

APA Ethics and Practice – Guidelines for Supervisors/Supervisees

Introduction

It has become increasingly clear that standards regarding APA Ethics and Practice as well as Guidelines for Supervisors/Supervisees need to be established. To this aim a Standards Committee was formed and a number of proposals have been put forward. It is generally acknowledged that a specific supervisor needs to meet certain requirements and have a certain level of experience in order to undertake the supervision of not only those applying for APA membership but also for the supervision of other APA members should they require it.

The purpose of this ‘APA Ethics and Practice – Guidelines for Supervisors/Supervisees’ is to inform and protect supervisors/supervisees, and establishes standards and accountability of supervisors and supervision practices.

A *supervisor* means a person who fulfils all the criteria of an APA Supervisor as set out by the APA Standards Committee from time to time, has applied to the APA and been approved by the APA Standards Committee to be a Supervisor.

A *supervisee* means a person holding an APA Associate Membership who needs to complete the required supervision hours to be eligible for Professional Membership, or an external person (non-member) who requires the supervision hours for Professional Membership. It is also those who have Professional Membership or are supervisors themselves who seek their own supervision.

These ethical standards and guidelines (*APA Ethics and Practice– Guidelines for Supervisors/Supervisees*) cannot expressly cover every conceivable situation that may occur. The absence of a specific standard or guideline for a particular kind of conduct does not mean that such conduct is ethical. Accordingly, while the specific wording of these standards is important, those utilising or interpreting these ethical standards and guidelines should always take the spirit and intent of the principles into consideration.

There are three sections to this ‘APA Ethics and Practice – Guidelines for Supervisors/Supervisees.

A. Why the Need for Supervision?

B. Ethics and Practice

1. The Nature of Supervision
2. Issues of Responsibility
3. Issues of Competence
4. The Management of the Supervision Work & Code of Practice
5. Confidentiality.

C. Guidelines for Supervision

1. Supervisor Requirements
2. Guidelines for Supervisees

A. Why the Need for Supervision?

If experienced astrological practitioners recognise the need for continuing supervision, it goes without saying that beginning astrologers also require supervision. Realising that they need skills to work effectively with clients on concerns or issues, beginning astrologers tend to seek the opportunity to discuss their experiences with an experienced professional. Thus it becomes an ethical and practical concern that appropriate supervision is provided to the beginning professional astrologer for both the sake of the client's welfare and the beginning practitioner's personal growth. *Supervision is for most professional bodies, within the human services sector, an ongoing process* but the extra time given specifically for supervision is particularly needed for those who have finalised their astrological studies and are beginning to practice as an astrologer.

The willingness to recognise and deal with self-doubts, anxiety, client projections coupled with other concerns or issues that arise when beginning to practice professionally as opposed to denying concerns by possible pretences or defences, is a mark of courage. That we all have self-doubts and anxieties is perfectly normal, what counts is how we deal with them. Supervision is one way that allows the possibility for rich meaningful exchanges that enable an open discussion and the gaining of support from the supervisor or others in the group (if in the case of group supervision) who probably have similar concerns and doubts.

Countertransference is one area we all need to face and recognise in our work. This occurs when our own needs or unresolved personal conflicts, our own aspects become entangled with the client's. When an astrologer is facing particular issues in their own life or from their own life's history clients who have similar issues in their lives will seek a consultation. When this occurs it is very easy to lose all objectivity, so it becomes *essential to find the time and space to focus on this and ourselves, and it is this opportunity that supervision provides.*

By dealing with the reactions stirred up by a particular client, we can learn much about how the needs and unfinished business in our own life are not only bogging us down but also, by way of transference, stand in the way of understanding and being effective for our clients.

Recognising how our needs intrude in our work is one step in the right direction, but we also need to be willing to continually explore what we are seeing in ourselves, otherwise we run the risk of using our clients and others in our life, to meet our unfulfilled needs.

Supervision as a developmental process exists for three reasons:

- to protect clients
- to improve the ability of professional astrologers to provide value to their clients
- to monitor the self-care of the astrologers.

