



Association for Family &  
Systemic Psychotherapy

# Continued Professional Development Policy for family and systemic psychotherapists validated to the UKCP register via AFSP

**Updated April 2026**

**www.theafsp.org**

## Introduction

One of the central aims of the Association for Family and Systemic Psychotherapy (AFSP) and the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) is to ensure the protection of the public. An important element of this is through the continuing maintenance and improvement of standards of practice. The UKCP requires all its Colleges and Organisational Members (OMs) to formulate and implement a CPD policy. In line with UKCP we also expect both full-clinical registrants and non-clinical UKCP members, to take full responsibility for the continuing development of their own practice and to provide evidence of this as required.

This policy and AFSP's CPD review process pertains to those members who choose to be validated via AFSP for the UKCP register. Members who are UKCP registered directly via college, or another organisation should refer to those respective CPD policies.

The Memorandum of Association, of the Association for Family Therapy states, "The Association's objects are to benefit the public by the promotion by all available means of the scientific study, practice, research and teaching of family therapy ...".

AFSP's Code of Ethics and Practice states, under 'Professional Conduct of the Therapist': "*You should ensure that you maintain your level of competence through continuing training/continuing professional development*".

## CPD Guidelines

The UKCP College for Family, Couple and Systemic Psychotherapy (CFCSP) has a CPD policy and AFSP's policy is designed to fit with this. Registrants are required to undertake 250 hours of CPD over a 5-year period\* and a minimum of 20 hours during any one year within that 5-year period. Non-clinical UKCP members should access CPD appropriate to their non-client-based practice.

**\*Annually, this includes supervision (12 hours), training courses (18 hours), reading and other learning activities (20 hours).**

## CFCSP – UKCP General Principles

- The protection of the public is paramount.
- There should be a flexible approach to CPD so that, for example, the development of skills in clinical supervision, teaching, research and management all need to be seen as valid.
- Family and Systemic Psychotherapists have a personal responsibility to ensure that they continue their professional development in a meaningful way. *They should have a personal CPD plan that is regularly reviewed with their supervisor.*
- CPD policies should seek to build on the model of reflection on practice that is central to all psychotherapies.
- Professional development involves the active reflection on experience in a way that allows the individual practitioner to specify what has been learned or reconfirmed.
- CPD policies need to allow for individual practitioners to develop in a variety of ways e.g. diversifying their practice to include models that lie outside their original training.
- The requirement to attend to CPD applies to all practicing Family and Systemic Psychotherapists.
- There will be additional requirements for Family and Systemic Psychotherapists in the first 3 years of post-qualifying practice.
- This is in recognition of the value of guidance in the early years of practice. Part of this guidance will be to support the development of an effective approach to CPD.

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- Clinical Supervision (sometimes referred to as consultation), may be individual, group or team. Live supervision and the use of streaming or digital platforms and recording are especially valued.
- AFSP considers the creative possibilities of other forms of supervision as technological advances are taking place and new methods are evolving e.g. electronically communicated forms of supervision and videoconferencing.
- All documentation should show evidence of ethical, inclusive and anti-discriminatory practice.
- For Family and Systemic Psychotherapists with more than 3 years of post-qualifying experience, CPD should be assessed within a 5- year cycle. This takes account of the occasional need to have 'lean times' due to illness, pregnancy or other life events.

## AFSP's Minimum CPD requirements for UKCP Registration

The following requirements are considered to be the minimum necessary to ensure continued professional development appropriate to the practice of family therapy, together with an acceptable measure of protection for the public and continued validation to the UKCP register. In exceptional circumstances individuals may be unable to fulfil the requirements in the way that they are set out. Disability or geographical isolation could be reasons for this or that their work is a specialism. Such an individual must contact the Registration Committee of AFSP so that a CPD plan equivalent to that laid out in this document can be agreed.

### Non-clinical membership

If you have been a full-clinical member of UKCP for more than five years and are not currently engaged in clinical practice, but are teaching and or offering supervision, then you might qualify for full non-clinical membership with UKCP. If you are granted non-clinical membership, you would not be required to undertake the reaccreditation process. If your nominated supervisor is not on the AFSP approved supervisor list, you will need to complete the Supervisor CPD requirements and obtain approval from the registration committee.

