

Fitness to Practise Glossary of Terms

Clinical audits

For the Interim Orders Committee (IOC), an audit is a quality assurance process. For a practice committee, an audit is either a quality assurance process or a quality improvement process.

The reviewer selects and assesses a set of relevant records against the recognised standard. The reviewer may look at the whole record or at a specific area of practice like radiographs. The reviewer can look at whether the treatment was clinically necessary or if the radiographs were of sufficient diagnostic value. The individual specified in the condition or undertaking must verify the audit.

Case-based discussion

Case-based discussions help to assess the registrant's performance by discussing patient cases or looking at patient records. The reviewer will check if the registrant followed standards, and if the activity they carried out was clinically necessary. They will also identify any areas for improvement.

Workplace supervisors can use case-based discussions to document supervision as part of conditions or undertakings. The workplace supervisor (see below for definition) could include them with reports they submit to the GDC.

Conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest is when another interest influences or impairs, or could influence or impair, someone's ability to make a judgement or to act. Examples could include a personal relationship (such as a relation or partner) or a commercial/financial interest.

There is no exhaustive list of what constitutes a conflict of interest, and this is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Conflicts of interest can be actual or potential.

Contracting body

A contracting body is an organisation or individual who contracts the registrant to provide dental services, for example, a dentist may have a contract with NHS England. A private dentist may have an arrangement with an individual patient or a contract with companies such as dental plan providers to deliver services on their behalf.

Chaperones

A chaperone is an impartial adult observer that must be present whenever the registrant interacts with, or is in the company of, certain groups of patients or colleagues/staff. For example, this could be patients under 18 years of age, female patients or colleagues, patients with a learning disability.

The chaperone must be:

- a dental professional registered with the GDC or other UK healthcare regulator
- nominated by the registrant
- must be approved by the GDC.

Conditions or undertakings may specify that a chaperone should be of a certain sex.

Development adviser (England only)

A development adviser supports a registrant with conditions or undertakings to develop and update a Personal Professional Development Plan (PPDP). They also support, guide, and monitor the registrant to meet the areas of concern identified in conditions or undertakings.

The development adviser will help the registrant to draw up their PPDP, monitor progress against the PPDP, and review any written evidence specified in the PPDP. They will provide the GDC, or other relevant bodies, with reports on the registrant's progress at times specified under the conditions/undertakings or upon request. Development advisers do not supervise the registrant's clinical practice.

Registrants must nominate a development adviser for approval by the GDC. Persons agreeing to undertake this role are likely to charge the registrant a fee.

Educational supervisors (Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland)

An educational supervisor is appointed by a postgraduate dental dean to address the issues identified in the conditions/undertakings. If the condition/undertaking allows it, the registrant may be able to nominate their own educational supervisor.

Educational supervisors are responsible for the overall supervision of the registrant's learning and educational progress during a specified period. The educational supervisor will help the registrant to draw up their Personal Professional Development Plan (PPDP) to address the issues identified. They will support and guide the registrant, monitor the progress against the PPDP, and review the evidence specified in the PPDP.

The educational supervisor will provide the GDC, or other relevant bodies, with reports on this process at times specified under the conditions/undertakings or upon request.

Educational supervisors do not supervise the registrant's clinical practice.

Locum/staff bank

A locum is a registrant standing in for an absent professional or temporarily covering a vacancy. It is possible that employment as a locum may be restricted under conditions or undertakings.

Logs

A log is a record made during, or directly after, the treatment or activity, as specified in a set of conditions or undertakings. Conditions or undertakings will specify if someone should verify the log.

The log must always include:

- Registrant's name.
- Date of the activity/treatment.
- Patient's anonymous identifier or patient number.
- Any other information needed to meet the requirements of the relevant condition or undertaking.

For clinical cases, in addition the log must always include:

- Patient's clinical issues or presenting problem.
- The activity/treatment undertaken.
- Outcome.
- Any relevant medical history.

Medical supervisor

A medical supervisor must be:

- registered with the General Medical Council
- is nominated by the registrant
- approved by the GDC.

A registrant will usually have a medical supervisor if the concerns relate to adverse physical or mental health. The medical supervisor will meet with the registrant regularly to discuss their progress. They will contact treating doctors, for example, a GP or another medical professional treating the registrant. The medical supervisor may, with the consent of the registrant, consult with others involved in the registrant's conditions/undertakings.

The medical supervisor will report to the GDC on a regular basis about the registrant's progress under treatment, their compliance with conditions/undertakings and their fitness to practise in general.