B. Ethics and Practice

A Supervisor is expected to observe the following:

1. The Nature of Supervision

- 1.1 Ensure that the supervisee is addressing the needs of the client and that the clients' interests are protected and promoted.
- 1.2 Supervision is a formal collaborative process. The term 'supervision' encompasses a number of functions concerned with monitoring, developing and supporting individuals in their astrological practice.
- 1.3 To this end, supervision is concerned with:
 - i. the relationship between supervisee and client being enhanced and more effective
 - ii. monitoring and supporting the supervisee in their role as a Professional Astrologer
 - iii. the relationship between the supervisee and the supervisor, in order to enable the supervisee to develop professional identity through *reflection* on the work, in the context of this relationship, which will be both critical and supportive
 - iv. ensuring that ethical standards are maintained throughout the supervisory work.
- 1.4 Supervision is therefore *not* primarily concerned with:
 - i. astrological training
 - ii. personal psychotherapy/counselling of the supervisee
 However, the skills associated with these activities are central to competent supervision.
- 1.5 Supervision is to enhance self-knowledge and develop the capacity of the supervisee to self-critique.
- 1.6 The supervisory relationship must by its nature be confidential.
- 1.7 APA Supervisors should not work without regular supervision for themselves.

2. Issues of Responsibility

- 2.1 Given that one of the primary purposes of supervision is to monitor, develop and support individuals in their astrological roles in order to enable a professional development and identity through reflection:
 - i. Supervisees are responsible for their work with the client, and for presenting and exploring as honestly as possible their experiences of that work with the supervisor
 - ii. Supervisors are responsible for providing a supportive role while also helping supervisees reflect critically upon that work. It is important that both parties are able to work together effectively.
- 2.2 Supervisors are responsible, with supervisees, for ensuring that they make best use of the supervision time.
- 2.3 Supervisors and supervisees are both responsible for setting and maintaining clear boundaries between working relationships and friendships or other relationships, and for making explicit the boundaries between supervision, counselling and training.
- 2.4 Supervisors and supervisees must distinguish between supervision and counselling. They would not normally expect to mix the two. On the rare occasions when the supervisor might engage in counselling with the supervisee a clear contract must be negotiated and any counselling done must not impact on the supervision time.
- 2.5 Supervisors are responsible for the observation of the principles embodied in the 'APA Ethics and Practice – Guidelines for Supervisors/Supervisees'.
- 2.6 Supervisors must recognise the value and dignity of supervisees as people, irrespective of astrological preference, religion, origin, status, sexual orientation, age, belief or contribution to society.
- 2.7 Supervisors are responsible for encouraging and facilitating the self-development of others, while also establishing and maintaining clear agreements, which indicate the responsibility of supervisees for their own continuous learning and self-monitoring.
- 2.8 Supervisors and supervisees are responsible for regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the supervision arrangements, and for considering through joint consultation when it is appropriate to change them.
- 2.9 Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the satisfaction of their own needs is not dependent upon the supervisory relationship, and they should not exploit this relationship.
- 2.10 The supervisor and supervisee should both consider their respective legal liabilities to each other, the APA, and the client. (The APA accepts no legal responsibility for the Supervisor, Supervisee or the client. It is expected that Insurance (e.g. professional indemnity insurance) is covered by the individual Supervisor/Supervisee.

3. Issues of Competence

Supervisors:

- 3.1 should continually seek ways of increasing their own professional development, including, wherever possible, undertaking specific training in the development of supervision skills
- 3.2 must monitor their supervision work and be prepared to be accountable to their colleagues for the work they do
- 3.3 must monitor the limits of their competence and act accordingly in the best interests of the supervisee
- 3.4 are strongly encouraged to make arrangements for their own consultancy and support to help them evaluate their supervision work
- 3.5 have a responsibility to model a high level of professional integrity and self-awareness.

CODE OF PRACTICE

4. The Management of the Supervision Work & Code of Practice

Introduction

This Code of Practice is intended to give more specific information and guidance regarding the implementation of the principles embodied in the Code of Ethics for the Supervision of Astrologer and supervisee.

In order to establish an effective supervision contract, the following points should be considered:

- 4.1 Before embarking on a supervision contract, supervisors should ascertain that supervisees have met all training requirements.
- 4.2 Supervisors should inform supervisees (as appropriate) about their own training, philosophy and theoretical approach, qualifications, and the methods they use.
- 4.3 Supervisors should be explicit regarding practical arrangements for supervision, and pay particular regard to the length of contract time, the frequency of contact and the privacy of the venue.
- 4.4 Fees required should be arranged in advance.
- 4.5 Supervisors and supervisees should make explicit the expectations and requirements they have of each other, and each party should assess the value of working with the other.
- 4.6 If, in the course of supervision, it appears that counselling or therapy would be beneficial to a supervisee, the supervisor should discuss the issue and, if appropriate, make a suitable referral to a third party with the agreement of the supervisee.

