

VOLUME 1:

AN INVESTIGATION OF FACTORS INVOLVED WHEN
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS SUPERVISE
OTHER PROFESSIONALS

By

Katherine Margaret Callicott

A thesis submitted to
The University of Birmingham
in part fulfilment for the degree of
Doctorate in Applied Educational and Child Psychology

School of Education
The University of Birmingham
June 2011

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ABSTRACT

This research explores inter-professional supervision involving an educational psychologist supervising another professional and complements the recent guidelines on professional supervision produced by The Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP) (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010). The factors explored were purposes and boundaries of supervision; models of supervision; skills of the supervisor, including those that are distinctive to the profession of educational psychology; benefits and problems associated with supervision including the process of evaluation and ethical and legal issues pertaining to supervision.

An interpretative epistemological stance was adopted. Ten semi-structured interviews were carried out with educational psychologists (supervisors) and other professionals (supervisees) recruited through purposive sampling. Interviews were transcribed orthographically and coded using thematic analysis.

Findings suggest that inter-professional supervision was viewed positively. Supervision skills were recognised as a necessary pre-requisite but not necessarily distinctive to the profession of educational psychology. This research highlights the conflicting conceptualisations of supervision and the importance of contracting for increasing understanding of the supervision process, alerting stakeholders to important ethical and legal implications, and reconciling differences in expectations concerning the aims and functions of supervision.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the support from Jane Leadbetter, my university tutor. Jane, you have guided me in such a way that I feel I own this research paper and feel confident in your experienced opinion of its worth. You have helped me to develop enormously as an academic writer; from being focused on getting your approval, to being able to work more independently.

I acknowledge my support team. My husband has looked after the children and household so that I could spend time in the library. My mum, dad and step-mum have helped me to edit. My children have been a welcome release.

I acknowledge the time that people spent being interviewed by me. Without their generosity and reflections, this research project wouldn't have materialised.

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and rationale

Guidelines for professional supervision have recently been developed for educational psychologists. The guidelines were formulated by members of a working party convened by the Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP), which is part of the British Psychological Society (BPS). The guidelines note the increase in inter-professional supervision involving educational psychologists. This research paper complements and illustrates the professional practice guidelines and employs interpretivist philosophy to explore the views of educational psychologists and other professionals engaged in inter-professional supervision.

Inter-professional supervision combines supervision and inter-professional working; both complex and poorly understood social processes (Townend, 2005). Research into inter-professional supervision is very much in its infancy, making it more important to connect to the existing body of literature and respond to the methods, methodologies and findings in the extant literature.

The principal purposes of the current research are:

- To explore views on the factors involved when educational psychologists supervise other professionals.
- To contribute to the existing literature by responding to debates raised and exploring existing research findings.

The following research questions have been formulated from the research aims and extant inter-professional supervision literature (see Table 1):

Table 1: Research questions

What are the purposes of inter-professional supervision and how are the purposes agreed?
What are the boundaries of inter-professional supervision and how is accountability agreed?
What are the benefits of inter-professional supervision?
Should professional and management supervision be separated or combined?
What problems have arisen?
Have any ethical issues been raised?
Which supervision models are useful when engaging in inter-professional supervision?
What supervisory qualities and competencies are required for inter-professional supervision?
Are any supervisor qualities and competencies distinctive to the profession of educational psychology?
How should inter-professional supervision be evaluated?
How could inter-professional supervision be improved?
How do educational psychologists receive support for their role as supervisor?

Supervision literature from the United Kingdom has increased dramatically over the last few decades due to the increasing use of therapy in the helping professions and an associated recognition that such work needs to be properly supervised (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006). Aside from supervision of therapeutic competence and impact on the client; often referred

to as clinical supervision (Cornforth and Claiborne, 2008), supervision has many other purposes and benefits. Supervision facilitates ongoing personal and professional development (Scaife, 2009) and offers an opportunity to enhance the well-being of practitioners (Howard, 2008). The act of supervising provides the supervisor with the opportunity to monitor the quality of supervisee practice (Bernard and Goodyear, 1998) and examine their own work (Page and Wosket, 1994; Carrington, 2004). In the context of life-long learning, Zorga (2002) argues that professionals require supervision in order to keep up with the pace of organisational change, which seems to be occurring at a faster pace than ever before.

1.2 Background to the current research

This research grew out of a local research project that aimed to explore the introduction of inter-professional supervision within my employing authority. Three educational psychologists were commissioned to supervise 27 members of the pre-school support team who provide support to pre-school children with Special Educational Needs. The pre-school support team are comprised of portage workers, who provide a home-visiting service to support children and families, and early-years teachers, who provide support to parents and nurseries concerning targets and strategies.

Inter-professional supervision was introduced to the pre-school support team as a requirement for all team members in May 2009 following the amalgamation of portage (for whom supervision was already part of their role) and early-years teachers (for whom

supervision was a new experience). The introduction of supervision as an obligatory requirement for all practitioners was met with suspicion and so I was asked by the manager of the pre-school support team to explore the views of practitioners in order to increase their understanding of the issues at stake.

The local research project consisted of 27 questionnaires and nine interviews. Data was analysed using thematic analysis and reported back to the pre-school support team. The findings suggested that the term 'supervision' was interpreted in different ways and, for many practitioners, signalled mistrust in their competence.

Through this local project work, I became interested in supervision as a process that seemed to be conceptualised and operationalised in different and conflicting ways. For me, supervision bridges theory and practice, provides space to reflect on practice and realigns professional identity and integrity. However, for others, supervision may be viewed as a threat on a personal and professional level, leading to the withholding of information, the desire to give 'the right answer' and a reduction in professional confidence. Therefore, supervision has the potential both to enrich and to detract from the professional lives of both supervisors and supervisees.

I decided to focus the present research on inter-professional supervision within a wider variety of contexts, with the aim of contributing to literature in the field of inter-professional supervision and supporting educational psychologists when engaged in supervision with other professionals. I recruited participants from my local authority initially and then

extended the sample to include all other instances of inter-professional supervision known to me.

1.3 Structure of this thesis

The literature review chapter critically analyses literature relevant to the theory, research and practice of inter-professional supervision and supervision within the profession of educational psychology. Following this, the methodology chapter explains the methods and methodology selected for the current research and gives an overview of how data was analysed. The results chapter presents data categorised in each of the 17 themes created during data analysis and shows how themes were further categorised to form four meta-themes portraying the process of supervision. The discussion chapter analyses each of the four meta-themes in terms of how the data answers research questions and responds to the extant literature and concludes by offering a 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision'. The conclusion chapter presents the key findings of the research; notes limitations in the methods and methodology selected and suggests possible implications of this research for future theory, practice and research within the field of inter-professional supervision.

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

‘Supervision’ literally means ‘to oversee’, alluding to the origins of supervision as a managerial practice concerned with standards and measures of effectiveness (Page and Wosket, 1994). ‘Professional Supervision’ has a different meaning and continues to be firmly grounded within psychological theory and practice. Professional supervision was first practised in psychoanalytic discussion groups in the 1920’s (Carroll, 1996) and subsequent models of supervision continue to give prominence to psychodynamic concepts based on psychoanalytic theory (Wosket and Page, 2001; Hawkins and Shohet, 1989).

In more recent times, supervision has been practised across professions (O’Donoghue, 2004; Townend, 2005). Research of ‘inter-professional’ contexts reveals that psychologists are often called upon to supervise other professionals (Townend, 2005), causing professional organisations to consider how psychologists can be supported when supervising other professionals. For example, the Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP, British Psychological Society) has recently published guidelines to support educational psychologists when acting as supervisor in inter-professional contexts (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

The psychological underpinnings of supervision combined with the wide practice of supervision within current derivations of applied psychology (Goodyear, 2007, as cited in Scaife, 2009), suggests that psychologists may be well suited to the role of supervisor in inter-disciplinary contexts.

This literature review critically examines literature relevant to the theory, research and practice of inter-professional supervision and supervision within the profession of educational psychology. Search methods are described and the historical narrative of supervision is explained to set the context for the remaining review. The following sections analyse literature in the fields of supervision generally, the practice of supervision within the profession of educational psychology and the practice of inter-professional supervision. Each of these sections notes and explains consistencies and inconsistencies in the field and includes a synthesis and critical analysis of research practices.

2.2 Search method

Literature was located through the identification of key texts on supervision and through searching for publications of key authors in the field and key topic areas. Appendix 1 contains further information on key authors and key texts.

Since 'inter-professional supervision' is the focus of this literature review, literature relating to inter-professional supervision was searched systematically. It is assumed that educational psychologists would normally be called upon to supervise other professionals working with children in a 'helping' capacity. Therefore, search engines were selected with a focus on those most relevant to educational psychology; to include psychologists, teachers, social workers and nurses. The search engines used were: PsychINFO, British Education Index (BEI), Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Social Care Online, and British Nursing Index (EBSCO). Appendix 2 contains further information on the search process.

2.3 Historical narrative of supervision

Conceptualisations of supervision have differed between cultures and professions, giving rise to the proposition that supervision 'is not a uniformed corpus but a conflicted site' (Davy, 2002, p. 228). Authors have explored the history of supervision in order to increase understanding of the current beliefs and values underpinning supervision across professions and cultures (Carroll, 1996; Davy, 2002; Cutcliffe, 2005; Scaife, 2009). The importance of understanding how the historical and cultural context impacts upon the current conceptualisations of supervision becomes more important in inter-professional contexts, when unwritten rules and belief systems of different professions may conflict.

'Professional supervision', the focus of this review, was originally practised in the 1920s by psychoanalytic practitioners in order to review each other's work (Carroll, 1996). Developmental models (e.g. Stoltenberg and Delworth, 1987, as cited in Hawkins and Shohet, 2006) presented a challenge to the view that supervision should be determined by the theoretical orientation of the supervisor, proposing instead that supervision should respond to the developmental needs of the supervisee. Developmental models were conceptualised in the United States and research of developmental models has tended to involve trainee counselling psychologists.

In parallel to developmental models, Bernard (1997) and Holloway (1995) introduced 'social-role' models of supervision that gave prominence to the psychological need rather than the developmental stage of the trainee and attempted to isolate tasks and functions within

supervision. Social role models enabled trainees to articulate their supervisory need and required supervisors to remain flexible across roles. However, uneven power differentials continued to pervade social role models conceptualised in the United States, with emphasis given to the evaluation of the supervisee and the seniority of the supervisor.

Within the United Kingdom, the first authors addressing supervision defined the functions of supervision as formative, normative and restorative (Proctor, 1986, as cited in Carroll, 1996). These functions have since been elaborated (see Table 2) and continue to be widely referred to across disciplines (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006).

Table 2: Functions of supervision (based on Hawkins and Shohet, 2006, p. 58)

Reference	Discipline	Functions		
Kadushin (1976)	Social work	Managerial	Educational	Supportive
Proctor (1986)	Counselling	Normative	Formative	Restorative
Hawkins and Shohet (2006)	Eclectic	Qualitative	Developmental	Resourcing

While Kadushin (1976) focuses on the role of the supervisor and Proctor (1986, as cited in Carroll, 1996) on the benefits to supervisee, Hawkins and Shohet (2006) prefer to focus on the processes that both supervisor and supervisee are involved in, indicating a neutralised power dynamic and a collaborative process. For instance, the ‘resourcing’ function refers to both the supervisor and supervisee identifying emotions experienced at work and exploring ways of managing those emotions.

Different disciplines have emphasised different functions. Within social work, emphasis is given to the managerial function (Bradley and Hojer, 2009) following negative press exposure resulting from high profile child protection cases (Eborall and Garmeson, 2001). Within educational psychology, there is a focus on education and support of the supervisee within current guidance (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010). Within counselling psychology, the client is viewed as the ultimate focus of supervision and recent guidance seems to reflect all three functions within a distinct ethical framework (Division of Counselling Psychology, 2007). Refer to Appendix 3 for comparisons of the development of supervision across professions.

Historically, literature from the United Kingdom has conceptualised supervision as a necessary part of ongoing continuing professional development (Wosket and Page, 2001; Page and Wosket, 2004; Cutcliff and Lowe, 2005) and prominent authors have developed generic models for use across profession and theoretical orientation (Page and Wosket, 2004; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009) and within counselling specifically (Carroll, 1996).

The discourses characterising literature from the United Kingdom have indicated a more neutralised power dynamic, de-emphasising formal didactic teaching and giving prominence to joint evaluation of the supervision process (e.g. Page and Wosket, 2004). Popular texts have set models of supervision within chapters devoted to organisational culture and context, training for supervision and consideration of ethical issues and legal challenges (e.g. Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009).

This section has explored the diverse practices and concepts of supervision across culture and profession. Some authors have welcomed the diversity (Scaife, 2009), whereas others have called for more unified practice to support the rigorous evaluation of supervision in terms of client welfare and supervisee development (Milne, 2007).

The different and diverse meanings of supervision between cultures and professions calls into question the continued use of the term 'supervision', which literally means 'to oversee' indicating managerial purposes. However, Page and Wosket (1994) argue that alternative terms are not accurate. For instance, mentoring implies an uneven power dynamic and consultation is normally regarded as a one-off event. Instead, Page and Wosket (1994) encourage localised debate to deepen understanding of the nature of supervision, suggesting that 'current concerns about the term are symptomatic of something else' (p.15) and that the 'something else' needs to be explored.

2.4 General literature on supervision

2.4.1 Research synthesis

Scaife (2009) explains the increase in supervision across education, health and social care with the introduction of clinical governance, making individuals accountable for monitoring the professional practice of others through supervision. However, the political and social impetus for supervision has not been supported by an evidence base (Davy, 2002; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006). As Feltham (2000) writes,

‘In my view there is curiously little evidence, but much emotional rhetoric supporting the value or clarifying the purposes of supervision.’ (p. 21)

This section reviews the methods and methodologies that have been adopted by researchers and discusses the problems implicated when researching supervision. Suggestions are made for how the supervision process can be researched in the future.

Ellis et al. (1996) reviewed the supervision literature by applying 49 validity criteria to 144 clinical supervision studies. Ellis et al. (1996) concluded that existing research lacked methodological rigour, noting the use of unreliable measures, non-random samples, poor statistical power and threats to the validity of findings. Ellis et al. (1996) explain the poor methodological rigour with reference to the increase in realistic ‘field’ studies and encouraged researchers to use randomised control trials in order to increase the generalisability of research to other populations.

Ellis et al.’s. (1996) review indicates a positivist epistemological position, where the aim is to make law-like or nomothetic statements about factors increasing the effectiveness of supervision that can be applied to other populations. A necessary condition of the positivist position is to ‘bracket out’ contextual factors and other intervening variables that are a character of field studies in order to increase confidence in the validity of findings.

In contrast interpretivist epistemology argues that researchers should concern themselves with ‘interpretation, meaning and illumination’ (Usher, 1996). Instead of excluding contextual factors, interpretivist philosophy argues that researchers should get to know the

context and reach a deeper understanding of the conditions under which supervision flourishes.

Other studies of supervision have tended to explore perceptions of supervisors and supervisees in order to determine satisfaction levels. Worthen and McNeill (1996) analysed interview data from trainee counsellors concerning good supervision experiences using phenomenological analysis. However, Holloway and Neufeldt (1995) and Bernard and Goodyear (1998) warn against relying on satisfaction ratings, as they may or may not relate to client outcome.

Problems with supervision research stem from the demographic characteristics of studies. The majority of supervision research has been conducted in the United States on trainee populations, borrowing techniques from counselling psychology, and so limiting the applicability to European populations of qualified applied psychologists (Carroll, 1996). Researchers tend to be involved in supervision training or delivering supervision and so may be unable to distance themselves from the supervision process sufficiently to spot flaws and the foundational myth that supervision is necessarily a good thing (Davy, 2002).

Another problem with supervision research stems from the complexity of the supervision process. Supervision involves a multiple array of extraneous variables that can impact on the supervision process, making it difficult to determine causality and generalise the findings to other contexts when positivist epistemologies are adopted. Table 3 lists some of the extraneous variables mentioned in the literature.

Table 3: Extraneous variables impacting upon the process of supervision

The supervisee presents selective information to the supervisor (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006)
The relationship may or may not be conducive to effective supervision and it is difficult to quantify relational factors (Milton, 2001)
There may be external pressures from the organisational or cultural context that impinge on supervision (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006)

More recently, ‘manualised’ approaches to supervision have been introduced (e.g. Milne, 2010), which aim to reduce the potential for individual differences and contextual factors to confound the outcomes of supervision, increasing confidence that findings can be replicated elsewhere. However, the use of ‘manualised’ approaches to supervision contrasts with the majority of supervision models, which argue that the supervisor should remain flexible and respond dynamically to the need of the supervisee (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009).

More recent reviews of supervision research have attempted to isolate links in a chain between supervisors and clients in order to determine a pathway, rather than causal link between supervision and client outcome. Milne and James (2000) reviewed 28 field studies of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy supervision using objective measures of learning outcomes and concluded that studies showed that supervision can be effective. A causal chain may be better able to capture the complexities of supervision. However, collapsing research for different links in the causal chain (e.g. supervisee – client outcome) means that contextual

information is lost, making it difficult to understand contexts that are conducive to effective supervision.

Another problem noted in the supervision literature is the tendency of researchers to rely on measures of the 'therapeutic alliance' (Bordin, 1979), originally developed to measure the effectiveness of the relationship between a therapist and client. Use of such measures has been criticised because of the failure to acknowledge differences between the therapeutic and supervisory relationship, such as the focus on the professional development of the supervisee (Palomo et al. 2010).

Palomo et al. (2010) used exploratory factor analysis to develop the 'Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire', designed specifically for the purposes of measuring the supervisory relationship. The questionnaire was developed from the views of supervisees concerning the factors of the supervisory relationship that contributed most and least to their clinical effectiveness (Beinart, 2004, as cited in Palomo et al., 2010). Initial research suggests that 'a safe base' was the most important factor reported by trainee clinical psychologists (Palomo et al., 2010). Palomo's et al. (2010) research responds to the call for greater clarity with respect to the supervisory relationship, which has been consistently considered as a crucial factor in supervision but poorly understood as a concept (Orlans and Edwards, 2001).

In response to some of the difficulties described above, some authors (e.g. Milton, 2001; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006) recommend that supervisors should act as applied-researchers

responding flexibly within the current context, reflecting on practice, making changes to test hypotheses, collecting and analysing data and reviewing the changes made and the research process. Milton (2001) argues that such applied-research bridges the gap between academic research and practice and discourages supervisors from being 'bound by blind faith' (p. 190). Milton's (2001) recommendations implicate an uneven dynamic between supervisors and supervisees.

2.4.2 Models of supervision

There are a plethora of models of supervision. The confusing array has been categorised in a variety of ways. For instance Scaife (2009) describes models as either describing functions of supervision or the process/content of supervision, whereas Bernard and Goodyear, (1998) split the array of supervision models into developmental models, social role models and integrationist models.

For the purposes of this review, I have decided to conceptualise supervision models as either focusing on the content within a single supervision session or the holistic process of supervision. 'Content models' focus on what is discussed during supervision and how that information is processed. 'Holistic models' position supervision sessions within a wider context and address factors that impact both on and between supervision sessions, such as contracting and evaluation. The categorisation of models in this way draws attention to the notion that supervision is a process that takes place within a context, which is particularly important within inter-professional contexts, where multiple contexts can impinge on

supervision sessions. However, a flaw in conceptualising models in this way is that the majority of models would be categorised as ‘content models’, reducing the usefulness of this distinction.

Recently published professional guidelines for educational psychologists engaged in supervision (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) mention the General Supervision Framework (Scaife, 2001), which is conceptualised as a ‘content model’ of supervision. The General Supervision Framework will be presented, along with the Cyclical Model of supervision (Wosket and Page, 2001), selected as a ‘holistic model’, which describes the entire supervision process.

2.4.2.1 General Supervision Framework (GSF) (Scaife, 2009)

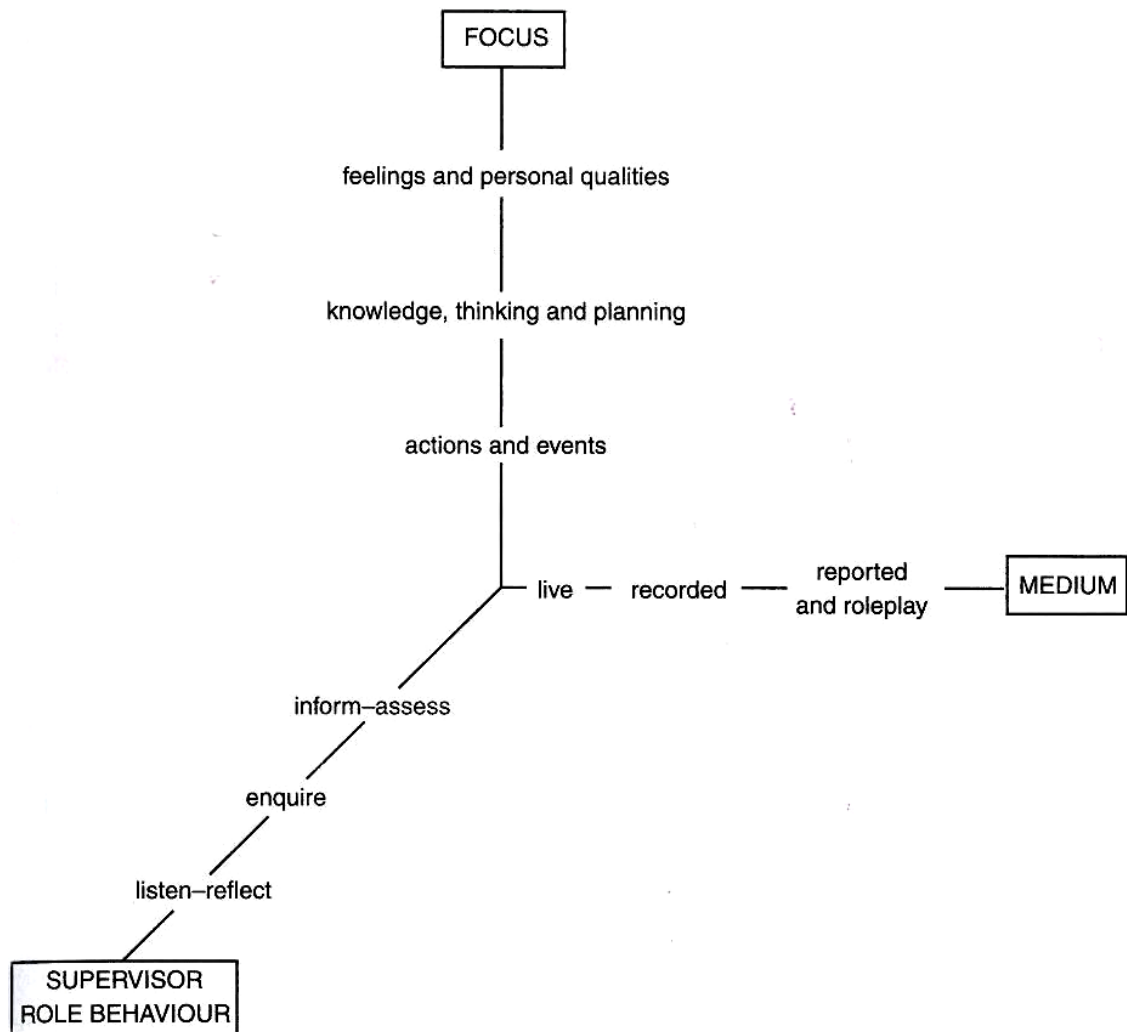
The ‘General Supervision Framework’ (GSF) was first described by clinical psychologists in 1993. The GSF is attractive to practitioners of diverse theoretical preferences and recommended for educational psychologists (Scaife, 1993; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

The GSF postulates three types of focus, three types of supervisor role and three types of supervision medium (see Figure 1 and Table 4). The GSF is based on the Discrimination Model (Bernard, 1997) which was conceptualised in the United States. A central tenet of both the Discrimination Model and GSF is that supervisors should tailor their responses to the particular needs of the supervisee, meaning that focus, role and medium will change across and within supervision sessions.

Scaife's text book on supervision within clinical practice (2009) includes a chapter on adult learning theory which explains the requirement to respond dynamically to the needs of supervisees in terms of constructivist philosophy and Piagetian theory where new knowledge must fit with the life experience of the supervisee to avoid affective resistance, known as 'cognitive dissonance' (Piaget, 1972).

Scaife (1993) uses a travel metaphor to illustrate how constructivist philosophy can be applied to learning: If a visitor is lost, one might ask 'where are you now?' illustrating constructivist theory that seeks to start from the current position of the learner. Scaife (1993) also proposes that the lost traveller should be asked 'how are you travelling?' This question alludes to the process of learning and seeks to discover the roles and mediums most appropriate for the learner. A third question might be 'what is the purpose of your journey?' This question examines the aims and purposes of learning and suggests that an examination of the beliefs and underlying assumptions of the learner may also be an important starting point for supervision.

Figure 1



'The General Supervision Framework' (Scaife, 2009, p. 103)

Table 4: The General Supervision Framework (Scaife, 2009, p. 103-113)

Supervisor role		Focus		Medium	
Inform-assess	The supervisor, having superior knowledge and insight, judges and comments upon supervisee performance.	Actions and events	Behaviour and skills of supervisee: what they did.	Live supervision	Use of a one-way viewing screen and communication via a 'bug in the ear' or scheduled breaks.
Enquire	Both the supervisor and supervisee explore an issue together in a spirit of enquiry.	Knowledge, thinking and planning	Rationalisation of behaviour: what they did and why?	Recorded sessions	Indirect observations through the use of audio and video recordings.
Listen-reflect	The supervisor pays attention to the personal needs of the supervisee and actively listens, encouraging the supervisee to reflect on the issues described.	Feelings and personal qualities	How feelings and personal qualities affect and are affected by professional practice.	Reporting	Discussion of the supervisee's written or verbal reports at the planning or debriefing stage of the supervisee's work.
				Role play	Pose hypothetical problems, demonstrate and practice skills/ techniques and explore difficulties.

The GSF is not grounded in a specific theory and is attractive to practitioners of diverse theoretical orientation. For example, a focus on 'actions and events' would suit professionals with an orientation to behavioural psychology, 'knowledge, thinking and planning' would be relevant to cognitive models of functioning and 'feelings and personal qualities' would be appropriate for practitioners with an interest in psychodynamic theory. Scaife argues that the decision of whether to tap into specific theory should be made on the basis of supervisee need and that wholesale application of one particular theory across supervision sessions should be avoided (Scaife, 1993).

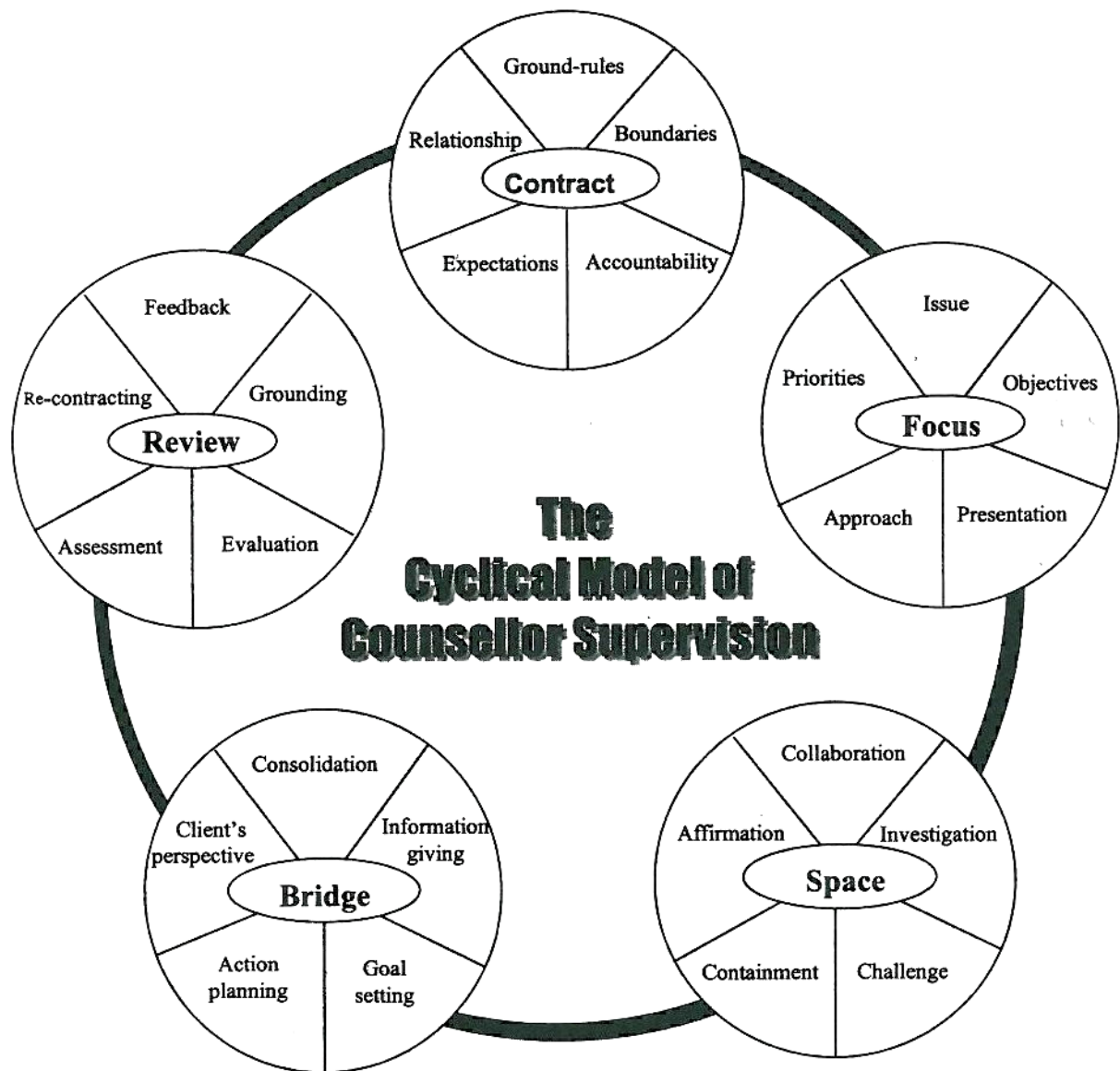
The GSF represents a simple tool for ensuring that supervisors do not get habituated into the use of one role or focus of supervision. The simplicity of the GSF makes it attractive to practitioners from diverse fields. However, the simplicity may also be a weakness of the framework; in an attempt to conceptualise a simple framework offering a number of choices, rich and detailed descriptions based on sound theory may be lost (Bernard, 1997).

2.4.2.2 The Cyclical Model (Wosket and Page, 2001)

The Cyclical Model has been heralded as the first comprehensive, accessible and holistic model of the supervision process for British counsellors, although the authors suggest that the model can be applied to other professions (Page and Wosket, 1994). The Cyclical Model is based on humanistic, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural principles and comprises five stages, which are subdivided into five steps (see Figure 2). Page and Wosket (1994)

suggest that supervision can start from any of the five stages and that the cyclical format conveys the 'seamless pattern and recurring rhythm of the supervision process' (p. 38).

