, evaluating not only his or her practice but also the attitudes and understandings that inform that practice. By holding the boundaries of time, space and relationship, the supervisor can help the student to see the limits of functions and abilities, rather than developing the feeling that in this work anything goes.

The process of continuous assessment is also specific to the supervisor role. Each supervision session, by enabling the student to reflect on practice, enables him or her to evaluate performance, recognise strengths and weaknesses and plan future action. Producing a written assessment is a part of this process, and once again, by example and involvement, students gain valuable insights in all areas of learning.

This chapter was written to show the equal importance the College attaches to the different training roles assigned by it to different categories of people. More specifically, we have tried to identify the functions of supervision, and how they relate to the rest of the student's learning environment.

The Place of Assessment in Supervision

This Chapter discusses the function of assessment and some of the difficulties associated with its performance.

The assessment of self is, we think, a normal and continuous function of all human beings. All of us, as parents, as workers, as private individuals in our social interactions, as adults or as children, spend a lot of our time answering, or trying to answer, the question 'How well have I done?' We cannot say **how much** time is spent in this activity since it is probable that some of this constant evaluation is going on beyond our awareness. However, **that** it is going on much of the time we must all agree.

Of course a lot of such evaluation is quite simple, even crude. We say 'That was a good job' or, more advanced, 'I could do better if I ...'. And of course some of it is also wrong, for we know how apt we are to misjudge our own actions as to how well or how badly we have done.

All this is everyday stuff; but the assessments or evaluations that take place in professional discussions (for that is what supervision is) are in essence no different. It is hardly possible to speak with another professional person about one's work without some assessment happening. Every time we identify the need to develop a particular skill - say the skill of not jumping in too quickly with an answer or solution - we have, implicitly or explicitly, made an assessment of the kind 'My work would be better if ...(I didn't jump in so quickly)'. Assessment is only reflection after the event. If we are actually reflecting and not merely telling stories about what happened we cannot avoid assessment. What makes the supervision situation different is only **the degree to which the assessment is made explicit**. This is done, first by the supervisor or supervisee naming and declaring the assessment: e.g. 'I think I am getting a little better at not jumping in.' and secondly, where this course is concerned, by the fact that the assessment is written down and evidence offered for it.

The supervisor's role is to offer a model of assessment whereby the student is enabled to become a skilled assessor of self. This is done through the supervisor and student reflecting on an action that the student has taken. Through his reflection the student increases their awareness of the knowledge, attitude and skills that inform their practice.

Writing the assessment

The assessments that we make in the normal course of things, as we have just described, generally cause us little discomfort. Undoubtedly it is in the **writing** of the assessment that the difficulties occur, for it is here that we make our thoughts and judgements clear and explicit, and it is here that they become a permanent record and therefore committing.

The College has a principle that no assessment from a supervisor should contain any material that has not been explored with the student in supervision. Logically, therefore, the written assessment should not contain any surprises for the student. In short the content of the supervisor's assessment comprises insights gained through the process of supervision.

In practice it is rather different. Many people, if not most, have some apprehension about what a 'report' from another person is going to contain, and although a supervisor's assessment is not a report in this sense it is likely to be experienced as such, at any rate when it happens for the first time. It feels to us as if we are awaiting a verdict.

What is difficult for the student to grasp is that the College **places the responsibility** on the student for assessing him or herself. Thus the supervisor's assessment is totally different from a verdict. Students who complain that the assessment is like a verdict have failed to grasp their own responsibility for it, and they have instead placed all the authority in the supervisor, acting themselves as a helpless and powerless victim. (Of course there is a verdict, and that is the decision taken by the Board of Examiners.)

We have to recognise that life is much easier as a helpless victim. To take responsibility for assessing our own performance involves the hard work of thinking about it, and then maybe the emotional work of accepting and integrating the impact of our own judgements - whether they are good or bad, favourable or unfavourable. It is far easier to remain passive and leave the judging to others (whom we can then blame) than stand on our own two feet. It is also easier for the **supervisor** to accept the responsibility for judging rather than do the work needed to enable the student to do so, except of course when the judgements are unfavourable ones, in which case the temptation is for both to evade the issue.

