



COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)
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COUNSELLOR SUPERVISION RECOMMENDATIONS

The COSCA Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice (see paragraph 8.1) recommends 'that the proportion of time spent on counselling supervision to that spent on client-work should be 1:12'.

The 1:12 ratio is the recommended ratio for most members of COSCA, but the recommended ratio is different for students on COSCA validated diploma courses and for COSCA accredited counsellors/psychotherapists.

Please see below the recommendations for the proportion of time spent on counselling supervision to that spent on client-work for:

- students on COSCA validated diploma courses
- Counsellor Member (Organisations), Counsellor and Practitioner Members of COSCA
- COSCA Accredited Counsellors/Psychotherapists (pre and post 5 years).

➤ **Diploma Students on COSCA Validated Courses:**

- The required ratio of counselling supervision hours to client contact hours is 1:6.

➤ **Counsellor Member (Organisations):**

- The required practice base is at least 5-8 hours per month with the recommended counselling supervision ratio of at least 1:12.

➤ **Counsellor Member:**

- The required practice base of at least 5-8 hours per month with the recommended counselling supervision ratio of at least 1:12.

➤ **Practitioner Member:**

- The required practice base of at least 8 hours per month with the recommended counselling supervision ratio of 1:12.

➤ **Accredited Counsellor/Psychotherapist member:**

• **Counselling Supervision: 0-5 Years Post Accreditation**

For accredited counsellors who have been practising for less than 5 years post accreditation the recommended level of counselling supervision is not less than 1.5 hours per month. This level is not directly linked to the number of counselling hours, and may therefore suit those accredited counsellors who deliver higher number of counselling sessions per month.

When the 1.5 hours per month level means that accredited counsellors would require more counselling supervision than under the standard 1:12 ratio, they can opt to follow the 1:12 ratio. The 1:12 ratio may be more appropriate, for example, when accredited counsellors are delivering 12 counselling sessions per month as this would mean that they require only 1 hour of supervision rather than 1.5 hours.

The above levels are the recommended minimum level of counselling supervision and are not maximum levels. Depending on their assessment of the volume and nature of the client work, accredited counsellors would be expected to increase these levels.

➤ **Accredited Counsellor/Psychotherapist:**

• **Counselling Supervision: 5 Years Post Accreditation**

For counsellors who have been practising for more than 5 years post accreditation it is recommended that supervision is not less than 1 hour per month and that it is appropriate to the volume and nature of client work.

➤ **Group Supervision**

If group supervision is to be considered as part of the period of supervision, groups should be no larger than permits an allowance of 20 – 30 minutes per group member in the supervision session. The focus of the work must be on client related issues, and the group led by a substantially experienced practitioner: 'peer-led' groups are not acceptable.

Example:

A counsellor/psychotherapist is a member of a supervision group of 4 supervisees, meeting for 2 hours every month. This provides ½ client supervision hour per month for the counsellor. The counsellor is also having fortnightly individual supervision sessions of 1 hour, providing her with a further 2 hours per month. She thus received 2½ supervision hours in total per month. She has arranged this amount of supervision because she works 8 hours per week, seeing between 6 – 8 clients per week. This works out at an average ratio of approximately 1:12 over the year.