Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions

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Introduction

The *Ethical Framework* sets out the expected ethical principles, values and good practice standards for BACP members.

As members and registrants of BACP, we have committed ourselves to the principles and values set out in this *Ethical Framework* and recognise that our membership or registration may be at risk if we fail to fulfil our commitments.

This *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions* is the main point of reference for decisions in professional conduct hearings.

Using the *Ethical Framework*

You should read and understand the *Ethical Framework* before working with clients. This framework is designed to help you provide your clients with a secure base for your work together. It is good practice to integrate the *Ethical Framework* into your work and to use it as a resource to help you face any challenges and issues as they arise. This works much better than just turning to it in an emergency or after something has gone wrong.

As a framework, it creates a shared structure within which we all work but with the flexibility to respond to the needs of different contexts and client groups. There are three main sections:

- *Our commitment to clients* provides a summary and overview. You may use this as a separate document to give to your clients or include it in the information you provide about your service.
- *Ethics* is designed to help you understand the thinking behind how we work with clients. It can be used in supervision to think through any issues or dilemmas.
- *Good practice* considers the practicalities of putting our ethics into action.

The *Good Practice in Action* resources, and other resources on the BACP website, provide additional non-binding practice guidance which you may find relevant or useful. The binding words are those used in the *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions*, which should be your ultimate point of reference to decide what is appropriate to your role and setting.

Key terms

A *practitioner* is a member or registrant of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy who is providing therapeutically-informed services, particularly coaching, counselling, pastoral care, psychotherapy or using counselling skills. This includes being a supervisor, trainer, educator of practitioners, or researcher of any aspect of the counselling professions.

Therapeutically-informed services are developed from and informed by the theory and practices used in talking and listening therapies, typically coaching, counselling, pastoral care, psychotherapy or using counselling skills. Such theories and practices may be drawn from a wide academic and professional base, including neurology, psychoanalysis, psychology, social sciences and other disciplines.

A *client* is anyone in receipt of coaching, counselling, pastoral care, psychotherapy or counselling skills from a member or registrant of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. All clients are entitled to receive services that satisfy the commitments stated in this *Ethical Framework* in ways that are appropriate to the type of service being provided and its setting.

All the principles of the *Ethical Framework* will apply to working with trainees and supervisees, particularly to ensure that they are treated with respect, provided with services that meet the required standards, and are protected from exploitation or abuse by anyone with professional power or authority over them. Trainees and supervisees will receive the same commitments and ethical standards as any client receiving services from a member of the counselling professions.

Trainees will fulfil all the commitments to clients within the *Ethical Framework* when working as practitioners with members of the public as their clients. Good Practice point 81 sets out the commitments for working with other trainees to learn new knowledge and skills.

The principles of the *Ethical Framework* apply where appropriate to the participants in research – for further guidance see Good Practice points 84–90 and the BACP *Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions*.

Our *responsibilities* are set out as full or qualified commitments. We are fully and unconditionally committed to fulfilling a specific requirement where we state 'we will …' or 'we must …'. Where we consider that a requirement may need to be varied for good ethical reasons, we state that 'we will usually …'.

We are committing ourselves to being openly accountable and willing to explain how we have implemented any of these obligations to people with a valid interest in our work.

Our commitment to clients

Clients need to be able to participate freely as they work with practitioners of the counselling professions towards their desired goals. This requires clients to be able to trust their practitioner with their wellbeing and sensitive personal information. Therefore, as members or registrants of BACP, we take being trustworthy as a serious ethical commitment. We have agreed that we will:

1.
Put clients first by:

a. making clients our primary concern while we are working with them

b. providing an appropriate standard of service to our clients.

2.
Work to professional standards by:

a. working within our competence

b. keeping our skills and knowledge up to date

c. collaborating with colleagues to improve the quality of what is being offered to clients

d. ensuring that our wellbeing is sufficient to sustain the quality of the work

e. keeping accurate and appropriate records.

3.
Show respect by:

a. valuing each client as a unique person

b. protecting client confidentiality and privacy

c. agreeing with clients on how we will work together

d. working in partnership with clients.

4.
Build an appropriate relationship with clients by:

a. communicating clearly what clients have a right to expect from us

b. communicating any benefits, costs and commitments that clients may reasonably expect

c. respecting the boundaries between our work with clients and what lies outside that work

d. not exploiting or abusing clients

e. listening out for how clients experience our working together.