Figure 2



The Cyclical Model (Wosket and Page, 2001, p. 23)

The contracting stage demystifies the process and gives structure, purpose and direction to supervision. The focus stage ensures that supervisees can make the best use of their time by agreeing what should be discussed in each session. In the space stage, Page and Wosket (1994) suggest that the supervisee should feel safe enough to be challenged and to be comfortable with feelings of confusion and 'not knowing'. The bridge stage promotes the impact of supervision on professional practice, as discussions and 'playful reflections' are applied to the work context and goals are set. In the review stage, mutual reflections on the supervision process and relationship take place.

The Cyclical Model (Wosket and Page, 2001) offers a framework for use within and between sessions. A central tenet of the Cyclical Model is that supervision should be primarily a containing and enabling process rather than an educational or therapeutic process. The enabling process is born out in aspects of the Cyclical Model such as 'space' where not knowing, reflection and insight are encouraged. Wosket and Page (2001) explain how containment is experienced by going through a process and dealing with one stage at a time, thus increasing feelings of security. They also explain how the bridge stage acts as a 'container' in that application to practice is set aside and picked up at a specified stage later on in the process (Wosket and Page, 2001).

Page and Wosket (1994) propose that the Cyclical Model is designed to complement other approaches; the process of supervision can be directed by using the Cyclical Model and the content can be informed by other models, such as the GSF.

The heavy reliance on psychodynamic principals reduces the application of the Cyclical Model as practitioners unfamiliar with psychodynamic theory may find it difficult to understand and use. Although the authors suggest that the model should be applied flexibly, the sequence of stages appears fixed and may create frustration in a supervision session that naturally followed an alternative path.

2.4.2.3 Models of supervision: conclusions

A consistent requirement of models of supervision is the flexibility of supervisors and their ability to respond dynamically to the needs of supervisees. Scaife (2009) describes this as a 'dance' between supervisor and supervisee - between 'what is unconsciously evoked and what is deliberately chosen' (p. 106). Models differ in the extent to which they are underpinned by theory and whether they describe the holistic supervision process or focus on the content within supervision sessions.

Models of supervision can increase feelings of safety and containment, build confidence in beginning supervisors, and provide a language for contracting and evaluation (Wosket and Page, 2001). Having some structure during supervision can prevent avoidance behaviours from supervisees and supervisors as a result of natural resistances and defences (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006). However, when used ineffectively, they can also act as a straightjacket, curtailing creativity and evoking frustration (Wosket and Page, 2001). This has led some authors to propose that it is not the model that is selected but the way that the model is

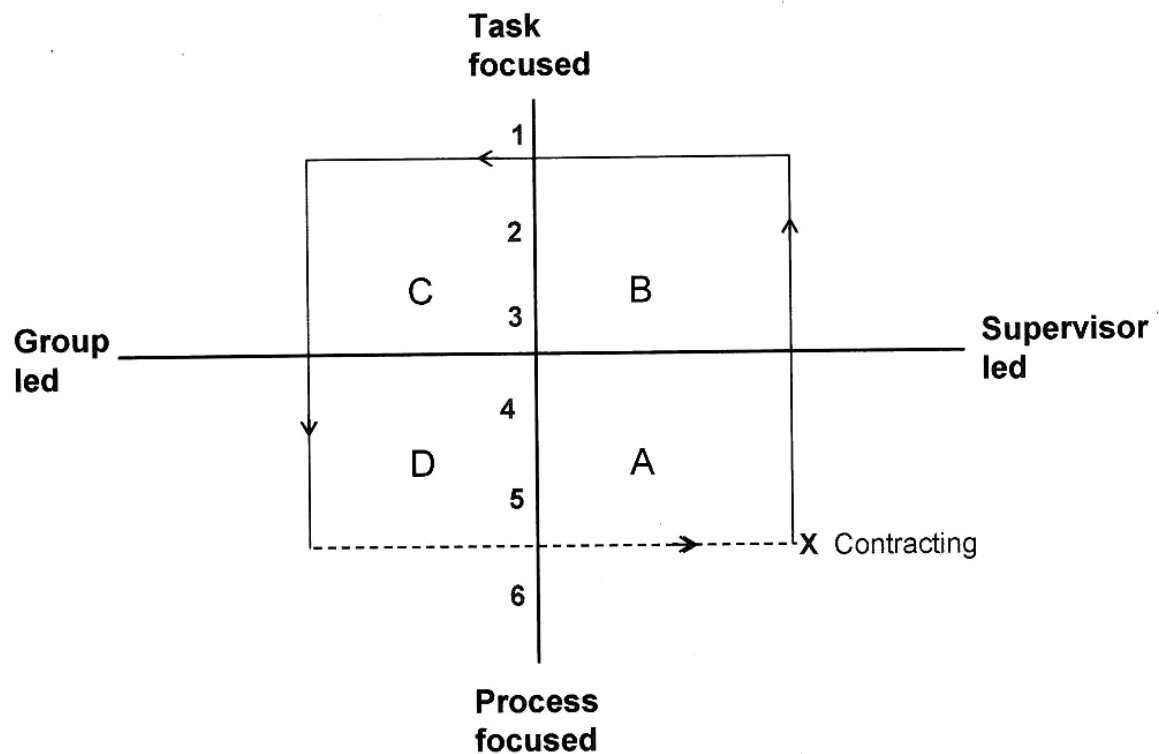
used that is vital (Mullarkey et al., 2001; Wosket and Page, 2001). In particular, Scaife (2009) argues that the decision to facilitate reflection is more important than the choice of model.

2.4.3 Group supervision

Group supervision is considered beneficial for economic reasons and provides a greater range of experiences, personalities and demographics, increasing the likelihood for empathy to be experienced (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006). However, group dynamics can be difficult to manage and the contracting process is likely to be complicated. Proctor (2000) argues that managing group supervision is a specific ability that requires 'added courage and self-discipline' (p. 8).

Hawkins and Shohet (2006) offer a 'Model of Group Supervision Styles' (see Figure 3), which provides a framework for agreeing purpose and supervisor role during the group contracting process. Different supervisor styles, depicted in each of the four quadrants, are chosen based on whether the sessions are led by the group or the supervisor and whether they focus on the process of supervision or the content of cases brought to supervision.

Figure 3



Model of Group Supervision Styles (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006, p. 154)

Hawkins and Shohet (2006) contend that effective group supervision should move flexibly through these areas. They suggest that exclusive focus on a particular quadrant leads to ineffective supervision, with exclusive focus on quadrant A akin to therapy, quadrant D akin to a peer support group, quadrant B emphasising the expertise of the supervisor and dependency of supervisees and quadrant C increasing competition between supervisees.

Models of structured group supervision have been developed where supervisees adopt various roles and reflect on a problem solving process involving a current and real problem

in order to achieve a change in thinking. Hawkins and Shohet (2006) discuss 'Practicum groups' (Hawkins and Smith, 2006, as cited in Hawkins and Shohet, 2006), where supervisees adopt various roles, including the role of facilitator, supervisor and supervisee who reflect on a real problem and shadow supervisors who observe the process and supervise the supervisor. Other examples of group problem solving processes are 'Solution circles' (Pearpoint and Forrest, 2002) and 'Circle of adults' (Wilson and Newton, 2006). Both are illustrated by a shared graphic with the aim of solving problems (Solution circles) or understanding the emotional processes leading to behaviour (Circle of adults).

2.4.4 The supervisory relationship

The argument that a good supervisory relationship is a crucial factor in determining the effectiveness of supervision is consistently made in the literature (Ladany, 2004; Ladany et al., 1999; Nelson and Friedlander, 2001; Falender and Shafranske, 2010). A good supervisory relationship has been linked to increases in supervisee satisfaction ratings (Worthen and McNeill, 1996) and a reduction in the tendency to withhold information (Webb and Wheeler, 1998; Mehr et al. 2010). This has led some authors to develop models of supervision where the relationship is core (Holloway, 1995; Orlans and Edwards, 2001).

From personal experience, Scaife (2009) writes that one of the most important factors contributing to an effective supervisory relationship are feelings of safety and this is supported by research conducted by Palomo et al. (2010) on trainee clinical psychologists, who found that a safe base was the most important factor for trainee clinical psychologists.

Scaife (2009) contends that feelings of trust take time to develop and are facilitated by openness and authenticity and she makes recommendations for increasing feelings of safety; including specifying boundaries, exploring and aligning expectations, having supervision sessions at the same time and in the same place and agreeing methods of contact between supervision sessions in 'emergency situations'.

Scaife (2009) and Page and Wosket (1994) give examples of tensions inherent in supervision sessions that can cause unease and underpin difficulties with the supervisory relationship. Tensions may stem from expectations regarding the degree of facilitation or donation and uneven power dynamics. These tensions may be more pronounced in inter-professional contexts where expectations underpinned by cultural beliefs and assumptions may conflict.

Tensions relating to power differentials and expectations concerning the process of supervision can be reduced through an active and participative contracting process, where expectations and boundaries are discussed and potential problems are raised hypothetically before they contaminate the relationship (Scaife, 2009).

2.4.5 Contracting

Contracts normally refer to written documents with legal ramifications, specifying boundaries, rules and responsibilities. This is inconsistent with the supervision literature, where contracting is referred to as a process that occurs during the course of a supervisory relationship (Page and Wosket, 1994; Carroll, 1996; Scaife, 2009). A key aspect of contracting is the discussion that ensues, where experiences and expectations are shared either formally

through the use of a pre-supervision questionnaire (Scaife, 2009) or informally through discussion.

The importance of contracting is recognised in the literature but is often not borne out in practice (Proctor, 1997; Scaife, 2009). For instance, Lawton (2000) studied eight supervisory relationships and found a patchy experience of contracting and that rigour of contracting was linked to positive supervisory relationships.

Elements of contracting are, on the whole consistent across the literature, although the wording may vary. Table 5 shows some of the key aspects of contracting.

Table 5: Key aspects of contracting

Reference	Suggestions for content of contract
Page and Wosket (1994)	Ground rules, boundaries, accountability, expectations, relationship
Carroll (1996)	Practicalities, working alliance, presenting in supervision, evaluation
Hawkins and Shohet (2006)	Practicalities and meeting arrangements, boundaries, working alliance, the sessions format, the organisational and professional context, taking notes
Scaife (2009)	Formal contractual obligations, ethical imperatives, ground rules, stakeholder requirements, standards and learning, written records of supervision, diversity, the psychological contract (role relationship, problems , evaluation, personal characteristics, supervisory style)

Contracting is beneficial in that it revisits ethical requirements for practice and informed consent, clarifies expectations and responsibilities and enables the exploration of the organisational and cultural contexts. Importantly, contracting also conveys the message that the form, content and process of supervision is negotiable and should be reviewed (Scaife, 2009) and frames the supervision process with reflection, responsiveness and reciprocity from the start.

2.4.6 Supervisor qualities and competency models

The qualities needed for supervision are complex and the process of becoming a competent supervisor occurs throughout the lifetime of a practising professional (Falender et al. 2004; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006). The notion of being 'competent' is different to the notion of 'competency'. To be competent is to reach a state of adequate professional practice whereas competency models recognise the continual development of the professional and include means of assessing supervisor qualities (Falender et al. 2004).

2.4.6.1 Supervisor qualities

Hawkins and Shohet (2006) provide a useful list of qualities of a good supervisor, based on the work of Gilbert and Evans (2000, as cited in Hawkins and Shohet, 2006). See Table 6.

Table 6: Qualities needed to be a good supervisor (based on Hawkins and Shohet, 2006, p. 50)

Quality needed to be a good supervisor
Flexible and able to explore of a range of interventions, methodologies and theoretical concepts
Brings multiple perspectives to supervision
Open to new learning
Has a working knowledge of the profession of the supervisee
Can contain and manage anxiety
Is sensitive and responsive to cultural differences
Is sensitive and responsive to wider contextual issues
Is sensitive and responsive to power differentials
Humour, humility and patience

The importance of responding to the needs of supervisees (Carroll, 1996; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009) and being able to reflect on supervision as it proceeds (Schön, 1991; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009; Falender and Shafranske, 2010) have been consistently promoted as key supervisor qualities in the literature. Reflection in action (Schön, 1991) describes how the supervisor becomes a researcher in the practice context, not dependent on an established theory, but able to continue to proceed through supervision, whilst simultaneously reflecting on and altering practice, noting the results and

responding accordingly. Reflection in action is pro-offered as the hallmark of professionalism by Schön (1991).

Hawkins and Shohet (2006) also discuss the importance of reflection both before and after supervision sessions. In particular, they recommend that supervisors think about their own needs underpinning the motivation to become a supervisor so that these can be recognised and met responsibly.

2.4.6.2 Competency models

The recent professional guidelines for supervision produced by the Division of Educational and Child Psychology (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) include a list of supervisor competencies relating to the qualities of supervisors (see Table 7). The Supervision competencies framework is influenced by the work of Falender et al. (2004) and is provided to support reflection and self-assessment of professional supervisory skills.

Table 7: Supervision competencies framework (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010)

Competency category	Example competency from the Supervision competencies framework (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010)
Training	Seeking supervision of own supervision practice
Values	Creating a safe and trusting forum for discussion and recognising potential power imbalances
Context	Clarifying lines of accountability and relationship between line management and supervision
Knowledge	Knowing and using appropriate models of supervision

Skills	Developing and maintaining critical mind-sets in order to assist the supervisee to work in a reflective way
Evaluation	Using evaluative feedback from the supervisee to develop supervisory practice

Competency based models were developed in the United States (Talbot, 2004) and are becoming more relevant within the practice of professional psychology (Falender and Shafranske, 2007). This is partly because of the ethical standard to 'practice within the boundaries of their competence' (British Psychological Society, 2006; American Psychological Association, 2002), which is starting to be defined and broken down by giving examples of the values, knowledge and skills that contribute towards competency in particular areas of practice.

Competency models constitute a new learning paradigm based on criterion referenced assessment (Falender, et al. 2004) and outcomes based education and training (Falender and Shafranske, 2010). 'Competency' has a different meaning to 'competence' which is one step on the road to professional excellence (Talbot, 2004). Some professionals recognise the continuum of competency, whereas others may not be able to see past a binary incompetent / competent dichotomy (Talbot, 2004). This signals a tension in the epistemological positions concerning conceptualisations of competency models.

Competency models are advantageous in that they help to articulate the distinctive contribution that psychologists make and enable links to be made between training and

assessment. However, there is a great deal of controversy surrounding the conceptualisation and increasing use of competency based approaches to practice (Falender et al. 2004). Most of the controversy surrounds the limits that competency models place on diversity within professional practice. Competency approaches narrow the focus of training, reduce professionalism to a collection of specific skills (Fish and De Cossart, 2006) and limit the

‘...reflection, intuition, experience and higher order competence necessary for expert, holistic or well-developed practice.’ (Talbot, 2004, p. 587)

2.4.6.3 Training

In Britain, training of supervisors has constituted a key element of the supervision literature and authors have tended to formulate theories and frameworks for supervision that are underpinned by their own experiences of training supervisors (Page and Wosket, 1994; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006).

More recently supervisor training has gained momentum on both sides of the Atlantic due to the increasing use of competency models (Falender and Shafranske 2007), increasing awareness of the accountability of supervisors for the professional practice of supervisees (Storm et al. 2001) and increasing interest in the accreditation of training courses (Gonsalvez and Milne, 2010).

Training is included as a category in the competency framework for educational psychologists (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

Recently, Milne (2010) has begun to research approaches to training supervisors based on the use of a training manual, with initial findings suggesting that this approach is feasible and acceptable. However, others (e.g. Page and Wosket, 1994; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006) prefer to conceptualise training as an opportunity for supervisors to reflect on previous supervision experiences and develop their own informed style and approach to supervision rather than a didactic session where knowledge and experiences of supervision are donated.

2.4.7 Ethical issues

Carroll (1996) suggests that the functions of supervision are twofold; to promote the welfare of the client and to encourage the development of the supervisee. Ethical codes, principles and dilemmas concern how professionals can work towards ensuring client welfare and are therefore given priority within the supervision literature (Page and Wosket, 1994; Carroll, 1996; Scaife, 2009). Different authors have given advice on how ethical issues should be addressed.

Page and Wosket (1994) recommend an exploration of ethical principles to

‘...provide a means of receiving the problem through to a depth of understanding beyond the scope of codes of practice.’ (p.147)

Ethical principles, such as fidelity, beneficence and autonomy have their roots in moral philosophy and assist individuals with how to decide what is good and bad in a given context.

Carroll (1996) provides a useful model of 'ethical decision making' in order to build supervisor confidence in dealing competently with ethical issues. The first stage involves creating ethical sensitivity. Ethical sensitivity can be encouraged through becoming familiar with ethical codes; anticipating future ethical problems and conflicting responsibilities; discussing hypothetical situations; and evaluating the ethical implications of real-life and hypothetical decisions.

The second stage involves formulating a practice decision based on ethical decisions and signals the link between theory and practice. The third stage involves implementing the ethical decision and relies on the motivation of the supervisee. The fourth stage involves living with the ambiguities of an ethical decision and recognises that ethical decisions constitute an informed decision and not a 'right' answer.

Most authors discourage unthinking adherence to ethical codes of practice and suggest that the application of ethical principles and the process of ethical decision making are key to responding appropriately to ethical dilemmas (Page and Wosket, 1994; Carroll, 1996; Scaife, 2009). This is particularly relevant to the field of inter-professional supervision, where ethical codes from different sources are likely to conflict, leading Scaife (2009) to suggest that ethical codes should be viewed as a 'stimulus for debate' in a dynamic process.

2.4.8 Accountability

Accountability relates to the legal responsibility that supervisors have for the professional practice of supervisees and ultimately, the welfare of client. According to Leonard and Richards (2001), there have to be direct effects between the advice given by a supervisor and harm to a client for litigation to proceed.

Accountability has received more attention recently due to the greater litigious environment and move towards controlling the quality of services (Orlans and Edwards, 2001). In the United States, supervisors are generally assumed to have more responsibility for the negligence of supervisees than in the United Kingdom (Scaife, 2009). On both sides of the Atlantic, professional practice standards documented in the 'Ethics code' (American Psychological Society, 2002) and 'Standards of proficiency' (Health Professions Council, 2009) have required supervisors to ensure that supervisees carry out tasks competently.

Supervisors frequently and erroneously assume that they are less responsible for the professional practice of supervisees than they actually are (Storm et al. 2001). Supervisors also tend to take more care over client records than supervision records, even though they are equally important when problems with practice arise (Scaife, 2009).

Table 8: Recommendations for accountable practice

Reference	Recommendation for accountable practice
Storm et al. (2001)	Be clear about what constitutes supervision and be realistic about what supervision can and can't accomplish
Cutcliff (2000)	Acknowledge any limitations in knowledge and competence at the outset
Leonard and Richards (2001)	Know codes of conduct and abide by them
Leonard and Richards (2001)	Supervisors should receive regular supervision for their work as supervisor and keep detailed records of supervision.
Scaife (2009)	Make it clear to supervisees that their supervisor shares responsibility for the welfare of clients.
Storm et al. (2001), Leonard and Richards (2001)	Create a formal written contract that is periodically reviewed
Storm et al. (2001)	Agree that information concerning 'risky' clients is discussed at specified regular intervals
Storm et al. (2001)	Agree procedures for contact in emergency situations
Cutcliff (2000), Leonard and Richards (2001)	Agree procedures for record keeping as part of the initial formal contracting stage. Minimal records are advisable and more detailed records necessary when direction is given (e.g. steps to be taken, with dates and consequences if action isn't taken).
Wosket and Page (2001)	Use a model of supervision to account for the process of supervision and make the rationale underpinning supervision transparent.

Accountability becomes more complicated in inter-professional contexts. Guidelines for supervision for educational psychologists (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) state that,

‘When an educational psychologist supervises a person from another profession, it is vital that key lines of accountability in decision making are clearly agreed and recorded. It is crucial that there is clarity with regard to liability, legal and case responsibility that normally remains within line management structures.’ (p.11)

2.5 Supervision within the professional practice of educational psychology

2.5.1 Research

The continuing supervision of educational psychologists has not received a high profile in the theoretical and research literature (Nolan, 1999). Since Educational and Child Psychology (British Psychological Society) published an issue dedicated to supervision in 1993, there has been little supervision research within the field of educational psychology. Any research that has been published has tended to explore the supervision of trainee educational psychologists or newly qualified educational psychologists (Nash, 1999; Carrington, 2004; Atkinson and Woods, 2007).

Lunt and Sayeed (1995, p.26) explain the slow growth of supervision literature within educational psychology with reference to the cultural attitudes that exist within education that equate:

“competence’ with ‘no longer in need of supervision’, with the implication that it was the unskilled, dependent practitioners who require supervision.’

Two articles were selected for more detailed analysis (Nolan, 1999; Atkinson and Woods, 2007). An overview of other known literature addressing supervision within the field of educational psychology is tabulated below.

Table 9: Research of supervision within the profession of educational psychology

Authors	Aim	Summary of methods and methodologies	Conclusions
Pomerantz (1993)	To explore the supportive activities of educational psychologists.	A national questionnaire was developed (147 items) by a DECP working party. Closed questions were used. Participants were randomly selected from member lists (DECP and AEP). 117 questionnaire responses were analysed using SPSS descriptive and inferential techniques.	<p>44% of educational psychologists received supervision.</p> <p>92% of supervisors were in a 'promoted post'.</p> <p>33% thought that their supervisor shouldn't be their line manager</p> <p>23% didn't feel sufficient trust within the supervisory relationship.</p>
Nash (1999)	To discuss the application of Solution Focused thinking for the supervision of trainee educational psychologists.	Nash used a case study to illustrate her personal learning journey when applying solution focused questioning to the supervision of a trainee educational psychologist.	<p>Supervision offers a valuable opportunity for mutual observations and reciprocal reflections on practice.</p> <p>Nash offered a consultative model to support reciprocal observation and reflection.</p>

Carrington (2004)	To discuss learning gains when supervising a trainee educational psychologist	Carrington used a case study to illustrate her learning gains in the role of supervisor.	Supervision should be viewed as a reciprocal learning process.
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Nolan (1999) researched continued supervision within the profession of educational psychology. She used a mixed methods approach; comprising focus groups and interviews (n=14) within one service, and a questionnaire distributed to principal educational psychologists in other services (n=58). The interviews explored views on and experiences of supervision and the questionnaires explored how supervision was organised.

Nolan (1999) found that the amount of supervision decreased as experience increased and that supervisors tended to be senior educational psychologists. Nolan (1999) noted that educational psychologists found it difficult to specify a supervisory model, with four stating that no particular model was used. Some respondents believed that supervision should be separated from management (50%) and others thought that supervision needed to be linked to appraisal to guarantee its survival. Nolan (1999) concluded by suggesting the next steps for her employing service and suggested that the culture of supervision within the educational psychology services needed to be explored.

Nolan's (1999) research comprises a multi-level view of the practice of supervision and utilises aspects of action research, where 'action, reflection, theory and practice' (Reason and Bradbury, 2001, p. 1) occur in partnership with stakeholders to improve practice.

Nolan (1999) suggested that espoused theory and theory in action within educational psychology services may not be consistent. However, she chose to send questionnaires to principal educational psychologists, who may have given the espoused theory without checking out the reality with their employee educational psychologists. This decision reflects a positivist stance, whereby the 'facts' are sought and alternative interpretations of those facts are ignored. The decision also reflects an inconsistency in epistemology in that power issues are explored by the author and yet questionnaires were distributed to principal educational psychologists, at the top of the power hierarchy, and with little direct experience of being supervised.

Nolan's (1999) research reflects the cultural attitudes that seem to exist within education services that place supervisory need with lesser-experienced practitioners. This culture may be militating against an evidence base and associated practice that recognises the value of continuing supervision throughout the lifetime of a practising educational psychologist.

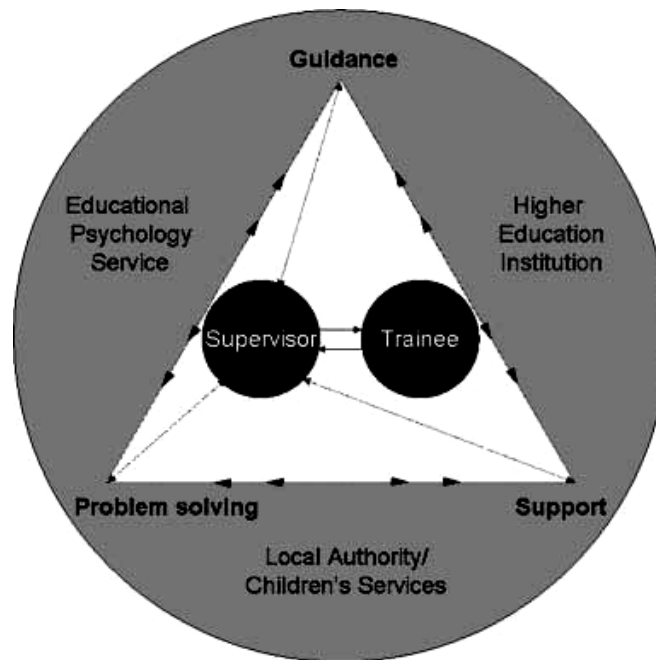
Atkinson and Woods (2007) sought to provide

'...up-to-date evidence on facilitators and barriers to effective supervision for trainee educational psychologists.' (p. 301)

Mixed methods were used; comprising focus groups (n=8) within one educational psychology service, and questionnaires (n=93) distributed to educational psychologists from the North of England and Wales. Focus group discussions informed the questionnaire design, which comprised statements referring to enabling factors and barriers to supervision. Respondents were required to rank the statements in order of importance and supply additional comments 'where relevant'. The highest ranked enabling factor was 'Supervision offers guidance, problem-solving and support appropriate to the needs of the trainee.' and the highest ranked barrier was 'Lack of communication/clarity of communication between the supervisor and trainee.'

Atkinson and Woods (2007) formulated a 'Model for Effective Supervision' (refer to Figure 4). The model highlights the importance of contextual factors, which incorporates the cultures manifest in different organisations impacting upon supervision. However, the formulation of the model from the research findings is not clearly expressed and the model emphasises the passive role of the trainee educational psychologist, who is portrayed as a recipient of the supervisory role. The passive portrayal of the supervisee is at odds with the wealth of literature on supervision which gives prominence to supervisee led supervision and reciprocity within the supervisory relationship (Nolan, 1999; Scaife, 2009; Page and Wosket, 1994). I recognise that my own identity as a trainee educational psychologist influences this observation and biases the strength of argument put forward.

Figure 4



Model for Effective Supervision (Atkinson and Woods, 2007, p. 307)

The decision to use ranked statements reflects positivist epistemology. The statements were informed by focus group discussions within one educational psychology service and then ranked by respondents working in other organisations with different historical and cultural contexts. The statements will have different meanings for different people and those differences may become more pronounced across organisation contexts. For instance, the highest ranked enabling factor was 'Supervision offers guidance, problem-solving and support appropriate to the needs of the trainee.' In this statement, the word 'guidance' may be positioned at any point along a continuum from facilitation, when the supervisee takes responsibility for learning, to direction, where the supervisor takes responsibility for learning.

2.5.2 Professional practice guidelines

The current 'generic professional practice guidelines' produced by the Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP) state that supervision should be an entitlement for all educational psychologists working with clients (DECP, 2002).

More recently, the DECP have created 'guidelines for professional supervision' (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) including a competencies framework for skills in supervision. The guidelines were created in response to the changing contexts in which educational psychologists work, including the move towards multiagency working and the regulation of all practising educational psychologists by the Health Professions Council (HPC) from 2009. The HPC produced guidelines on professional practice that included the direction to 'supervise tasks that you have asked others to carry out' (HPC, 2008, p. 12). Therefore, inter-professional supervision is becoming increasingly important to the professional practice of educational psychologists.

The DECP guidelines recommend that all practicing psychologists should receive professional supervision, which they define as (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010):

'...a psychological process that enables a focus on personal and professional development and that offers a confidential and reflective space for the educational psychologist to consider their work and the responses to it.' (p. 7)

The definition emphasises the educational and supportive functions of supervision and suggests that supervisees should have a strong influence on the supervision agenda.

The definition of supervision as a 'psychological process' alludes to the distinctive and valuable role that educational psychologists could play in inter-professional supervision of non-psychologists.

The DECP guidelines recommend the creation of a contract as an opportunity to discuss aspects of supervision and the supervisory relationship and stress the importance of agreeing and contracting the lines of accountability around decision making so that there is clarity around boundaries of liability, legal and case responsibility. The information exchange between stakeholders involved in professional and line management supervision should also be agreed.

To conclude this section, there is a lack of up to date research concerning the continued supervision of practising educational psychologists and extant research tends to describe personal experience of supervisors (Carrington, 2004; Nash, 1999) or research views of qualified educational psychologists (Atkinson and Woods, 2007; Nolan, 1999), neglecting the views of trainee educational psychologists / supervisees.

2.6 Inter-professional supervision

Inter-professional supervision describes a process whereby professionals from different fields come together to discuss issues related to their working practice. The practice of inter-professional supervision is a relatively new phenomenon, with a small research base (Davy, 2002). Recent professional guidelines produced by the DECP (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) have introduced the possibility of inter-professional supervision. The guidelines are

likely to stimulate debate on the value of inter-professional supervision within the practice of educational psychology. This section will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of inter-professional supervision and critically analyse research in the field.

2.6.1 Theoretical debate

A pivotal debate arising from the topic of inter-professional supervision concerns whether supervision should be regarded as an activity occurring within a profession or a discipline within its own right (Carroll, 1996). In other words what is more important; having a supervisor who has expertise in the supervisee's professional domain or having a supervisor who has expertise in supervision? Carroll (1996) argues that professional practice skills and supervision skills are not mutually exclusive and should be sought in combination.

Some professional organisations and key writers in the field have argued that it is more important to have a supervisor who has expertise in the professional domain of the supervisee in order to retain the 'socialisation function' of supervision (Bernard and Goodyear, 1998; Division of Clinical Psychology, 2003). This view is often held in contexts that focus on the supervision of trainee psychologists whose socialisation into their respective profession is more of a priority than is the case for continuing supervision of applied psychologists.

More recently, professional organisations have allowed for supervision to be delivered by a practitioner from another profession, so long as the supervisor is sufficiently qualified and experienced as a supervisor and has current knowledge of key aspects of the role and

context of the supervisee (DCP, 2006; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010). The guidelines on supervision for educational psychologists (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) include a competency framework and usefully illustrate how supervision skills and professional knowledge can be conceptualised (see Figure 5).

Figure 5



Supervision competencies (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010, p. 8)

Profession specific competence describes skills particular to the profession, core competence describes skills that are essential for supervision and pertain across professional disciplines, and specialist/therapeutic competence describes specialist skills specific to a particular skill area (e.g. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy). These competencies are not mutually exclusive; some are distinctive but many cut across competency domains.