Sometimes students may see supervision as a place to report about the work they have done, rather than reflect on it. This may be because of anxiety about assessment and of wanting to give the supervisor something 'good' to write about. The supervisor may acquiesce in this role maybe for similar reasons.

The supervisor's role however, is to encourage the student to bring material that can be looked at and learnt from. The focus of the supervisor's assessment is the student's learning within the supervision session. The student and supervisor will identify this learning during the supervision session which will be evidenced by the changed knowledge, behaviour or attitude as described by the student. These changes will be reflected in the records maintained by both the student and the supervisor, hence the importance of regular recordings in the process of assessment.

The learning should also be identified by the supervisor and in the student's self-assessment as specifically as possible. A sentence such as 'Anne has learnt a lot about how her values affect the way she works with young people' needs to be expanded to say **what** has she learnt about **which** values and **how** do they affect her work. It might also include any changes in behaviour in her practice arising from the learning

Learning is also about changes that may seem for the worse. An example might be - 'Anne says in supervision that she seems to feel less confident about working with large groups as she is now more aware of the different dynamics and behaviour within this size of group'.

It is most important that evidence is as precise and as concrete as possible. It is easy to **say** someone has learned this or that. However, it sometimes happens that when we search for evidence it becomes apparent to us that either **they have not learned or we do not know whether they have learned or not**. It is important that the situation is made clear. The student will say he or

she has learned something but provide no evidence. In such a case you need to point out the absence of evidence; e.g. *'The student says... but I do not have evidence of this'*. This does not mean that the student

does not have the specified learning, simply that you do not have the evidence. In fact, your position is rather like that of an underwriter; it is wise not to commit your money unless you know that the goods exist.

The supervisor's assessment and the assessment process

Nothing we have said above implies that the supervisor is not responsible for producing his or her own assessment of the student. The supervisor's assessment is one of the documents considered by the Board of Examiners when it makes decisions about qualification and progress through the Programme. While in theory it is no more important than the other documents the Board considers, in practice it represents the views of someone who has spent many hours working individually with the student and therefore has a good opportunity to evaluate his or her learning

We have said that the supervisor's assessment should not contain anything that has not already been discussed in supervision. However, this should not be taken to mean that the supervisor's assessment is merely a reflection of or restatement of the student's assessment. The supervisor has the freedom to say things that the student has not said and to come to judgements that are different from the student's judgements. Indeed the supervisor has a duty to state clearly the judgements he or she makes, since the assessment is a part of the evidence on which qualification is given. If the supervisor has doubts about the student's learning **these must be clearly stated**. (Needless to say they must also have been said to the student).

We are all reluctant to say things that we feel are hard, and we are tempted to hope that even if we don't say them someone else will. On the College's Programmes you cannot count on this. You do not know what other people are saying; only the student knows, and the student may not tell you. You have to give your assessment independently of other assessments. The College recognises that this may sometimes feel like playing poker: 'if only you knew what was in the other people's hands.' This is the same problem that the student faces - the problem of taking responsibility. It is easy to be responsible for something that is good, but it is not easy to stand up and say *'This is not good enough in my judgement'*.

It is helpful in these circumstances to remember what the Board of Examiners does. It confers a licence to practice as a professional and as a consequence it makes statements about what is an acceptable standard of work and what is not. Put another way, it has a duty to care for the profession as a whole. Your assessment is a part of this.

Concerns About Students' Performance

It is a responsibility of managers, supervisors and tutors to register concern about students' performance with the Programme Committees. Concern is taken to mean:

- failure to meet Programme Requirements; if for example, a student has not been in touch to arrange sessions or they do not turn up for supervision, supervisors should inform the Administrator for Supervision. **It is not the responsibility of the supervisor to 'chase' the student.**
- inability to use the Programme for learning.
- serious failures of professional judgement on the part of the student; or
- significant weaknesses in particular areas of professional practice.

Supervisors who have concerns about a student's performance should register them promptly, so that early action may be taken.

Supervisors are therefore encouraged to explore their next action by contacting the Administrator for Supervision.

If necessary these concerns will need to be put in writing, forwarding a copy of the correspondence to the Programme Committee at the College, via the Administrator for Supervision. **The student must be informed that this has been done.**

The College may contact the student involved in order to establish their views and to see how the situation may be resolved.

A report will be made to the Programme Committee and further actions may be necessary.