5.
Maintain integrity by:

a. being honest about the work

b. communicating our qualifications, experience and working methods accurately

c. working ethically and with careful consideration of how we fulfil our legal obligations.

6.
Demonstrate accountability and candour by:

a. being willing to discuss with clients openly and honestly any known risks involved in the work and how best to work towards our clients' desired outcomes by communicating any benefits, costs and commitments that clients may reasonably expect

b. ensuring that clients are promptly informed about anything that has occurred which places the client at risk of harm or causes harm in our work together, whether or not clients are aware of it, and quickly taking action to limit or repair any harm as far as possible

c. reviewing our work with clients in supervision

d. monitoring how clients experience our work together and the effects of our work with them.

Ethics

1.

Our ethics are based on values, principles and personal moral qualities that underpin and inform the interpretation and application of *Our commitment to clients* and *Good practice*.

Values

2.

Values are a useful way of expressing general ethical commitments that underpin the purpose and goals of our actions.

3.

Our fundamental values include a commitment to:

- respecting human rights and dignity
- alleviating symptoms of personal distress and suffering
- enhancing people's wellbeing and capabilities
- improving the quality of relationships between people
- increasing personal resilience and effectiveness
- facilitating a sense of self that is meaningful to the person(s) concerned within their personal and cultural context
- appreciating the variety of human experience and culture
- protecting the safety of clients
- ensuring the integrity of practitioner-client relationships
- enhancing the quality of professional knowledge and its application
- striving for the fair and adequate provision of services.

4.

Values inform principles. They become more precisely defined and action-orientated when expressed as a principle.

Principles

5.

Principles direct attention to important ethical responsibilities. Our core principles are:

Being trustworthy:
honouring the trust placed in the practitioner.

Autonomy:
respect for the client's right to be self-governing.

Beneficence:
a commitment to promoting the client's wellbeing.

Non-maleficence:
a commitment to avoiding harm to the client.

Justice:
the fair and impartial treatment of all clients and the provision of adequate services.

Self-respect:
fostering the practitioner's self-knowledge, integrity and care for self.

6.

Ethical decisions that are strongly supported by one or more of these principles without any contradiction with the others may be regarded as well-founded.

7.

However, practitioners may encounter circumstances in which it is impossible to reconcile all the applicable principles. This may require choosing which principles to prioritise. A decision or course of action does not necessarily become unethical merely because it is controversial or because other practitioners would have reached different conclusions in similar circumstances. A practitioner's obligation is to consider all the relevant circumstances with as much care as possible and to be appropriately accountable for decisions made.

Personal moral qualities

8.

Personal moral qualities are internalised values that shape how we relate to others and our environment. They represent a moral energy or drive that may operate unconsciously and unexamined. This moral energy or drive is ethically more beneficial when consciously examined from time to time and used to motivate our ethical development or shape how we work towards a good society.

9.

'Personal moral qualities' are a contemporary application of 'virtues' from moral philosophy.

10.

The practitioner's personal and relational moral qualities are of the utmost importance. Their perceived presence or absence will have a strong influence on how relationships with clients and colleagues develop and whether they are of sufficient quality and resilience to support the work.

11.

High levels of compatibility between personal and professional moral qualities will usually enhance the integrity and resilience of any relationship.

12.

Key personal qualities to which members and registrants are strongly encouraged to aspire include:

Candour:
openness with clients about anything that places them at risk of harm or causes actual harm.

Care:
benevolent, responsible and competent attentiveness to someone's needs, wellbeing and personal agency.

Courage:
the capacity to act in spite of known fears, risks and uncertainty.

Diligence:
the conscientious deployment of the skills and knowledge needed to achieve a beneficial outcome.

Empathy:
the ability to communicate understanding of another person's experience from that person's perspective.

Fairness:
impartial and principled in decisions and actions concerning others in ways that promote equality of opportunity and maximise the capability of the people concerned.

Humility:
the ability to assess accurately and acknowledge one's own strengths and weaknesses.

Identity:
sense of self in relationship to others that forms the basis of responsibility, resilience and motivation.

Integrity:
commitment to being moral in dealings with others, including personal straightforwardness, honesty and coherence.

Resilience:
the capacity to work with the client's concerns without being personally diminished.

Respect:
showing appropriate esteem for people and their understanding of themselves.