On-call duties

Some dental professionals at a general practice can be on an on-call rota to see patients outside of regular hours. Dental professionals may also belong to an on-call service, separate to the practice in which they work. On-call dental professionals may also provide dental services under NHS helplines or private emergency dental services. Hospital-based registrants could be on-call to see acute patients. The registrant could be on-call while at home or off-duty.

Out-of-hours work

Out-of-hours work is done outside of business hours. Normally this is after 18:00 and before 08:00 on weekdays, and all day at weekends and bank holidays.

Personal Professional Development Plan (PPDP)

A PPDP is a plan for the registrant's continued professional and/or personal development over a set period. For registrants with conditions or undertakings, it is the starting point for remediation and/or retraining in a particular area or areas of practice.

The PPDP can cover any area of the GDC's [Standards for the Dental Team](#), but it must set out an action plan to address the area or areas of concern, any measures to take, and the completion date.

The development adviser (in England) or educational supervisor can advise the registrant about preparing a PPDP, but it is the registrant's responsibility to prepare and complete it.

Workplace reporter

A workplace reporter will provide reports to the GDC on the registrant's compliance with conditions or undertakings and will notify the GDC of any concerns or complaints. Practice committees can also require workplace reporters to report on progress towards remediation in an area or areas of concern.

The GDC must approve the workplace reporter before a registrant can return to work. The registrant or their representative will need to provide the workplace reporter's full name and contact details, current CV and a signed copy of the 'Workplace reporter agreement form'. The workplace reporter and the workplace supervisor (see below for definition) can be the same person.

The workplace reporter must agree to provide reports to the GDC at the intervals specified in the registrant's conditions or undertakings. They can use a GDC template to meet this requirement.

All reports must include:

- Dates of meetings between the workplace reporter and the registrant.
- Confirmation that the registrant is complying with their conditions or undertakings.
- Details of any patient complaints received and the outcome of these complaints.
- Details of any concerns raised in the workplace about the registrant's fitness to practise.
- Details of any formal disciplinary action.
- Details of the registrant's progress on remedial activities.
- Any other information relevant to the registrant's compliance with their conditions or undertakings.

If the workplace reporter does not work at the same place as the registrant, they must be able to attend the practice and access any documentation relevant to the registrant's conditions or undertakings. Sometimes, the practice committee, IOC or case examiner may specify that the workplace reporter must always be on premises with the registrant.

Workplace supervisor

A workplace supervisor will oversee the registrant's day-to-day clinical work. Workplace supervisors review the clinical practice of the registrant throughout the period of supervision and provide feedback to the GDC. Postgraduate dental deans or their nominated deputies do not appoint, identify, or manage workplace supervisors.

The workplace supervisor must agree to provide reports to the GDC at the intervals specified in the registrant's conditions or undertakings. The reports should include information about:

- The registrant's clinical performance.
- One-to-one meetings and case-based discussions.
- The registrant's progress towards remediation.
- Any concerns regarding the registrant, their practice, or their progress towards remediation (where applicable).
- Any specific areas of concern listed in the conditions or undertakings.

There are three levels of workplace supervision:

1. **Supervised:** the workplace supervisor must supervise the registrant's day-to-day work in a way prescribed in the relevant condition or undertaking. The workplace supervisor does not need to work at the same practice as the registrant, but they must be available to provide advice or assistance if the registrant needs it. Where the workplace supervisor is unavailable through illness or planned absence, the registrant must not work, unless an approved alternative workplace supervisor is in place.

The workplace supervisor must review the registrant's work at least once a fortnight in one-to-one meetings and case-based discussions. These meetings must focus on all areas of concern identified by the conditions or undertakings. These meetings should usually be in person. If this is not possible, at least one of every two fortnightly meetings must be in person.

2. **Closely supervised:** the workplace supervisor must supervise the registrant's day-to-day work in a way prescribed in the relevant condition or undertaking. The workplace supervisor must always be on site and available when the registrant is working. Where the workplace supervisor is unavailable through illness or planned absence, the registrant must not work unless an approved alternative workplace supervisor is in place.

The workplace supervisor must review the registrant's work at least twice a week in one-to-one meetings using case-based discussions. These meetings must focus on all areas of concern identified by the conditions or undertakings. These meetings can be in person or via video conferencing.

3. **Directly Supervised:** the workplace supervisor must observe the registrant's day-to-day work, or the particular element(s) of the registrant's work, as prescribed in the relevant condition or undertaking. The workplace supervisor must always be on site and available to directly observe the specified element(s) when the registrant is working. Where the workplace supervisor is unavailable through illness or planned absence, the registrant must not carry out the specified element(s) of their work unless an approved alternative workplace supervisor is in place. Conditions or undertakings will specify which element(s) of a registrant's practice to observe.

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