Dunsmuir and Leadbetter (2010) suggest that the core competencies 'should be expected in all supervisory relationships' (p.8) and the same is not said for profession specific competencies, indicating the importance of supervision skills for supervision.

The notion that supervision is a profession in its own right with a unique set of skills or competencies that cut across professional disciplines is supported by key supervision texts (Scaife, 2009; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006) which are eclectic in terms of theoretical orientation and have been written for a variety of professions. Literature addressing inter-professional supervision tends to conclude that it is more important to choose a supervisor based on supervisory skill and relevance to the needs of the supervisee rather than solely on the basis that they are from the same profession (Lilley, et al., 2007; Mullarkey et al., 2001; Davies et al, 2004). Therefore, current thinking seems to give prominence to supervision skills relative to professional practice skills.

2.6.2 Advantages and disadvantages of inter-professional supervision

Advantages of inter-professional supervision include the 'fresh' perspective of the supervisor, who maybe more able to see what the supervisee's own belief system is editing out and their independence from the professional organisation of the supervisee (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009) and line management structures (Clouder and Sellars, 2004).

The independence of supervisors has been debated in the literature, with most authors arguing that professional supervision should be separated from line-management structures (Page and Wosket, 1994; Clouder and Sellars, 2004; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife,

2009). This is because the needs of the organisation may not be compatible with the needs of the client (Page and Wosket, 1994) and the hierarchical structures implicated when line managers deliver professional supervision may increase the power-inequalities, placing strain on the supervisory relationship. Clouder and Sellars (2004) argue strongly that the agendas should not be conflated as supervisees will not engage fully when supervision is perceived to mask checking up procedures.

The independence of supervisors may enable supervisees to discuss difficult issues that conflict with organisational agendas. Webb and Wheeler (1998) found that supervisees were more likely to withhold information from their supervisor when they were supervised 'in-house' (within-professional supervision) compared to when they were supervised independently of the setting (inter-professional supervision). However, Townend (2005) found that participants were more guarded in inter-professional contexts relative to within-professional contexts.

The different conclusions reached by these authors may be explained by the disclosures reported. Webb and Wheeler (1998) recruited psychodynamic counsellors and disclosures included erotic feelings towards the client and discomfort with the supervisor. Townend (2005) recruited Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapists, who identified that they were less likely to discuss problems with their practice during inter-professional supervision. It seems that the disclosures about personal relationships are easier to disclose to someone who is independent from the working context, whereas disclosures about working practice are easier to disclose to someone who works within the same working context.

Scaife (2009) talks about the difficult emotions that can be evoked by work colleagues.

‘In our experience, the range of emotions aroused at work in relation to clients is at least equalled if not exceeded by those evoked by colleagues’ (p.46)

Difficult emotions are likely to impede successful supervision adding further weight to arguments for having a supervisor who is not a work colleague and is independent from the professional organisation of the supervisee.

Disadvantages of inter-professional supervision have also been reported. Disadvantages include differences in language and culture between professions, acting as a barrier to effective communication and feelings of empathy (Townend, 2005).

Most authors writing about inter-professional supervision emphasise the importance of contracting to determine the purpose of supervision and identify boundaries of managerial and professional supervision in terms of the respective foci and responsibilities (O’Donoghue, 2004; Mullarkey, et al. 2001; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

Some authors have also emphasised the importance of further preparation of supervisees and supervisors before embarking on inter-professional supervision to ensure that a sensitive approach ensues, where the supervisor and supervisee are attuned to the historical and cultural context of the respective professions (Lilley, et al., 2007; O’Donoghue, 2004; Townend, 2005; Davies., et al, 2004; Mullarkey, et al., 2001). Discussion of experiences and views of supervision is also considered important (Lilley, et al 2007; O’Donoghue, 2004) as different professions give emphasis to different functions of supervision and have a unique

historical narrative underpinning the development of supervision. The narratives are often framed by power hierarchies and changing practices that have caused conflict and necessitate a sensitive approach.

2.6.3 Critical analysis of a research paper

Townend (2005) researched the 'inter-professional' supervision experiences of accredited Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist's (CBP's) receiving 'specialist' supervision specific to their needs as a CBP. An open-ended questionnaire was distributed to 170 randomly selected CBP's in order to find the frequency of inter-professional supervision (IPS) and views as to any associated facilitators and barriers. CBP's included mental health nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, teachers and psychologists.

Townend (2005) found IPS to be common amongst CBP's (65 out of 170). When engaging in IPS, psychologists were often found to be the supervisors (36 out of 41) but infrequently the supervisees (5 out of 41) in the supervisory relationship. This supports the findings of Thomas and Reid's (1995) survey and demonstrates that psychologists are often called upon to supervise others.

Townend (2005) reported that IPS was perceived by respondents to facilitate a broadening of perspective, knowledge and skills; help the supervisee to gain an objective stance; and engender a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities between professions, which may support effective multi-agency working. The barriers to IPS were reported to be ethical

issues, differences in training, and the increasing likelihood for professionals to become guarded for fear of judgement from their supervisor.

Townend (2005) used open-ended questions, enabling participants to demonstrate their unique way of looking at the world (Silverman, 1993). However, the use of a questionnaire precludes the probing and checking out that a face to face interview allows. We can be less certain when using a questionnaire, as opposed to an interview, that the true and full meaning and experiences of participants are conveyed to the researcher in the way intended.

Townend's (2005) sampling technique seems inappropriate for the stated research aims of the paper. Townend (2005) selected a random sample of CBP's and aimed to describe and explore the inter-professional aspects of supervision. Random sampling is usually considered appropriate when the intended research outcome is to extrapolate findings to other contexts and is normally used within positivist methodologies. The extent to which the research can be extrapolated to more diverse populations is acknowledged by the author as limited because CBP's share a common language, theoretical grounding, epistemological stance, and training experience. This commonality will not be experienced by other non CBP populations.

Townend's (2005) stated aims and identity as a CBP seems to provide an ideal context for selecting a purposive sample and conducting face to face interviews yielding rich data concerning the experiences of fellow CBP practitioners engaged in IPS.

2.6.4 Conclusion

This section has reviewed debates within the field of inter-professional supervision, explored the advantages and disadvantages of inter-professional supervision and reviewed the inter-professional literature from other fields.

From this brief review, it seems that inter-professional supervision encourages a broadening of perspective and can engender a greater appreciation of the contributions of different professionals, supporting effective multiagency practice. Issues raised were the need for a clear purpose and contracting process and an exploration of cultural and historical factors concerned with professional practice and supervision (Townend, 2005; O'Donoghue, 2004).

2.7 Conclusions and implications for the current research

2.7.1 Main conclusions from the literature review

The increasing interest in supervision demonstrated by formulation of practice guidelines for supervision (DCP, 2006; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) has been underpinned by the direction for supervisors to ensure that tasks are carried out competently (HPC, 2008), increasing the accountability of supervisors for the professional practice of supervisees. However, the political and social impetus has not been supported by an evidence base (Davy, 2002).

Research into inter-professional supervision is limited (Davy, 2002) and absent from the field of educational psychology. The extant research suggests that inter-professional supervision

can bring a fresh perspective to professional practice and can increase understanding of different professional roles in multi-agency teams (Townend, 2005). However, feelings of safety, heralded as the most important factor in determining a positive supervisory relationship (Scaife, 2009), appear to be compromised in inter-professional supervisory contexts (Townend, 2005).

Feelings of safety can be encouraged through an active and participative contracting process, where boundaries and expectations are discussed and cultural and historical assumptions and beliefs associated with individuals and their organisational contexts are explored. Contracting frames supervision with reflection, responsiveness and reciprocity from the start and can also reduce future tensions associated with supervision as potential problems can be discussed hypothetically before they contaminate the relationship (Scaife, 2009).

Feelings of safety can also be encouraged through the explicit use of models of supervision to provide a route through a complex process, engendering feelings of certainty and consistency (Wosket and Page, 2001). Models of supervision are not mutually exclusive and have been used in combination within inter-professional contexts (Davies et al. 2004). Scaife (2009) recommends that the facilitation of reflection is more important than the choice of supervision model. Reflection is a key part of the definition of supervision given by the DECP guidelines for educational psychologists (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) and reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action are given as hallmarks of quality supervision (Schön, 1991; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009; Falender and Shafranske, 2010).

2.7.2 Implications for the current research

This research has the dual purpose of exploring views on inter-professional supervision and contributing to the extant literature.

From an analysis of research methods and methodologies in extant literature described in this review, I have taken the following principles which will be applied to the research presented here.

- This research draws on interpretivist philosophy and seeks to recognise and understand the complexities of the supervision process (Scaife, 2009). It doesn't seek to bracket out complexities in order to determine causality or allow for generalisability (e.g. Milne, 2007; Holloway and Neufeldt, 1995).
- This research recognises the demographic of researchers in the field (Davy, 2002) and the tendency of some researchers to neglect the views of supervisees (Atkinson and Woods, 2007; Carrington, 2004; Nash, 1999; Nolan, 1999). Therefore, this research seeks to explore the views of both supervisees and supervisors and is conducted by a supervisee.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

The topic researched here is supervision: a social experience where people meet and discuss aspects of their work. Postmodernism (McKenzie et al., 1997) argues that researchers must firstly explore their own *understandings* of the concepts being researched (ontology) before deciding *how* those concepts should be researched (methodology). My ontological position with regard to supervision is that supervision is a personal experience involving both the supervisor and supervisee who construct the experience and its effectiveness in unique ways according to their views of the world. Following from this, my epistemological position is that the views of the supervisor and supervisee are critical to our understanding of the supervision process. Therefore, an interpretative epistemological framework is appropriate for this research. Interpretivism seeks to understand meaning within social situations (Usher, 1996) and acknowledges that meaning will be understood within the researcher's frame of reference.

3.2 Research design

When considering possible research designs for this project, I was guided by the research questions and aims, my position as a researcher, ethical considerations and extant literature exploring inter-professional supervision and supervision within the field of educational psychology. Interviews, questionnaires and focus groups were considered as possible methods for gaining the views of participants within an interpretative framework.

Focus groups are forums for generating and analysing interactions between participants (Barbour, 2007). Focus groups have been used in research of supervision within the profession of educational psychology (Atkinson and Woods, 2007; Nolan, 1999). They are ideal for finding out why participants think as they do and seem to provide more rounded and reasoned arguments when conducted with pre-existing teams (Barbour, 2007). However, the use of focus groups to explore supervision within existing teams has ethical implications. The confidentiality normally assured within the confines of a supervisory relationship could not be extended to information given within the focus group discussion (Kruger and Casey, 2000). Furthermore, some participants recruited for this research were known to each other and so would be discussing personal opinions on potentially contentious issues, such as quality of supervision, with their colleagues. Participants may withhold information for fear of peer disapproval and where information is given, focus group discussion may lead to negativity between colleagues or a breakdown in supervisory relationships. For these ethical reasons, focus groups were considered an inappropriate method for the topic of research considered here.

Questionnaires and interviews were considered appropriate for discussing views on supervision, as confidentiality could be assured and views may be expressed more freely without fear of peer disapproval. Questionnaires have been selected when researching both inter-professional supervision (Townend, 2005) and supervision within the practice of educational psychology (Atkinson and Woods, 2007). The following paragraphs explain why

interviews as opposed to questionnaires were considered to be the most appropriate tool for the research presented here.

Inter-professional supervision combines the complex processes of supervision and multi-agency working (Townend, 2005) and so research of inter-professional supervision requires a design that can capture the complexities of the topic under investigation. Interviews are more suited to the complex topic area because interviews allow the researcher to extend their line of questioning and probe interesting responses for further exploration (Robson, 2002) in contrast to questionnaires which yield data limited to the fixed questions posed.

Interviews are also ideal research tools for exploring relatively under-researched areas as they allow the researcher to question, paraphrase and summarise so that any misalignment between understandings of the researcher and participant are minimised (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). Research into inter-professional supervision is in its infancy and the issues presented by educational psychologists have not to my knowledge been articulated in the inter-professional supervision literature before and so interviews are an appropriate method for exploring this new area of research.

The question as to whether there can ever be accurate alignment between the views of the participant and those reported by the researcher has been debated. Walford (2001) argues that the researcher and participant will construct the interview in different ways according to their own experiences and preconceptions and so accurate alignment between views expressed and views reported can be worked towards but never fully achieved. The concept

of reflexivity is important here, describing how researchers should work towards accurate interpretation, acknowledging and, wherever possible, identifying any factors that may influence interpretations made (Robson, 2002).

The decision to use interviews was influenced by the methods employed in research papers investigating inter-professional supervision in other disciplines. Townend (2005) used a questionnaire to ask a series of open-ended questions aimed at finding the facilitators and barriers involved when engaged in inter-professional supervision. Townend's (2005) research was useful for finding out views as to the facilitators and barriers involved when engaged in inter-professional supervision from a large sample of participants (170). However, the use of questionnaires precludes the probing and checking out that an interview allows and produces data limited to the questions posed, allowing more opportunities for a misalignment in understandings between the participant and researcher. To build on Townend's (2005) research it seems appropriate to conduct interviews to validate, clarify and illustrate Townend's (2005) findings in more detail (Robson, 2002).

The principal difference between interviews and questionnaires is the presence or absence of the researcher. The social context in which an interview takes place can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. In an interview, the researcher can probe interesting responses, obtaining rich and meaningful data. However, in an interview the participant is more likely to change his or her responses according to characteristics of the researcher, introducing researcher bias (Cohen et al. 2007). It is important to be aware of the potential biases associated with interviews so that steps can be taken to reduce their impact and we

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can be more confident of the validity of findings. The steps taken in this research to reduce potential biases are presented in Table 12 (p. 79).

3.2.1 Interview schedule

I decided to use semi-structured interviews rather than a structured or unstructured interview schedule. Semi-structured interviews encourage the interviewer to focus on obtaining information relevant to the research questions while also allowing the interviewer to modify their line of enquiry according to the responses given (Robson, 2002). This is particularly useful when there is limited knowledge about the topic being researched.

Based on the guidelines given by Gillham (2000), outlined in Table 10, I decided to use face to face interviews rather than telephone interviews.

Table 10: Guidelines for using face to face or telephone interviews (based on Gillham, 2000)

Gillham (2000) advises to use face-to-face interviews when ...	Application to this research
Small numbers of people involved	10 interviews
People are accessible	Distance = 73 miles (n=1), 27 miles (n=1), 15 miles (n=1), 7 miles (n=6), 2 miles (n=1)
Questions are open-ended and prompts may be required	19/19 questions were open-ended
Trust between the interviewer and respondent is necessary because topics discussed may be sensitive	Exploratory interviews indicated negative feelings when discussing supervision.
Research aims require insight and understanding	Some element of insight and understanding required for this new area of research

Although some participants were not as accessible as others, the importance of establishing trust and being able to read non-verbal messages that add depth and feeling to the verbal responses given (Robson, 2002) outweighed the distances that needed to be travelled, justifying the decision to conduct face-to-face interviews.

The interview schedule was piloted with one supervisee to ensure that the questions were easy to understand, relevant and the interview flowed as naturally as possible. It was agreed that the questions were easy to understand and relevant to the research questions. Changes were made to the order of questions to increase the flow of the interview and changes were made to the format of the schedule to make it easier to follow. Since questions remained unchanged it was decided that the pilot interview could be incorporated into the data set for the current research.

3.2.2 Question construction

The semi-structured interview schedule comprised 19 key interview questions, with associated prompts (see Appendix 4). The questions were open questions rather than closed or scaled items so that participants could be encouraged to demonstrate their unique way of looking at the world (Silverman, 1993). The first questions were factual questions designed to relax participants (Patton, 1980). The following questions were derived from the literature and important themes that arose from a local research project.

Some of the questions for the interview were formulated from important themes arising from an earlier research project (see section 1.2 for background information) involving nine

exploratory interviews conducted with educational psychologists and early years practitioners within my local authority. The exploratory interviews revealed strong feelings held by some participants that they were being checked up on and that supervision was synonymous with developmental need, reflecting a lack of trust in their capabilities as a practitioner. This reflects the culture that has existed within education services that has equated '...competence' with 'no longer in need of supervision' (Lunt and Sayeed, 1995, p.26). During the exploratory interview, many participants were uncomfortable with the term supervision, preferring 'casework support'. The importance of the supervisory relationship was highlighted. Participants thought that it was important for the supervisee to feel supported and for there to be trust between the supervisor and supervisee.

Interview questions were also formulated with reference to extant literature enabling the research presented here to make a direct contribution to continuing debates within the field of inter-professional supervision and supervision within the field of educational psychology. Hence participants were asked whether it is more important to have skills in professional practice or skills in supervision (O'Donoghue, 2004), about facilitators and barriers when engaging in inter-professional supervision (Townend, 2005; Atkinson and Woods, 2007), about models of supervision (Nolan, 1999), the distinctive skills that educational psychologists have as a supervisor in inter-professional supervision contexts (Townend, 2005) and about the boundaries of supervision and issues of legal responsibility which has been brought to our attention in recent professional guidelines for supervision (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

3.3 Ethical issues

Guidelines from the British Psychological Society (BPS) were followed throughout the research process (BPS, 2009) as demonstrated by the ethics form included in the appendices (see Appendix 5). Participants were contacted by email and given general details about my identity and the aims of the research. A letter was attached giving more details relating to the research topic and pertinent ethical considerations (see Appendix 6). The letter ensured that participants had the opportunity to be fully informed about the nature of the research enquiry before deciding whether to respond and consider further their participation in the interviews. At the start of interviews, a consent form was read aloud to participants (see Appendix 7) giving full details of ethical decisions made during the design of the research, including information relating to issues of confidentiality, anonymity and the distribution and storage of research reports. Any questions were answered and participants were asked to sign the form to signify consent for their participation in the research process.

At the end of interviews, participants were debriefed. A summary of their views was presented back to participants and they were asked to comment on whether they felt that their views on the topic had been accurately and fairly represented. Participants were also asked whether they wanted any information to be deleted from records.

Other ethical considerations included the possibility that participants may experience negative feelings resulting from the interview process. Supervision can be a contentious issue, often hinging on the uneven power differentials experienced in the supervisory

relationship. Supervision was found to be a contentious issue during the exploratory interviews, when some participants described the feeling of being checked up on and not trusted to do their job properly. My identity as a trainee educational psychologist may exacerbate such negative feelings, as some of the supervisee participants may view me as 'one of them' rather than 'one of us'. In response, I tried to relate to participants as a neutral observer emphasising my position as a trainee and my interests in improving the practice of supervision generally.

In order to neutralise any power differentials that may be experienced, I asked all participants to choose the location of interviews. The interview process was fully explained and participants were encouraged to ask questions during the interview process to increase their feelings of control.

3.4 Participants

Educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision as supervisor and their supervisees were contacted and asked to take part in interviews. The decision to narrow the search for participants to inter-professional supervision contexts where educational psychologists are supervisors at the exclusion of inter-professional supervision contexts where educational psychologists are supervisees reflects the need to meet the intended outcome, which is to support educational psychologists when they provide supervision to other professionals.

I realise that the decision to exclude research of other professionals acting as supervisor may indicate an uneven power differential, which is not the position stated by the writers of key texts written by authors from the United Kingdom (Scaife, 2009; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006) or the position adopted by myself. The decision has been made with regard to pragmatic concerns to narrow the focus of research of this complicated field and to support educational psychologists as supervisors in inter-professional contexts.

I decided to focus on the experiences of educational psychologists when engaged in inter-professional supervision. It is acknowledged that I could have also included questions relating to experiences of within-profession supervision (when an educational psychologist supervises a fellow educational psychologist). Although comparisons of inter-professional supervision and within-professional supervision may have revealed useful information, I decided to focus on inter-professional supervision exclusively so that this area could be examined in detail as the first study of inter-professional supervision involving educational psychologists.

I decided to involve both educational psychologists as the supervisor and their supervisees in the research since both views of inter-professional supervision were deemed important for a full understanding of the processes involved when an educational psychologist supervises another professional.

Given the small number of educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision, participants were recruited through purposive sampling (Thomas, 2009) in that

instances of inter-professional supervision involving an educational psychologist as supervisor were actively sought.

The search for participants can be split into two distinct phases. Phase 1 involved the search for participants within my local authority. I had personal contact with three educational psychologists who were supervising 27 members of the pre-school support team. A brief presentation was given to educational psychologists and members of the pre-school support team to introduce the research project and then a letter was distributed asking for their participation in the interviews (see Appendix 6). Two educational psychologists and four pre-school practitioners agreed to take part in the interviews.

Participants recruited during phase 1 were mostly (4 out of 6) known to me through previous professional contacts, increasing feelings of reciprocity and the likelihood that respondents gave answers that they thought I wanted to hear (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995), which is an acknowledged weakness of the research design. To increase the validity and reliability of responses given, I emphasised to all participants that there were no right or wrong answers and that I was interested in hearing their views and experiences of supervision.

Phase 2 involved the search for participants in other educational psychology services within the United Kingdom. During a research presentation to fellow trainee educational psychologists and university tutors, I asked whether anyone was aware of any educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision within their own employing educational psychology services. From this, contacts were identified in various authorities

within the United Kingdom (Buckinghamshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire). Educational psychologists known to have experienced inter-professional supervision were contacted by email and asked whether they would consider taking part in the interviews. A letter was attached giving further information and they were asked to pass the letter on to their supervisees to ask for their participation in the interviews.

Through this process, four educational psychologists agreed to be interviewed. Educational psychologists were supervising a variety of different workers, e.g. outreach workers from a pupil referral unit, area special educational needs coordinators, family support workers and educational welfare officers.

Participants recruited during phase 1 were engaged in individual supervision, whereas those recruited during phase 2 were engaged in group supervision. The form of inter-professional supervision (group or individual) was not considered during recruitment or communicated before interviews took place. This is acknowledged as a weakness of this research design. Given the small numbers of educational psychologists found to engage in inter-professional supervision, I decided to incorporate all instances of inter-professional supervision (group and individual) in the data set. On reflection, the form of supervision should have been specified at the point of recruitment so that the literature review and interview questions could encapsulate issues pertaining to group supervision as well as individual supervision (e.g. group dynamics).

During phase 2, I was not able to recruit any supervisees and so the data may be biased in favour of the views of supervisors or educational psychologists. In all cases, I contacted educational psychologists more than once asking them to pass on my contact details and initial letter to their supervisees. Other steps taken to increase the likelihood that supervisees took part in interviews were emphasising the confidential nature of the interview and asking participants to choose the location of the interview. However, I received no response from supervisees. I was disappointed that the sample of participants didn't adequately represent the views of supervisees. On reflection, possible reasons for the failure to recruit supervisees during phase 2 may have been that:

- I had no personal contact with supervisees and so they may have felt less compelled to take part in the research.
- Supervisees may have believed that their supervisor would have access to the information given and so feel uneasy about the interview.
- Educational psychologists may have felt uneasy about encouraging their supervisees to take part as many supervisees may be anxious about the possibility of their contracts ending in the current period of austerity.
- Educational psychologists may have felt uneasy about their supervisees revealing information relating to their competence as a supervisor.

Given these points, I may have been more successful in recruiting supervisees if I was able to contact supervisees directly. When making initial contact with educational psychologist participants, I asked whether they could either pass on my letter asking for participation or

the contact details of supervisees so that I could contact them personally. In all cases, educational participants chose to pass on my letter.

3.5 Procedure

Prior to the interview, I tried to put participants at ease by informally chatting about neutral topics (e.g. the weather). I then gave some background information to the interview. I described my identity as a trainee educational psychologist and supervisee and my growing interest in supervision. I explained that the focus of the research was to explore inter-professional supervision delivered by an educational psychologist and asked them to give information relating to this type of supervision only. I then read through a consent form and asked participants to sign and date the form to signify their consent for participation in the research process.

During the interview, I asked the questions in the order established on the interview schedule. When participants gave interesting or unexpected responses, I used various probes to encourage participants to give more detail e.g. pausing, repeating back or further questioning. When participants found questions difficult to answer, I read a list of points taken from the literature to encourage participants to give further information and help them to feel more comfortable in the interview process (refer to Appendix 4). I also tried to show empathy whenever negative feelings were conveyed verbally or nonverbally. I paraphrased responses to increase the likelihood of shared understandings and questioned further when I was uncertain of the views that the participant was trying to convey.

At the end of the interview, I checked that the participant thought that responses given were an accurate and fair representation of their views on inter-professional supervision and asked whether participants wanted any information given to be deleted from the transcripts.

3.6 Data Analysis

Within the interpretative framework adopted for this research, thematic analysis was chosen as an appropriate method for extracting and analysing data. Thematic analysis is described by Braun and Clarke (2006), ‘... a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.’ (p.79)

Braun and Clarke (2006) celebrate the flexibility of thematic analysis, arguing that thematic analysis can either be applied within a theoretical framework (e.g. grounded theory) or can be used as a method in its own right. When thematic analysis is applied as a method in its own right, as is the case here, it is important that the theoretical position of thematic analysis is made clear. This section discusses the theoretical basis of how thematic analysis was applied in terms of the important decisions underpinned by epistemological assumptions. The procedures followed will then be made explicit by presenting a step by step account of how the data was analysed.

3.6.1 Decisions made

Qualitative researchers can adopt an inductive or deductive approach to thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), according to whether the researcher analyses the data with reference to the literature and research questions (deductive approach) or whether the

analysis starts from the data and the researcher tries to avoid fitting the data into a pre-existing coding frame (inductive approach). A deductive approach was considered appropriate here. Research into inter-professional supervision is in its infancy, making it more important that new research connects to the existing body of literature, investigating further the findings of existing research and responding to the suggestions made. The deductive approach adopted here used theory and research derived from existing inter-professional supervision literature as a framework for analysis, ensuring that the present research paper contributes to the growing body of knowledge of inter-professional supervision.

However, deductive frameworks for data analysis work against retaining and communicating the views of participants in their original form and context and so the richness of the data may be lost. Deductive approaches are also more prone to researcher bias, as the researcher may code data according to underlying theories or wishes as to the conclusions that may be drawn. In response, the analysis and interpretation of interview data represents a compromise between deductive and inductive approaches to analysis. The processes of analysis and interpretation started with the research questions and then adapted according to the data found in the interview transcripts.

Another important decision concerns whether the aim of the analysis is to summarise the data or open it up for further interrogation (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). The research presented here is the first known study of inter-professional supervision involving educational psychologists and the aim of the study is to provide support to educational

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psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision. For these reasons I decided to summarise or reduce the data accumulated.

The nature of the themes that the researcher wishes to present must also be considered (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Semantic themes reveal the explicit and surface meanings of the data, whereas latent themes examine the underlying meanings that could be informing the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This research examines and presents both types of themes. Within the interpretivist epistemology underpinning this research, latent themes are considered from both the respondent's and researcher's perspective (Mason, 2002). However, the principal themes derived will be semantic considering the need to reduce the data to an accessible form.

Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that researchers must make clear the details of how analysis was conducted, including how decisions were made as to which sections of data are coded and how the relative importance of codes and themes are judged. Within the deductive framework of data analysis adopted here, it was decided to code all data relevant to the research aims and foci. Taking advice from Braun and Clarke (2006), judgements concerning the relevance of codes and themes did not depend on quantifiable measures but whether the codes or themes capture something important in relation to the overall research aims.

Finally, I considered whether to analyse the data as a whole data set, or analyse responses separately according to whether participants were 1. supervisor (educational psychologist) or supervisee 2. engaged in individual supervision or group supervision. Whilst a separate

analysis may provide useful information, the aims of the research are not to compare and contrast but to provide general information to support educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision. In line with the aims of the research, I will ensure that any information given that is relevant to group supervision and not relevant to individual supervision will be reported separately so that educational psychologists engaged in group supervision can extract information specific to their form of supervision. However, the majority of information pertaining to over-arching topics, such as issues of accountability, is collapsed across categories.

3.6.2 Procedure

Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed orthographically (Braun and Clarke, 2006) as shown in the appendices (see Appendix 8). The views of participants were, as far as possible, recorded in the way originally intended, including any subtleties in the way words were spoken that may reveal how participants view aspects of the supervisory process, e.g. pauses and repetition.

Once checked for accuracy, transcriptions were subject to analysis and interpretation. For the purposes of this research, analysis refers to the searching for features and themes in the data and spotting patterns and relationships within the data. Interpretation refers to the transfer of coded data into meaningful data (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). Data analysis and interpretation were not carried out as discrete processes but occurred concurrently and in cyclical fashion (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996).

Data were analysed using an adapted form of the processes of 'first-level coding' and 'pattern coding' described by Miles and Huberman (1994). First-level coding involves segmenting the transcripts and assigning codes to fragments of data. Pattern coding involves the grouping of codes into a smaller number of themes (Miles and Huberman, 1994). For the purposes of this research, the processes of 'first-level coding' and 'pattern coding' occurred at the same time due to the large amount of data accumulated and the need to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the data set.

Data from transcriptions were segmented, coded and grouped in themes (e.g. distinctive skills of EP). The first part of the code assigned indicated the broad theme (**D+EP+Kn**) and the second part the meanings within the theme (**D+EP+Kn** indicates a comment about the knowledge that EPs bring to supervision). Codes were created from the words of participants, interpretations of the meaning that the participants may have been trying to convey or from conceptual interests relating to the research aims and foci (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996).

Conversation cannot be neatly bound into packages and so codes were assigned flexibly (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). Therefore, some extracts of data had more than one code assigned. Extracts were recorded in at least two separate locations; their original context and in as many themes to which the extract belonged. Data presented in the original context retains contextual information reducing the data loss that is inevitable when categorising data. Data presented in themes assists in data handling for the purposes of interpretation.

Extracts of data were grouped in broad thematic categories through the processes of assimilation (data fits into a theme) and accommodation (themes need to adapt in order to include the data). Therefore, themes were not seen as discrete and unchanging, but as flexible tools for thinking with and themes were expanded, changed or scrapped as ideas developed (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). Changes that were made to themes were recorded in a research diary to show how themes developed as the process of analysis and interpretation progressed. Data not fitting into a theme were not ignored but recorded alongside the themed data (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996) to increase confidence in the validity of findings.

Due to the large amount of data accumulated, it was necessary to conduct the process of data analysis in a rigorous and methodological way. Table 11 displays the steps taken during analysis and interpretation and includes the procedures for checking the validity of data.

Table 11: Stages of data analysis and interpretation

Stage	Description
1	Audio-recordings transcribed
2	Data from transcripts 1 and 2 segmented, coded and collated in themes or 'Theme Tables' (refer to Appendix 9).
3	Check 1: 'Theme Tables' checked and amended accordingly.
4	Data from transcripts 3 and 4 segmented, coded and included in 'Theme Tables'.
5	Check 2: 'Theme Tables' checked and amended accordingly.
6	Data from transcript 5 segmented, coded and included in themes or 'Theme Tables'.
7	All 'Theme Tables' analysed and 'Interim Summaries' written (refer to Appendix 10).
8	Thematic map of the data set drawn (see Figure 6, p. 125).
8	Changes made to 'Theme Tables' informed by the 'Interim Summaries'.
9	Data from transcript 6, 7 and 8 segmented, coded and included in 'Theme Tables'.