Sincerity:
a personal commitment to consistency between what is professed and what is done.

Wisdom:
possession of sound judgement that informs practice.

Conclusion

13.

The challenge of working ethically means that practitioners will inevitably encounter situations that require responses to unexpected issues, resolution of dilemmas, and solutions to problems. A good understanding of the ethics that underpin our work is a valuable resource which is helpful in making significant decisions. The use of an ethical problem-solving model and discussion about ethics are essential to good practice. This *Ethical Framework* is intended to assist practitioners by directing attention to the variety of ethical factors that may need to be taken into consideration and to identify alternative ways of approaching ethics that may prove more useful.

14.

No statement of ethics can eliminate the difficulty of making professional judgements in circumstances that may be constantly changing and full of uncertainties. By accepting this statement of ethics, members and registrants of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy are committing themselves to engaging with the challenge of striving to be ethical, even when doing so involves making difficult decisions or acting courageously.

Good practice

1.
As members of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) we are committed to sustaining and advancing good practice.

2.
This section of the *Ethical Framework* looks behind *Our commitment to clients* and *Ethics* to consider their implications for *Good practice* in more detail.

3.
It sets out what can be expected of all members and registrants of BACP as practitioners providing therapeutically-informed services, particularly coaching, counselling, pastoral care, psychotherapy and using counselling skills. This includes being a supervisor, trainer, educator of practitioners, or researcher of any aspect of the counselling professions. Trainees will fulfil all the commitments to clients within the *Ethical Framework* when working with members of the public as their clients. Good practice point 81 sets out the commitments for working with other trainees to learn new knowledge and skills.

4.
As members and registrants of BACP, we have committed ourselves to the principles and values set out in this *Ethical Framework* and recognise that our membership or registration may be at risk if we fail to fulfil our commitments.

5.
Our responsibilities are set out as full or qualified obligations. We are fully and unconditionally committed to fulfilling a specific requirement of Good practice where we state 'we will…' or 'we must…'. Where we consider a requirement may need to be varied for good ethical reasons, we state that 'we will usually…'.

6.
We are committing ourselves to being openly accountable and willing to explain how we have implemented any of these obligations to people with a valid interest in our work.

Putting clients first

7.

We will make each client the primary focus of our attention and our work during our sessions together.

8.

Any professional or personal interests that conflict with putting a client's interests first will be carefully considered in consultation with a supervisor, an independent experienced colleague or, when appropriate, discussed with the client affected before services are offered.

9.

We will give careful consideration to how we manage situations when protecting clients or others from serious harm or when compliance with the law may require overriding a client's explicit wishes or breaching their confidentiality – see also 10, 55 and 64.

10.

In exceptional circumstances, the need to safeguard our clients or others from serious harm may require us to override our commitment to making our client's wishes and confidentiality our primary concern. We may need to act in ways that will support any investigations or actions necessary to prevent serious harm to our clients or others. In such circumstances, we will do our best to respect the parts of our client's wishes or confidences that do not need to be overridden in order to prevent serious harm.

11.

We share a responsibility with all other members of our professions for the safety and wellbeing of all clients and their protection from exploitation or unsafe practice. We will take action to prevent harm caused by practitioners to any client – see also 24.

12.

We will do everything we can to develop and protect our clients' trust.

Working to professional standards

13.

We must be competent to deliver the services being offered to at least fundamental professional standards or better. When we consider satisfying professional standards requires consulting others with relevant expertise, seeking second opinions, or making referrals, we will do so in ways that meet our commitments and obligations for client confidentiality and data protection.

14.

We will keep skills and knowledge up to date by:

a. reading professional journals, books and/or reliable electronic resources

b. keeping ourselves informed of any relevant research and evidence-based guidance

c. discussions with colleagues working with similar issues

d. reviewing our knowledge and skills in supervision or discussion with experienced practitioners

e. regular continuing professional development to update knowledge and skills

f. keeping up to date with the law, regulations and any other requirements, including guidance from this Association, relevant to our work.

15.

We will keep accurate records that:

- are adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary for the type of service being provided
- comply with the applicable data protection requirements – see www.ico.org.uk.

16.

We will collaborate with colleagues over our work with specific clients where this is consistent with client consent and will enhance services to the client.

17.

We will work collaboratively with colleagues to improve services and offer mutual support – see 56–59 Working with Colleagues and in Teams.