- 4.7 Supervisors should ensure that supervisees are given regular opportunities to discuss and evaluate their experience of supervision and be open to the feedback of supervisees.
- 4.8 Supervisors should regularly review how the supervisee engages in self-assessment and self-evaluation of their work.
- 4.9 Supervisors should ensure that supervisees understand the importance of further training experiences, and encourage the supervisee's professional development in this way.
- 4.10 Where personal disagreements occur and cannot be resolved by discussion between supervisors and supervisee, the supervisor should consult with a fellow professional and, if appropriate, offer to refer the supervisee to another supervisor.
- 4.11 In addition to the routine self-monitoring of their work, supervisors are expected to arrange for regular supervision themselves by an appropriately experienced consultant.
- 4.12 Supervisors should, whenever possible seek further training experience that is relevant to their supervision work.
- 4.13 Supervisors should take into account the limitations of their competence, and arrange consultations or referrals when appropriate.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 As a general principle, supervisors must maintain confidentiality with regard to information about supervisees or clients.
- 5.2 Supervisors must not reveal confidential information concerning supervisees or clients to any other person or through any public medium unless:
 - a) it is clearly stated in the supervision contract that this is acceptable to both parties, *or*
 - b) when the supervisor considers it is necessary to do so to prevent serious emotional or physical damage to the supervisee or a third party.
- 5.3 Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of confidential information relating to the following:
 - a) recommendations concerning supervisees for professional purposes
 - b) pursuit of disciplinary action involving supervisees in matters pertaining to ethical standards.
- 5.4 Information about specific supervisees may only be used for publications in journals or meetings with the supervisee's permission, and with anonymity preserved when specified.

C. Guidelines for Supervision

1. Supervisor Requirements

A Supervisor is expected to fulfil the following requirements:

(i) Internal (Astrologically qualified)

- is a member of the APA and has been for a minimum of 5 years
- is a fully qualified astrologer and has a registered Astrological Practice (i.e. a registered business name)
- has at least 5 years of experience in astrological practice
- has documentation indicating they have successfully completed a minimum of 250 hours counselling training or psychotherapy training from a recognised program
- Hold Professional Indemnity Insurance in their field of practice (Certificate of Currency required).
- has received their own supervision (a minimum of 5 hours annually) with a log kept and presented annually to the APA Standards Committee (APA Supervisors Log Book provided). Supervisors overseeing more than four supervisees for individual supervision must apply to the APA Standards Committee to determine extra personal supervision requirements
- has accumulated a minimum of 50 hours personal supervision
- has participated in a recognised Supervisor Training program (minimum of 16 hours)
- must agree to adhere to the APA Code of Ethics and ‘APA Ethics and Practice – Supervisor Guidelines’.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Some applicants may be a member of the APA and may have been a member for some/many years; they may be a competent supervisor but may not have completed the formal qualifications outlined above. There may be many reasons for this circumstance, but the most likely one is that there was no formal training for supervisors in the past, and that the competencies were learned on the job.

In line with Government guidelines relating to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) overall, it is the right of an applicant to prove equivalent competence. This is not meant to be an easier way for recognition as a supervisor. It is saying that the *actual* competence of the applicant – attained through years of theoretical learning and practical expertise – is the same as one who has completed the formal training. If both types of applicants were viewed in practice, their expertise would be roughly equivalent.

It is the responsibility of the applicant for RPL or 'Equivalent Competence' to demonstrate actual competence in the field of supervision.