10	Check 3: 'Theme Tables' checked and amended accordingly.
11	Data from transcripts 9 and 10 segmented, coded and included in 'Theme Tables'.
12	Check 4: 'Theme Tables' checked and amended accordingly.
13	Check 5: coded transcripts 1 to 10 revisited and checked for appropriate coding.
14	All 'Theme Tables' analysed.

Regular checks were made of the 'Theme Tables' to increase confidence that extracts:

- Were relevant to the research aims and foci
- Could be understood out of context
- Were appropriately coded and categorised.

Alternative interpretations of the data were considered and the original transcripts were referred to in order to ensure that, as far as possible, the participants' original meanings were retained. After each check, amendments were made to the 'Theme Tables' and the coded transcripts and a list of themes and codes were created to assist in the next stage of data analysis.

Having analysed transcripts one to five, the process of analysis slowed and I became confused as to how to categorise the data. At this point, I took the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994) and wrote 'Interim Summaries' to orientate and focus the process of data analysis. The 'Interim Summaries' (refer to Appendix 10 for an example Interim Summary) described the contours of the theme, justified the relevance of the theme to the research aims and foci and considered the reasoning behind decisions about the data that should be included in the theme. Following the Interim Summaries, a thematic map was created (see Figure 6, p. 125) to conceptualise the entire data set.

As the process of analysis progressed, themes changed and I became concerned that analytic decisions made earlier on in analysis may not be consistent with the analytic decisions made in the later stages of analysis. After the final transcript was analysed I returned to the coded transcripts one to ten to check whether each extract had been appropriately coded and categorised. This checking process didn't seem to be adding anything substantial and so I surmised that the 'Theme Tables' were, as far as possible, adequately and consistently capturing the contours of the original data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

3.6.3 Validity and reliability when undertaking data analysis

Although this research strived to retain the original meanings of participants, processes of transcription, analysis and interpretation were conducted through the researcher's frame of reference and so meanings become different to the beliefs and understandings of the participant (Pring, 2000). Interpretations presented reflect the researcher's views and interests. It is important to think reflexively and acknowledge and plan to reduce the influence that the researcher's views and interests make on the interpretations (see table 16).

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Cohen et al. (2007) list possible sources of bias in interviews as the characteristics of the interviewer, participant and the content of questions. Table 12 presents the possible sources of bias and the steps taken to reduce the influence of bias on the reported findings.

Table 12: Sources of bias and steps taken to reduce bias

Source of bias	Steps taken to reduce bias
Interviewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researcher used carefully placed questioning and paraphrasing during the interview. • Full orthographic transcripts were created (Kvale, 1996). • All data relevant to research aims was coded. • Data was not deleted but reported separately. • The stages of data analysis were made available for scrutiny. • Frequency counts were reported. • Alternative interpretations were considered, and at all times decisions made with reference to original transcripts.
Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power dynamics were neutralised by asking participants to choose the location of the interview and by adopting a relaxed interview style. • Participants were encouraged to ask questions. • The researcher's neutral role as a researcher was emphasised. • Individual summaries were presented back to participants.
Content of questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions were derived from the literature and exploratory interviews. • Probes were constructed from research into inter-professional supervision. • The interview schedule was piloted and amended accordingly (Silverman, 1993).

Renzetti and Lee (1993) indicate that biases when conducting interviews become more pronounced when the interviews themselves may be viewed as threatening to either the interviewer or the interviewee. In the case of the research presented here, educational psychologists might view the interviews as threatening as some of the questions relate to the effectiveness of educational psychologists when acting as supervisor. Moreover, my own

identity as a trainee educational psychologist means that I may have felt a desire to present educational psychologists in a good light. The combination of these factors suggests that this research may be more prone to bias than research conducted by a more neutral researcher. The concept of reflexivity is important here, where sources of bias are identified and steps are taken to reduce the impact of the bias on the findings reported.

As a trainee educational psychologist, I am concerned about the changing face of educational psychology and want to emphasise the unique contribution of educational psychologists to make them indispensable in the current period of austerity. I may tend to place greater emphasis on views that confirm the unique skill set of educational psychologists. In a similar vein, I may underemphasise negative comments about educational psychologists and their effectiveness as supervisors.

I took steps to reduce this potential bias during sampling, the interview itself and data analysis. When making sampling decisions, I aimed to represent the views of supervisor's (educational psychologists) and supervisee's (non-educational psychologists). During the interview process, I asked carefully placed clarifying questions, paraphrasing and summarising to check out the meanings of participants. During analysis, I coded all data relevant to the research aims and foci so that positive and negative views of educational psychologists as supervisors were represented. I was careful not to omit coded data that didn't fit into a theme. I also counted the frequency of coded data in order to increase confidence that findings reported in reports are an accurate and fair representation of the data set.

Chapter 4: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the interview data. During the process of analysis, 17 themes were created. The purpose of this chapter is to describe data categorised in each of the 17 themes.

Following from the 'results' chapter, the 'discussion' chapter explains how the 17 themes group to form 4 meta- themes, shows how the data presented answers the research questions and interprets the data in the light of the available literature, commenting critically on decisions made relating to the methods and methodology selected for the purposes of this research.

Each of the 17 themes is presented alphabetically. A brief description of the contours of the theme is given. Following this, sub-themes and associated excerpts are presented in tabular form to illustrate comments made. Excerpts are presented to provide further illumination to the comments made in the description and have been selected in order to represent the range of comments made, with the numbers presented in brackets to indicate the number of participants making the same or similar comments. In cases where a subtheme contains differing viewpoints, the subtheme is illustrated by more than one excerpt in order to represent the range of views expressed.

To ensure anonymity, data given by participants that could lead to their identification were taken out and replaced by general terms presented in upper case (e.g. SUPERVISEES).

Further information needed to assist in understanding and interpreting the tabulated data is given in Table 13.

Table 13: Guide to interpreting tabulated data

Example from tabulated data	Interpretation
EP SUPERVISOR	Text presented in upper case replaces specific information given by respondents that could lead to their identification (e.g. names, job titles)
(n=5)	'n' refers to the number of different respondents making the same or similar comments
<i>(Is that part professional or managerial?)</i>	Text presented in brackets and using italics represents the words spoken by the researcher
(supervisor)	Text presented in brackets represents contextualised information added by the researcher to help with the understanding and interpretation of the de-contextualised excerpts.
...	Ellipses replace information that is not relevant to the aims and foci of the current research.

The 17 themes and associated sub-themes are also presented in Appendix 11 so that the reader is able to conceptualise the entire data set.

4.2 Theme 1: Accountability

The 'Accountability' theme includes responses pertaining to legal responsibility: In other words - who should be held legally responsible for the practice of the supervisee when practice decisions are discussed during supervision and enacted by the supervisee during professional practice in the field.

Respondents gave a variety of responses. They thought that supervisees, supervisors, the group or line managers were accountable for the professional practice of the supervisee. When line managers were thought to be accountable, respondents thought that it was the responsibility of the supervisor to inform the line manager. The group was seen as responsible when a group decision was made or when another supervisee from the group gave advice regarding professional practice.

One respondent reported that they didn't keep records of points raised during supervision, believing that it was the supervisee's responsibility to keep notes. The same respondent went on to describe feelings of unease around the lack of record keeping, saying:

‘I'm worried about if someone took action as a course of action as a result of supervision, what records would I have about what I've actually discussed.’

Some respondents suggested that the supervisor should have less responsibility for decision making in the field when adopting a facilitative model of supervision. This sense of reduced responsibility did not appear to be documented or clearly expressed in terms of where the boundaries of legal responsibility lay.

Generally, respondents seemed uncertain of whether supervisors could be held to account for the practice of supervisees. However, in the case of 'safe-guarding' most respondents tended to clearly identify that the supervisor should be responsible for ensuring that information is passed to the line manager, with again little evidence of clear documentation to support this.

Table 14: Excerpts from the 'Accountability' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Supervisee is accountable (n=1)	No, the only decisions are made by the person who has brought forward the issue, so they're using the group if you like, as a way of thinking about the issue but they would be responsible for their own professional decision erm not the consultant who could be any of their colleagues acting in that role, erm not myself (supervisor).
Supervisor is accountable (n=1)	I guess it depends what that problem was. If there's a problem with the outcome - if it was being discussed in supervision then perhaps we (supervisor) would be ultimately responsible.
Group is accountable (n=2)	There's also responsibility for the whole group and so if people are chipping in to an issue, as often happens, we make a decision as a group about how we are going to move it forward.
Line manager is accountable (n=3)	I think that as supervision takes in all of our practice and the way it should work, is if a problem is identified in that supervision then it's our supervisor that goes to the manager. Does that make sense?
Facilitation role reduces responsibility (n=4)	My view on supervision is that we're not giving people erm actual actions to go away, we're discussing opportunities and possible actions (<i>not directing</i>) not directing at all.

4.3 Theme 2: Benefits of supervision

Views concerning benefits of supervision were further categorised into subthemes derived from the supportive and educative functions of supervision.

4.3.1 Supportive function

Most respondents spoke about the support received during supervision. Some respondents valued the praise they received from their supervisor and feelings of affirmation that they

were 'doing the right thing'. Others spoke of how supervision had helped to build relationships between and within different professional services and some reported the feeling that they were offloading emotional stresses during supervision.

A few spoke about feelings of isolation in their professional role and appreciated the opportunity to feel emotionally supported through supervision and 'energised' to continue practising, whilst often working with complex families.

4.3.2 Educative function

Benefits pertaining to educative functions of supervision were also discussed by most respondents. Some valued the opportunity to problem solve in relation to casework and wider professional issues. Respondents talked about gaining 'new ideas' and that supervision helped them to 'organise their thoughts' about how to approach difficult situations. One respondent said that problem solving during supervision helped to, '... free them up to think of the other stuff that's going on.'

Other responses related to the skill development of supervisees. Here, supervision was viewed as an opportunity to develop 'skills and strengths as reflective practitioners' and build capacity to practice effectively outside the supervisory context.

4.3.3 Other responses

Other responses included having protected time to talk about casework or 'thinking space' and one respondent talked about the feeling that there is more value attached to the work

of supervisees when they receive supervision. A few respondents appreciated the chance to stand back and take stock in relation to casework and their own continuing professional development (CPD) and others talked about benefits for supervisors 'hearing different ideas and learning from the group.' One respondent said they weren't sure if there were any benefits of supervision.

Table 15: Excerpts from the 'Benefits of supervision' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Supportive benefits: Emotional support (n=7)	It can be quite lonely and the potential to be a stressful and depressing role and I think that these sessions hopefully will enable them to use to gain some emotional support.
Supportive benefits: Affirmation (n=3)	A lot of their work is isolated so they value knowing they are doing it right; re-education of isolation.
Supportive benefits: Building relationships (n=3)	It's a great opportunity to get to know people. You know from a kind of personal / social point of view.
Supportive benefits: Offloading (n=3)	I don't come out feeling more weighed down than when I went in. It's offloading, and that's the feeling at the end.
Educative benefits: Problem solving (n=7)	People (supervisees) have said that they find it quite useful because it sometimes helps them to organise their thoughts if there's sometimes a little bit of an uncertainty about perhaps what to do or how to manage a situation.
Educative benefits:	I think 'developing thinking and learning'; I suppose it does in a way, but it just, erm, I think, just, then, makes you, erm, carry on those

Building capacity (n=6)	thought processes, do you know what I mean; sometimes you think about things and then you've not got the time to, to see those through, if you know what I mean, and then with that, I suppose, it has helped to ... if that situation arose again, I would think 'oh remember that time that' so yeh, it does have I suppose; it's indirectly isn't it really.
Thinking space (n=5)	I think it's helped give them space to talk about things that otherwise they don't have time or space to talk about its helped them to think things through perhaps more calmly than when they try and think things through on the hoof.

4.4 Theme 3: Boundaries of supervision

The 'Boundaries of supervision' theme includes responses outlining what is and is not discussed during supervision. Some respondents said that there were no limits set and that supervision covered all aspects of their personal and professional role. Others reported that supervision focused on casework, excluding wider personal or professional issues. Some said that their supervision excluded managerial functions (i.e. CPD, performance management).

Table 16: Excerpts from the 'Boundaries of supervision' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
No limits set (n=4)	Professional supervision for the workers where they could bring concerns both about professional practice as well as cases, so it didn't necessarily, it could be about any issues (<i>not just cases</i>) yes because all of them are developing their role and some of them were redeveloping their role from ground level so they hadn't done this kind of work before. So at the beginning, last year, it was about developing service, so I guess it was a place where they could also bring their grumbles, if you like, about the way that the service was developing and things that weren't set up for them ... but the topic and the area; I haven't been

	told any limit (by managers with whom the contracting decisions were made).
Supervision limited to casework discussions (n=3)	My supervision would be primarily around issues that they bring around casework and the managers would manage the other issues that they might have around anything that they have to do with work I guess.
Supervision excludes managerial discussions (n=4)	In terms of I suppose our professional development, the way I see that is that is then erm managed and supervised by whoever by whoever is allocated to do our CPD meeting (<i>is that part professional or managerial?</i>) erm I think that's managerial really I do think that's managerial.

4.5 Theme 4: Changes to supervision

The 'Changes to supervision' theme includes any mention of changes that could be made to increase the effectiveness of supervision. Respondents talked about changes to how supervision is orientated within the context, the role of the supervisor and how supervision sessions should be evaluated.

Some respondents recommended changes to the contracting process, commenting that there should be discussions and clearly expressed agreements which orientate supervision within the particular supervisory context. One respondent warned against assuming that people share the same conceptualisation of supervision, as the word 'supervision' can mean different things to different people. In some cases, respondents thought that agreements should be formalised and documented in written form. Respondents talked about the following issues for consideration during contracting:

- The purpose of supervision
- The roles and responsibilities of the supervisor and supervisee
- The ground rules of supervision
- Lines of communication between the supervisor and line management team
- Response to safeguarding issues
- Accountability and lines of legal responsibility

A few respondents talked about ensuring that supervision is evaluated, both informally (during supervision sessions) and formally (at regular intervals). Others wanted to change the role of the supervisor. One supervisor wanted the supervisor role to be more facilitative and another recommended a balance between facilitation and donation, commenting:

‘In terms of my own professional development, I’ve learned that psychologists can’t just facilitate. You have to donate some psychology.’

One respondent said they would increase the number of supervision sessions that they currently receive and another said that they would arrange a social event to build trust between supervisor and supervisee before embarking on supervision.

Table 17: Excerpts from the ‘Changes to supervision’ theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Orientation of supervision (n=6)	I think with hindsight, I think probably to formalise; I think erm mine has sort of evolved and I think I have always felt a bit uneasy about that; that maybe we should be more formal; perhaps there should be some sort of more clearly expressed agreement about who is agreeing to what, erm, I think that’s what I would do next time ... so I think maybe being, as I said, more explicit about the roles, purposes, functions, all of that and probably in more written forms, I think there would be a value of having a written statement.

Evaluating supervision (n=2)	I would also say boundary the time, in that; agree to do so many sessions and then evaluate.
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4.6 Theme 5: Competencies of supervisor

This theme encapsulates general competencies that all supervisors should demonstrate in supervision. Responses referring to competencies of educational psychologists specifically were not included here and categorised in the 'Distinctive competencies of educational psychologists' theme. Supervisor competencies were further categorised into knowledge and skills. Skills were further categorised into personal skills, process skills, content skills and wider skills.

Some respondents discussed the knowledge that a competent supervisor should have. Respondents thought that supervisors should have a broad professional knowledge base and an understanding of the professional role of the supervisee. One person thought that the knowledge base should include an awareness of the current political and legislative climate.

Most respondents discussed the importance of personal skills. Personal skills included the ability to establish respect and empathy for professional roles, establish trust, build rapport, 'keep it light', and generate the feeling that supervision 'is not being done to them.' Some respondents who had good relationships with supervisors said that if they didn't get on with supervisors, they would 'glaze over the surface and make out everything's alright.'

Other personal skills included responding appropriately to the particular needs, preferences and personalities of the supervisee and 'really listening to what ... where you come from initially.'

Most respondents mentioned the importance of process skills, including time management and listening skills. One person talked about being 'outcome focused' so that 'people go away with the feeling that it's been a good use of their time.'

The majority of respondents discussed content skills. Some talked about supervisors 'sifting out important points', reflecting back meanings and helping supervisees to 'untangle their own thinking'. Others mentioned the ability to challenge thinking but in a comfortable way. Many mentioned skills in facilitation, encouraging supervisees to feel that their professional judgement remains intact and helping their skills as reflective practitioners to grow.

Some respondents discussed wider professional skills, including skills that aren't confined to how content is processed or how the supervisor presents during supervision. Wider professional skills include holistic skills that are multidimensional. Here, respondents discussed the importance of creating a 'safe place' for supervision by setting boundaries, conveying unconditional positive regard and having some element of routine so that supervisees know what to expect. One respondent also talked of 'reflection in action', referring to the ability to reflect critically upon all of the other skills and aspects of supervision as supervision is taking place, so that changes can be made and ideas tested out. The same person discussed the importance of holding in mind the big picture, considering

how the discussions within supervision effect and are influenced by the wider organisational, cultural and community factors.

Table 18: Excerpts from the 'Competencies of supervisor' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Knowledge: Broad professional knowledge (n=5)	It's the knowledge of the service area, erm thinking broad knowledge within what area of work you're in, so for us, for us, there's something about a breadth of knowledge about, sort of, early years and it's not just children's special educational needs it's also, sort of, early years because you've got to think about children first.
Process skills: Time management (n=5)	Being able to get people back on track if they go off without upsetting the flow, erm, yes, because it could in some groups turn into a chit chat. It could turn into a moan and I think keeping that done in a sort of friendly but efficient kind of way I think that takes practise.
Content skills: Comfortable challenge (n=2)	There's never been any supervision when I haven't felt comfortable or not felt; SUPERVISOR wouldn't make me feel uncomfortable, she'd make me feel 'ooh that's a really good idea, I didn't think of that route', so it's very supportive, challenging ... It's not like an interview; its people skills that allow her to have the insight to do it because it isn't supposed to be a cosy chat, that would be very nice but I could sit and chat with EP SUPERVISOR for an hour.
Content skills: Facilitation (n=7)	It's about empowering people really to think about their own, to think about, you know, sort of, the ways forward. To me it's not about, you know, you should do this and this and this. It's very much about ok so thinking about this, this and this; what do you think? And perhaps the next things to consider and it's; I think that's a really key part of supervision.
Wider skills: Creating a safe place (n=3)	Well yes because I think that is another advantage (of the model); it's a safe, you know, I try to do it, well we will be, try to do it in the same room, I try to get there before they get there, I set it up in a circle erm, I try to keep things in the same place, I try to behave in the same way, erm, you know, so, there's quite a lot of things to keep consistency and safe practice.

4.7 Theme 6: Contracting

‘Contracting’ takes place at the outset of supervision and refers to agreements as to the purpose, roles, responsibilities and procedures of supervision in relation to the particular context or circumstances in which supervision takes place. Agreements can be expressed through verbal discussion or in written form (referred to as ‘contracts’). The ‘contracting’ theme includes information relating to the extent of contracting and problems with the contracting process.

Some respondents said that the contracting process occurred through verbal discussions between supervisors and supervisees. Others reported the creation of policy documents that outlined general guidelines or ground rules (e.g. the purpose of supervision and limits of confidentiality) for a number of different supervisees working for the same team. No respondents reported the creation of individualised written contracts, which orientate supervision within a specific supervisory relationship. One respondent said that they weren’t aware of any discussions or written documents relating to contracting. This respondent was recalling supervision that commenced six years previously.

Most respondents said that they thought the contracting process needed to be improved, with some expressing a preference for written contracts and other preferring verbal discussions. In terms of content, respondents wanted clear orientation with respect to the purpose of supervision, with one respondent saying:

‘You will get a whole range of perspectives. You need a shared understanding of what supervision means in the context of that particular area.’

One respondent wanted clear agreements on the distinction between professional and management supervision (e.g. boundaries, respective responsibilities) and others wanted the process of evaluation to be agreed.

Some respondents made agreements with both supervisees and their respective line managers for how supervision should be orientated within the particular context, adding another layer to the process of contracting.

Table 19: Excerpts from the ‘Contracting’ theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Individualised verbal agreements with supervisee (n=1)	The first supervision meeting is about ground rules and about roles and responsibilities but its not formalised; it’s not written.
Individualised verbal agreements with managers (n=2)	I mean I talked to the manager about it and said ‘what’s the, what would you like, what do you see my role as being here? In coming along to your team meetings whatever else you already do the supervision with them individually’, and she said ‘I just want them to have the possibility of discussing things as a group’, and she said ‘I would like somebody with skills facilitating groups and perhaps a sort of neutral person’.
Written document created with group (n=1)	We have an agreed set of ground rules ... the ground rules form the written contract and that’s sent out in an email to remind the group and also after the group ... Any safeguarding concern - and that’s in the ground rules - any safeguarding issue that wasn’t resolved in the group would have to be reported on but otherwise confidentiality would have to remain in the group.

General written documents for team of supervisees (n=6)	We have a policy that came out that was, sort of like, giving guidance. But I do think that that was quite general and I think; I know why it is quite general, because there are people within the team that have got different terms and conditions and I think that creates a problem in that, you know; you can't be saying to a PROFESSIONAL you're going to do this, unions would say 'uhhh we can't have that' so I think there's probably some issues.
Improvements needed: written contracts (n=3)	I think with hindsight, I think probably to formalise I think erm mine has sort of evolved and I think I have always felt a bit uneasy about that; that maybe we should be more formal, perhaps there should be some sort of more clearly expressed agreement about who is agreeing to what, erm, I think that's what I would do next time ... As I said, more explicit about the roles, purposes, functions, all of that and probably in more written forms, I think there would be a value of having a written statement.

4.8 Theme 7: Distinctive competencies of educational psychologists

This theme includes comments relating to whether educational psychologists have specific competencies that make them effective as supervisors and whether those competencies are different to and distinctive from the competencies of other professionals. Some respondents thought that educational psychologists did have distinctive competencies relevant to the role of supervisor whereas others thought that the skills, experience and knowledge that educational psychologists use in supervision are not distinctive to or different from those used by other professionals.

Since this theme relates to educational psychologists specifically, participants are identified as either 'educational psychologists' or 'supervisees' where the identity of the participant is considered to aid interpretation of the responses.

4.8.1 Educational psychologists have distinctive competencies

Responses indicating that educational psychologists did have distinctive competencies were further categorised as relating to the skills, experience and knowledge of educational psychologists; the distinctive perspective that educational psychologists can offer; and the value that educational psychologists place on supervision.

4.8.1.1 Skills of educational psychologists

All ten participants talked about distinctive skills of educational psychologists that can be utilised when acting as supervisor. Some respondents noted that educational psychologists had skills in working with people, such as consultation skills and counselling skills. A few supervisees valued the ability of educational psychologists to deliver constructive criticism in a comfortable way and other supervisees talked about skills in managing the supervision process, such as the use of logical questioning. One educational psychologist reported distinctive skills in meta-analysis during the process of supervision and reflection on the supervision session afterwards.

Table 20: Excerpts from the ‘Distinctive competencies of educational psychologists’ theme
(Subtheme: Skills)

Subtheme	Excerpt
Skills: Working with people (n=5)	I think educational psychologists spend an awful lot of their time interacting with other people and bringing some sort of understanding to interactions, such as counselling skills;
Skills: comfortable constructive criticism (n=2)	It’s sort of the ability, I’m rattling through my cases and it’s the ability to draw out the important points from that information, and it’s the ability to be sort of look critically but look constructively at what I’m saying and analyse it but in a comfortable way.
Skills: Logical questioning (n=6)	I’ve found working with EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SUPERVISOR was more beneficial than when I was working with MANAGER SUPERVISOR. She’s more logical and she does see it from a wider perspective ... I usually see the end result of where I want to go to, but EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SUPERVISOR will make me sit and work through; you can’t just get to there, it’s all the little steps in between.

4.8.1.2 Experience of educational psychologists

Three educational psychologists and two supervisees talked about the distinctive experiences of educational psychologists, noting experiences of education and experiences of educational psychology. Experiences derived from education included experience of teaching and of Special Educational Needs. Experiences encountered as an educational psychologist included experience of procedures relating to Special Educational Needs, experience of working with children with complex needs and their families, experience of different agencies and services, and experiences of receiving and giving supervision.

Table 21: Excerpts from the ‘Distinctive competencies of educational psychologists’ theme (Subtheme: Experience)

Subtheme	Excerpt
Experience: Education (n=1)	I think they’ve got a wide range of experience, haven’t they? From teaching to specialising in special educational needs.
Experience: Procedures (n=1)	You develop your knowledge of processes; for instance there’s the code of practice and the statutory stuff, so you, kind of, can support, you know, on that. On the local arrangements and things like that, erm, so there’s all that kind of procedural stuff.
Experience: Complex families (n=2)	Also their knowledge and experience of children and families, in this case, because you know, erm these are the people, that’s what these people are going out to do and the fact that, you know, educational psychologists have experience of children, working with children and families obviously helps.
Experience : Different agencies (n=1)	I think also educational psychologists of course have got experience across; they come across usually most of the external agencies and professions and so it’s just their broader experience across the authority.
Experience: Supervision (n=3)	That’s something our profession is very good at, isn’t it; supervision is embedded in our practice and so it, so therefore, people doing it bring a kind of naturalness and ease to the supervision session, because we’re so use to having it ourselves.

4.8.1.3 Perspective of educational psychologists

Two educational psychologists and three supervisees spoke about the different, wider or holistic perspective offered by educational psychologists. One educational psychologist talked about being able to offer different theoretical perspectives (e.g. behaviourist, cognitive) and different viewpoints (e.g. child, parents, teacher). Another educational psychologist talked about the importance of considering how different viewpoints or variables interact and encouraging the supervisee to consider the holistic picture.

Table 22: Excerpts from the 'Distinctive competencies of educational psychologists' theme (Subtheme: Perspective)

Subtheme	Excerpt
Perspective: different (n=4)	If you ask them what the added input is, for some of them, they say 'you ask good questions'. Or 'you offer me a different perspective', 'you look at it from a different point of view', and I suppose that's the psychology that I'm trying to bring in that I'm bringing different theoretical paradigms; you could look at this from a behaviourist point of view, you could look at this from a psychotherapeutic point of view. Or sometimes just simply saying 'I wonder what the child's thinking'; different voices as well as different paradigms.
Perspective: Holistic (n=1)	You've got the benefit really of our educational psychology training of always looking at stuff holistically, so you never kind of you know, look down that narrow field, you're always stepping back and looking at all the variables really and the relationship between the two.

4.8.1.4 Knowledge of educational psychologists

Five educational psychologists and one supervisee talked about the distinctive knowledge of educational psychologists, such as knowledge of general psychological paradigms (e.g. cognitive-behaviourist paradigm) theories (e.g. containment) and frameworks (e.g. Solution Circles), specific knowledge of theories relevant to a particular problems raised by supervisees and knowledge of research methods that could be utilised to evaluate the work of the supervisee. A few respondents also noted that educational psychologists tended to keep their knowledge up-to-date within the current political context.

Table 23: Excerpts from the 'Distinctive competencies of educational psychologists' theme
(Subtheme: Knowledge)

Subtheme	Excerpt
Knowledge: general models, theories or frameworks (n=5)	Partly 'containing' - that's psycho-dynamic for you - containing a lot of the stress they have to deal with, these kinds of front line jobs is huge. I do believe psychologically that (supervision) is providing that service. I think we can provide that service in a way with that awareness of the importance of it. And maybe if we could train managers to do that for their teams, then maybe that would be another option; maybe that could work as well. (<i>Containment is interesting</i>) I think that's a lot of it, certainly for the support group. It is for me, not necessarily individually holding it, but even the power of the group holding it; it's huge, because it's diffused, you know, and nobody feels particularly put upon or comes out feeling drained that I've ever identified or recognised.
Knowledge: specific models of psychology (n=1)	(<i>What are the benefits of that; offloading, support?</i>) It was more than that, much more specific than that; I actually brought a psychological model to her situation erm it was MODEL, and about interactions and so what I was bringing was a theoretical framework to think about relationships with other people. (<i>Did you share that with her?</i>) Oh absolutely, oh yes, yes, yes, we talked about MODEL, we talked about how; I donated that psychology, which from a distance, what she then did is apply that to her situation and then used that in her situation and when she came back, she reported on how effective that was; erm, they were getting into quite, you know battles, it was about her preserving face of the other person but also understanding her face, so that's an interesting example because that was me actually bringing something, understanding, knowledge, that I had, that she didn't have, donating it to her and saying, you know, how does that fit, she then got that and then applied that herself but was using supervision to discuss the issues of that.
Knowledge: Research methods (n=1)	For example there was a lot of conversation with the SUPERVISEES about how they evaluate their work, there was a lot of angst about that; how do we know they make any difference. So I suggested and donated a series of different types of measure, I didn't recommend any but said these are some possibilities they found that quite useful, I don't know what they did with it, but that was the session we did ... I

	think the concept of evaluation was, I mean, psychologists know about that, they know about the issues of evaluation, they know about, you know, the qualitative, quantitative, questionnaires, the value of that, how you would evaluate etc, that was certainly something that came up with the SUPERVISEES about you know, how, well the issues about evaluation, how would you do that, and I think that was again quite, knowledge that I had and they didn't have.
Knowledge: Updated professional knowledge (n=2)	Well I think it's the up to date knowing as well, isn't it really. It's that being aware and again that's probably an education thing, isn't it, you know; educational psychology, you, you do keep on top of what's happening because that's expected and that's part - you couldn't do you role without really , erm, so I guess it isn't just the empathy.

4.8.1.5 Value that educational psychologists place on supervision

One educational psychologist thought that the value that educational psychologists place on supervision is a distinctive quality of the profession.

4.8.2 Educational psychologists do not have distinctive competencies

Two educational psychologists and three supervisees thought that the skill set of educational psychologists may not be distinctive. Two educational psychologists and one supervisee said that they thought other people may have the necessary thinking skills for effective supervision (e.g. offering different perspectives, skills in facilitation). One supervisee said that she thought the only advantage of having an educational psychologist as supervisor is the fact that they are from a different profession and give a different perspective. Two supervisees said that they couldn't distinguish between their own supervisory experiences with an educational psychologist and with a member of their own team in terms of supervisor competence.

Educational psychologists discussed possible reasons for the difficulties in identifying the distinctive skills of educational psychologists. Two talked about the skills of educational psychologists not being made explicit at the point of orienting the supervision or during the supervision process and one talked about the form of supervision (formal, case based model) preventing the use of supervision skills (e.g. facilitation).