18.

We will maintain our own physical and psychological health at a level that enables us to work effectively with our clients – see 91 Care of self as a practitioner.

19.

We will be covered by adequate insurance when providing services directly or indirectly to the public.

20.

We will fulfil the ethical principles and values set out in this *Ethical Framework* regardless of whether working online, face-to-face or using any other methods of communication. The technical and practical knowledge may vary according to how services are delivered but all our services will be delivered to at least fundamental professional standards or better.

Respect

21.

We will respect our clients' privacy and dignity.

22.

We will respect our clients as people by providing services that:

a. endeavour to demonstrate equality, value diversity and ensure inclusion for all clients

b. avoid unfairly discriminating against clients or colleagues

c. accept we are all vulnerable to prejudice and recognise the importance of self-inquiry, personal feedback and professional development

d. work with issues of identity in open-minded ways that respect the client's autonomy and be sensitive to whether this is viewed as individual or relational autonomy

e. challenge assumptions that any sexual orientation or gender identity is inherently preferable to any other and will not attempt to bring about a change of sexual orientation or gender identity or seek to suppress an individual's expression of sexual orientation or gender identity

f. make adjustments to overcome barriers to accessibility, so far as is reasonably possible, for clients of any ability wishing to engage with a service

g. recognise when our knowledge of key aspects of our client's background, identity or lifestyle is inadequate and take steps to inform ourselves from other sources where available and appropriate, rather than expecting the client to teach us

h. are open-minded with clients who appear similar to ourselves or possess familiar characteristics so that we do not suppress or neglect what is distinctive in their lives.

23.

We will take the law concerning equality, diversity and inclusion into careful consideration and strive for a higher standard than the legal minimum.

24.

We will challenge colleagues or others involved in delivering related services whose views appear to be unfairly discriminatory and take action to protect clients, if necessary – see 11.

25.

We will do all that we reasonably can to ensure that our clients are participating on a voluntary basis. Hesitant clients or clients who feel under pressure from other people or agencies to work with us will have their reservations acknowledged and taken into account in how services are offered.

26.

We will work with our clients on the basis of their informed consent and agreement. We recognise that exceptional situations may arise where we may need to prioritise the safety of the client or others over our client's wishes and confidentiality – see 10.

27.

Careful consideration will be given to working with children and young people that:

a. takes account of their capacity to give informed consent, considering whether it is appropriate to seek the consent of others who have parental responsibility for the young person, and their best interests

b. demonstrates knowledge and skills about ways of working that are appropriate to the young person's development and how relationships are formed

c. demonstrates a sound knowledge of the law relevant to working with children and young people and their human rights

d. is informed about the current culture and customs that affect parenting/care giving and how children and young people interact with each other and other significant people in their lives.

28.

We will give careful consideration to obtaining and respecting the consent of vulnerable adult clients, wherever they have the capacity to give consent, or involving anyone who provides care for these clients when appropriate.

29.

Our work with clients will be based on professional partnerships with them that aim to increase their wellbeing, capability and/or performance.

Building an appropriate relationship

30.

We will usually provide clients with the information they ought to know in advance in order to make an informed decision about the services they want to receive, how these services will be delivered and how information or data about them will be protected. Where the urgency or seriousness of the situation requires us to intervene before providing such information, we will do so at the first appropriate opportunity.

31.

We will give careful consideration to how we reach agreement with clients and will contract with them about the terms on which our services will be provided. Attention will be given to:

a. reaching an agreement or contract that takes account of each client's expressed needs and choices so far as possible

b. communicating terms and conditions of the agreement or contract in ways easily understood by the client and appropriate to their context

c. stating clearly how a client's confidentiality and privacy will be protected and any circumstances in which confidential or private information will be communicated to others

d. providing the client with a record or easy access to a record of what has been agreed

e. keeping a record of what has been agreed and of any changes or clarifications when they occur

f. being watchful for any potential contractual incompatibilities between agreements with our clients and any other contractual agreements applicable to the work being undertaken and proactively strive to avoid these wherever possible or promptly alert the people with the power or responsibility to resolve these contradictions.

32.

We will periodically review each client's progress and, when practicable, seek our client's views on how we are working together.

33.

