

Mindfulness Association Supervisor Good Practice Guidelines

October 2017

Mindfulness supervisors should adhere to the Good Practice Guidelines for Teaching Mindfulness-based Courses published by the UK Network for Mindfulness-Based Teachers

<http://mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk/pdf/UK%20MB%20teacher%20GPG%202015%20final%202.pdf>.

The UK Network for Mindfulness-Based Teachers has published a set of supervisor good practice guidelines. What you find below is an adaptation of these to accommodate the Mindfulness Association's training and values.

Supervisors will:

SECTION 1

- Be deeply experienced as mindfulness practitioners, having been practicing for a minimum of 5 years and having deeply integrated mindfulness into their lives.
- Have a sustained and on-going personal mindfulness practice that includes the body scan, mindful movement, sitting practice, kindness practice and self-compassion practice.
- Regularly, at least annually, attend teacher led mindfulness based retreats of at least 7 days duration. Or if unable to do so, due to caring responsibilities for example, to attend 2 or 3 shorter retreats.
- Be steeped in the understanding of mindfulness, informed by relevant current scientific and/or clinical understanding as well as its historical antecedents from relevant spiritual and philosophical traditions, the most common example of which is the Buddhist tradition.
- Be experienced as mindfulness-based teachers and be on the UK Listing of Mindfulness Teachers.

SECTION 2 - Mindfulness Training completed

- Have completed the Mindfulness Level 1 course (Being Present) and the Mindfulness Level 2 course (Responding with Compassion). These were formerly known as the Mindfulness/Compassion Practitioner Certificate Courses. Or have completed year one of the Studies in Mindfulness MSc or have trained in mindfulness to an equivalent level in another organisation but have done an MA Conversion Weekend and/or an MBLC retreat or the MSc.
- Have completed or intend to complete Mindfulness Level 3 (Seeing Deeply) in either the one year or MSc format.
- Have already attended at least three practice retreats of 6 days or more.

SECTION 3 Mindfulness Teaching completed

- Have had full teaching responsibility for at least nine MBLC courses over a minimum of three years under supervision or have been a tutor on four Level 1 courses over a minimum of three years under supervision and have completed the MBLC retreat or equivalent training/experience.
- Or have had full teaching responsibility for at least nine MBSR/MBCT courses and have done an MA Conversion Weekend and/or an MBLC retreat or the MSc.
- Continue to teach mindfulness-based courses to people with varying levels of experience.

SECTION 4 Supervision and Teacher Training Specific

- Have completed or intend to complete mindfulness-specific supervision training with the MA or have equivalent experience.
- Be involved in training mindfulness based teachers and/or be trained as a supervisor in a clinical setting or have equivalent experience.
- Have regular (strongly recommended monthly) supervision with an experienced mindfulness supervisor to reflect upon their teaching and its interface with their personal mindfulness practice.
- Engage in peer relationships with other supervisors.
- Be up-to-date with current methods of assessing mindfulness-based teaching competency and maintaining good practice. Including being familiar with the use of the Mindfulness-Based Interventions Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBITAC) as a feedback tool.
- Be familiar with the principles that influence learning and development of individuals and groups.
- Include their experience of their supervision role and anything that arises within the supervisory relationship within their own supervision sessions.
- Stay up to date with current and developing evidence base for mindfulness, with particular emphasis on the supervision area of expertise.
- Have on-going study and guidance with a teacher or teachers (possibly in a contemplative tradition) to support a deepening of their personal mindfulness practice. This might include interviews or meetings with a teacher on teacher-led retreats; on-going dialogue with a teacher experienced in meditation; and/or guidance and study with an experienced mindfulness supervisor who has these skills and experience.

SECTION 5 Other Competencies

- Knowledge and understanding of ethical and professional practice.
- An experientially gained understanding of the complexity of mindfulness as an approach and its transformational potential.
- An in-depth understanding of the aims and intentions of the full range of curriculum components within the mindfulness-based course their supervisees teach

- An awareness of the specific context within which the supervisee teaches, if this is not simply the general public. (eg. children and mindfulness, mindfulness in counselling, mindfulness and cancer etc)
- Skill in working with groups, especially the creation of a safe and challenging learning environment.
- Ability to communicate to the supervisee the scope of the supervisory relationship and guide them in learning how to make the most of the supervision process.
- The ability and skill to support supervisees in identifying their strengths and learning needs, providing honest and supportive feedback that facilitates new learning. Use the MBITAC document where appropriate.
- The ability and knowledge to work within the ethical framework of his/her profession or training and to have particularly developed sensitivities in relation to:
 - Only supervising within the limits and boundaries of competence and experience (ie. supervising teachers who work in a similar professional context).
 - Only asking supervisees to engage in an appropriate kind and amount of informal and formal practice (i.e. no more than the supervisor themselves would practice).

To set up the supervision process supervisors will need to be able to:

- Provide the supervisee with the following documents:
 - a) MA Supervision Policy,
 - b) the Working Agreement
- Set up a Supervision Working Agreement, which explains and contextualises the supervision process for the supervisee and identifies their supervisory needs and interests.
- Develop and maintain a working alliance.
- Have the ability to draw on and embody own mindfulness practice whilst using the *MA Supervision Model (FIG)* as a guide.
- Have the ability to identify supervisee's level of competence and learning needs.
- Have the ability to give accurate and constructive feedback and to challenge bad practice where necessary.
- Set up 'live' or videoed teaching with subsequent feedback for the supervisee using the MBITAC document.
- Where useful use the MBI-TAC as a training tool and as an evaluation tool.
- Have the ability to balance the content of the supervision so that all key areas are given attention over time. This would include exploring ethical issues, being supportive and encouraging, giving advice, challenging the supervisee, exploring issues around maintaining integrity (personally and in the mindfulness profession) and balancing exploration of personal and professional practice. Using the MBITAC is helpful as a way to maintain this balance.