

Guidance note for supervision of trainees

Background

This guidance is primarily directed at those supervising pre-registered dispensers; trainees who have completed the HAC exams and are undertaking 850 hours of supervised practice. Supervisors are directly responsible for their trainees education, performance and conduct.

The Council requires these trainees to fill in a log book recording what they are doing as they complete the 850 hours. Based on the completed log book and a signature from the trainees' supervisor certifying that the trainee satisfactorily completed their training and is competent to dispense, the Registrar decides if that person has met the Council's eligibility criteria and can therefore join the register of Hearing Aid Dispensers.

As there is no final, independent assessment at the end of the training period, the log book and the supervisor's certification are the only evidence the Registrar has that a trainee is sufficiently competent to register and thereby legally dispense hearing aids. Without adequate supervision, including an accurate and properly completed logbook, neither the supervisor nor the Registrar can state that the trainee has satisfactorily completed training and can dispense in a safe and effective manner.

Following an audit of log books, the Council highlighted a number of reservations about how the log book was being used and how trainees were being supervised. The Council decided to publish guidance to help address these concerns and hope it will support good supervision. However, it is registrants' responsibility to ensure they comply with regulations and the Disciplinary Committee is the competent authority in deciding whether the Council's requirements have been breached.

If you require any further information, please contact the HAC office:

Tel: 020 3102 4030

Email: hac@thehearingaidcouncil.org.uk

Why supervise trainees?

Three objectives underpin the Council's supervision requirements:

- Consumers should receive safe and effective treatment
- Trainees should be appropriately supervised at all times to minimise the risk to consumers and themselves.
- Each trainee should have a designated supervisor, notified to Council, who is responsible for the trainee's training, supervision and performance.

Supervised training is used in many professions, such as clinical placements for health professionals. Log books are widely used in these professionals to support good supervision, direct learning and record progress.

What are the supervision requirements?

The Hearing Aid Council Act 1968 (as amended) makes it a legal requirement to supervise all trainees. This requirement is explained in clauses 23 to 29 of the Code of Practice and in clauses 1 to 4 of the Standards of Competence. Amongst other requirements, these clauses explain that: supervisors must notify the Council if there is a change of supervisor; that a

supervisor must be on hand if needed when the trainee is dispensing alone and that the log book must be completed correctly.

How should the log book be used?

In the absence of a final assessment, the log book is fundamental in demonstrating that post examination trainees and supervisors are adhering to the requirements set out above during their training and that trainees have reached the necessary level of competence at the end of their training.

Log books are widely used in other professions, and supervisors in the hearing aid industry should make sure that they are completed to similar standards in other professions. For example, log books should be:

- accurate;
- timely (completed at least once a month); and
- easily audited by the HAC or another body (so that the supervisor and their trainee can demonstrate compliance, with the law and regulations made under the law).

Log books must be completed on a regular basis if they are to be an accurate record of a post-examination trainee's clinical training. It is not acceptable to complete them solely at the end of the training period or in a single sitting.

The trainee and the supervisor should file a photocopy of the log book regularly (the regulations state at least monthly). This helps trainees and supervisors to comply with any audits the Council may carry out and also helps demonstrate compliance and competence if the log book is lost.

Only the supervisor notified to the Council can sign the log book. It is vital that supervisors inform the Council (using the form available on the HAC website or from the HAC office) of any change of supervisor. It is the supervisor's responsibility to demonstrate compliance with this requirement and so they are advised to send the form by registered mail or check with the HAC office that it has arrived.

More information

For more information, please contact the HAC office:

Tel: 020 3102 4030

Email: hac@thehearingaidcouncil.org.uk

You can download the Standards of Competence and the Code of Practice (2008) from our website thehearingaidcouncil.org.uk .