General Notes About Supervisor / Supervisee

Allocation of supervisors

Level Four - Full Time

Students are allocated a supervisor from the College's current list of professional supervisors. Students are allocated to supervisors on a geographical basis.

Level Five - Full Time

Students normally remain with the supervisor to whom they were allocated at level four to maintain a continuity of the professional relationship throughout the first two levels.

Level Six - Full Time

Students again will normally remain with the supervisor they were allocated to on their previous level of study, unless they inform the College that they would like to request another supervisor for their final level.

Level Four - Distance Learning

Students are allocated a supervisor from the College's current list of professional supervisors. Students are allocated to supervisors on a geographical basis.

Level Five - Distance Learning

Students normally remain with the supervisor to whom they were allocated at level four to maintain a continuity of the professional relationship throughout the first two levels.

Level Six - Distance Learning

Students again will normally remain with the supervisor they were allocated to on their previous level of study, unless they inform the College that they would like to request another supervisor for their final level.

Level Seven – PGDip/MA Qualifying Route & Blended Learning

Students are allocated a supervisor for the College's current list of professional supervisors. Students are allocated to supervisors on a geographical basis.

Number of supervision sessions

Students on all levels of the BA(Hons) by full time learning and PGDip/MA qualifying programmes undertake 8 separate one hour sessions of supervision in order to meet the course requirements for attendance at supervision. The PGDip/MA by Blended Learning level has 12 sessions over a two year period. Students on all levels of the BA(Hons) by distance learning undertake 12 separate one hour sessions in order to meet the course requirement for attendance at supervision.

N.B. It is a Programme Requirement for the student to complete the requisite number of sessions for each level. The sessions must be concluded by the date that the supervisor's assessment is due to the student. (See tables on pages 2 & 26).

Supervisor/student responsibilities

- The supervisor is responsible for providing a suitable place for sessions (e.g. quiet/private without disturbance etc.)
- The student is responsible for making the initial contact with the supervisor, normally within two weeks of receiving their allocation notification and for ensuring that dates and times for meeting are agreed.
- The supervisor must be completely independent of any association with the student's organisation, work, or professional practice.
- A person cannot be a supervisor whilst currently a student at the College (with the exception of the Professional Studies in Supervision programme).
- The focus of supervision is the student's professional practice.
- Students on the programme have a brief from College for their professional practice. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that he or she is in possession of this brief, understands it and communicates it to the supervisor as appropriate.
- Students who are deferred either during the programme or beyond the normal end of the programme in order to complete additional supervision sessions, may incur additional costs that are equivalent to the supervisor's payment of professional fees.
- The supervisor and student should try to schedule the sessions equally throughout the level of study and endeavour to maintain a minimum of two weeks between sessions.

Supervisor's agreement

The agreement between the College and the supervisor is normally for one level. For full time students this means the agreement is for one academic year. For students starting levels 4, 5 and 6 of the distance learning programme, the agreement will be for 14 months. For the PGDip/MA qualifying route the agreement will normally be for 12 months and for the Blended Learning the agreement will be for 12 sessions over two years split into 2 agreements of 6 sessions per year. Agreements will normally be renewed for level 5 of the programmes, and will cover the same period of time, unless the student's learning needs indicate otherwise.

Supervisors should carefully read and understand their agreement. The supervisor is then required to return a signed copy to the College as acknowledgment that they agree to the terms and conditions within the agreement.

The agreement states that each session must be for the duration of one hour only. The College cannot accept any financial liability for sessions that extend beyond that time. It should be noted that this would include any occasion where there may be a temptation to consider a 'double session'.

Students must meet all supervision attendance requirements by the due date of the supervisor's assessment to the student.

Supervision sessions should be offered at regularly spaced intervals throughout the level. Supervision should not be offered more than once a week unless in exceptional cases of illness etc. This is to maintain the spirit of supervision as a learning activity rather than just a requirement that needs to be met.