## Section 1 – Clinical Practice Requirements

Monthly Client Hours: For the first 3 years post-qualifying the minimum requirement is 12 hours per month (this would usually be face-to-face & online hours with clients not as part of reflecting teams).

- After 3 years, the minimum requirement would be 8 hours of Face-to-face and/or online per month averaged over a 5-year period. \* Subject to Online policy revisions.
- It is highly recommended that they have the training and supervision to support on-line work and adhere to all AFSP and UKCP policies including codes of ethics and practice.
- Professional Wishes/Will - UKCP require registrants to have a designated professional to take care of their caseload in the event of sudden illness, emergency or death. (See Professional Wishes Sheet for guidance and the AFSP Code of Ethics and Practice).

## Section 2 – Complaints in Relation to Practice

Following a complaint against a registrant's practice being upheld, the Registration Committee may require additional CPD/supervision evidence to be provided as per the requirements of the UKCP's Complaints Committee. Registrants subject to a complaint, are required to notify both AFSP and UKCP and provide detail and may need to reflect on this in subsequent re-accreditation CPD review.

## Section 3 – Professional Indemnity Insurance

Registrants are required to have professional indemnity insurance (PII) that covers the context of their work. For members not undertaking any private practice or self-employed teaching or consultation work, they may elect only to have PII from their employer that covers their family and systemic work. In this case evidence of



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Employer's PII is required. However, it is strongly advised that all practicing Family and Systemic Therapists have personal PII as employer's insurance may not cover complaints made to a professional body. e.g. UKCP. It is advised that the professional Insurance should include "Run Off Cover" which covers members for the year after clinical work has ended.

### Section 4 – Criminal Records Check – DBS Check & Level 3 Safeguarding Training

Registrants must have a current Enhanced + Barring DBS (or equivalent e.g. Disclosure Scotland's Protecting Vulnerable Groups, PVG; Access Northern Ireland, NI) certificate. We recommend that this check should have taken place within the last three years (or within five years in the case of Access NI). Submission of evidence of a DBS/ PVG/or Access NI, and attendance at Level 3 Safeguarding training is a requirement. (Also see AFSP Code of Ethics and Practice).

### Section 5 - Supervision

Registrants are responsible for their own clinical practice and for meeting the minimum clinical supervision requirements.

It is advisable to establish a contractual agreement between supervisee/s and supervisor/consultant. Please refer to AFSP's Supervision information sheet for further details.

Supervisors should be AFSP Approved Supervisors or Family and Systemic Psychotherapists who have been registered with the UKCP for a minimum of 3 years.

*\*In exceptional circumstances, the Registration Committee will consider supervision from a qualified and experienced Family and Systemic Psychotherapist who is not currently on the UKCP register but is registered with a professional body that can deal with complaints.*

For the first 3 years post-qualification, the minimum supervision requirement is 18 hours per year, (i.e. one and a half hours per month). At least 12 hours should be individual face-to face or online supervision (retrospective and/or live). The remaining 6 hours can include live-team supervision and/or retrospective group supervision, face-to-face online, live online or face-to-face

After 3 years of post-qualified practice, family and systemic psychotherapists are required to undertake a minimum of 12 hours of supervision per year. While this would usually take place monthly, the emphasis on flexibility means that supervision could be at less frequent intervals, but at no greater interval than 2 months.

Some of this supervision may be with practitioners who are not UKCP registered as a Family and Systemic Psychotherapist.

*\*In exceptional circumstances, the Registration Committee will consider supervision from a qualified and experienced Family and Systemic Psychotherapist who is not currently on the UKCP register but is registered with a professional body that can deal with complaints.*

It can also be from another psychotherapy modality; however, it is expected to be in addition to a minimum of 7 hours supervision from a supervisor who is registered with the UKCP. These supervisors (another modality or non-registered FT's) will be required to submit a CV.

#### Forms of Supervision may include:

- a. Online Supervision, whether individual or group  
Where supervision is received on-line it is expected that the supervisor will have the training and experience to carry out the task.