Table 24: Excerpts from the 'Distinctive competencies of educational psychologists' theme (Skills are not distinctive)

Subtheme	Excerpt
Skills aren't distinctive: Others could be as effective (n=3)	I think there are probably a number of our team who, they haven't got the same background but they've done some training or have those skills, which means that they can also do that (give a different dimension to supervision).
Skills aren't distinctive: Inter-professional supervision is the only advantage (n=1)	It's somebody outside and EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SUPERVISOR is part of the team, the EP's part of the team but they're not doing the job; in that sense it's not relevant that they're educational psychologists but they are not in our team doing the job that we are, they're outside that doing a job, a different professional background but they still work with the same families so I would think a different pair of eyes on things.
Skills aren't distinctive: Can't distinguish between different supervisors (n=2)	I think that sometimes through discussion, you then start, I then start 'oh I could do that'; start another thought process (<i>do you think it's the educational psychologist that enables that or general supervision</i>) I think that's generally having supervision. I do think it's generally having supervision but then the educational psychologist might have tools that they use that we don't know about type of ... ways of asking things that, you know, promote that really (<i>So you feel the benefits of supervision are generally due to supervision but might be a bit added by the psychology?</i>). Yeh.

4.9 Theme 8: Ethics

The 'ethics' theme covers all issues relating to ethical practice, including issues of confidentiality, safeguarding and the boundaries of the supervisee's professional role.

Responses relating to the issue of confidentiality included agreeing the limits of confidentiality. Some respondents seemed clear that confidentiality should be broken when safeguarding concerns were raised.

Other responses related to the importance of maintaining confidentiality for feelings of safety. One participant said that they thought the confidential nature of their supervision enabled supervisees to discuss personal and professional issues that they couldn't necessarily raise with their managers, creating a safe place 'outside the management structures' to enable practice to move forward.

In relation to safeguarding, some respondents reported that safeguarding procedures were clearly documented and one talked of the need to make safeguarding procedures clear. One respondent discussed additional methods for ensuring that information is shared by copying supervisors and line managers into emails relating to safeguarding concerns.

In relation to ethical issues raised during supervision, the common ethical issues discussed concerned the boundaries of the supervisee's professional role; what supervisees could reasonably be expected to do and achieve and what tasks maybe outside of their professional role.

Table 25: Excerpts from the 'Ethics' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Confidentiality: Limits of confidentiality clear (n=5)	I think there might be something in the policy, something that says supervision is confidential, unless from a safeguarding point of view that confidentiality has to be broken.
Confidentiality: Creating a safe place (n=1)	The idea of having a safe place that is confidential and outside the management structures that they work within and also outside of the work relationships that they have with their colleagues. ... There's no information shared with line management structures. It's confidential. <i>(Any ways of feeding info to line management?)</i> It's up to them what they do. I won't, I don't discuss anything within supervision other than normal child protection issues erm, and they're the line management. I don't keep notes either. They keep their notes.
Safeguarding: Procedure clear (n=3)	In terms of safeguarding because that's quite straightforward. If something comes up of safeguarding, safeguarding nature; I would inform - and this is open - the line manager of that person, and there's a quite a clear flow diagram that everyone is aware of; immediately that would go to the line manager for that, yeh, and that would be recorded in my supervision file.
Safeguarding: Procedure needs to be clear (n=1)	Maybe that's something that I need to, sort of, always erm, introduce the session; if you brought forward something that I thought was harmful or needed to be taken forward to your own line manager then I, we would have to say that.
Ethical issues discussed during supervision (n=4)	I've felt uncomfortable about something and I've discussed it with the supervisor and said 'oh' you know, 'I don't feel that this is part of my role but I've been asked to do it' type of thing, and, you know, I think that it should be and they all said, it hasn't empowered me, but they've said 'I think you're right' and, you know, 'the course of action that you've decided to take, you know, to challenge - that would be right' and that again that sort of helps with that.

4.10 Theme 9: Evaluating supervision

This theme includes information relevant to the evaluation of supervision. Here respondents discussed the process of evaluation and how evaluative information might inform changes to supervision.

Respondents talked about the importance of agreeing procedures for evaluation during the initial stages of orientating supervision. Some used regular formal evaluation procedures to inform changes to supervision (e.g. cost benefit analysis) and others spoke about ways of gaining informal evaluation information (e.g. 'give and get', Hawkins and Shohet, 2006) as a quick measure of the effectiveness of each supervision session.

When obtaining evaluation information, most supervisors sought the views of supervisees. In some cases the views of both supervisees and line managers were sought and in one case peer feedback on the supervision process was given when two educational psychologists worked together to co-facilitate group supervision.

One respondent thought that supervisees should be responsible for providing evaluative information, saying: 'If I'm not giving what they want then tell me.'

In relation to the processing of information obtained during evaluation, one respondent thought that evaluation comments should be discussed openly with supervisees in order to find ways of improving the supervision process. In a few cases, formal evaluation procedures had informed changes to supervision to enable supervisees to spend some of their supervision time sharing information about a particular topic area.

Table 26: Excerpts from the 'Evaluation' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Supervisee feedback: Agreeing evaluation (n=2)	I think there perhaps needs to be some discussion around the guidance when you start supervision; you don't want to just jump in and what to do if things aren't going well ... or even if you don't have a contract; issues, if things aren't going well; when are we going to review or does it go on forever like this or do we wait until you get someone else.
Supervisee feedback: Informal evaluation (n=2)	At the end of the session I ask for a 'give and a get', and that's from Hawkins and Shohet (2006) actually. So something you've given today and something you've got from today and that helps me get a quick measure whether it's working. So someone who's quiet I still ask for a give and a get. What have you given today? What have you got today? It works really well.
Supervisee feedback: Formal evaluation (n=2)	When we asked for feedback either within the sessions and their feedback to their managers, their managers were very keen that we kept this going because they felt it built up skills as well and the fact that they re-commissioned it.

4.11 Theme 10: Group supervision

This theme includes any information relevant to group supervision. Four out of ten participants were engaged in group supervision and all of them were educational psychologists acting as supervisors. Therefore the views of supervisees engaged in group supervision are not represented here.

Responses included issues of confidentiality, supervisor skills needed for group supervision, feelings of group support, group learning and problems with group supervision.

In terms of confidentiality, some respondents described how supervisees were asked to not give names of clients and were asked not to discuss the issues raised in supervision with anyone outside the group supervision context.

Respondents also talked about group management skills, such as skills in group facilitation, being able to respond to the needs of the group, maintaining focus on the agenda and evaluating the effectiveness of group supervision.

Respondents valued feelings of group support or 'groupness' arising during supervision. One respondent identified that supervisees 'liked helping each other'. Another explained feelings of group support with reference to the psychodynamic principle of containment, saying,

'... the power of the group holding it; it's huge because it's diffused, you know, and nobody feels particularly put upon or comes out feeling drained that I've ever identified or recognised.'

A few respondents explained how members of the group learned from each other, both within and across professions, depending on the group membership.

A few respondents also discussed problems with group supervision. One talked about some group members being reluctant to speak and others dominating the discussion. One respondent discussed difficulties with group size and constancy of group membership and another described how supervision could turn into a group moan.

Table 27: Excerpts from the 'Group supervision' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Confidentiality (n=3)	But we do say, you know, about, you know, we're professionals and people may bring up issues that, and we keep it in the group; I do say that before we start the group.
Group management skills (n=3)	I think you've got to have - I'm thinking in terms of groups because a lot of my work is in groups - you've got to have a very good understanding of groups; you've got to be sensitive to the group, you've also got to be willing to fly without a safety net because you don't know which way a group will go.
Group support (n=3)	From the evaluations; when the small groups met together it gave them a feeling of groupness and teamness ... getting the support of the group.
Group learning (n=2)	But you also learn from the group. One particular group of SUPERVISEES; you've got a worker who comes from a social care background; you've got a worker who comes from a SUPERVISEE type education background; I've got another one who comes from a main stream school background; one who comes from special school and they're all quite different but you could even say to them what would happen from a social care perspective, from a main stream perspective, from a special school perspective, how would we understand that behaviour?
Problems with group supervision: Withholding information (n=1)	There is some history of difficulty with group dynamics of staff from ORGANISATION. We talked about how we were going to resolve the difficulties and lack of openness. So, one person said I'm happy to continue to talk, others said I'm happy to continue to support.
Problems with group supervision: Group moan (n=1)	PEER EP had started less structured and had found there were a couple of people who were so very dominant; it was hard to get that sort of group cohesion if you like. She felt that it could just turn in to a moan and so she thought she would do something that would be more structured and I thought I would try that as a beginning point.

4.12 Theme 11: Independence from line management

This theme addresses issues involved when a practitioner has professional supervision that is separate to line management supervision and structures.

Respondents discussed the advantages and disadvantages of having separate professional supervision. Other issues were discussed, such as processes for sharing information with line managers, and the difficulties involved when commissioning group supervision with line managers.

Advantages of having professional supervision that is separate to line management supervision and structures related to the neutrality of supervisors, enabling supervisees to talk about issues that they don't feel able to surface with their line managers. One respondent said that the independence of supervisors from line managers means that,

'... we don't have to worry about the managerial stuff, the operational stuff, which frees us up, very neutral very independent but still psychologically we're looking to support the people.'

A few respondents thought that having separate professional supervision could be a disadvantage. Disadvantages reported were the potential for overlap and the need to share information when issues relevant to both professional and managerial supervision were raised.

In terms of procedures for sharing information with line managers, respondents thought that the process should be transparent and should be agreed with supervisees so that

supervisees don't become suspicious about the purpose of communication. Some respondents described a written document outlining the form, content and procedures for communication between professional supervisors and line managers. One respondent believed that information shouldn't be shared with line managers to retain confidentiality and associated feelings of safety.

Some respondents discussed the issues involved when commissioning group supervision with line managers. Respondents talked about the need to contract with managers as well as the group, agreeing issues such as the role of the supervisor and the focus and boundaries of supervision. A few respondents explained that some line managers were uncomfortable with the confidential nature of supervision, preferring that supervision be limited to discussions concerning casework, excluding wider professional issues. Respondents also talked about regular meetings with line managers to discuss evaluation information and make changes to supervision. One respondent noted the importance of line managers valuing supervision and another found it difficult to get evaluation information from managers concerning their views on supervision, saying 'normally, no news is good news'.

Table 28: Excerpts from the 'Independence from line management' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Advantages (n=4)	I think the overwhelming erm point is the idea of having a safe place that is confidential and outside the management structures that they work within and also outside of the work relationships that they have with their colleagues.
Disadvantages (n=2)	But it's one of those difficult things (line manager not knowing about your good work) when your supervisor is not your line manager.

Information Sharing: openly agreed (n=2)	After the supervision, well during the supervision, we would discuss what the next steps are. Do you feel confident to know what to do next? If there were concerns that they wanted fed back via me, coming from the group as opposed to coming from an individual then that would be fed back by an email or a phone call.
Information Sharing: written document (n=3)	There's a document that some of the other EPs and I, who work with SUPERVISEES, wrote, but it's been amended and gone to the line managers and service manger. I don't think it's been completed yet. It's also about, quality is the wrong word. But say If someone is getting on ok as a worker, as a visitor as a member of staff. If there are any kind of CPD needs that are identified through the course of supervision and that's mentioned in a positive way as well erm and we link in that into PDR.

4.13 Theme 12: Inter-professional supervision

This theme includes views on the advantages and disadvantages of having a supervisor from a different professional background. Advantages related to the different perspective of supervisors, the increased understanding of respective professional roles and the building of links between professions. Disadvantages related to gaps in professional knowledge and reduced feelings of empathy experienced by supervisees.

One supervisor reported that one of their supervisees tended to withhold information, making supervision difficult. When questioned further, the supervisor said that the same supervisee would probably be as guarded if supervised by someone from their own profession.

Table 29: Excerpts from the 'Inter-professional supervision' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Advantages: Different perspective (n=4)	Given a different perspective definitely ... She represents a profession that I work a lot with but I'm not an educational psychologist and so in discussing my cases she gives a different dimension.
Advantages: Knowledge of respective professional roles (n=3)	It's given me a better understanding of the educational psychology service... each educational psychologist's practice is different; you may have guidelines as an educational psychologist to say this is how you work with CASES, but they don't all do that. So, if I have a particular problem - and I had quite a few last year with a couple of educational psychologists - EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SUPERVISOR was great at supporting me and moving that situation on. Because EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SUPERVISOR can see it from the educational psychologist point of view whereas I am just going to go 'oh they haven't done this, they haven't done that, they haven't done the other'. So it's made me step back and say, 'hold on a minute have you took this into consideration' and if I have it's then move it on.
Disadvantages: Gaps in professional knowledge (n=2)	I think sometimes we have to ask clarifying questions that we might not have to do.
Disadvantages: Reduced feelings of empathy (n=1)	I think that it is around the empathy; that they understand where you're coming from ... so, I think, that having someone who has come from that sort of background, I find that you don't then have those discussions (justifying your role); they just sort of understand, you know, they just understand where you are coming from.

4.14 Theme 13: Models of supervision

This theme includes any information given concerning models or theories of supervision.

Participants gave a variety of responses and had varying ways of conceptualising 'models of

supervision'. Respondents said that models of supervision were not used, should be used more and should be suited to the needs of the supervisee. The advantages and disadvantages of models of supervision were also discussed.

Some respondents said they were not aware of the use of supervision models. Others reported the use of 'the three functions of supervision' and a few had experienced structured process-based models of group supervision.

Respondents had different views of models of supervision. One participant said that they drew upon implicit knowledge of models of supervision, believing explicit use of models of supervision to be 'clunky'. Another said that they used a group problem solving model of supervision (unnamed to preserve anonymity), whereas others viewed group problem solving models to be a 'tool' rather than a 'model of supervision'.

Some respondents said that models of supervision should be used flexibly according to the needs and preferences of supervisees and one said that it was important to get the approval of supervisees if a model is going to work effectively.

Respondents discussed the advantages and disadvantages of using structured process-based models of group supervision, such as Solution Circles. One respondent said structured models helped supervisees to feel safe because they knew how any issues raised would be processed by the group. The same respondent thought that structured models based on facilitation avoided the donation of solutions to problems. Another said that sessions were

less likely to turn into a group moan when structured models were used. Disadvantages of structured models were that supervisees may feel 'a little bit organised or managed'.

Table 30: Excerpts from the 'Models of supervision' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
No use of models (n=5)	Not that I'm aware (no use of models); no, of; it's a discussion of the children and you justifying what I'm doing and why I'm doing it really.
Use of models (n=5)	I think there is something around, sort of, as we have talked about before; whether it is educative, supportive or professional.
Different views of models: Implicit use of a model (n=1)	<i>(Do you use implicit knowledge of models and is that enough?)</i> I think it's enough for this context because educational psychologists are well used to issues around supervision that it's almost become part of how we think, erm. I also think that, in terms of the groups I've supervised, that they haven't been au fait on a conceptual level; use of a model might be a bit clunky, a bit odd.
Advantages of structured models (n=2)	I think one of the big strengths for me about using the model is it puts the person talking about their issue on a formal setting, if you like, and I feel that's safe practice in that they can bring forward quite a - what could be - quite a big emotional issue for themselves and they know it will be treated with respect and they will leave the room safely. Whereas somebody could have maybe brought forward an issue and without that, erm, form of coaching, if you like, it could be that they leave that room not emotional supported with lots of donated solutions, if you like, but actually feeling just as overwhelmed.
Disadvantages of structured models (n=1)	It's alien to some people; they don't like having a structure there. They maybe feel a little bit organised or er managed, and they're not quite sure why I'm there managing it, you know.

4.15 Theme 14: Problems with supervision

Respondents gave a variety of possible problems associated with supervision. Some talked of difficulties at the outset due to supervisees holding negative views of supervision. In some

cases supervision wasn't sufficiently valued by managers and hadn't been a priority within the history or culture of the profession. In others, respondents reported feelings of mistrust, with some supervisees believing that the purpose of supervision was to 'check up' on quality of practice, implying inadequate professional capability.

Other problems related to the tendency for supervisees to seek direction, reducing opportunities for facilitation and hindering the thinking skills of the supervisee. Some supervisory contexts were thought to encourage direction, such as when the supervisor is portrayed in higher positions of power relative to the supervisee or when a formal 'case-work' format is adopted. Conversely, respondents explained negative views of facilitation held by supervisees, such as the frustration experienced when supervisors reframe direct questions. In this case supervisees may 'feel a bit cheated' and supervisors might 'come over as inauthentic or quite strange', leading to feelings of mistrust.

Some respondents raised potential difficulties with the supervisory relationship, talking about the importance of establishing trust, attending to uneven power differentials and taking care to avoid feelings of anxiety when delivering criticism.

Other responses referred to unclear purpose and issues with time, with some respondents wanting more time and others struggling to 'find the time' for supervision sessions and the preparation that they involve.

Respondents also discussed difficulties with having professional supervision as a separate process to managerial supervision. One respondent talked about inadequate communication

between professional and line management supervision. Another talked of difficulties with negotiating agreements with the line managers of supervisees, saying that some line managers were uncomfortable with the confidential nature of supervision and the knowledge that they wouldn't be made aware of issues discussed in supervision.

Table 31: Excerpts from the 'Problems with supervision' theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Negative view of supervision: Supervision not valued (n=3)	But I think there are barriers in terms of just presenting it in a way that doesn't sound too wishy washy. (<i>Presenting it as if there is structure, or outcome?</i>) Yes. If you feel that people will not automatically sign up to the idea of just talking about cases for the value of, the value of the group, I think it's the hardest thing to get across, even though I think that is the most valuable, I think that is the hardest thing to convey to people. If you don't have people committed every, every, it's like a chicken and egg thing, really, because in some cases managers would send people; so this time has been freed up for you to do this, but it was kind of like sent rather than managers saying we think this is really good and important. Do you know what I mean? It's sometimes just in the way it's presented, sometimes people turn up and think why; I don't really know why I'm here or who you are or what it's about really and why am I doing this when I have got families I could be seeing. Whereas now I think lots of people in our established group are, you know; they look forward to it and they know that's an afternoon or a hour and a half where they see the same people not just catch up but they get that validation from hearing from each other that they are struggling with similar things.
Negative view of supervision: Feelings of mistrust (n=4)	As a psychologist you understand that supervision means, kind of; it's a support meeting and an entitlement. Those who haven't come from a psychology background found the term a little bit threatening before they realised what went on in the sessions.

Supervisee seeks direction (n=4)	I expect it might be this idea of expertness; that if you are seen as an expert it can deskill the thinking of who you are with. So supervision then becomes seeking of answers and I think the way I would see supervision personally is more facilitation and helping people's thinking, erm, but that's asking people to do a lot, if they're not used to that, you know, I don't think people naturally do that.
Supervisory relationship: Trust (n=2)	It's crucial to be able to trust that person, I wouldn't; if I didn't, I wouldn't. I would tell the person enough to get through the session. I think I can be completely open with SUPERVISOR but perhaps with a different person or personality, I would definitely keep things to myself if I wanted to but I don't feel a need to do that.
Purpose unclear (n=4)	I think the big issue really was people understanding the purpose of it really ... I think people were suspicious about the purpose of it ... peoples' suspicions came from the idea of being checked upon.

4.16 Theme 15: Purposes of supervision

This theme considers the intended purposes of supervision; whether supervision is aimed at fulfilling educational, supportive or managerial functions.

Most respondents defined their supervision as 'professional supervision'. No respondents defined their supervision as 'managerial supervision'. Respondents conceptualised professional and managerial supervision in different ways; some focused on aspects of the supervisor and others on aspects of the task. Some respondents used the term 'professional supervision' to refer to any form of supervision outside line management structures. One person defined managerial supervision as fulfilling a safeguarding function and another

thought that managerial supervision was the forum for raising ethical issues, such as defining role boundaries.

In terms of the purpose of supervision, most respondents talked of educative functions of supervision. Respondents thought that supervision was set up to provide the opportunity to 'talk through casework' and receive 'guidance and advice' in relation to next steps and interventions.

Others thought that supervision was aimed at providing more than just caseload support, and should build the capacity of the supervisee to reflect on practice and 'continue those thought processes' during everyday working practice. The extent of 'guidance and advice' expected was determined by the complexity of the casework discussed and the experience of the supervisee; with more direction expected for more complex cases and less experienced supervisees.

Most respondents talked of supportive functions of supervision, such as providing affirmation that the professional judgements of the supervisee are appropriate, engendering group support and 'absorbing emotional stresses'.

Some respondents described managerial functions, saying that the intended purpose of supervision was to 'check up' on practice or promote the safeguarding of clients and practitioners.

In some cases, respondents seemed confused about the purposes of supervision, saying: 'I think it's supposed to be a supportive process.' followed by: 'We're told it's also for

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safeguarding.’ In other cases, respondents seemed clear. One respondent reported that supervisees were asked to think of whether discussions within sessions were serving ‘educational’, ‘supportive’ or ‘managerial’ purposes as part of ongoing good supervision practice.

Some respondents thought that purposes of supervision needed to be more clearly defined and operationalised to reduce feelings of mistrust in cases where the ostensible purpose is ‘educational’ or ‘supportive’ but supervision includes procedures for checking up on practice, indicative of managerial supervision.

Table 32: Excerpts from the ‘Purposes of supervision’ theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Educational purposes: Information and guidance (n=7)	If I’m seeing a family and there’s more concern, it’s more complex; I’m just looking for a sounding board really. You know, this is what I’m doing and for that person to say, you know, that’s great, and it’s an opportunity to talk about often, but also for that person to say ‘well have you thought about this, have you thought about that?’ ... everyone has very complex cases, everybody has some degree of child protection cases or some issues with their children and it’s just an opportunity to talk to someone about it, and it might only be talking about it, you might be looking for some advice or suggestions, or it might be that I want to talk about a case that I’m actually quite happy with, but it is complex and I’d like another opinion.
Educational purposes: building capacity (n=3)	Around this particular area of work there are lone practitioners that have got to be problem solving and using initiative when they are out there, as such, and that’s what you want the supervision process to support.
Supportive purposes (n=6)	<i>(What do you think that supervision encompasses other than casework support?)</i> I think it’s the, it’s almost like the, it’s the personal support ... In this particular area of work because you are working one-to-one with

	families; a lot of the time you are absorbing a lot of their, sort of, emotional, sort of, stresses, if you like, and I think there is an element of personal support around it, because it, it can be quite subtly pressured.
Managerial purposes: Checking up (n=2)	It's very much about each term we must speak about each child on their caseload and we look at dates of visit and whether they occurred or not and then a brief discussion about issues that they might want to raise about them, so there's often a bit of background and then we look at term plans for the future and that sort of thing, but probably the most important bit is checking that visits have occurred and those that haven't whether any procedures had been put in place for ensuring that there's a check.
Managerial purposes: Safeguarding (n=4)	(<i>What is the key purpose?</i>) I think it's the guidance and advice and also the safeguarding; it helps you to be accountable for your actions in a safe way.

4.17 Theme 16: Supervision skills compared to professional knowledge

This theme considers discussions concerning the *relative* importance of skills in supervision and professional knowledge. *General* responses pertaining to the skills and knowledge necessary for competent supervision are included in the 'Competencies of Supervisor' theme.

Responses were categorised as indicating the importance of skills in supervision, the importance of professional knowledge and those responses suggesting that professional knowledge could act as a barrier to effective supervision.

Most respondents discussed the importance of professional knowledge for enabling supervisors to demonstrate respect for the professional role of the supervisee, offering

suggestions for how practice could be improved and mediating in terms of role boundaries between professions that the supervisee works with. Some respondents thought that supervisors should also have had experience in the same profession of the supervisee or in related professions so that they 'understand where you're coming from.' One respondent stated that the supervisee may, 'listen differently to the advice or the comments' in cases where the supervisor had no previous experience of the same or related professions.

A few thought that professional experience could hinder supervision as supervisors may be tempted to 'jump in too early' with guidance and advice or 'get caught up in their own agenda,' giving their personal stories and demonstrating their expertise. One respondent stated that: 'It has to be about the people you are supervising; about their needs and not your (supervisor) needs.'

Most respondents discussed the importance of skills in supervision so that supervisors can 'extract and facilitate' and achieve the best out of the sessions.

In most cases, respondents thought that a combination of both skills in supervision and professional knowledge are needed for effective supervision, saying, for example,

'I think it's more about skills of supervision but I think without the background in professional practice you would struggle, because a lot of people are asking questions of professional practice.'

Table 33: Excerpts from the ‘Supervision skills compared to professional knowledge’ theme

Subtheme	Excerpt
Professional knowledge (n=9)	I’m investing in the time to go through my cases and if there’s something I’ve missed or could do better, or develop, but the person I’m talking to has got the skill to be able to know that and to give some suggestions, or offer something ... it’s important because obviously if I’m talking about a case and I’m looking for a different perspective or some support or some suggestions, that person’s got to have some degree of knowledge of the professional practice but if they don’t have the skills in supervision we’ll never get to that point.
Skills in supervision (n=8)	If you don’t know things; I won’t say that’s secondary, but I think, you know, the most important thing is the person bit. ... I think that if you can, you can know everything there is to know but if you can’t facilitate a helpful solution focused friendly da de da de da, supervision session, then no matter what you know, you’re not going to kind of, extract and facilitate are you?

4.18 Theme 17: Support for supervisors

This theme includes different ways in which supervisors are able to receive support and develop as competent supervisors. Responses were categorised as relating to training, meetings held between supervisors, general peer support, additional reading and support through their own supervision.

Some supervisors emphasised the importance of training, recognising that there are different approaches to supervision and that training is needed to avoid there being ‘a mismatch between what the person needs and what you can offer.’ Respondents said that they had received additional training for their role as supervisor, either through their educational psychology service or through university contacts, and thought that the training

was useful. One reported that the training had helped orientate initial discussions with supervisees about the functions and roles of the supervisor.

Some respondents talked about meetings held between supervisors to ensure consistency in format or to reflect on issues relating to supervision. Other supervisors reported co-facilitation of group supervision where two educational psychologists worked together to supervise a group. These supervisors valued working together with another educational psychologist, appreciating support when trying to identify subconscious group processes. One supervisor also valued the constructive criticism offered by the other educational psychologist.

A few supervisors discussed the importance of additional reading to support training in supervision. One supervisor said that they had raised issues arising from inter-professional supervision during their own supervision. Others said that they could discuss issues during their own supervision, but often hadn't felt the need to do so.

Table 34: Excerpts from the 'Support for supervisors' theme

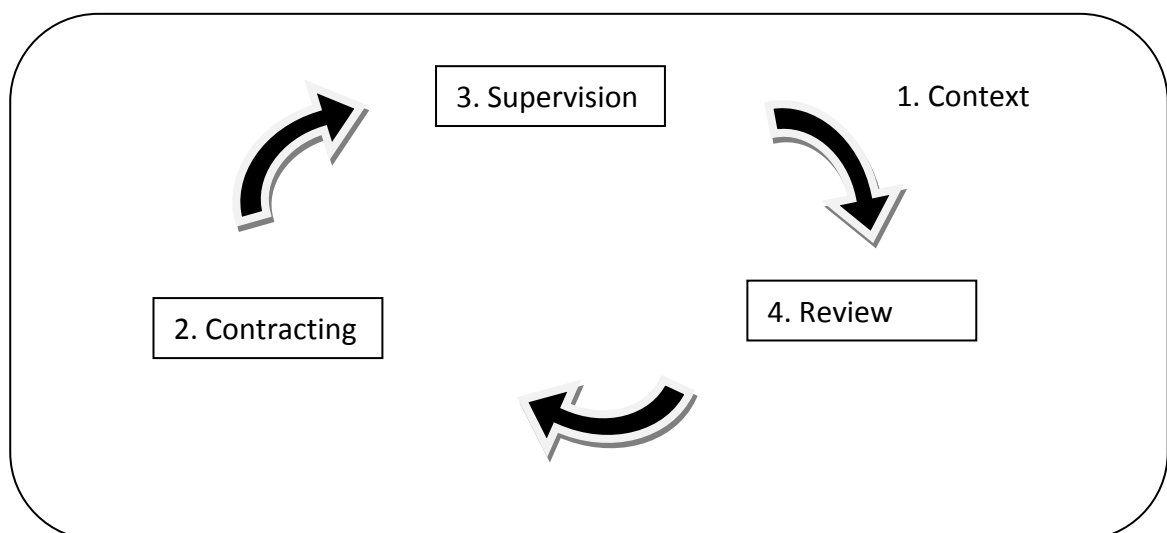
Subtheme	Excerpt
Training: Importance of training (n=3)	I think that anybody taking on this role would need some time thinking about themselves as a supervisor, so either maybe they have attended a formal course like the one in CITY because they've erm supervised a, you know, an EP in training, or placement, erm, so they've had some time to do the role alongside training sessions, or maybe they've, you know, been trained another way, erm for example, maybe the service has had a TRAINING or a different supervise, way of supervision, supervision model, or maybe there's been some service CPD time spent on that.

Training: Training attended (n=3)	I've been on supervision courses run by the UNIVERSITY. (<i>Were the courses useful?</i>) Errrrrr, Yes. I paused because I was frantically trying to remember what we did. And one of the things that came out of an activity on the courses that TUTOR that I can relate to personal experience that it's kind of and I've had some really really good supervisors you know how would you want it, how would you want to be supervised. How would you want someone to be? Yeah? Was it 'do not to other what you do unto you', something like that so, it's also putting yourself in someone else's place. What would like it to be?
Meetings held between supervisors (n=3)	We also started going to a, sort of, supervision interest group, which was set up within the county for people who were doing this kind of inter-professional supervision, which I found really helpful actually – it was really interesting. (<i>Was it beneficial?</i>) I think it was just having any sort of space to talk about those sort of things ... the kind of dynamics that I think come up in supervision and trying to manage, particularly with other people who had less well established groups and they were trying to establish... they were finding things a lot trickier, convincing people of the worth of it particularly, and I think they really struggled with that, and found they had falling attendance, they had, it wasn't the same people every time so it was hard to establish a group it was difficult to establish ground rules and all these issues I could hear being discussed and I thought if I ever do this in the future without such an established group and when I started with the SUPERVISEES I was thinking I need to bear these things in mind actually so I did find that useful.
Peer support (n=3)	If you're going to work with groups I think that you need to have work with a partner I think ... because it is different on your own. (<i>Is that because then you can talk to them about how the process is going and reflect on them?</i>) Yes and also you might be making big bloomers yourself, you know, and you need someone to say well actually you were a bit strong that time or err I'm not quite so sure they were clicking on what we were trying to do, erm or its going quite well you know we'll do more of that next time, whatever.
Supervisors supervision (n=2)	I process it sometimes through my own supervision, I go back and say, there's something going on there but I couldn't quite pick it up.

4.19 Conceptual map of meta-themes

During analysis the 17 themes were loosely grouped to form four meta- themes portraying the process of supervision (see Figure 6). The themes were grouped so that I could create pathways through the entire data set, begin to conceptualise and make sense of the process of supervision and draw attention to some of the key points made by participants, such as the importance of contracting.

Figure 6



Thematic map of data set

The following describe the themes that were grouped to form meta-themes.

- The context meta-theme relates to factors outside of supervision that impact on the supervision process, such as different concepts of supervision, having a professional

supervisor who is separated from line management structures and having a supervisor from a different professional background.