(ii) External (i.e. non-member)

- Be a qualified psychologist, social worker, counsellor or psychotherapist with a minimum of 350 hours training/education from an accredited course and provide details of personal supervision hours accrued within the context of this training.
- Have a minimum of 5 years' experience as practitioners in their field.
- Be a registered and current financial member of the professional body associated with their qualifications e.g. The Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA), Australian Social Workers Association etc.
- Provide information regarding length of membership of that organisation
- Submit details of the requirements set out by their professional organisation regarding ongoing supervision and the required hours of annual professional development together with additional requirements as a supervisor.
- Provide details of current personal supervision over the past 2 years and ongoing supervision plan.
- Hold Professional Indemnity Insurance in their field of practice (Certificate of Currency required).
- Set up a clear supervisory contract with all supervisees that will agree to all the APA requirements being met for supervision as outlined in the APA Ethics and Practice document. This will take the form of a letter detailing the supervision requirements as outlined in the section on supervision and a signed contract by all parties. An APA Log Book will be provided upon request.
- Adhere to the APA Code of Ethics, or an equivalent professional code of ethics
- External Application Form available upon request

Applicants need to provide evidence of qualifications and other requirements as set out above by provision of copies of the related documentation that has been certified by Justice of the Peace as a copy of the original.

The supervision arrangement whether from an internal or external source should not involve a dual relationship between the supervisor and supervisee (e.g. that of a relative or partner). Any query about the propriety of a supervision relationship should be referred to the Standards Committee.

2. Guidelines for Supervisees

The supervision process involves several steps to be taken in this order:

1. Ensure that all training requirements have been successfully completed
2. Choose an APA-approved supervisor
3. Develop a plan of supervision
4. Notify the Membership Convener of intent
5. Maintain a record of the required 25 hours supervision

6. Attend to any issues which may arise from supervision
7. Complete and submit record of supervision to the Membership Convener.

The Membership Convener must be informed of any changes to the supervision agreement.

Note: the hours accredited as ‘supervision’ must be different from those hours accredited as ‘training’. In the case of **group supervision**, a proportion of the total number of hours of supervision should be accredited to each individual supervisee. Group supervision shall be accredited as follows:

- a. 1–4 (inclusive) supervisees: the full number of hours will be accredited
- b. 5–6 (inclusive) supervisees: 2 hours for every 3 hours accredited
- c. 7–8 (inclusive) supervisees: 2 hours for every 4 hours accredited
- d. 9 supervisees or more: this is considered training not supervision

NOTE:

The Membership Convener should be notified of the Supervision details before supervision is commenced, particularly the choice of supervisor, and also be informed of any supervision changes.

1. Ensure that all training requirements have been successfully completed

2. Choose an APA-approved supervisor

The primary link in the supervision process, whatever format you may choose to follow, is that you choose and nominate a supervisor who you will then develop a plan of supervision with and who will oversee the process of supervision. The supervisor you choose may not be involved in all of your supervision but will be the one you attend individual supervision sessions with and who you relate to for overall contact re the supervision process.

3. Develop a plan of supervision

Together with your supervisor, you will then develop a plan for completing supervision, which will include:

- Format of supervision (individual, and small group work)
- Any specific aims, objectives or goals, which you wish to meet (i.e. how to deal with self doubts, how to maintain boundaries, be more objective, less emotive), in your practice
- Dates and venues for supervision and a tentative completion date (completed in 1 year)

4. Notify the Membership Convener of intent

Inform the Membership Convener of your choice of supervisor.

5. Maintain a record of supervision

Upon request to the APA Membership Convener will provide a Supervision Log which will assist in maintaining your record of supervision hours that can then be sign by the appropriate supervisor. The completion of this log and the supervision requirements are mandatory for approval as a Professional member of the APA.

6. Attend to any issues that may arise from supervision

Supervision provides the opportunity to share the work and experience of our peers in a confidential space that is not available elsewhere. In this way we are able to:

- Experience a range of potential strategies and alternative perspectives of working, including those of the supervisor and the members of the supervision group
- Develop a capacity to evaluate professional/clinical work with clients and respond to the feedback of others
- Increase the capacity to work effectively and developed unique style.

7. Complete and submit record of supervision to Membership Convener

When the required 25 hours of supervision have been completed, the Supervision Form, along with the documentation of the Counselling requirements is then attached to your application form and sent to the Membership Convener.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Countertransference – The astrologer’s unconscious emotional responses to a client that are likely to interfere with objectivity; unresolved conflicts of the astrologer projected onto the client.

Transference – The unconscious shifting of feelings and fantasies, both positive and negative, that are displacements from reactions to significant others from the client’s past.

Projection – The process in which we disown certain aspects of ourselves by ascribing them to the environment or others.

(Document amended 11 3 2015)