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b. Group Supervision (max 6 supervisees)

When supervision is conducted in a group setting (i.e. 3-6 supervisees, facilitated by a supervisor) there must be sufficient time for all group members to present and receive supervision for their work.

- When supervisee's present their own clinical work to the group for supervision, they should double this time to calculate the total supervision time accepted for each individual and then divide this number by the number in the group. The total number of supervision sessions that have occurred over 12 months is then used to multiply this number to get the total supervision received over the year.

- Length of supervision session  

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 X 2  
Number of supervisees in the group

- For example: 4 supervisees in a group meet for 4 hours = 1 hour each x2 = 2 hours of total supervision time.
- They have group supervision 6 times over 12-month period = 12 hours of supervision time each per year.
- For example: 3 supervisees in a group meeting for 1.5 hours would be  $(1.5 \div 3) \times 2 = 1$  hour each of total supervision time. The total hours over a year will then be calculated by x by total number of group supervision sessions.

c. Peer supervision

One-to-one Peer supervision: Where two therapists provide supervision to each other alternately.

d. Peer group supervision (3-6 people in a group)

Where a small group of therapists provide each other with supervision, equally sharing the time and responsibility for supervision within the group, without a facilitator supervising. Peer group members would usually have equal clinical experience/training. The same formula should be used for apportioning hours as that given above for group supervision.

Both forms of peer supervision should have an annual consultation from an appropriate outside person (an AFSP Approved supervisor and/or an experienced Family and Systemic Psychotherapist registered with UKCP in the College for Family, Couple and Systemic Therapy).

This consultation should include a consultation to the process of the group. If the peer supervision is additional to the required supervision, then the consultation is not a requirement.

### Section 6 – CPD Activities

6a. Attendance at workshops and other training events (18 hrs)

This should include evidence of attendance at Level 3 Safeguarding training.

The minimum requirement for attendance at training events is 18 hours per year. Two thirds of this should be systemic, but all should be directly relevant to clinical practice. Evidence of attendance is required e.g. certificates of attendance.

Examples of training:

- Attendance at live or online events, workshops, conferences, webinars etc.



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6b. Keeping up to date with developments in the field (20 hours per year)

There are a variety of ways of doing this, but there is an expectation that Family and Systemic Psychotherapists, as professional people, will wish to keep abreast of current developments in the field.

Examples of keeping up to date are:

- Research and evaluation
- Teaching
- Podcasts
- Direct involvement in the development of the field of systemic family therapy and the profession
- Contributions to the work of AFSP or another related organisation, for example through membership of committees.
- Reading - Members may read a range of literature and other relevant resources that support their current and future practice.
  - Examples are:
    - AFSP's publications – The Journal of Family Therapy, Context and other AFSP online material
    - Other professional literature, e.g., Journals, Publications, Online resources, Podcasts etc

The balance between these activities needs to be considered carefully, but in general each practitioner must be able to demonstrate that involvement in wider professional activity, such as committee membership, has not been at the cost of clinical CPD, i.e. supervision and training.

### Section 7 – Professional Development Plan

Registrants are required to reflect on their clinical practice and future learning needs in relation to developing their knowledge and skills to support their future clinical practice. This should be completed within their individual, or peer group supervision.

### Section 8 – Expression of Professional Wishes

Registrants working in private practice are required to have in place an Expression of Professional Interest. Whilst we do not require a copy of this, we do require notice that one is in place.

### Annual Review

Each year all Family and Systemic Psychotherapists registered with UKCP are required to complete a renewal form and declare any complaints against their practice.

AFSP members, for whom AFSP validate for continued UKCP registration, are required to maintain their AFSP membership subscription and engage in the CPD cycle.



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## UKCP Re-Accreditation – CPD Review

To support registrants with maintaining the CPD requirements and support reflective practice registrants are asked to:

1. Annually discuss their CPD with their supervisor or within peer group supervision.
2. Maintain an annual log of their CPD for their records.
3. Engage in the CPD reaccreditation process when asked to submit formal review.

Registrant's with more than 3 years of post-qualifying experience, are asked to submit a personal CPD review for re-accreditation between every 3 and 5 years, or more frequently, as requested, by the Registration Committee.