- The contracting meta-theme relates to the issues to be considered during contracting, such as purposes of supervision, the boundaries of supervision and ethical and legal issues.
- The supervision meta-theme includes elements of supervision, such as the supervisory relationship, models of supervision and the qualities and competencies of supervisors, including whether educational psychologists have distinctive competencies and the relative importance of supervision skills and professional knowledge.
- The review meta-theme includes the evaluation of supervision, including an exploration of benefits of supervision, problems with supervision, how supervision could be changed and implications for supervisor development and training.

The above text suggests that themes were grouped neatly into meta-theme categories. In reality, the grouping of themes proved problematic, with many themes fitting into more than one meta-theme according to the context and nature of supervision. For instance, some supervisory contexts may require more formalised contracting, comprising methods for communication between professional and line-management supervision, ethical issues, models of supervision and the evaluation process. This may particularly be the case when the supervision is commissioned by the supervisee's line manager.

4.20 Conclusion

This chapter has described each of the 17 themes and shown how the 17 themes were grouped to form four meta-themes portraying the process of supervision. The descriptions of data included in each of the 17 themes have given an overview of the range of views expressed and the tabulated excerpts have provided further illustration of the descriptive data and indicated the frequency of comments made.

Chapter 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to explore views of supervisors and supervisees on the factors involved when educational psychologists supervise other professionals. This chapter discusses views within each of the four meta-themes created during analysis of the interview transcripts and interprets information within the context of literature from the fields of supervision, inter-professional supervision and supervision within the practice of educational psychology.

This chapter makes explicit the practical applications of the research by analysing how this research complements and illustrates the professional practice guidelines for educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) and suggesting a 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision'.

5.2 Meta-theme 1: Context

Context includes the factors impacting upon supervision that relate to the cultures and histories of the individuals and organisations involved in supervision. Contextual issues become even more pronounced in inter-professional contexts, when two organisational and individual contexts impinge on supervision. In some cases, the supervisee's line-manager is also involved in decisions relating to supervision, introducing a third dimension to supervision and the contracting process.

5.2.1 Different concepts of supervision between professions

Participants talked about different conceptualisations of supervision across professional contexts, with some valuing supervision 'as an entitlement' and others feeling 'threatened' by supervision. Some respondents reported the belief that the purpose of supervision was to 'check up' on practice and this was particularly the case when supervision was obligatory. With time, supervisees seemed to view their supervision experiences more positively.

Negative views of supervision from some participants seemed to be related to feelings of mistrust. Scaife (2009) writes about the importance of feelings of safety within supervision and this is supported by research conducted by Palomo et al. (2010), who found that a safe base was the most important factor for trainee clinical psychologists. Scaife (2009) believes that feelings of safety take time to develop and can be encouraged through openness and authenticity. This suggests the importance of a collaborative and sensitive contracting process where the purpose of supervision can be discussed and agreed.

5.2.2 Separation of the supervisor from the profession

Respondents were engaged in supervision where the supervisor and supervisee worked within different professions or organisations. The majority of supervisees appreciated working with someone outside of their profession, valuing the different perspective of supervisors and the greater understanding of different professional roles brought about through inter-professional supervision. Disadvantages of being supervised by someone

outside of the supervisee's profession were reported to be the need to ask clarifying questions and the reduced sense of professional empathy that might be experienced.

Views reported here align closely with the work of Townend (2005), who reported that Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapists (CBP's) engaged in specialist inter-professional supervision valued the broadening of perspective and objective stance. In contrast to Townend (2005) respondents taking part in this research did not report the likelihood of withholding information during inter-professional supervision.

Comparisons between the present research and the findings of Townend (2005) should be made with caution due to differences between the methodology and aims of the research. Townend (2005) aimed to directly compare within-professional supervision and inter-professional supervision within the practice of CBP and sought to interpret the views of participants using questionnaires. Respondents participating in Townend's (2005) research may have been more likely to reveal the tendency to withhold information when answering questionnaires compared to respondents taking part in the face-to-face interviews reported here. The increased proximity of participants to the researcher implicated in the present research design may have made respondents more wary of the judgements of the researcher and less likely to reveal that they withheld information during supervision.

5.2.3 Separation of the supervisor from the supervisee's line manager

Supervisors taking part in this research did not have line management responsibility for supervisees. Participants generally appreciated the neutrality of supervisors, enabling

supervisees to discuss issues that they did not feel able to surface with their line managers. A few participants felt that the independence from line-management could be a disadvantage due to the potential for overlap and the need to share information when issues relevant to both professional and management supervision were raised.

This research tends to align with views in the literature suggesting that line management supervision and professional supervision should be delivered by separate professionals due to power inequalities and conflicting agendas (Page and Wosket, 1994; Clouder and Sellars, 2004; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009). However, it is important to note that this research did not set out to compare and contrast different types of supervision. Instead, this research set out to find and interpret views on supervision; and in relation to this aim, participants seemed to appreciate having professional supervision from someone who was not their line manager.

The recent professional guidelines for educational psychologists, (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) advise that the functions of professional and line management supervision should be separated and but can be delivered by the same or separate people. They highlight the importance of contracting to provide clarity with respect to functions, agendas and boundaries.

5.2.4 Conclusion

In relation to the 'context' meta-theme, the independence of supervisors from the organisation and management structures of supervisees was generally viewed as

advantageous for supervision. However, the positive view of inter-professional supervision may not relate to all instances of inter-professional supervision. Only a small sample of participants from those originally contacted agreed to take part in this research. Those who decided not to take part may have viewed inter-professional supervision less positively. This point re-states the aim of the research which is to understand the process of supervision and not to generalise findings to other contexts in which inter-professional supervision takes place.

5.3 Meta-theme 2: The contracting process

Contracting, involves an exploration of assumptions, expectations and experiences, culminating in the development of a written working agreement, clarifying the functions, roles, responsibilities and boundaries of supervision within the multiple contexts impacting upon the process of supervision.

In relation to the present research, most respondents were unsatisfied with their experiences of contracting. Participants spoke about informal contracting processes, where issues of confidentiality and roles and functions of supervision were loosely discussed. Few participants reported the creation of individualised written contracts and many said that they would consider creating individualised written contracts in future supervisory contexts in order to provide more clarity regarding respective functions, roles, responsibilities and boundaries of professional and line-management supervision.

The importance of contracting is consistently highlighted in the literature. Contracting has been included within models of supervision (Wosket and Page, 2001) and key texts on supervision (Page and Wosket, 2004; Carroll, 1996; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009). In terms of the research literature, Lawton (2000) found that rigorous contracting was related to positive supervisory relationships. Contracting has also been recommended for securing ethical and accountable practice (Storm et al. 2001; Leonard and Richards, 2001; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

In contrast, many respondents taking part in this research seemed unclear of the purposes of supervision and reported uncertainty with regard to the legal ramifications of supervision, with some assuming that their role as facilitator reduced the extent to which they could be held accountable for the practice of supervisees. These assumptions were not formally agreed or recorded.

Despite the imperative consistently demonstrated in the literature, this research is consistent with anecdotal reports of a 'patchy experience' of contracting (Scaife, 2009; Proctor, 2007). It is important to consider possible reasons for discrepancies between actual experiences of contracting and recommendations in the literature.

One possible reason relates to the use of the term 'contracting', derived from the term 'contract' which is usually considered to be a written document specifying rules and procedures. In contrast, key authors conceptualise contracting as a process involving discussions of expectations and an exploration of the cultural and historical contexts of

professions and professionals involved in supervision (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009). Use of the term ‘contracting’ may evoke feelings of unease around the specification of rules, leading to avoidance of contracting altogether.

Another reason may be lack of knowledge of frameworks supporting the content and process of contracting. The contracting process is rarely portrayed in models of supervision, and supervisors may be uncertain with regard to how to go about contracting or what contracting might include.

In inter-professional supervision, it is even more important to clarify purposes, roles, boundaries, ethical issues and legal ramifications due to the different assumptions and experiences of the supervisor and supervisee, stemming from organisational contexts with different and sometimes conflicting cultural and historical narratives (O’Donoghue, 2004; Mullarkey, et al. 2001; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

The following table presents suggestions for what to include in the contracting process with particular attention paid to the inter-professional context for supervision. The suggestions made are derived from the views of participants reported here and information from literature on supervision.

Table 35: The contracting process within inter-professional supervision

Functions of supervision	<p>What are the functions of professional supervision and how do they compare and contrast with functions of management supervision?</p> <p>What are the roles of the professional supervisor?</p>
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	<p>What models of supervision will be used and how do models inform the different functions and roles of supervision?</p>
Ethical and legal issues	<p>How will ethical issues be addressed in professional and management supervision? How regularly will discussions of ethical issues take place?</p> <p>What are the boundaries of confidentiality within professional supervision? When will confidentiality be broken and what are the processes for this?</p> <p>Will there be any information communicated between professional and management supervision – what information will be communicated, when, for what purpose and by who?</p> <p>Who is to be held legally responsible or accountable for which elements of practice, under what conditions?</p>
Practical issues	<p>When and where will supervision take place? For how long will supervision last?</p> <p>Will there be contact between supervisor and supervisee between sessions? If so, how will this be managed?</p> <p>What are the responsibilities of supervisors, supervisees and line-managers in relation to paperwork, contracting, evaluation and information sharing?</p> <p>What are the ground rules of supervision?</p>
Personal factors	<p>What are the expectations and preferences of supervisors and supervisees in terms of the style, theoretical orientation, content and processes of supervision?</p> <p>What are the previous experiences, both positive and negative, of supervision and how do they relate to hopes and fears for the present supervisory relationship?</p> <p>What problems could arise during supervision or the supervisory relationship and how could these be managed?</p>

Contextual issues	<p>What are the respective ethical codes and legal responsibilities of the professionals involved in supervision?</p> <p>What are the roles of respective stakeholders and how do needs confer and contrast?</p>
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When carried out sensitively, contracting should increase understanding of the supervision process and alert stakeholders to important ethical and legal implications, minimising future misunderstandings and tensions. When expectations formed during contracting match with experiences, consistency and authenticity is quickly established, increasing feelings of safety and enabling reflection and challenge to take place to support professional and personal development.

5.4 Meta-theme 3: Supervision

This meta-theme encompasses elements of supervision sessions, such as the supervisory relationship, qualities and competencies of the supervisor and models of supervision.

5.4.1 The supervisory relationship

The argument that a good supervisory relationship is a crucial factor in determining the effectiveness of supervision is consistently made in the literature (Ladany, 2004; Ladany et al., 1999; Nelson and Friedlander, 2001; Falender and Shafranske, 2010). Respondents interviewed for this research concurred with this view. Participants discussed the importance of trust, saying that they would withhold information from supervisors that they did not trust.

Tensions in the supervisory relationship relating to the degree of facilitation and the power dynamics (Page and Wosket, 1994; Scaife, 2009) were also reflected in this research. Some participants reported different and conflicting expectations with regard to the degree of facilitation appropriate during supervision and others discussed the importance of collaboration so that supervision wasn't 'being done to them'.

Supervisors talked about strategies that they used to improve the quality of relationship. One respondent discussed how trust was encouraged through assurances of the confidential nature of the supervisory relationship, enabling supervisees to talk freely about personal and professional issues that they felt unable to discuss with their line manager. Another talked about engendering feelings of safety through conveying unconditional positive regard, setting boundaries and ensuring consistency within and between supervision sessions. The consistency was facilitated through the use of a structured model of supervision so that supervisees knew what to expect and how their issues would be processed.

It is suggested here that trusting and safe relationships can also be encouraged through a collaborative, sensitive and dynamic contracting process, where expectations and boundaries are discussed and potential problems can be processed hypothetically before they contaminate the relationship (Scaife, 2009).

5.4.2 Supervisory qualities and competencies

Participants reported a range of supervisor qualities and competencies relating to educative and supportive functions of supervision. The importance of responding to the needs of

supervisees and being able to reflect on supervision as it proceeds were noted by some participants. These skills have been consistently promoted as key supervisor qualities in the literature (Carroll, 1996; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009; Falender and Shafranske, 2010).

5.4.3 Distinctive qualities and competencies of educational psychologists

The psychological underpinnings of supervision combined with the wide practice of supervision within current derivations of applied psychology (Goodyear, 2007, as cited in Scaife, 2009) suggests that psychologists are well suited to the role of supervisor in interdisciplinary contexts. This research focused on supervision contexts where educational psychologists were given the role of supervisor and sought to discover supervision skills that are particular to the profession of educational psychology.

Respondents taking part in this research thought that educational psychologists were able to apply psychological theory, think through casework logically, use counselling and consultation skills and had a wide professional and contextual knowledge base.

However, around half of respondents thought that these qualities or competencies might not be distinctive. Some respondents thought that skills in logical thinking, counselling and consultation could be learned by other professionals and applied effectively within supervision. Others struggled to identify distinctive skills of educational psychologists.

Possible reasons for the mixed views need to be considered. Respondents noted the reluctance of educational psychologists to discuss their distinctive skills and qualities with

supervisees for fear of increasing power inequalities. This means that some supervisees may remain in the dark with respect to the 'mysterious' qualities of educational psychologists and the rationale for their selection as supervisor. Therefore, there seems to be a tension in the need to be open and transparent about the skills and competencies of the supervisor and the need to neutralise power inequalities.

It is suggested here that educational psychologists are well-placed to become supervisors due to skills in consultation, counselling and knowledge and application of psychological theory. However, the background of educational psychologists does not necessarily imply that they have the skills necessary for effective supervision. Professionals within educational psychology will have a unique skill set that will be appropriate for supervision to different degrees.

In the literature, it has been argued that the choice of supervisor should not be made according to the profession to which they belong, but should be made on an individual basis, taking account of the contexts impacting upon supervision and the needs and preferences of the supervisee (Lilley, et al., 2007; Mullarkey et al., 2001; Davies et al, 2004). It is suggested here that a clear rationale for the choice of supervisor should be formulated in collaboration with the supervisee, in which the choice of supervisor is informed by the aims and purposes of supervision, and the skills, competencies and specific knowledge of the supervisor.

5.4.4 Relative importance of supervision skills and professional knowledge

A pivotal debate in the literature is whether it is more important for supervisors to have expertise in the supervisee's professional domain or whether it is more important to have expertise in the process of supervision? Respondents generally viewed both professional knowledge and skills in supervision to be important for effective supervision. Respondents seemed to consider supervision skills to be a necessary pre-requisite for effective supervision and professional knowledge to be advantageous for establishing respect and demonstrating empathy. These findings align with the DECP guidelines (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) that discuss generic supervision skills that are considered necessary for effective supervision.

Some participants thought that having expertise in the supervisee's profession could be a disadvantage as supervisors may be tempted to 'jump in too early' with guidance and advice or 'get caught up in their own agenda,' giving their personal stories and demonstrating their expertise. These findings demonstrate the potential value of inter-professional supervision where opportunities to 'give advice' maybe reduced, enabling more opportunity for facilitating reflection.

This research is not suggesting that acting as an expert in the supervisee's professional domain is always a disadvantage, as in some specialist supervisory contexts expertise is more advantageous. This research suggests the importance of contracting the extent of expertise appropriate for the particular supervisory context in question.

5.4.5 Models of supervision

Around half of participants reported use of a supervision model. Of the participants that reported using models of supervision, three reported awareness of the three functions of supervision and two reported explicit use of structured problem solving models. Participants were generally not aware of the General Supervision Framework (GSF), the Cyclical Model or other supervision models.

Participants varied in terms of their conceptualisations of 'models of supervision' with some believing that structured problem solving models constituted a model of supervision and others believing that structured problem solving models were a tool to be used within a supervision session. Generally, participants struggled to answer this question and some said that they would like to know more about models of supervision. These findings align with those of Nolan (1999) who reported that participants found it difficult to specify the supervisory model used.

Advantages and disadvantages of the use of supervision models were given. Structured problem solving models were purported to increase feelings of safety and avoid the donation of solutions to problems. However, one participant believed models of supervision to be too 'clunky' and unnatural for use with supervisees within the particular supervision context that they were describing.

According to Scaife (2009) models of supervision should be applied according to the extent to which they facilitate reflection. Reflection has been consistently recognised as a key factor

in successful supervision (Page and Wosket, 1994; Nash, 1999; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Scaife, 2009; Falender and Shafranske, 2010) and is included in a recent definition of supervision taken from the professional guidelines for educational psychologists (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

Participants talked about skills of reflection, valuing the chance to 'organise their own thoughts' and recognising supervisor skills in 'sifting out important points' and helping them to 'untangle their thinking'. These comments indicate a process of facilitating reflection rather than donating solutions to problems.

However, participants also discussed a tension in the extent of facilitation expected by supervisees and supervisors, with some supervisees expecting more direction due to the perceived 'expertise' of the supervisor. In contrast, supervisors tended to prefer facilitation of reflection. Some supervisors discussed a desire to increase facilitation, some avoided direction altogether and others changed practice to be more directive in order to meet with the preferences of supervisees. These tensions may be more acute within inter-professional contexts, when expectations and experiences stemming from different cultural and historical contexts may conflict.

The multiple contexts impinging on supervision are given prominence in the 'Model for Effective Supervision' (Atkinson and Woods, 2007) (see Figure 4, p. 44) and so the model seems relevant for inter-professional supervision, where organisational context and previous experience seem to play an important part. However, the 'Model for Effective Supervision'

does not provide guidance on how the multiple contexts should be worked with. The model omits the contracting process and doesn't suggest *how* supervision could bring about reflection on professional practice.

Wosket and Page (2001) argue for the use of models of supervision to provide direction and structure, increase feelings of safety and provide a language for contracting and evaluation. The processes of contracting and evaluation were identified by participants as aspects of supervision that needed to be improved. More active and explicit use of models of supervision may support more effective contracting and evaluation.

5.4.6 Group supervision

Responses reported here suggested the difficulties and benefits of group supervision. Difficulties included problems with group dynamics and the complexities involved when contracting with the group and the line-managers of the group of supervisees. Benefits included feelings of 'groupness' and the social support engendered.

Group supervision may facilitate or hinder reflection, as the collective provides a wider range of experiences which may be used to reflect or to donate. It is interesting to note that one educational psychologist reported changes made to group supervision in order to increase opportunities to donate solutions and ideas, as a response to requests from supervisees.

5.4.7 Conclusion

This research supports the importance of the supervisory relationship for effective supervision and reflects the tensions in power dynamics and extent of facilitation that have been discussed in the literature. This research also supports the conceptualisation of supervision skills as a unique set of skills crossing disciplinary boundaries and as vital to the supervisory process (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010). Psychological skills in problem solving, counselling and consultation were valued by participants but not always recognised as distinctive to the profession of educational psychology. Supervisors reported that they tended to avoid discussing their skills in supervision in an attempt to avert power inequalities, which may explain the lack of clarity regarding the psychological underpinnings of supervision skills.

It is suggested here that trust and feelings of safety can be encouraged through the use of structured models of supervision and through a collaborative, sensitive and dynamic contracting process. Contracting provides the opportunity to establish a clear rationale for choice of supervisor, discuss discrepancies between preferences and expectations and agree the conditions for facilitation or donation most appropriate for the specific context of supervision. Models of supervision may also assist in how the degree of facilitation or donation can be operationalised to increase reflection within supervision.

5.5 Meta-theme 4: Review

The review meta-theme includes methods and processes of evaluation and how these informed changes to the supervision process. Respondents reported evaluating supervision within each session and after a series of sessions. Some discussed how supervisees and supervisors collaborated with respect to how evaluative data should inform changes to supervision, indicating the use of ideas from Action Research techniques for organisational change (Reason and Bradbury, 2001).

Evaluation methods included informal methods (e.g. discussions of the usefulness of supervision) and formal methods (e.g. survey of the costs and benefits of supervision). Information gained through evaluation was sometimes shared with line managers. Some participants recommended that evaluation processes should be clarified during contracting and constituted an important part of supervision.

Participants reporting formal evaluation procedures sometimes used structured models of supervision. This suggests that structured models of supervision may provide a language and structure for evaluation (Wosket and Page, 2001).

In relation to the problems experienced by participants, some were unclear of the purpose of supervision and others noted the tension in the different expectations of supervisors and supervisees concerning the degree of facilitation appropriate for supervision. Many noted difficulties at the outset with supervisees holding a negative view of supervision. Some of the supervisees came from a background in education and so initial difficulties with

supervision may be explained by the cultural attitudes within education that equate supervision with need (Lunt and Sayeed, 1995).

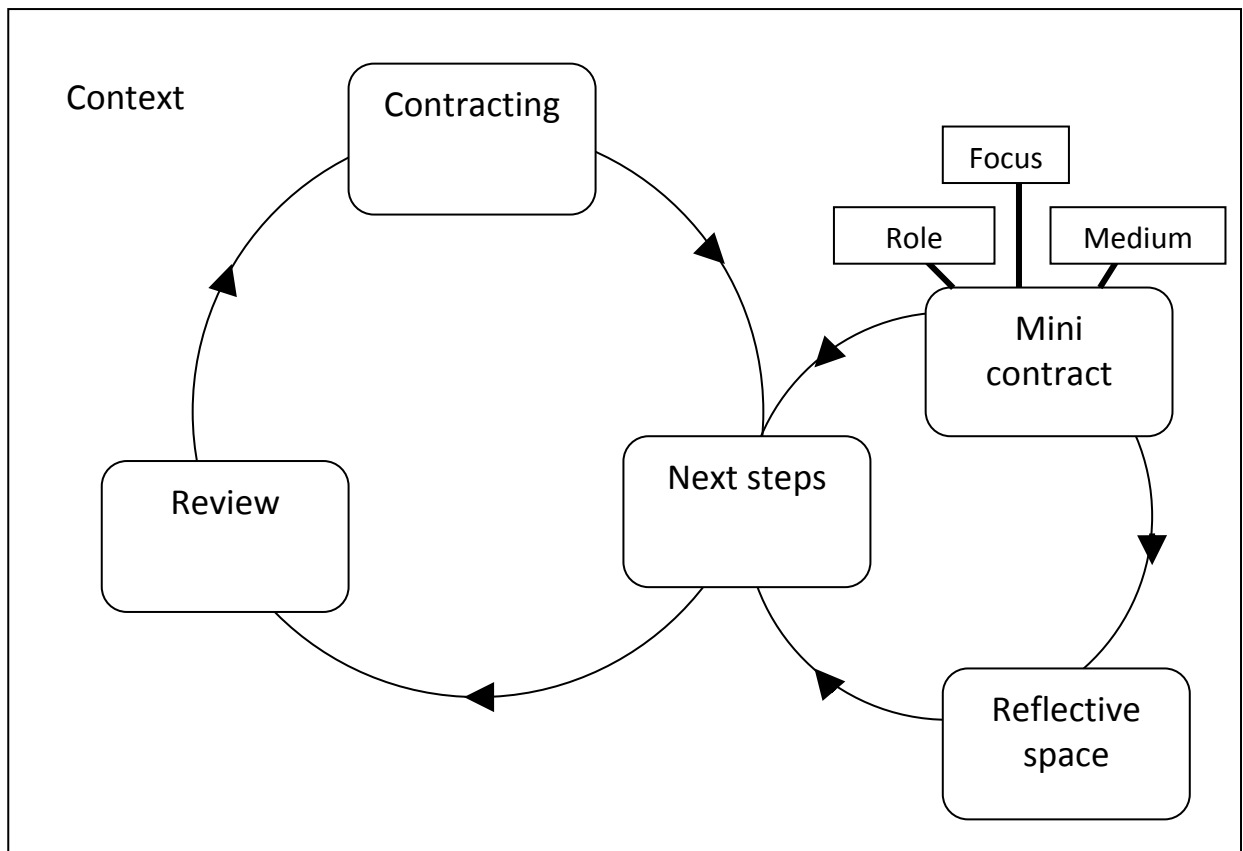
Discrepancies in expectations are often underpinned by the cultural and historical contexts of professionals. These discrepancies may be more pronounced in inter-professional contexts, where multiple agendas and professions impact upon the supervisory process. With this in mind, I propose a 'holistic model' for use in inter-professional supervision that constitutes an amalgamation of models presented in the literature and pays attention to the importance of context within the inter-professional supervision.

5.6 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision'

I constructed the 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision' (see Figure 7) from the 'General Supervision Framework' (GSF) (Scaife, 2009), the 'Cyclical Model' (Wosket and Page, 2001) and the 'Model for Effective Supervision' (Atkinson and Woods, 2007). The holistic model works within the multiple contexts impacting upon supervision, explains the process of supervision and is flexible enough to incorporate different contexts in which supervision takes place. The model is informed by the current research and aims to support educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision.

I have limited supervisory experience and so offer the model in draft form to be worked upon, challenged and refined by researchers and practitioners. The following paragraphs explain how the model was developed.

Figure 7



'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision'

Context was found to be important in this research, where participants reported different and conflicting expectations concerning the purpose and processes of supervision. The 'Model for Effective Supervision' (Atkinson and Woods, 2007), developed for supervision of trainee educational psychologists, depicts the multiple contexts that impact on supervision (see Figure 4, p. 44). The 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision' depicts context as one component outside the confines of the supervision but impacting on every part of the

supervision process. Contexts include those derived from all of the stakeholders involved in supervision and may include the supervisee, supervisor and supervisee's line-manager.

The 'Cyclical Model' (Wosket and Page, 2001) depicts the process of supervision; from contracting through to review. The contracting process was frequently mentioned by participants, due to a lack of clarity regarding functions, roles and processes of supervision. Participants viewed the contracting process as important but experiences of contracting were reported to be inadequate by some respondents. One reason for this discrepancy may be a lack of knowledge of the process of contracting. The 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision' represents the contracting process so that stakeholders are reminded to participate in contracting.

The 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision' incorporates a cyclical theme but separates the cycle of components within supervision and the cycle of events across supervision sessions in two separate and interlinked circles. The reason for this separation is to reflect that the more global aspects of 'contracting' and 'review' may be different to the more local aspects of 'mini contract' and 'next steps'. 'Contracting' in inter-professional contexts should involve the creation of a formal written agreement of the ethical, legal and practical aspects of supervision (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010). This is different to 'mini contract' which includes discussing possible agendas for an individual supervision session. 'Review' depicts the process of regular and formal evaluation of the supervisory relationship. This is different to 'next steps' which concerns how discussions within a supervision session should inform professional practice and future supervision sessions, providing an

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opportunity for frequent and informal discussions of whether supervision is meeting the desired function and aims.

The 'mini-contract' component involves discussing possible agenda items and respective aims for the session. The 'mini-contract' component also involves reflecting on the supervisory processes needed to support the aims for the session. The processes of supervision are depicted by 'foci', 'roles', 'mediums' taken from the GSF (Scaife, 2009). The aims and process of supervision are not intended to be pre-determined by the mini-contract; rather the mini-contract reflects the need to have an idea of what needs to be discussed, why and how the discussions should be processed in order to maximise reflection. These initial ideas should change dynamically as supervision unfolds.

The 'reflective space' component derives from the 'space' stage of the 'Cyclical Model' (Wosket and Page, 2001). However, the 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision' does not give precedence to psychodynamic principles. Instead, 'reflective space' denotes the opportunity to explore collaboratively and challenge safely through the use of a variety of psychological theory, depending on the preferences of stakeholders and the contexts impacting upon supervision. The word 'reflection' acknowledges the priority given to reflection within the literature and might include reflection on ethical ramifications of supervision discussions.

The 'next-steps' component is derived from elements of the 'bridge' step of the 'Cyclical Model' (Wosket and Page, 2001) in that links between supervision and professional practice

are made explicit. This involves summarising the discussions, relating them to professional practice, deciding on changes and discussing the implications of changes for the client, which may involve role play. The 'next-steps' element also involves a mini-review of the supervision session and how effective the discussions were for meeting the aims and functions agreed at the start of the supervision session.

The 'review' component constitutes a global review of the supervision process, including the models of supervision applied, the supervisory relationship and effectiveness of supervision for increasing reflection and improving ethical professional practice. The separation of this component reminds the stakeholders of the importance of evaluating the supervision process and ensuring that evaluative information informs changes to the written contract and processes supporting supervision.

The 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision' is offered for educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision and is formulated from models of supervision, taking into account also of the findings of the current research.

Criticisms of the model might include the fixed sequence, the complexity of the model and the lack of underpinning theory and information given for how the components may be operationalised. Never-the-less, it is hoped that the model will provide practical support to educational psychologists engaged in inter-professional supervision and may add a fresh dynamic to the field of supervision that is frequently researched and theorised by supervisors involved in training of supervision.

Chapter 6: CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings of this research study and critically analyses the methods and methodologies of the research process. Implications for future theoretical, professional practice and research opportunities are discussed.

6.2 Key findings

The key findings of this research are that inter-professional supervision is valuable and that general supervision skills are essential for effective supervision but not exclusive to applied psychology:

- Respondents valued inter-professional supervision due to the different perspective of the supervisor and increased understanding of professional roles, supporting research of CBP's conducted by Townend (2005).
- Participants viewed supervision skills as a necessary pre-requisite for effective supervision, supporting the separate portrayal of core competency skills in the supervision guidelines (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).
- Respondents thought that psychological skills (e.g. logical thinking, counselling and consultation) were valuable and could be learned by other professionals and applied effectively within supervision.

One of the key messages taken from this research is the importance of the contracting process. Participants reported a patchy experience of contracting, uncertainty with regard to the legal ramifications of supervision and a general lack of clarity with regard to respective functions, roles, responsibilities and boundaries of professional and line-management supervision. Contracting is even more important in inter-professional supervision, due to the different assumptions and experiences stemming from organisational contexts with different and sometimes conflicting cultural and historical narratives (O'Donoghue, 2004; Mullarkey, et al. 2001; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

Another key message taken from this research is the potential impact of conflicting assumptions, ideas and expectations from different professionals. Some participants valued facilitation and others preferred more directive approaches; some valued the broad professional knowledge base of educational psychologists and others thought professional knowledge could hinder supervision as supervisors may be tempted to 'jump in too early' with guidance and advice. Conflicting conceptualisations of the supervisory process have the potential to cause tensions in the supervisory relationship, consistently demonstrated as important to effective supervision (Ladany, 2004; Ladany et al., 1999; Nelson and Friedlander, 2001; Falender and Shafranske, 2010).

This research generally suggests that inter-professional supervision is potentially both more beneficial and more challenging; the opportunities for facilitation of reflection may be more likely with less professional knowledge however the different experiences and assumptions of stakeholders rooted in professional and individual histories create tensions, placing a

strain on the supervisory relationship. Further research comparing and contrasting inter-professional and within-professional supervision is needed to explore this suggested claim.

When carried out sensitively, contracting should increase understanding of the supervision process, alert stakeholders to important ethical and legal implications, and reconcile differences in expectations between the aims and functions of supervision, minimising future misunderstandings and tensions. When expectations formed during contracting match with experiences, consistency and authenticity is quickly established, increasing feelings of safety and enabling reflection and challenge to take place to support professional and personal development. Feelings of safety may also be encouraged through the use of a model of supervision, bringing an element of consistency and a language for contracting and evaluation (Wosket and Page, 2001).