We will establish and maintain appropriate professional and personal boundaries in our relationships with clients by ensuring that:

a. these boundaries are consistent with the aims of working together and beneficial to the client

b. any dual or multiple relationships will be avoided where the risks of harm to the client outweigh any benefits to the client

c. reasonable care is taken to separate and maintain a distinction between our personal and professional presence on social media where this could result in harmful dual relationships with clients

d. the impact of any dual or multiple relationships will be periodically reviewed in supervision and discussed with clients when appropriate. They may also be discussed with any colleagues or managers in order to enhance the integrity of the work being undertaken.

34.

We will not have sexual relationships with or behave sexually towards our clients, supervisees or trainees.

35.

We will not exploit or abuse our clients in any way: financially, emotionally, physically, sexually or spiritually.

36.

We will avoid having sexual relationships with or behaving sexually towards people whom we know to be close to our clients in order to avoid undermining our clients' trust in us or damaging the therapeutic relationship.

37.

We will avoid continuing or resuming any relationships with former clients that could harm the client or damage any benefits from the therapeutic work undertaken. We recognise that conflicts of interest and issues of power or dependence may continue after our working relationship with a client, supervisee or trainee has formally ended. Therefore:

a. We will exercise caution before entering into personal or business relationships with former clients

b. We will avoid sexual or intimate relationships with former clients or people close to them. Exceptionally, such a relationship will only be permissible following careful consideration in supervision and, whenever possible, following discussion with experienced colleagues or others concerned about the integrity of the counselling professions, when:

- enough time has elapsed or the circumstances of the people concerned have sufficiently changed to establish a distinction between the former and proposed new relationship
- any therapeutic dynamics from the former relationship have been sufficiently resolved to enable beginning a different type of relationship. (This may not be possible with some clients or inappropriate to some therapeutic ways of working.)
- an equivalent service to the one provided by the practitioner is available to the former client, should this be wanted in future
- the practitioner has taken demonstrable care in ensuring that the new relationship has integrity and is not exploitative

c. We will be professionally accountable if the relationship becomes detrimental to the former client or damages the standing of the profession.

Breaks and endings

38.
We will inform clients about any fixed limits to the duration or number of sessions as part of the contracting process.

39.
We will endeavour to inform clients well in advance of approaching endings and be sensitive to our client's expectations and concerns when we are approaching the end of our work together.

40.
We will inform clients in advance of any planned breaks in working together, for example, holidays or medical treatments, and give as much notice as possible.

41.
Any unplanned breaks due to illness or other causes will be managed in ways to minimise inconveniencing clients and, for extended breaks, may include offering to put clients in touch with other practitioners.

42.
In the event of death or illness of sufficient severity to prevent the practitioner communicating directly with clients, we will have appointed someone to communicate with clients and support them in making alternative arrangements where this is desired. The person undertaking this work will be bound by the confidentiality agreed between the practitioner and client, and will usually be a trusted colleague, a specially appointed trustee or a supervisor.

Integrity

43.
We will maintain high standards of honesty and probity in all aspects of our work.

44.
We will be as open and as communicative with our clients, colleagues and others as is consistent with the purpose, methods and confidentiality of the service.

45.
Whenever we communicate our qualifications, professional experience and working methods, we will do so accurately and honestly. All reasonable requests for this information will be answered promptly.

46.
We will give conscientious consideration to the law and how we fulfil any legal requirements concerning our work – see also 14f, 23 and 70.

47.
We will promptly notify this Association about any criminal charges or disciplinary procedures brought against us. We will also notify this Association of civil claims arising from work in the counselling professions, or if we have been declared bankrupt.

48.
We will avoid any actions that will bring our profession into disrepute.

49.
We will encourage clients to raise any concerns about our work with them at the earliest possible opportunity, give any concerns careful consideration and, when appropriate, attempt to resolve them. Clients will be informed of any applicable complaints processes open to them including the Professional Conduct Procedures of this Association www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/protecting-the-public/professional-conduct.

Accountability and candour

50.
We will take responsibility for how we offer our clients opportunities to work towards their desired outcomes and the safety of the services we provide or have responsibility for overseeing.

51.
We will discuss with clients how best to work towards their desired outcomes and any known risks involved in the work.

52.
We will ensure candour by being open and honest about anything going wrong and promptly inform our clients of anything in our work that places clients at risk of harm, or has caused them harm, whether or not the client(s) affected are aware of what has occurred by:

a. taking immediate action to prevent or limit any harm

b. repairing any harm caused, so far as possible

c. offering an apology when this is appropriate

d. notifying and discussing with our supervisor and/or manager what has occurred

e. investigating and take action to avoid whatever has gone wrong being repeated.