Supervisors will be paid for any mutually agreed pre-arranged sessions where the student failed to attend or gave very short notice of cancellation without reasonable cause. This will mean the student will not be able to meet the programme requirement for attendance at supervision. The supervisor is advised **not to offer any additional sessions at this stage**. Any missed or cancelled sessions need to be clearly noted in the supervisor's 'end of level assessment' and on the 'completion of agreement pro-forma'. This will usually mean the supervisor being approached with a new agreement to offer the student the appropriate number of additional sessions. **The student will then be invoiced by the College for reimbursement of any payments for additional supervision.**

It may not be possible for the supervisor to offer the additional sessions or there may be too many missed sessions to be met in the time available. This may mean that the student is deferred by the Board of Examiners until the supervision requirement is met.

Supervision agreements are normally within term time only.

Supervisors have to confirm the number of sessions that have been offered at the end of the respective level by returning the '**Completion of Agreement Pro forma**' to the Administrator for Supervision in College, before payment can be authorised. Failure to return the pro forma fully signed and dated by both the supervisor and the supervisee, by the due date, may result in the payment of professional fees being suspended until the next scheduled payroll.

Either party may terminate the agreement with two weeks' notice in writing.

Supervision – Professional Boundaries

The supervisor is completely independent of any involvement with the organisation in which the student is undertaking professional practice. However, it may happen that a supervisor finds that they have been allocated a student with whom they have a personal or professional connection. In this circumstance the College would expect the matter to be carefully considered and that

notification, where appropriate, of any personal or professional interest is sent to the College in writing.

When are the assessments/statements written?

Supervisors' assessments and statements and students' self-assessments are written at the same points in the Programme. The dates in the table below indicate when the **students' self-assessments are due to supervisors and when supervisors' assessments and statements are due back to students for academic year 2016/17.**

NB. STUDENTS MUST HAVE EITHER MET SUPERVISION ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS OR HAVE BEEN OFFERED THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF SESSIONS BY THE DATE THAT THE SUPERVISOR'S ASSESSMENT IS DUE TO THE STUDENTS

Due dates

Due dates when Students hand their self-assessments to Supervisors (3rd Column) and when Supervisors hand their assessments/statements back to students (4th Column)

Programme Title	Assessment/ Statement Title	Date for Student's Self-Assessment to be given to Supervisor	Date for Supervisor's Assessment/ Statement to be given back to the Student	Year
Full Time: – Level 5 September 2016 to July 2017	End of Level 5 Assessment	1 st May 2017	15 th May 2017	2017
Full Time: – Level 6 September 2016 to July 2017	End of Level 6 Assessment	24 th April 2017	8 th May 2017	2017
Distance Learning: - Level 4 – September 2016 to November 2017	Level 4 Interim Statement	23 February 2017	9 th March 2017	2017
	End of Level 4 Assessment	5 th October 2017	19 th October 2017	2017

Part Time :- Level 7 year 2 (15/17) PGDip/MA (Qualifying Route) October 2016 to November 2016	End of Level 7 Assessment	13 th October 2016	27 th October 2016	2016
Part Time :- Level 7 year 1 (16/18) PGDip/MA (Qualifying Route) October 2016 to November 2017	Interim Statement	23 rd February 2017	9 th March 2017	2017
	End of Level 7 Assessment	12 th October 2017	26 th October 2017	2017

Guidelines to Writing the Supervisor's Assessment of Student Learning

The following information relates to ALL End of Level Assessments on ALL programmes.

However, at the interim stage of Level 4 for both the Full Time and Distance Learning programmes, the supervisor will only need to complete the 'Statement of Student Learning and Attendance' which forms appendix 1 of the handbook. Supervisors must indicate whether the standard of work demonstrated by the student is appropriate to the level for which they are being assessed.

Before Writing:

The supervisor's assessment of student's learning amplifies or adds to the statements made by the student in their self-assessment. **This means that the supervisor cannot write their own assessment until the student's self-assessment has been completed and given to the supervisor.**

If for any reason, the student has failed to deliver the self-assessment by the due date, you should write your assessment with any comments you may wish to include on the circumstances in which it was written.

Writing:

Heading

Please include the following statements -

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL TO STUDENT, SUPERVISOR AND
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
SUPERVISOR'S ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING - (DATE)

STUDENT: (NAME)

SUPERVISOR: (NAME)

This assessment amplifies or adds to the statements made by the student in their self-assessment. It is based upon evidence gained through the process of supervision

Reference to Student's Self-assessment

You must state whether the student's Self-Assessment is in your view an accurate and adequate reflection of the student's learning. This is a requirement; its purpose is to indicate to the Board of Examiners the view you take of the student's assessment.