6.3 Limitations of the methods and methodologies of the current research

This research sought to understand how participants viewed inter-professional supervision in order to contribute to the literature in this complex and under-researched area. Data analysis draws on thematic analysis techniques, adapted to fit the aims and contexts of this research.

As I was formulating the methods and methodologies of the current research, I began to consider whether it would be more appropriate to conduct contextualised research and use action research methods in order to improve inter-professional supervision within my local authority, constituting an extension of the original local research project. In this way, I would

have been able to examine in more depth the inter-professional supervision practices within one particular context (my local authority) and contribute to changes made to improve inter-professional supervision. Although this idea makes intuitive sense and fits with the chosen interpretive epistemology, my role as agreed with the manager of the pre-school support team, was to explore views. My role did not include facilitation of the change process.

One of the principle limitations of this research derives from the characteristics of participants recruited. Of the ten participants agreeing to take part in interviews, four were engaged in group supervision and six in individual supervision. The form of inter-professional supervision (group or individual) was not considered during recruitment or communicated before interviews took place and so the interview questions failed to encapsulate issues pertaining to group supervision (e.g. group dynamics). I considered that many important issues in the literature were relevant to both individual and group supervision and decided to collapse the data across the categories of individual and group supervision. However, this decision indicates a compromise and not an ideal situation. Although group supervision has similarities to individual supervision, the group context means that the process of supervision can be different to the process of individual supervision. In hindsight, I would have limited the sample to instances of either group or individual supervision so that the research could capture, more adequately, the contextual issues involved.

Another limitation is the failure to represent the views of supervisees engaged in group supervision. Supervisors engaged in group supervision reported some difficulties with group

dynamics. It would have been preferential to gain information on group dynamics from the perspective of supervisees to gain a deeper understanding of the difficulties experienced.

A third limitation derives from the process of data analysis. Thematic analysis was rigorously conducted and steps were taken to reduce the impact of biases. However, my identity as a trainee educational psychologist is likely to have influenced the views given, my interpretations of the original meanings of participants and the way in which those views were categorised and recorded in meta-themes. It is hoped that the methodological and transparent processes of data analysis reported here may increase confidence that, as far as possible, the views reported relayed the meanings that participants intended to convey.

Finally, there are limitations to the literature review chapter due to the broad range of literature relevant to the topic of inter-professional supervision, which combines the complex processes of multi-agency working and supervision. I read literature relevant to the topic of supervision first and then conducted a systematic search for research of central relevance to the current paper (see Appendix 1 and 2). The literature review chapter aimed to achieve a balance of depth and breadth; providing more detail on studies that were highly relevant to the current research, whilst at the same time providing an overview of the many issues discussed in the literature and represented in the research questions. It is hoped that the carefully executed search and selection processes have adequately captured relevant literature and that the literature review provides an appropriate level of detail and critical analysis for the various topics believed to be pertinent to the current research.

6.4 Implications for future theory, research and professional practice

In terms of theoretical models of inter-professional supervision, this research suggests that we should move on from models of supervision that attempt to isolate tasks and functions, and conceptualise supervision as a process enacted within multiple contexts which impact upon supervision in important ways. The 'Holistic Model for Inter-professional Supervision' is offered in an attempt to initiate further research on supervision models that are suitable for inter-professional contexts.

In terms of further research, this project has suggested that inter-professional supervision can increase tensions in the supervisory relationship due to different and conflicting expectations between professions. Therefore, further research could explore the elements of supervision (e.g. contracting, models of supervision) that allay tensions and increase feelings of safety, creating space for reflection. Methods should draw upon recent developments in tools for research (e.g. the 'Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire', Palomo et al. 2010). Considering the complexity of inter-professional supervision, research should be aimed at making localised improvements in supervision, taking ideas from action research, and reporting findings, bridging the gap between academic research and applied practice.

In terms of professional practice, the guidelines for supervision (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010) are reinforced and illustrated by the current research. Educational psychologists should be reminded of the legal ramifications of supervision and the importance of

contracting for exploring the organisational and cultural contexts and framing the supervision process with reflection, responsiveness and reciprocity from the start.

From my own position, I plan to conduct further research into inter-professional supervision within my employing educational psychology service. Initially, I will present the current research findings to my employing educational psychology service using the public domain briefing included in Appendix 12. I then plan to use multi-method techniques in order to investigate:

- How the degree of facilitation is affected by the model of supervision used.
- How participants view of the contracting process in relation to initial ideas and final outcomes.
- The nature of the supervisory relationship using the 'Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire' (Palomo et al., 2010).

The aim of the research will be to explore, in more depth, processes that lead to effective supervisory relationships, believed to be a key factor in effective supervision.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Initial scoping of the literature

I initially used Psychinfo to search for all articles referring to supervision in journals relevant to the profession of educational psychology. I began to identify key supervision texts (refer to Table 1). I then searched for further articles by, for example:

- Searching for articles referred to in key texts that were relevant to my research project (snowballing)
- Using Psychinfo and University of Birmingham catalogue to search for published texts written by the key writers in the field (refer to Table 2)
- Using Psychinfo and University of Birmingham catalogue to search for topics of relevance to the themes derived from the interview data (e.g. contracting, relationship)

The search process was continuous throughout the initial scoping of the literature, through to editing the finished thesis.

Table 1: Key texts in the field of supervision

Reference	Country	Target profession
Scaife (2009)	United Kingdom	Applied psychology, counselling, psychotherapy, psychiatry, nursing and social work
Hawkins and Shohet (2006)	United Kingdom	Social care and the helping professions
Carroll (1996)	United Kingdom	Trainee counsellors
Holloway (1995)	United States	Trainee counsellors
Page and Wosket (1994)	United Kingdom	Counsellors but also can be used for other professions

Table 2: Key writers in the field of supervision

Author	Country	Profession and research interests
Michael Carroll	United Kingdom	Runs a counselling programme at the Roehampton Institute.
Val Wosket	United Kingdom	Lecturer in counselling (University College of Ripon and York St John).
Steve Page	United Kingdom	Counsellor and psychotherapist (private practice). Involved in supervision training.
Elizabeth Holloway	United States	Counselling psychologist and academic writer.
Joyce Scaife	United Kingdom	Clinical Psychologist and former director of the doctoral programme at the University of Sheffield.
Peter Hawkins	United Kingdom	Consultant, writer and researcher in executive coaching, organisational learning and change.
Robin Shohet	United Kingdom	Trainer in team coaching and supervision. Interested in using Appreciative inquiry to promote organisational change.

Appendix 2: Systematic search of literature relating to ‘inter-professional supervision’

The terms ‘inter-professional’ and ‘supervision’ were entered separately and combined. Terms entered were ‘supervision’ which was truncated (e.g. supervis*) to include all derivations, and ‘inter-professional’ in all combinations given in the table below both with and without the hyphen.

Table 3: Search terms used

	Professional	Agency	Discipline
Multi	Multi-professional	Multi-agency	Multi-disciplinary
Inter	Inter-professional	Inter-agency	Inter-disciplinary

A search was conducted on the 15th April 2011 for all peer-reviewed journals published in the United Kingdom from 2000 onwards. 13 articles were found. Six articles were found to be centrally relevant to this review. Reasons for excluding articles from the search are given in Table 4:

Table 4: Exclusion criteria

The paper researches within-professional supervision and its impact on inter-professional learning.
The paper researches within-professional supervision from an inter-professional perspective.
The paper focuses on the training of supervisors.
The paper focuses on group supervision.

The six articles comprised two articles discussing inter-professional supervision (Mullarkey et al., 2001; O’Donoghue 2004), two research articles (Thomas and Reid, 1995; Townend, 2005) and two articles describing professional practice (Davies et al., 2004; Lilley et al., 2007). All papers will be presented in the literature review. One research paper will be examined in more detail to inform the methodologies, research design and methods of this research project.

Appendix 3: The development of supervision practices across professions

Supervision within social work, counselling psychology and educational psychology will be compared in terms of the current supervisory protocol and the historical and cultural development of supervision. Differences in power differentials and opportunities for engaging in inter-professional supervision will be noted.

Definitions of supervision across the professional literature

Profession	Definition of supervision	Reference
Social work	Supervision ensures line-manager attention to the quality of work, including issues of accountability and formal decision making.	Social Care Institute for Excellence (2007)
Counselling psychology	Supervision promotes best practice in the interests of the client	Division of Counselling Psychology (2007)
Educational psychology	A psychological process that enables a focus on personal and professional development and that offers a confidential and reflective space for the Educational psychologist to consider their work and the responses to it.	Dunsmuir and Leadbetter (2010)

Differences in the development of supervisory practice between the helping professions can be broadly characterised in the following way: within social work there has been a shift in control of supervisory processes from supervisee to supervisor (Bradley and Hojer, 2009); within counselling psychology in Britain a reliance on the theoretical orientation of the supervisor has given way to the introduction of practical models of supervision (Carroll, 1996); within educational psychology, there has been a shift in focus from supervision of trainees to the continued supervision of all practitioners (DECP, 2002; DECP, 2006; Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010).

Supervisory practice seems to have developed in different ways in the helping professions. A common theme arising from the professional literature is the power dynamics at play within the supervisory relationship. Within social work, current supervisory practice places the majority of power with the supervisor. In counselling psychology, the arrival of practical models of supervision and the emphasis in the current guidelines on the supervisee's right to determine their mode of practice suggests that the power dynamics may lie increasingly with the supervisee. In educational psychology, the power differentials seem to be changing with the introduction of continued

supervision. New guidance emphasises the importance of negotiating a contract and recent models of supervision allow the opportunity for joint reflection on issues in a 'spirit of enquiry' (Scaife, 1993).

Finally, the opportunity for inter-professional supervision within the different helping professions can be inferred. Within social work, increasing emphasis on managerial and administrative forms of supervision means that supervision has become primarily concerned with issues specific to the profession (Mullarkey et al. 2001). This leaves little impetus for inter-professional supervision. Within counselling psychology, it can be inferred from the 2007 guidelines that supervision can be sought from other professions but opportunities for inter-professional supervision are not explicitly mentioned. Within educational psychology, the new guidelines (2010) explicitly address the supervision of and by educational psychologists involving other professionals.

Appendix 4: Key interview questions

- 1. How frequent are your supervision sessions?**
When and where held?
How long for?
- 2. What do you call your supervision sessions?**
- 3. What is the purpose of your supervision? (Professional or managerial?)**
- 4. What are the boundaries of your supervision? (Which parts of your practice are supervised by the EP and what parts are supervised by someone else?)**
- 5. Are there any ethical issues or issues of legal responsibility that have arisen?**
- 6. How was supervision set up?**
Voluntary or mandatory?
Choice of supervisor?
Did you create a contract?
- 7. Do you use any supervision models to support your supervision sessions? (GSF, Seven eyed model)**
Do supervision sessions follow a set structure or format? (Personal chat, case review, chance for offloading or celebrating)
Do you complete any records of supervision sessions? (Personal records, supervision minutes)
- 8. Do you feel that your supervision sessions have helped you?**
How have they helped you? (In your professional practice, personally, in your career?)
OR
Why have they not helped you? How would you like supervision sessions to help you?
Developed thinking / learning
Helped me problem solve,
Challenged me
Given me support
A chance to offload
- 9. Empowered me**
Given me a chance to celebrate
Made me feel more protected
Enabled me to review performance
Opportunity to reflect on my own professional development
- 10. What skills or competencies do you feel are needed to be an effective supervisor?**

Trust	Support	Empathy	Empowering
Reduce anxiety		Able to keep focused	

- 11. Are there any distinctive skills that you feel Educational Psychologists can bring to the task of being a supervisor?**

Overt use of psychological theory, Holistic thinking, Specialist knowledge

- 12. People writing about IPS often debate whether it is more important for supervisors to have skills in professional practice or skills in supervision. Where do you stand in relation to the debate?**
- 13. How has the quality of your supervision been affected by your supervisor being from a different professional group? (What difference has it made to you and your practice that you are supervised by an EP compared to if you were supervised by a ...?)**

Encouraged better joined up working

Enabled me to think more objectively

Broadened my thinking (wider interventions, creative / imaginative thinking)

Given me a better understanding (clearer, broader, new perspective)

Given me a wider knowledge base (assessment tools, models)

Helped me to keep focused

- 14. Have you experienced any problems during your supervision sessions with an EP.**

Differences in vocab / knowledge – time taken to explain role.

Withholding information – anxious when sharing information / fear of revealing weaknesses

Differences in professional status

Lack of respect for professional background

Lack of empathy

Differences in training mean that my supervisor doesn't understand where i come from

Differences in values underpinning practice

Difference in ethical codes

I haven't been able to develop my own professional knowledge as much as if supervised from within profession

Have you overcome these problems? If so, how?

- 15. How could supervision with an Educational Psychologist be improved?**

- 16. What issues should be taken into account when planning to set up supervision meetings?**

Questions for supervisors

- 17. Have you received training for supervision?**

- 18. Do you feel your training is sufficient for you to be able to supervise effectively?**

- 19. Are you supervised?**

- 20. Does your own supervision include support and guidance for when you are supervising others? Do you feel your own support and guidance is sufficient?**

Appendix 7: Consent form

Supervision Interviews: Ethical Issues

Discuss

- Confidentiality
 - I will transcribe all data; hence only I will hear the conversations recorded today.
 - I will not discuss information shared with anyone, except if information given means that someone is at risk of harm; in which case it will be my duty to tell you that I will have to share this information with my line manager.
- Anonymity
 - Coded data.
 - If info given compromises anonymity it will not be reported
 - Demographic data deemed relevant retained – whether supervisor or supervisee
 - All paper files, digital recordings and computer files will be destroyed after the data has been analysed (max 6 months).
 - Coded interview data will be stored by me in a locked filing cabinet until 2 years after submission and then destroyed.
- Informed consent
 - Data reported in
 - Thesis, stored in the University of Birmingham library
 - Pupil Domain Briefing to EPS
 - Short accessible summary report sent to all participants
 - Interviews will help me personally and inform future IPS for EPs
 - You can withdraw from the research anonymously at any time during the interview without any negative connotations.

I _____ give my consent to be interviewed by Katie Callicott.

Signed _____ Date _____

Debrief

- Is there anything that we have discussed that you would like me to delete from my records / discuss in further detail?
- Are there any positive or negative feelings that have surfaced during the interview?
- I will leave my direct contact details so that you can call me confidentially to discuss the information given at a later date.

Appendix 8: Example interview transcript

Transcription number: 10

Location: 93

Question	Response	Time	Coding
Frequency?	Once a half term. One hour.		
Name?	Supervision.		
Purpose?	<p>I suppose it's to give the participants a safe place to think to consider their practice to bring any issues that they want to share erm, i think also for information and for guidance as well, in terms of signposting or next steps. I think the overwhelming erm point is the idea of having a safe place that is confidential and outside the management structures that they work within and also outside of the work relationships that they have with their colleagues. <i>(So are you talking about professional supervision?)</i> Definitely there's very clearly, there's no line management relationship what so ever and there's no information shared with line management structures. It's confidential. <i>(Any ways of feeding info to line management?)</i> It's up to them what they do. I won't, i don't discuss anything within supervision other than normal child protection issues erm, they're the line management. I don't keep notes either. They keep their notes. ...</p> <p>That persons role to seek clarification of role. What i can do is to help them formulate how they might go about that.</p> <p>The actual supervision sessions are very much owned by them (so your role is facilitative) yes.</p>		<p>P+pro P+Ed E+sfeglinescom / E+C / P+pro / IPS++ / SPM+SPM</p> <p>SS+F</p>
What are the boundaries of your supervision? (Which parts of your practice are supervised)	<p>That's a very good questions because erm, in terms of how they're managed, there are differences and concerns that those two groups might have in terms of their role as defined by their line manager. It's not always clear. Erm, they can in both cases haven't really articulated even clearly to me what their roles are, in terms of what their expected and where their roles are boundred. <i>(What do you mean by roles?)</i> Roles in terms of how they, what's expected of them. For example the SUPERVISEE'S are seeing up to 25 CLIENTS a week, and that's hugely demanding and there are issues that arise about the purposes of that, erm and how they are evaluated for example, how they evaluate their practice erm, but when those concerns arise, erm, my, i suppose, thought to them is to really discuss that with their line manager,</p>	4.04	

by the EP and what parts are supervised by someone else?)	<p>management system or line management person, erm to seek that clarity that they can certainly explore that in supervision, explore how to approach that. I've tried to keep it very much, very importantly that what we are doing is not part of any line management structures because i think that would complicate things, i don't think it would be a safe place for them to bring issues.</p> <p>(lines of responsibility – who is responsible if something goes wrong?) the responsibility lies with the person seeking supervision, other than obvious child protection, safeguarding issues. If something like that came up, it's well understood that i would have responsibility. (Any written contract or verbal agreement to say that or is that what you understand?) that is established at the beginning verbally. (Generally seems to be not necessarily be explicit which is what the DECP guidelines are) the first supervision meeting is about ground rules and about roles and responsibilities but it's not formalised, it's not written (is that right) i think on reflection it probably should be written, erm, or formalised, the supervision has grown out of a need really rather than; it's been offered, it's much more developed erm, and in both cases i would have said that we're still in evaluation stage, whether it's a useful use of time, in both cases, i think the SUPERVISEE'S we've only had sessions for the about the last 6-9 months. SUPERVISEE'S 2 probably similar, a year.</p>		<p>SPM+SPM / IPS++</p> <p>R+Sup</p> <p>C-InVD / CS+C</p>
Are there any ethical issues or issues of legal responsibility that have arisen?	Not that i can think of.		
How was supervision set up?	<p>With the SUPERVISEE'S i had done some sessions around staff support groups erm and supervision generally, and i presented various models of supervision to the whole staff, erm from staff support groups to individual supervision to informal supervision, you probably know that in the EPS there's an awful lot of informal supervision going on conversations that we have with one another, we check each other's practice and we ask, you know i'll ask someone to read a report i've written and we do this all the time. I did a series of presentations to the SUPERVISEE'S about this and the idea is not that i would end up doing supervision there but that they could develop their own way of doing it. I can't remember how i came to do the SUPERVISEE'S 2, it came out of that though. (Is your supervision voluntary or</p>	10.55	

	mandatory?). Voluntary.		
Do you use any supervision models to support your supervision sessions?	<p>Do you mean formal models or do you mean a discussion about how supervision will proceed. <i>(Both really, start with formal models)</i> No, what we did do, we had, ANOTHER EP came, he was a PEP. He came and presented a session to our senior leadership group within the EPS where he discussed various ways and wherefores of doing supervision and erm, that certainly informed the conversation i had with the people that i was providing supervision to, and the main thrust of that was a conversation about what type of supervision they wanted so i would explain that one model would be facilitation only, where my role would be to facilitate their thinking but not to provide any information or any direction at all to them, erm or whether that was part of the role and i would also be willing to offer advice and provide information and erm to suggest courses of action and in both cases that was what people opted for, so there is a facilitation role but i also would provide direct advice to them about what i think they should do or suggestions that they should do. For example there was a lot of conversation with the SUPERVISEES about how they evaluate their work, there was a lot of angst about that, how do we know they make any difference. So I suggested and donated a series of different types of measure, I didn't recommend any but said these are some possibilities they found that quite useful, I don't know what they did with it, but that was the session we did, but interestingly on that occasion there was some concern that those measures could be used to evaluate their practice by their line manager. They were just concerned that they could be corrupted in to that <i>(Any there any models that you would like to us or any barriers to using formal models of supervision? ... Do you use implicit knowledge of models and is that enough?)</i> I think it's enough for this context because EPs are well used to issues around supervision that its almost become part of how we think erm I also think that in terms of the groups I've supervised that they haven't been au fait on a conceptual level, use of a model might be a bit clunky, a bit odd. I think that the initial meeting talking about the focus and purposes erm you know an EP might not, they might understand why they wouldn't want to seek advice, why that wouldn't be useful to them. So they wouldn't ask their supervisor for advice, they would understand that that isn't what supervision is, whereas I think erm people who are not familiar with models of supervision would find it odd they wouldn't be given advice if they asked for it, because sometimes they will ask well what do you think i should do, now, that's quite a dangerous question in supervision because i might not be in a position to know what they should do, so i tend to reframe a question like that into options and help them explore what their options are but i think i do that naturally as part of conversation, i just wouldn't jump in and give advice, and i think that is something where i've acquired a way of thinking about supervision</p>	12.12	<p>C+Roles / M+RS / P+F / SupS+T</p> <p>SUP+B+PS / D+EP+Kn</p> <p>M++ep / D+EP+PrExp M+Msc</p> <p>C+Roles / PS+S+D</p> <p>R+EP?</p>

	<p>in peer supervision with an EP so i think the MODEL example; there's no way this person would know about that and it happens as an EP in peer supervision sometimes but it's pretty unusual to have something as obvious as that, we tend to talk the same language, whereas when you're supervising people who are not EPs they've got different experience, different knowledge set. (IS that an advantage or disadvantage?) i think it could be both, i think it depends going back to what your aims are; your aims of supervision. I think EPs spend an awful lot of their time interacting with other people and bringing some sort of understanding to interactions, such as counselling skills; i run counselling skills courses so i'm very familiar with all of that, and certainly in my work i use that all of the time, that is something that somebody else could have, erm a lot of EPs would have that, but a lot of non EPs wouldn't have that, so that's an example of where you know you bring something, but it's certainly not, it's not hierarchical, not deliberate hierarchical relationship there, but i think there sort of is one there, in a way in that you've got knowledge that other people haven't got, but you see, they're seeking supervision from me, i'm not seeking it from them, so there's a relationship that's a bit different there, erm, i think there are issues around what people's roles and how each see each other. I do also think that erm, the fact that they were getting supervision made them feel, i don't know what the word is, valued? Their work valued, i think, that they were doing important work and that they needed to, erm, they needed to, you know serious work, they were working with complex children, they were working with or coming into contact with families anyway. They were in a very erm, demanding context and i think that they felt that they needed that supervision and i think that the fact that they were being offered it helped them feel they were being valued, their work was valued, that's just my impression.</p>		<p>PS+Power / D+EP+CouS</p> <p>SUP+B+Va</p>
What skills or competencies do you feel are needed to be an effective supervisor?	<p>I don't think so much about skills, i think you have to develop trust and rapport and i think that's part of what you've already said and i also think, yeh, it needs to feel right and i think that people need to feel that they're in control of it; it's not being done to them. You see EPs have to seek supervision, i mean its part of what we have to, peer supervision here we are expected to do that and we keep a record of it. These people are not, but nobody asked them to seek supervision, they sought it themselves and i think that's, that's, that's different.</p>	25.47	<p>SS+Tr / SS+R SS+P</p>
Are there any distinctive skills that you feel Educational	<p>Yes absolutely, well i would then go back to counselling skills, not counselling, counselling skills so it's the rapport ... all of that. I think having knowledge of models of supervision. I think knowing erm what some of the issues are around supervision, the purposes, the ethical issues around it, erm, as far as psychological literature is concerned, the knowledge base, i think that can be relevant or not. It depends on the model of supervision you're bringing. I think in</p>	16.32	<p>D+EP+CouS D+EP+Kn</p>

Psychologists can bring to the task of being a supervisor?	<p>my case it comes up, like for example, MODEL. I was in the position to donate that it's probably 20 things I didn't know about that i could have donated i just happened to know about MODEL so i just threw it in and the person can pick it up and run with it or leave it there, erm, it worked in that relationship; it's that sort of supervision relationship. I think I don't boundary that away but i could see a case where you would or you would want to, i think it's getting some steerage off the person that you are supervising, so i would double check with them; is this the sort of thing, is this working for you? Is this ok? So we would have those conversations usually at the beginning of the session (<i>which is a form of evaluation of the supervision</i>) yes, yes, yes. I think there is a distinction between skills and between knowledge and understanding. I think that the skill side of it is around counselling skills, so it's about summarising, helping to reflect, establishing rapport and how to do that and all of those things, erm, i think you need those in order to facilitate. But in terms of knowledge and understanding, having an understanding of why being an advice giver is not only possibly not helpful it's probably inappropriate, however there are occasions when giving advice is appropriate, i think it's a judgement, so the advice might be here are some options, let's talk about the issues of them, maybe you could maybe take them, but i've actually come up with the options, and there might be options that i haven't thought of; but it would be very unusual, the way i see it, to be very directive. I haven't got a role of being directive. Sometimes you get asked a straight question and you don't give a straight answer, you come over as inauthentic or quite strange to people that you won't give an opinion so you reframe really i think that's what you tend to do. (<i>different ways of questioning and reframing?</i>) yes and that is a skill.</p>		ES+feedback / D+EP+Kn D+EP+CouS D+EP+Kn / D+EP+Qu PS+S+D
People writing about IPS often debate whether it is more important for supervisors to have skills in professional practice or	<p>Skills in supervision, i don't, i think. Well in my case the people that i'm supervising are not in my profession, so supervision skills are what can be offered, but i think it's helped being a psychologist in terms of understanding supervision, but probably because we do a lot of it and we understand that.</p>		SVP+S

skills in supervision. Where do you stand in relation to the debate?			
How has the quality of your supervision been affected by your supervisor being from a different professional group?	<p>I don't know i think you'd have to ask them that. But i suppose my sense would be there probably are status and hierarchy issues there which probably aren't helpful in the sense that they're aware of what my job title is and there's a big difference in roles and responsibilities. There is a hierarchy there. Both those groups are not particularly well remunerated for what they're doing, erm, you know, they are managed by layers above, erm, I, with, at the SUPERVISEE, my initial idea was for them at the start as a whole to develop group supervision amongst themselves, i did sessions on how to do that and also staff support group, which is slightly different. Erm, that, none of those options were taken up by any of the staff, it was only the SUPERVISEE'S 2 that wanted supervision, erm, and they wanted it external, they didn't, they could have done it themselves really, erm, interestingly, the detail, one of them had a lot of experience of supervision themselves in another profession, erm, i can't remember what her role was, it was some sort of clinical role, it might have been social work role, but she wasn't a social worker, she was in a profession as such but in her work context, they were expected to seek supervision, so she was well use to it and knew how to use it, whereas the others didn't. I imagine if they had run group supervision, that might have been a problem. So sometimes somebody from the outside coming in can maybe help with that, but i think it's a question for them really. <i>(You said that status differences were not helpful; how does that look in terms of supervision – withholding information?)</i> might not be helpful. I expect it might be this idea of expertness; that if you are seen as an expert it can deskill the thinking of who you are with, so supervision then becomes seeking of answers and i think the way i would see supervision personally is more facilitation and helping people's thinking, erm, but that's asking people to do a lot, if they're not used to that, you know, i don't think people naturally do that.</p>	29.45	<p>PS+Power</p> <p>PS+Power</p>

What issues should be taken into account when planning to set up supervision meetings?	I think with hindsight, i think probably to formalise i think erm mine has sort of evolved and i think i have always felt a bit uneasy about that, that maybe we should be more formal, perhaps there should be some sort of more clearly expressed agreement about who is agreeing to what, erm, i think that's what i would do next time.	38.16	CS+C / C++C
Have you received training for supervision?	Well obviously on the training course there was loads about erm, we've had, I've actually just delivered training to the service about supervision, I've helped to develop the policy, the EPS we've had OTHER EP here doing a session with us.	39.07	SupS+T
Do you feel your training is sufficient for you to be able to supervise effectively?	I think where i feel probably, i think on the sort of big substantive question i get that, i think something about setting up, the how to do it, the, the idea of this formalising the whole thing into, i think with EPs we naturally do it, we've had all the training we just flop into it. People that are not from this profession, i think i had an expectation they would do the same and they pretty much have, but it's quite clear that they don't really understand supervision in the way we would, so i think maybe being, as i said, more explicit about the roles, purposes, functions, all of that and probably in more written forms, i think there would be a value of having a written statement, i think getting people to sign things, i'm very uneasy about that, i wouldn't go as far as that but i think being more explicit. I think one of the problems is when you get to know something quite well, you just, you don't realise what you know, you think about it but i think people that aren't used to it, they hear the word supervision and you assume they think the same as you do. It's not a helpful word actually, because it has a line management connotation, i certainly, at the SUPERVISEES i had to go to great lengths to say, 'this isn't about checking up on you and all of that, it's about a place for you to use' i think changing the word.	39.41	D+EP+PrExp PS+PreProfExp CS+C PS+PreProfExp CS-Sup
Are you supervised?	Yes.	41.17	

Does your own supervision include support and guidance for when you are supervising others? Do you feel your own support and guidance is sufficient?	It hasn't come up. <i>(Any other way of getting support for the supervision that you deliver?)</i> No, well I've got a peer supervisor. I could take it there.		
Anything else to add?	I've run or introduced process consultation which i would call staff support groups, which i don't think is professional supervision in quite the same way but i have put groups together in schools and they're surprisingly, i don't know, they only last as long as i'm interested, and i'm actually quite puzzled by that because i actually do think they're a good thing. You need someone to come in and do it. I think they don't continue because they people are not used to the concept, i think culturally or whatever. It's not in the culture, they just don't do it. You talk to clinical colleagues, social workers – they get it. I think really people should have to seek it, like EPs, i think that would change things. I worked in special schools for quite a long time and i think that special school staff definitely should have supervision, because, particularly with behaviour, i worked in an EBD school, and it was a very demanding work context that and i think people were operating at high chronic stress levels and i think would be protected element for them and the children and i always find it strange that groups like that are not required to seek supervision. We're looking at trading part of the service which has never been done before and supervision is one of the things that we will trade out and yet i'm pretty sure that unless it's compulsory it's not going to be taken up and i find that odd. The people that were probably the least paid and weren't teachers were the people that sought supervision and i think that's because they are offsite on their own doing quite difficult, complex work, quite isolated in their practice and i think they knew they were. No time allocation for it; i just do it		M-SSG PS+PreProfExp

Appendix 9: Example 'Theme Table'