53.
We will consider carefully in supervision how we work with clients – see 60–73.

54.
We will monitor how clients experience our work together and the effects of the work with them in ways appropriate to the type of service being offered.

Confidentiality

55.
We will protect the confidentiality and privacy of clients by:

a. actively protecting information about clients from unauthorised access or disclosure

b. informing clients about how the use of personal data and information that they share with us will be used and who is within the circle of confidentiality, particularly with access to personally identifiable information

c. requiring that all recipients of personally identifiable information have agreed to treat such information as confidential in accordance with any legal requirements and what has been agreed with the client at the time of disclosure

d. informing clients about any reasonably foreseeable limitations of privacy or confidentiality in advance of our work together, for example, communications to ensure or enhance the quality of work in supervision or training, to protect a client or others from serious harm including safeguarding commitments, and when legally required or authorised to disclose

e. taking care that all contractual requirements concerning the management and communication of client information are mutually compatible

f. ensuring that disclosure of personally identifiable information about clients is authorised by client consent or that there is a legally and ethically recognised justification

g. using thoroughly anonymised information about clients where this provides a practical alternative to sharing identifiable information.

Working with colleagues and in teams

56.

Professional relationships will be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect. We will endeavour to build good working relationships and systems of communication that enhance services to clients.

57.

Practitioners will treat colleagues fairly and foster their capability and equality of opportunity.

58.

Practitioners will not undermine any colleague's relationship with clients by making unjustifiable or ill-judged comments.

59.

All communications between colleagues about clients should be on a professional basis and thus purposeful, respectful and consistent with the management of confidences agreed with clients.

Supervision

60.

Supervision is essential to how practitioners sustain good practice throughout their working life. Supervision provides practitioners with regular and ongoing opportunities to reflect in depth about all aspects of their practice in order to work as effectively, safely and ethically as possible. Supervision also sustains the personal resourcefulness required to undertake the work.

61.

Good supervision is much more than case management. It includes working in depth on the relationship between practitioner and client in order to work towards desired outcomes and positive effects. This requires adequate levels of privacy, safety and containment for the supervisee to undertake this work. Therefore a substantial part or preferably all of supervision needs to be independent of line management.

62.

Supervision requires additional skills and knowledge to those used for providing services directly to clients. Therefore supervisors require adequate levels of expertise acquired through training and/or experience. Supervisors will also ensure that they work with appropriate professional support and their own supervision.

63.

All supervisors will model high levels of good practice for the work they supervise, particularly with regard to expected levels of competence and professionalism, relationship building, the management of personal boundaries, any dual relationships, conflicts of interest and avoiding exploitation.

64.

All communications concerning clients made in the context of supervision will be consistent with confidentiality agreements with the clients concerned and compatible with any applicable agency policy.

65.

Careful consideration will be given to the undertaking of key responsibilities for clients and how these responsibilities are allocated between the supervisor, supervisee and any line manager or others with responsibilities for the service provided. Consideration needs to be given to how any of these arrangements and responsibilities will be communicated to clients in ways that are supportive of and appropriate to the work being undertaken. These arrangements will usually be reviewed at least once a year, or more frequently if required.

66.

Trainee supervision will require the supervisor to collaborate with training and placement providers in order to ensure that the trainee's work with clients satisfies professional standards. The arrangements for collaboration will usually be agreed and discussed with the trainee in advance of working with clients.

67.

When supervising qualified and/or experienced practitioners, the weight of responsibility for ensuring that the supervisee's work meets professional standards will primarily rest with the supervisee.

68.

Supervisors and supervisees will periodically consider how responsibility for work with clients is implemented in practice and how any difficulties or concerns are being addressed.

69.

The application of this *Ethical Framework* to the work with clients will be discussed in supervision regularly and not less than once a year.

70.

Supervisors will conscientiously consider the application of the law concerning supervision to their role and responsibilities.

71.

Supervisors will keep accurate records of key points discussed in supervision.

72.

Supervisees have a responsibility to be open and honest in supervision and to draw attention to any significant difficulties or challenges that they may be facing in their work with clients. Supervisors are responsible for providing opportunities for their supervisees to discuss any of their practice-related difficulties without blame or unjustified criticism and, when appropriate, to support their supervisees in taking positive actions to resolve difficulties.