Dates of Sessions

Please ensure that the dates of all sessions that have been offered since the last assessment or from the start of the level are included either at the beginning or end of your assessment. These dates should include any cancellations or sessions that the student has not attended. Any substantial interruptions (other than Course breaks) should be noted.

Each session is to be offered for one hour only.

Organisation of content of the Supervisor's assessment

Supervisors, students and line managers are required to write their assessments according to the same structure. This ensures uniformity and helps the Board of Examiners to carry out its task more effectively.

The focus of the assessment is the identification of the student's learning through the supervision sessions. This learning will become evident to the student and the supervisor in the changed behaviour or thinking as described by the student. The noticing of this change informs the supervisor of what can be written in the assessment.

Supervisors Assessment – The Four Headings

a) The student's learning with regard to what is important to them (their attitudes, values or beliefs) in relation to making professional judgements as an informal educator.

(For example – What has the student learnt, how have they changed and why would that be significant to them? What evidence have they provided in support of this?)

b) The student's learning about themselves from participation in supervision sessions at this level.

(For example - What has the student learnt, how have they changed and why would that be significant to them? What evidence have they provided in support of this?)

c) The student's learning from significant professional and academic experiences at this level.

(For example – What has the student learnt, how have they changed and why would that be significant to them? What evidence have they provided in support of this?)

This final section of the assessment should critically explore and reflect on:

d) How the student's future practice will be affected by this learning.

(For example – How will the student's future practice change in the light of their learning? What further development is needed?)

Emphases for the Future

Please include these emphases as they can be very helpful for the student

Agreement of the Student

If the student does not agree with specific points, the student may write a letter of disagreement on a separate sheet. This is then appended to the relevant assessment or statement which also must contain a note, signed by the student, stating that the document is appended. A copy of the letter must be given to the writer of the assessment or statement. Any letters of disagreement must be lodged with the College by the due date or within three working days of the student receiving the assessment or statement, if it has been acquired after the due date.

Signatures and Dates

Please ensure that you have signed and dated your assessment and that the student does the same to indicate that they have seen the assessment.

Length

Length of End of Level assessment 1200 – 1800 words

Presentation

Assessments should be typed or word-processed on A4 paper, one side only, for ease of reading and photocopying. Please do not staple pages together and leave good margins on each side of the page.

Student References

Supervisors may write references for students if the students invite them to do so. If the reference is required prior to assessment, care should be taken not to prejudice the outcome of the Board of Examiners. The reference will be the professional opinion of the supervisor in a personal capacity and not of the College. The supervisor may include remarks about the student's suitability for the job specified. A copy of the reference should be sent to the College marked F.A.O. Administrator for Supervision.

If the supervisor does not wish to write a reference, the request for it may be passed onto the College.

Please note that individual student results from the Board of Examiners at all levels of the Programme (including any deferral, sit, resit or repeat conditions attached to the results) will be made available to sponsoring agencies and/or line managers and supervisors, after the student has received their results

Training, Development and Support

Reflective practice workshops are held at certain times throughout the year and a separate form is sent to all supervisors providing details of the forthcoming workshops.

Supervisors are eligible to apply for a place on our Professional Studies in Supervision Programme. This is a part-time post graduate distance learning programme at Masters level 7 accredited by Canterbury Christ Church University and the Standards Council for Education in Scotland. New courses are expected to commence around the middle next year.

Please contact the Administrator for supervision for further details about both these programmes.

Both the Tutor and Administrator for Supervision will be very pleased to talk to supervisors at any time regarding any supervision concerns.

Statement of Student Learning & Attendance – For Interim Level 4 and PGDip/MA Level 7 Qualifying Route

For Supervisors with students on the above programmes, you are only asked to provide the 'Statement of Student Learning and Attendance' by completing appendix 1 (Interim Level 4 & PGDip/MA Level 7 Qualifying Route - Supervisors Statement of Student Learning). Please detail the number of supervision sessions conducted since the start of the level. Any substantial interruptions (other than course breaks) or any mitigating circumstances for absence should be noted. These documents should be signed and dated and then given to the student by the appropriate due date.

