How to… Prepare for a supervision

The purpose of supervision is to allow you a safe space to discuss your cases, explore what is going on with the people you are working with, consider any impact on you or any impact of your own conscious or unconscious biases which may be impacting your working relationship, explore hypotheses and plan interventions. In order to get the most out of supervision, it is important you prepare for supervision and have an idea of what you want to achieve from your supervision sessions.

Some people find it useful to create a supervision history, which sets out your experiences of supervision, what you found positive, what you found more challenging and what you feel would have made supervision more beneficial. If you haven’t been in a role that has had formal supervision before, this is still something you can do, reflecting on for example, performance reviews in previous roles, one to ones or meetings with a previous manager. This can be shared with your supervisor to give them an understanding of your previous experiences, what works for you and what you might find challenging.

At your initial supervision session, you may be asked to read through and sign a supervision agreement. This will set out what is expected of you and your supervisor, the responsibilities each of you have for your supervision sessions and how they will run. Different organisations will likely have different formats for supervision, so it is important you discuss this with your supervisor so you know what to expect and what is expected of you. As a minimum, to prepare for supervision, it is recommended that you:

* Familiarise yourself with the organisation’s supervision policy and supervision template;
* Be clear about what you hope to get from the supervision sessions;
* Be prepared to be challenged about your thinking, what actions you have taken and your decision-making;
* Ensure you have a good understanding of your cases and it may be useful to have key dates such as the last visit and meeting, any upcoming Court dates or Conferences;
* If you have something that you are finding challenging, it might be helpful to explore some theories which you can discuss in supervision to explore the situation;
* If this is not the first supervision, review the last session’s minutes or your notes to ensure that you have completed all agreed actions;
* Make sure you have your diary and a pen and paper to take any notes.