THEME: Distinctive competencies of Educational Psychologists

Subtheme	Code description	Code	Extract	Transcript location
Perspective				
	Different perspective	D+EP+Pers	I like being supervised by an EP; you get a different perspective on things.	1
	Different perspective	D+EP+Pers	If you need support in interventions and stuff like that. Then they, they're (EPs) usually really good at guiding you or making you see from a different perspectives because sometimes you get quite bogged down.	3
	Different perspective	D+EP+Pers	Well certainly in professional practice because, I suppose, I mean, I was bringing health, health care knowledge, skills and training to the process, the EP was obviously bringing education, so you had a nice that was a nice way of broadening perspectives.	4
	Different perspective	D+EP+Pers	If you ask them what the added input is, for some of them, they say, "you ask good questions". Or "you offer me a different perspective", "you look at it from a different point of view", and I suppose that's the psychology that I'm trying to bring in that I'm bringing different theoretical paradigms; you could look at this from a behaviourist point of view, you could look at this from a psychotherapeutic point of view. Or sometimes just simply saying, "I wonder what the child's thinking"; different voices as well as different paradigms.	8
	Different	D+EP+Pers	I've found working with EP SUPERVISOR was more beneficial than when I was working with	3

	perspective		MANAGER. She's more logical and she does see it from a wider perspective	
	Different perspective	D+EP+Pers	There would obviously be things I don't know that an EP would know about in more detail around children's educational experience, that I would, know sort of their learning and how things are organised, because EPs they have a 0 to 19 brief, I suppose, so for us, working in the 0 – 5; it's a good context to be able to discuss it in, because things that you are discussing in that brief period of the child's life; you also get what the implications of that might be sort of further on in sort of their educational career, particularly when it gets to sort of like transitions and decisions been made you know families deciding whether what sort of provision they want for their child that sort of thing. 0-5 within the 0-19 you know. (<i>So it's knowledge of child development?</i>) and how schools work, as a health person, I mean, I don't, you know, I don't have in depth knowledge of how schools work. I always think you learn a bit by osmosis; who you work with influences a lot about, you know, sort of, what you become from, sort of, given, you know, sort of, given areas of work and I think someone who has got a particular set of knowledge and skills; there's a lot that you actually absorb without necessarily knowing what you are absorbing.	4
	Holistic perspective	D+EP+HPers	You've got the benefit really of our EP training of always looking at stuff holistically, so you never kind of you know, look down that narrow field, you're always stepping back and looking at all the variables really and the relationship between the two.	2
	Holistic perspective	D+EP+HPers	I would just reiterate the, kind of, holistic, you know, assessment or perspective.	2
Values				
	Value supervision	D+EP+Vsusp	It's not so much a skill; it's more a value really, I think, the value, understanding the value of supervision so that we think it's a worthwhile thing to be engaged in, because I think if you don't think it's a worthwhile thing to be engaged in then you're not going to convey to the group that it's something that they should be doing.	9

Skills				
	Thinking skills	D+EP+ThS	I think it probably is her (EP) thinking skills.	1
	Reflection	D+EP+R	<i>(Reflective practice – what does that mean?)</i> I think that you need to be able to reflect on what is happening in the supervision sessions <i>(as it's happening?)</i> yes, as it's happening, and also, erm, afterwards <i>(so you know how to improve as a supervisor)</i> yes <i>(and as it's happening so that you can adjust to what the supervisee may need)</i> erm I was trained by UNIVERSITY TUTOR in Self Organised Learning and I think that's, I use that quite a bit, I don't actually use it formally, but I think "What's the purpose of today?", 'What do I want to achieve out of today?' and then reflecting on it later 'What happened?' and erm 'What might be improved for next time?' so I think that's also helpful.	7
	Logical questioning	D+EP+LQu	I've found working with EP SUPERVISOR was more beneficial than when I was working with MANAGER. She's more logical and she does see it from a wider perspective ... I usually see the end result of where I want to go to, but EP SUPERVISOR will make me sit and work through; you can't just get to there, it's all the little steps in between.	3
	Reflection	D+EP+R	Being able to do the meta analysis (reflecting on the dynamics of the interaction as the conversations are taking place) as the activity (supervision) is taking place.	7
	Logical questioning	D+EP+LQu	Being an EP you perhaps do question some more issues than perhaps somebody would if they were immersed in what was going on in terms of their own work as well "oh yes, I've got one like that" sort of.	5
	Logical questioning	D+EP+LQu	Yeh the fact that they erm, I think for me the fact that they have got the professional qualification and knowledge. <i>(Does it matter what qualification? Education or psychology)</i> no I think the psychology bit definitely. <i>(What does psychology add?)</i> I think it's the way that the way that your mind works isn't it? It's that that thought process and that, sort of like, how you've reached those decisions. It's having that ability to be able to unpick that, you know. <i>(Questioning?)</i> I suppose it's like, you know like, with solution focused questions, type things, there's questions that, that you might	6

			use to draw out; it's having those skills isn't it to be able to (<i>like solution focused?</i>) yes it's similar to that I think; I don't think you quite have to do sort of all of that, but it is along those lines isn't it.	
	Logical questioning	D+EP+LQu	But if you ask them what the added input is for some of them, they say, "you ask good questions" or "you offer me a different perspective", "you look at it from a different point of view", and I suppose that's the psychology that I'm trying to bring in that I'm bringing different theoretical paradigms; you could look at this from a behaviourist point of view, you could look at this from a psychotherapeutic point of view. Or sometimes just simply saying "I wonder what the child thinking", different voices as well as different paradigms. "I wonder what they would say now if they were standing here now listening to you." I wonder sometimes, if they're talking about managerial concerns, in terms of how to work with other managers or other staff, because that will come up on occasion, "I wonder how that person would feel if they heard me saying that about you, about them. Would you rather you told them that you had that concern?"	8
	Logical questioning	D+EP+LQu	But in terms of knowledge and understanding, having an understanding of why being an advice giver is not only possibly not helpful it's probably inappropriate, however there are occasions when giving advice is appropriate; I think it's a judgement, so the advice might be "here are some options, let's talk about the issues of them, maybe you could maybe take them", but I've actually come up with the options, and there might be options that I haven't thought of; but it would be very unusual, the way I see it, to be very directive. I haven't got a role of being directive. Sometimes you get asked a straight question and you don't give a straight answer, you come over as inauthentic or quite strange to people that you won't give an opinion so you reframe really I think that's what you tend to do. (<i>Different ways of questioning and reframing?</i>) Yes and that is a skill.	10
	Comfortable constructive criticism	D+EP+CCC	I'm just trying to think whether that's down to being an EP because she can, it's sort of the ability, I'm rattling through my cases and it's the ability to draw out the important points from that information, and it's the ability to be sort of look critically but look constructively at what I'm saying and analyse it but in a comfortable way ... I think she possibly has the ability - which might be down to the psychologist - to make you think that's what I've done but actually she has been quite probing, she	1

			does it in a way that doesn't make it seem like that's what she's doing and she probably isn't doing it in a calculated way but she's doing it in the role she's in, she's doing it in a way that's person friendly.	
	Comfortable constructive criticism	D+EP+CCC	Plus, again, down to personal skills she's not critical. Yet if there's criticism it's always done in a constructive way, for you to learn from and move forward. (<i>Any other differences?</i>) It's just more relaxed with EP SUPERVISOR. It's going back to, she got the job done but in a more relaxed way, and I didn't feel that I was being, picked on is not the right word, but critical because you make more mistakes when you're anxious.	3
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	Well definitely about being a good listener, empathetic, genuinely interested in moving you know.	7
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	it's not necessarily that they (non-EPs) couldn't (supervise) but It's whether other people could do it as effectively (as EPs) if they haven't had the training that the psychology training gives you, if you like, because I mean so much (of supervision skills) is about effective communication; different models of sort of working with people.	4
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	... kind of be at ease when talking about stuff that's not so positive and also, you know, celebrating things.	2
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	... and the people skills; I like to think that most Ed Psychs have good people skills, I hope; not everybody does (laughs)	9
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	I suppose one of the things I think EPs are generally very strong on is modelling good ways of consulting, good ways of interviewing, you know, good ways of talking with people, if you like, and if that's being applied to you then quite often you learn that, you then, you then may use with other people but not realising necessarily, sort of, what you are doing. You won't necessary name it; put it within a particular model because you don't necessarily know the name of it but (<i>like solution focused?</i>) I was going to say solution focused. That all contributes to, doesn't it, to professional	4

			development.	
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	So now they did say quite a bit about it was every interesting to watch me being the consultant and reflect on what the consultee was saying or asking open ended questions and they felt they gained from that when they go out and talk to parents.	7
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	I think for psychologists it's a really good thing because it does tap into those skills; those sort of, almost consultation skills, but it's a mix of the consultation and also the wider group awareness, do you know what I mean? So part of it is sort of doing individual consultation because a lot of the time people do address things to you as the person who isn't in the group if you like, but then it's still consulting with them but broadening it out to bring in the rest of the group so that that value, because that's the experience, that's where, these are the people who are out there doing it every day of their lives, using them as much as possible really.	9
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	I am looking for a service that supports professionals to feel more capable in the work they're doing, and that for me is a really valuable thing that a psychologist can do. (<i>Are you talking about a supportive role?</i>) I'm not saying that I'm going to make them do more cases or achieve more goals, or targets, but to make them feel more in control of their work, more capable of responding.	9
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	I'm a trained counsellor, so erm I was trained a long time ago, and erm before I was an EP, so I worked as a counsellor in a school.	7
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	I suppose one of the things I think EPs are generally very strong on is modelling good ways of consulting, good ways of interviewing, you know, good ways of talking with people, if you like, and if that's being applied to you then quite often you learn that, you then, you then may use with other people but not realising necessarily, sort of, what you are doing. You won't necessary name it; put it within a particular model because you don't necessarily know the name of it but (<i>like solution focused?</i>) I was going to say solution focused. That all contributes to, doesn't it, to professional development.	4

	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	Yes (distinctive skills of EP) absolutely, well I would then go back to counselling skills, not counselling, counselling skills so it's the rapport ... all of that. ... I think EPs spend an awful lot of their time interacting with other people and bringing some sort of understanding to interactions, such as counselling skills; I run counselling skills courses so I'm very familiar with all of that, and certainly in my work I use that all of the time, that is something that somebody else could have, erm a lot of EPs would have that, but a lot of non EPs wouldn't have that, so that's an example of where you know you bring something, but it's certainly not, it's not hierarchical, not deliberate hierarchical relationship there, but I think they're sort of is one there, in a way in that you've got knowledge that other people haven't got, but you see, they're seeking supervision from me, I'm not seeking it from them, so there's a relationship that's a bit different there, erm, I think there are issues around what people's roles and how each see each other.	10
	Working with people	D+EP+Peo P	I think there is a distinction between skills and between knowledge and understanding. I think that the skill side of it is around counselling skills; so it's about summarising, helping to reflect, establishing rapport and how to do that and all of those things, erm, I think you need those in order to facilitate.	10
Experience				
	Experience of procedures	D+EP+ExpP	You develop your knowledge of processes; for instance there's the code of practice and the statutory stuff, so you, kind of, can support, you know, on that. On the local arrangements and things like that, erm, so there's all that kind of procedural stuff.	2
	Experience of supervision	D+EP+ExpS	That's something our profession (EP profession) is very good at, isn't it; supervision is embedded in our practice and so it, so therefore, people doing it bring a kind of naturalness and ease to the supervision session, because we're so use to having it ourselves.	2
	Experience of supervision	D+EP+ExpS	The fact that they (EPs) do experience supervision hopefully on a regular basis so they're able to think about both and be empathetic to both roles, and also as time goes on they may want to try different models, you know different ways of working with the group.	7

	Experience of supervision	D+EP+ExpS	EPs are well used to issues around supervision that its almost become part of how we think ... so I tend to reframe a question like that into options and help them explore what their options are but I think I do that naturally as part of conversation, I just wouldn't jump in and give advice, and I think that is something where I've acquired a way of thinking about supervision through doing it for a long time.	10
	Experience of supervision	D+EP+ExpS	I think where I feel probably, I think on the sort of big substantive question I get that, I think something about setting up, the how to do it, the, the idea of this formalising the whole thing into, I think with EPs we naturally do it, we've had all the training we just flop into it.	10
	Experience of complex families	D+EP+ExpFam	Yeh, the education part. Yeh. With the EP they're changing that. It's the knowledge and the practice; the fact that they have worked, erm, you know, the supervisor I have obviously has early years experience as well, so you know, understands the families.	6
	Experience of complex families	D+EP+ExpFam	... also their knowledge and experience of children and families, in this case, because you know, erm these are the people, that's what these people are going out to do and the fact that, you know, EPs have experience of children, working with children and families obviously helps.	7
	Experience of education	D+EP+ExpE	I think they've got a wide range of experience, haven't they? From teaching to specialising in special educational needs.	3
	Experience of education	D+EP+ExpE	It's also because they (EPs) come from a teaching background; they have that wealth of knowledge to draw from.	3
	Experience of different agencies	D+EP+ExpMAW	I think also EPs of course have got experience across; they come across usually most of the external agencies and professions and so it's just their broader experience across the authority.	7
Knowledge				

	Updated professional knowledge	D+EP+UPr Kn	Well I think it's the up to date knowing as well, isn't it really. It's that being aware and again that's probably an education thing, isn't it, you know; Educational Psychology, you, you do keep on top of what's happening because that's expected and that's part - you couldn't do your role without really, erm - so I guess it isn't just the empathy.	6
	Updated professional knowledge	D+EP+UPr Kn	So they're keen, they're on, they're always trying to update themselves and keep themselves professionally alert I suppose.	7
	General knowledge of models, frameworks, theories	D+EP+Mod G	Or you offer me a different perspective you look at it from a different point of view, and I suppose that's the psychology that I'm trying to bring in that I'm bringing different theoretical paradigms; you could look at this from a behaviourist point of view, you could look at this from a psychotherapeutic point of view... (<i>Do you label the paradigm that you are working within?</i>) Yes I would say if you took that from a behaviourist perspective or if you took that from a cognitive behavioural perspective. I think that's as I've grown more confident and I worked with others in that way.	8
	Specific knowledge of theories	D+EP+Mod S	(<i>What are the benefits of that; offloading, support?</i>) It was more than that, much more specific than that; I actually brought a psychological model to her situation erm it was MODEL, and about interactions and so what I was bringing was a theoretical framework to think about relationships with other people. (<i>Did you share that with her?</i>) Oh absolutely, oh yes, yes, yes, we talked about MODEL, we talked about how; I donated that psychology, which from a distance, what she then did is apply that to her situation and then used that in her situation and when she came back, she reported on how effective that was; erm, they were getting into quite, you know battles, it was about her preserving face of the other person but also understanding her face, so that's an interesting example because that was me actually bringing something, understanding, knowledge, that I had, that she didn't have, donating it to her and saying, you know, how does that fit, she then got that and then applied that herself but was using supervision to discuss the issues of that.	10

	Knowledge of research methods	D+EP+Res	For example there was a lot of conversation with the SUPERVISEES about how they evaluate their work, there was a lot of angst about that; how do we know they make any difference. So I suggested and donated a series of different types of measure, I didn't recommend any but said these are some possibilities they found that quite useful, I don't know what they did with it, but that was the session we did ... I think the concept of evaluation was, I mean, psychologists know about that, they know about the issues of evaluation, they know about, you know, the qualitative, quantitative, questionnaires, the value of that, how you would evaluate etc, that was certainly something that came up with the SUPERVISEES about you know, how, well the issues about evaluation, how would you do that, and I think that was again quite, knowledge that I had and they didn't have.	10
	Specific knowledge of theories	D+EP+Mod S	I felt that in both cases that I had a degree of expert knowledge that they didn't have and I felt that that was one thing that was different from being in peer supervision with an EP so I think the MODEL example; there's no way this person would know about that and it happens as an EP in peer supervision sometimes but it's pretty unusual to have something as obvious as that, we tend to talk the same language, whereas when you're supervising people who are not EPs they've got different experience, different knowledge set.	10
	General knowledge of models, frameworks, theories	D+EP+Mod G	But in terms of knowledge and understanding, having an understanding of why being an advice giver is not only possibly not helpful it's probably inappropriate, however there are occasions when giving advice is appropriate, I think it's a judgement, so the advice might be here are some options, let's talk about the issues of them, maybe you could maybe take them, but I've actually come up with the options, and there might be options that I haven't thought of, but it would be very unusual, the way I see it, to be very directive. I haven't got a role of being directive. Sometimes you get asked a straight question and you don't give a straight answer, you come over as inauthentic or quite strange to people that you won't give an opinion so you reframe really I think that's what you tend to do. <i>(Different ways of questioning and reframing?)</i> Yes and that is a skill.	10
	General knowledge of	D+EP+Mod	Partly 'containing' - that's psycho-dynamic for you - containing a lot of the stress they have to deal with, these kinds of front line jobs is huge. I do believe psychologically that (supervision) is providing	9

	models, frameworks, theories	G	that service. I think we can provide that service in a way with that awareness of the importance of it. And maybe if we could train managers to do that for their teams, then maybe that would be another option; maybe that could work as well. (<i>Containment is interesting</i>) I think that's a lot of it, certainly for the support group. It is for me, not necessarily individually holding it, but even the power of the group holding it; it's huge, because it's diffused, you know, and nobody feels particularly put upon or comes out feeling drained that I've ever identified or recognised.	
	General knowledge of models, frameworks, theories	D+EP+Mod G	Well definitely their previous training and experience. The fact... (<i>Training in supervision or training full stop?</i>) I would say their training in working with other people ... understanding the core conditions for learning ...	7
Skills aren't distinctive				
	Other people could be as effective	D+EP-D	I think there are probably a number of our team who, they haven't got the same background but they've done some training or have those skills, which means that they can also do that (give a different dimension to supervision)... think in terms of the background, I'm not sure, well actually, I mean I understand they come from a psychology background but I would say, but there's a number of people in the team who also have those skills. It might make her ability to, let's just think about this, because I think a lot of people in the team have the ability to draw on that information and analyse what's being said, whether that's down to ...	1
	Other people could be as effective	D+EP-D	I think that psychology makes a contribution whether it's educational psychology, or another aspect. Because working with a psychotherapist she offers different things. (<i>You talked early of paradigms</i>) I think EPs are attuned to that and understand that, whether they're the only people that understand that I remain unsure. I personally access erm its not supervision but it feels like supervision from someone who is not an EP but who is my manager and I think she is good at offering different voices,	8

			whether she does that intuitively. There are some psychologists who I think aren't good at hearing different voice.	
	Other people could be as effective	D+EP-D	... being an EP you perhaps do question some more issues than perhaps somebody would if they were immersed in what was going on in terms of their own work as well "oh yes, I've got one like that" sort of erm (<i>give a broader perspective?</i>) yeh yeh. But I don't think there's any reason why an PEER person can't do any of that.	5
	IPS is only advantage	D+EP-DIPS	It's somebody outside and EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SUPERVISOR is part of the team, the EP's part of the team but they're not doing the job; in that sense it's not relevant that they're Educational Psychologists but they are not in our team doing the job that we are; they're outside that doing a job, a different professional background but they still work with the same families so I would think a different pair of eyes on things.	1
	Supervision with EP or another person indistinguishable	D+EP+d?	broadened my thinking, wider interventions, creative and imaginative thinking because I think that sometimes through discussion you then start I then start "oh I could so that" start another thought process (<i>do you think it's the EP that enables that or general supervision</i>) I think that's generally having supervision. I do think it's generally having supervision but then the Educational Psychologist might have tools that they use that we don't know about type of ... ways of asking things that, you know, promote that really (<i>So you feel the benefits of supervision are generally dues to supervision but might be a bit added by the psychology?</i>). Yeh.	6
	Supervision with EP or another person indistinguishable	D+EP+d?	I don't think it (supervision) hasn't helped any different to how I had it (supervision) before really.	3

	Supervision with EP or another person indistinguishable	D+EP+d?	I suppose I can't distinguish (between IPS and WPS in terms of quality of supervision) really.	6
Skills are not identified by EP				
	Skills are not identified by EP	D+EP-EP	<i>(Did you explain that what it is about the EP role that puts you in this role?)</i> Well I didn't really, I'm quite cautious about the EP being like precious about their skills, I just said really that you know we've been commissioned last year and you may find this model useful.	7
	Skills are not identified by EP	D+EP-EP	I think it's (distinctive skills of EPs) very hard to identify because a lot of this stuff is very erm it's not talked about overtly very much, certainly not among the group, we go along and say we're going to be using this today and you're going to be using this and that.	9
Other Barriers				
	Formal models	D+EP/d?	I think that to an extent being an EP outside of service adds something but I'm not sure how great an advantage it is ... I don't think being an EP is necessarily earning a great addition because of the style of supervision because it is so process based I think that if it was more content based rather than case based it's probably more erm like social services type of supervision - let's talk about what you are doing right let's move on to the next one –	5

Appendix 10: Example interim summary

Theme

Distinctive Skills of an EP

How is this theme relevant to research aims and questions

I am exploring whether EPs make a distinctive contribution to the supervisory role, and if they do, what are the skills that EPs use that are distinctive? Previous IPS literature has found that psychologists are often the supervisor but infrequently the supervisee. This research seeks to find out why psychologists are often chosen as supervisor and whether or not the skills of an EP are distinctive enough and valuable enough to warrant the assumption that psychologists make good supervisors.

How I made decisions as to whether data should be included in this theme

Data was assimilated into this theme when respondents referred explicitly to skills of EPs. This is different to referring to the advantages of being supervised by a different/outside professional with EPs not explicitly mentioned. In this case, data was assimilated into the IPS theme. This was sometimes a difficult decision to make, as many respondents talked about their supervisor having a 'different perspective'. In this case I had to make a decision as to whether the data should go in IPS or 'Distinctive skills of EP' theme. The decision was informed by the question that the respondents were answering and whether EP was mentioned in the response.

Description of the contours of the theme

Respondents mentioned how EPs have perspective, skills and experience. Respondents noted the different, wider and holistic perspective of EPs. Skills mentioned were logical thinking skills, questioning techniques and the ability to question practice in a comfortable way. Other skills were the ability to work effectively with people and modelling good ways of communicating with people as an indirect way of building skills in supervisees. Experiences mentioned were diverse: experience of supervision, procedural knowledge (e.g. code of practice) and knowledge of child development.

Some participants thought people other than EPs could develop the questioning and thinking skills through training and be as effective as supervisors. Others talked of the main advantage of being supervised by an EP as uniquely down to the fact that they were an outside agency. Some said that they didn't think EPs offered a distinctive contribution.

Questions posed / changes that could be made

Is 'different perspective' a distinctive EP skill? Responses referring to 'different perspective' need to be reviewed and moved to the IPS category after close analysis of the source of the data – if the respondent was referring to EPs giving a different perspective with no mention of how the different perspective is distinctive to EPs, the data could be moved to the IPS theme.

Reviewed relevance to research aims and questions

Directly relevant. Should we have separate location for barriers to distinctive skills of EPs? Should this theme be collated under a wider theme of 'Supervisor Skills'?

Appendix 11: List of all 17 themes and associated subthemes

Accountability

Management
Supervisor
Smudging
Supervisee
Group
Paperwork

Benefits of supervision

Thinking space
Educational
Supportive
Benefits for supervisor
Other

Boundaries of supervision

All of practice
Casework
Doesn't include managerial functions

Changes to supervision

Practical issues
Relationship
Role of supervisor
Evaluation
Orienting supervision

Competencies of supervisor

Personal skills
Process skills
Content skills

Knowledge

Wider skills

Not distinctive

Distinctive Competencies of EP

Perspective

Values

Skills

Experience

Knowledge

Skills aren't distinctive

Skills are not identified by EP

Small advantage

Ethics

Safeguarding procedure

Ethical topics in supervision

Confidentiality

Evaluating supervision

Supervisee feedback

Changes made

Peer feedback

How to process feedback

Group supervision

Group support

Group learning

Group management skills

Group led

Group responsibility

Problems

Confidentiality

Independence from line

management

Advantages

Disadvantages

Lines of communication

Safeguarding issues

Commissioning with management

Improvements needed

Inter-professional supervision

Advantages

Disadvantages of IPS

Other

Models used in supervision

No use of models

3 Functions

Changes to be made

Advantages of structured model

Disadvantages of structured

model

Facilitates use of a model

Different views of models

Orientating supervision

No orientation

Discussion

General written documents

Need for more orientation

Contracting with managers

Problems with supervision

Practical issues

Purpose

Professional and managerial supervision delivered separately

Negative view of supervision

Personal relationship

Supervisee seeks direction

Record-keeping

Format

Purposes of supervision

Professional VS managerial

Managerial

Educational

Supportive

Problems with purpose

Purpose depends on experience

Supervision skills VS professional experience

Importance of professional knowledge

Importance of professional experience

Importance of skills in supervision

Both needed

Professional experience can be a disadvantage

Support for supervisors

Supervisors meetings

Training for supervisors

Supervision

Peer support

Reading

Inter-professional supervision

Katie Callicott

Rationale:

Psychologists are often called upon
to supervise others

- Supervision is inherently psychological
- Psychologists were found to be a supervisor more often than a supervisee in inter-professional supervision (Townend, 2004)
- DECP guidelines note the rise in inter-professional supervision within educational psychology
- The HPC gives the direction to 'supervise tasks that you have asked others to carry out' (HPC, 2008, p. 12)

Local research project

- ESS – supervision introduced as a requirement for all in 2009.
- 9 interviews exploring the issues involved.
- Revealed feelings of mistrust, perhaps due to cultural attitudes that equate supervision with being 'needy' within education.

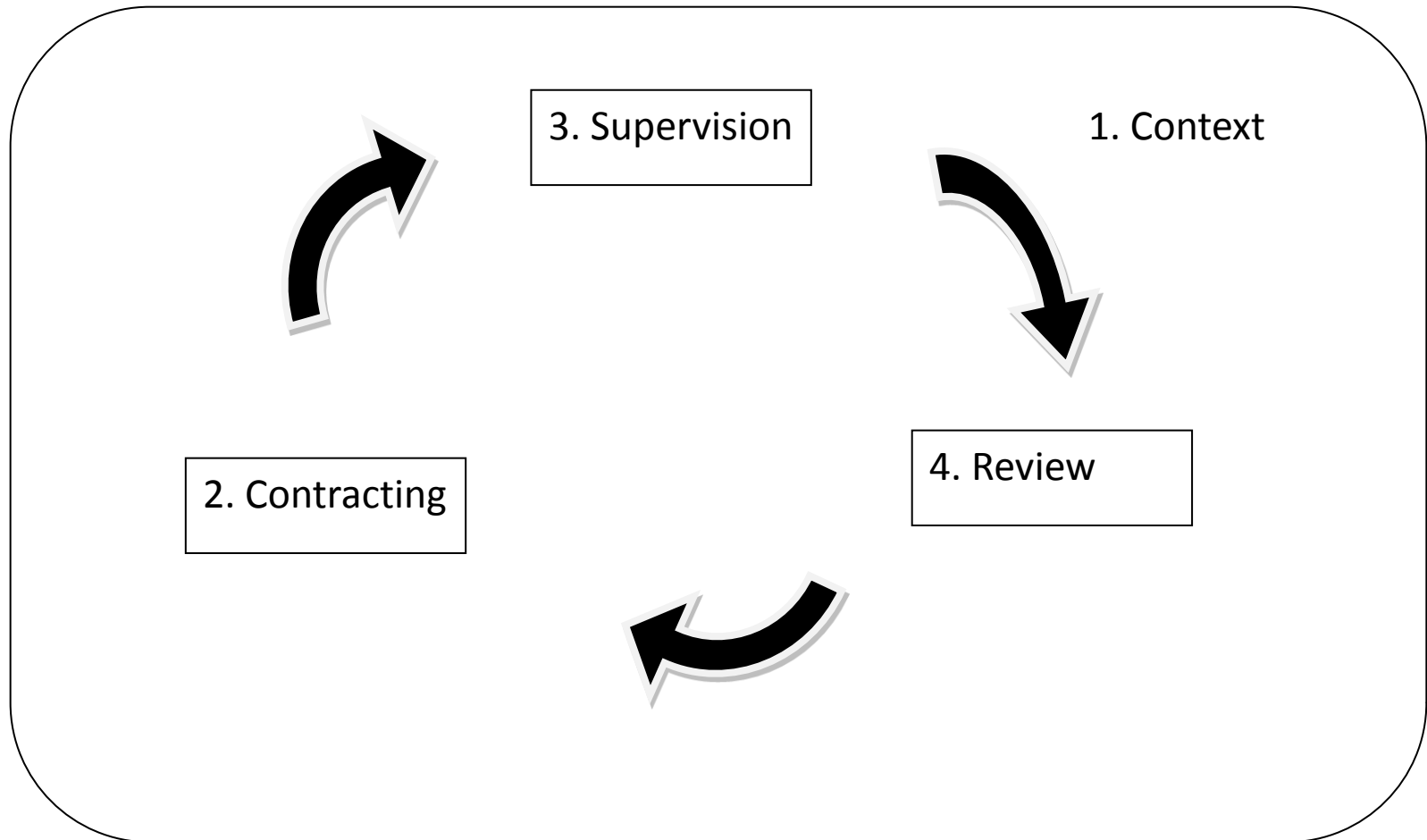
Research questions

- What are the purposes of inter-professional supervision and how are the purposes agreed?
- What are the boundaries of inter-professional supervision and how is accountability agreed?
- What are the benefits of inter-professional supervision?
- Should professional and management supervision be separated or combined?
- What problems have arisen?
- Have any ethical issues been raised?
- Which supervision models are useful when engaging in inter-professional supervision?
- What supervisory qualities and competencies are required for inter-professional supervision?
- Are any supervisor qualities and competencies distinctive to the profession of educational psychology?
- How should inter-professional supervision be evaluated?
- How could inter-professional supervision be improved?
- How do educational psychologists receive support for their role as supervisor?

Research methods

- This research draws on interpretivist philosophy and seeks to recognise and understand the complexities of the supervision process (Scaife, 2009). It doesn't seek to bracket out complexities in order to determine causality or allow for generalisability (e.g. Milne, 2007; Holloway and Neufeldt, 1995).
- I conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with supervisors (EPs) (n=6) and supervisees (non-EPs) (n=4). Participants were derived from this EPS and other EPs known to engage in IPS.
- Questions were formulated from the literature and from key themes from the local research project.
- Interviews were transcribed and subject to thematic analysis. I created 17 themes, 4 meta-themes and 93 sub-themes.

Thematic map



Key findings

- Inter-professional supervision was generally viewed positively
- Psychological skills were valued.
- Participants reported a patchy experience of the contracting process and models were loosely used.
- There were different and sometimes conflicting expectations of how supervision should proceed.

Inter-professional supervision – what did people think?

- Participants valued the
 - increased understanding of the roles of other professionals
 - the ‘fresh’ perspective offered by supervisors
 - the neutrality of supervisors
- Participants discussed processes for sharing information with line managers, and the difficulties involved when commissioning group supervision with line managers.

Psychological skills, experience and knowledge were valued

- Consultation skills, counselling skills, constructive criticism, logical questioning, meta-analysis or reflection-in-action.
- Experiences of teaching, SEN, working with children with complex needs and their families, experience of different agencies and services, and experiences of receiving and giving supervision.
- Knowledge of general psychological paradigms (e.g. cognitive-behaviourist paradigm) theories (e.g. containment) and frameworks (e.g. Solution Circles), specific knowledge of theories relevant to a particular problems raised by supervisees and knowledge of research methods.
- Some questioned whether these skills were distinctive to the profession of educational psychology.

Contracting

- Participants reported a patchy experience of contracting, uncertainly with regard to the legal ramifications of supervision and a general lack of clarity with regard to respective functions, roles, responsibilities and boundaries of professional and line-management supervision.
- Many participants said that they would like to improve the contracting process in the future.

Concluding comments

Key interpretations

- This research generally suggests that inter-professional supervision is potentially both more beneficial and more challenging;
 - the opportunities for facilitation of reflection may be more likely with less professional knowledge
 - the different experiences and assumptions of stakeholders rooted in professional and individual histories create tensions, placing a strain on the supervisory relationship

Key messages

- The word 'supervision' can mean different things to different people.
- Contracting frames supervision with reflection, responsiveness and reciprocity from the start and conveys the message that the form, content and process of supervision is negotiable and should be reviewed.