73.

Supervision is recommended to anyone working in roles that require regularly giving or receiving emotionally challenging communications, or engaging in relationally complex and challenging roles.

Training and education

74.

All trainers will have the skills, attitudes and knowledge required to be competent teachers and facilitators of learning for what is being provided.

75.

Any information about the teaching, education or learning opportunities being provided will be accurate and enable potential students to make an informed choice.

76.

Any selection of students will be fair, respectful and transparent to candidates and use procedures designed to select suitable students.

77.

Any assessments of students will be fair, respectful and provide reasoned explanations for the outcome to the students.

78.

Care will be taken when using examples of work with clients for teaching purposes that the client information is used with the consent of the person or sufficiently anonymised so that the person concerned cannot be identified by any means reasonably likely to be used.

79.

Trainers and educators will model high levels of good practice in their work, particularly with regard to expected levels of competence and professionalism, relationship building, the management of personal boundaries, any dual relationships, conflicts of interest and avoiding exploitation.

80.

Trainers and educators will encourage trainees to raise any concerns at the earliest opportunity and have processes and policies for addressing any trainee's concerns. Trainers and educators are responsible for providing opportunities for trainees to discuss any of their practice-related difficulties without blame or unjustified criticism and, when appropriate, to support trainees in taking positive actions to resolve difficulties.

Trainees

81.

Trainees working with each other will:

a. relate respectfully to others and endeavour to support each others' learning

b. follow good ethical practice when working with each other, for example when practising skills or in personal development.

82.

In the interests of openness and honesty with clients:

a. trainees on a practitioner-qualifying course working with clients will inform clients (or ensure that clients have been informed) that they are trainees

b. trainees who are undertaking post-qualification CPD or further training will be guided by any applicable training requirements when using their professional and ethical judgement about whether to inform clients that they are in training.

83.

All trainees will:

a. seek their clients' permission to use any information from work with them for training purposes, for example, in presentations, case studies or as assessed practice. Alternatively, any report of work undertaken will be so thoroughly anonymised that the identity of the person concerned cannot be identified by any means reasonably likely to be used. Consent is required if anonymity cannot be assured or when required by the training provider's instructions or regulations

b. ensure that they deliver services that satisfy the minimum professional standards when working as practitioners with members of the public. This standard may be achieved with the assistance of appropriate professional support

c. collaborate with their trainers, placement providers, supervisors and other professional advisers to provide services to their clients that satisfy professional standards by being undertaken with reasonable care and skill

d. be watchful for any incompatibilities between contractual requirements that have implications for work with clients, for example, between agreements with clients, training providers and placements, and seek appropriate support in order to ensure that all contractual requirements are compatible

e. be open and honest with trainers, placement providers and supervisors about all issues relevant to their selection, training, supervision and professional practice.

Research

84.

We value research and systematic inquiry by practitioners as enhancing our professional knowledge and providing an evidence-base for practice in ways that benefit our clients.

85.

We will usually support and provide opportunities for research if it is compatible with the services we provide.

86.

When undertaking research we will be rigorously attentive to the quality and integrity of the research process, the knowledge claims arising from the research and how the results are disseminated.

87.

All research that we undertake will be guided by the *BACP Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions*.

88.

All participants in research will do so on the basis of explicit informed consent.

89.

All research will be reviewed in advance to ensure that the rights and interests of participants have been considered independently of the researcher.

90.

The research methods used will comply with standards of good practice in any services being delivered and will not adversely affect clients.

Care of self as a practitioner

91.

We will take responsibility for our own wellbeing as essential to sustaining good practice with our clients by:

a. taking precautions to protect our own physical safety

b. monitoring and maintaining our own psychological and physical health, particularly that we are sufficiently resilient and resourceful to undertake our work in ways that satisfy professional standards

c. seeking professional support and services as the need arises

d. keeping a healthy balance between our work and other aspects of life.

Responding to ethical dilemmas and issues

92.

We recognise that professional and ethical issues, problems and dilemmas will arise from time to time and are an unavoidable part of our practice.

93.

We will use our supervision and any other available professional resources to support and challenge how we respond to such situations. We will give careful consideration to the best approaches to ethical problem-solving.

94.

We will take responsibility for considering how best to act in such situations and will be ready to explain why we decided to respond in the way we did.