

NQSW supported year - supervision and professional development Supervision negotiation/contracting template

It is important to negotiate the time, frequency, location, structure and content of supervision. Sometimes this is known as contracting and social workers often have an individualised contract around supervision that meets specific needs.

More recently, this has often given way to broad organisational policies which have important functions about standards and accountability to employees and the public. However, negotiating your own complementary agreement about what you want to focus on within this wider policy can still be tremendously useful.

Consider the categories below and make notes to discuss an individual agreement, that you or your manager record and share, which is relevant to your needs, learning style, locality and role as a social worker. These headings are adapted for NQSWs from the Supervision Learning Resource (SSSC, 2016).

Arrangements for planned, frequent 1:1 supervision

There is no substitute for this and it is key to the wellbeing of NQSWs and the people who use our services. It should be a joint responsibility and major priority for both parties even with the work pressures and technical hurdles that may be increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Arrangements for complementary supervision

Such as with a registered social worker (if your line manager does not have this role) and any group supervision and peer reflection which is covered in the section below.

The link between supervision and other management processes

Such as probationary employment periods, annual appraisal cycles, case allocation policies and specific team or departmental goals or performance expectations.

Link with your expectations, support and CPL as an NQSW

This may include sharing your last individual learning plan that you were working with at your final placement. You could adapt this for your new role to show where you have developed and what you are still working on. You may want to consider a three-month review or a year mid-point appraisal of Continuing Professional Learning (CPL) requirements and learning opportunities to meet the required standards.

The purpose and content of sessions - including models used and how time might be divided between the normative, formative and restorative functions (this is discussed further in the web resources on supervision models).

The standards and ethics specific to the NQSW role and how you might include these in any model of supervision that you both agree to use eg see the section below on the seven-eyed model which may help with this.

Administration issues - such as agenda, recording and data handling compliance. Identifying specific cases for deeper analysis and reflection is helpful. This may give a supervisor time to read case notes in advance, avoiding spending sessions describing cases and allowing a broader, more holistic focus.

NQSW adapted 7-eyed supervision model

This is a summary of the adapted 7-eyed model of supervision which you may wish to use as a framework for NQSW supervision sessions.

There is also a supervision preparation and recording template that you can download and adapt.

1: The people using services – what & how they present

Standard: Critical thinking, professional judgement and decision making

Related standard: Communication, engagement, and relationship-based professional practice

Ethics: Respecting Diversity, Honesty and Integrity

Goal: Helping NQSW's unpack & formulating the issues

2: The NQSW's strategies and interventions

Standard: Promoting wellbeing, support and protection

Related standard: Use of knowledge, research and evidence in practice

Ethics: Human Rights and Dignity, Social Justice

Goal: Increase the NQSW's options & addressing the reasoning and timing

3: The relationship between NQSW and the people using services

Standard: Communication, engagement and relationship-based professional practice

Related standard: Working with complexity in unpredictable and ambiguous contexts

Ethics: Participation and coproduction, Self-determination

Goal: Reflecting on and using an external perspective on interpersonal & professional dynamics

4: The NQSW's skills and wellbeing in relation to their role

Standard: Self-awareness and reflexivity

Related standard: Critical thinking, professional judgement and decision making

Ethics: Respecting Diversity, Self-determination

Goal: Resilience and wellbeing issues for the NQSW as well as professional judgements

5: The supervisory relationship

Standard: Use of knowledge, research and evidence in practice

Related standard: Self-awareness and reflexivity

Ethics: Participation and coproduction

Goal: Regular review of the effectiveness of supervision and caseload dynamics

6: The supervisor offering support from their own experience/learning

Standard: Working with complexity in unpredictable and ambiguous contexts

Related standard: Promoting wellbeing, support and protection

Ethics: Honesty and Integrity

Goal: Responses to the NQSW & sharing the supervisor's own concerns or relevant experience

7: The wider contexts in which the work happens

Standard: Professional leadership

Related standard: Ethics, values and rights-based practice

Ethics: Social Justice, Partnership

Goal: Organisational, professional and societal issues including Codes of practice, Codes of ethics, local policies & inter-agency relationships

This resource forms part of a suite of resources for NQSWs and their employers in Scotland, part of our evolving national project to develop an NQSW supported year. You can contact us for more information at nqswproject@sssc.uk.com.