Registrants will be asked to complete the CPD review form and provide supporting information in relation to section 1-7 of this policy.

Registrants will be asked to reflect (section 7) with their supervisor, who is a UKCP registered Family and Systemic Psychotherapist, and identify any future CPD plans. Registrants may be asked to provide additional CPD evidence at the discretion of the Registration Committee. Members have 28 days to submit further information if this has been requested.

Registrants may also be called at any time for a UKCP random audit which is autonomous to this CPD reaccreditation process.

## The CPD Review Process

Registrants that are selected for a CPD review will be contacted by email to complete and submit a CPD review. Those selected are usually sent advanced notification in the December before the review year. A formal notice is then sent giving 4-6 weeks to complete and post this to the AFT office together with all the supporting documentation. The Registration Committee endeavour to respond to complete CPD reviews within 3 months of receipt.

**Registrants will be asked to complete the CPD form and provide supporting information.**

CPD Sections	Information required
1	Detail of Clinical Practice hours
2	Detail any complaints in relation to practice
3	Evidence of in date Professional Indemnity Insurance for Family and Systemic practice
4	Evidence of a current DBS check (certificate or managers confirmation letter)
5	Completed reference form from their current supervisor(s)
6	Evidence of ways they have attended to their professional development during the period including certificates of attendance which should include Safeguarding level 2 or 3 or letter from a manager confirming attendance
7	Personal reflection of professional development in this period and a plan outlining plans for future development.
8	Statement of provision of Expressions of Professional Interest for independent practitioners



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In exceptional circumstances, a short extension may be offered if a registrant needs more time to submit all their documentation, however deferral of reaccreditation is not permitted by UKCP. UKCP state that “If a registrant is unable to take part, they must be advised to resign from the Register until they are able to engage with the process.” Registrants may be eligible for a break in practice.

Possible outcomes:

- a. CPD review is approved
- b. CPD review is approved with advised recommendations
- c. More information is requested. (Members have 28 days to submit further evidence – you will need to resubmit a full application if you fail to send the additional information requested within this time-period)
- d. CPD review does not meet the AFSP’s CPD requirements and not approved.

Where registrants fail to meet the CPD requirements or fail to engage in the CPD process, AFSP will be unable to recommend registrants for UKCP re-accreditation and could result in removal from the UKCP register. AFT will take the member out of the CPD cycle and their AFSP membership category will be changed to standard ‘member’ rate. For details on re-instating UKCP registration via AFSP please see the Registration Policy.

A member may also be referred to the AFSP Ethics committee if a breach of the AFSP Code of Ethics is identified, e.g. if continuing to practice as a Family and Systemic Psychotherapist whilst no-longer maintaining professional registration.

Feedback, Issues or Questions

If there are any difficulties in meeting the requirements, please contact the Chair of Registration through AFSP’s Membership Administrator.

The Registration Committee aims to provide a facilitative approach to the CPD process. However, where registrants wish to contest the outcome of their CPD review they can write to the Chair of the Registration Committee and the Chair of AFSP for any concern to be addressed via AFSP’s Membership Administrator.

Email: [hello@theafsp.org](mailto:hello@theafsp.org)

### Breaks in Practice and Extended Periods of Absence

Periods of absence will be considered when CPD’s are reviewed. Please see ‘AFSP’s Registration Policy’ for further information and guidance on breaks in practice and re-registration. In the event of the need for extended periods away from practice please consult UKCP and contact the Registration Committee who will discuss a professional plan with you.

In the event of need for extended periods away from practice due to illness, accident, death of a close relative, parental, maternity, paternity, adoption leave, carer’s leave, temporary unemployment, study or other life events.

UKCP and AFSP request and expect the registered member take responsibility to inform both organisations of the start and end date of their sabbatical. The period of leave would be considered, pro-rata for the hours required in the CPD. (All sabbaticals must be requested from the UKCP 3 months in advance.)

Where there has been the occasional need to have “lean times,” registrants are advised, to address this and discuss their CPD plan with their supervisor s (in relation to future practice) in their Professional Development Plan-section 7. The committee are also available to discuss and advise on a CPD plan.