

RJC Practitioner Code of Practice

Introduction

Quality in restorative practice delivery is essential to provide the best possible chances of a successful outcome, to safeguard the wellbeing of participants and to build public and community confidence.

The RJC Practitioner Code of Practice has been developed to support restorative practitioners in the delivery of high quality restorative practice and sets out the minimum requirements for RJC registered practitioners. The Code reflects the relevant aspects of the National Occupational Standards, to which practitioners may refer in full where necessary.

A practitioner may not be a member of the RJC (either as an Associate or Accredited Practitioner) unless they can confirm that they adhere to this Code of Practice. The requirements in this Code are mandatory for RJC members. Supporting guidance (in blue) is not mandatory but is aimed at assisting practitioners to implement the rules.

Aim

This Code is intended to:

- protect individuals receiving restorative services and those involved in the delivery of restorative services
- set out the minimum standards for restorative practitioners

Use of the Code

- The RJC will not admit to its Practitioner Register, as an Associate or Accredited Practitioner, any practitioner who has not confirmed their adherence to this Code.
- This Code may be used by practitioners, employers, service users and the public to understand the minimum requirements of practitioners.
- Holders of the RJC Restorative Service Quality Mark are required to ensure that their restorative practitioners practice in accordance with this Code.
- The RJC may request further information from practitioners to verify that an applicant meets the requirements of this Code before an application to join the Practitioner Register is accepted and the practitioner listed.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code 'practitioner' shall mean restorative facilitators using restorative interventions, including formal and informal processes, and direct and indirect forms of restorative practice.

Code requirements

These requirements apply to all RJC registered practitioners.

- a) Practitioners must commit to work to the RJC principles of restorative practice.

Guidance: The six principles of restorative practice set out the core values of the field of restorative practice. They cover the following areas: restoration, voluntarism, neutrality, safety, accessibility and respect. The RJC principles apply to all those working in the field of restorative practice and can be downloaded from www.restorativejustice.org.uk/RJC-principles.

- b) Practitioners must have completed, as a minimum, facilitation training delivered by an RJC registered training provider.

Guidance: Facilitation and practitioner training is training for those wishing to undertake formal restorative processes. Such training covers the full range of skills outlined in the core 2013 National Occupational Standards for Restorative Practice.

Facilitator and practitioner training will usually comprise a minimum of 20 hours of training. Training of less than 24 hours' duration should be preceded by mandatory pre-reading.

This training should cover the following key areas:

- an introduction to the concepts and philosophy of restorative practice
- informal and formal restorative processes, including restorative conferences, face to face restorative practice and/or family group conferencing
- relevant national standards, including the RJC Practitioner Competency Framework, the RJC Principles of Restorative Practice, the RJC Practitioner Code of Practice and the National Occupational Standards for Restorative Practice (Skills for Justice)

Facilitator and practitioner training should have a practical element, including at least one role play exercise demonstrating a restorative intervention. This should give participants the opportunity to practise and observe facilitation skills.

- c) Practitioners must ensure that they undertake regular case supervision by a case supervisor.

Guidance: A case supervisor must be a fully trained, practising restorative facilitator. A case supervisor may be a peer of the practitioner. For the purposes of this Code 'regular' means at least once every three months. Case supervision is designed to support practitioners in their restorative work. It can take a number of forms, including:

- one to one supervision (either face to face, by telephone or virtually)
- group supervision (a group of practitioners within one organisation or team, or through a practitioner network forum)

Specific guidance on case supervision is set out in section five of this handbook.

- d) Practitioners must ensure that they build on initial training by undertaking CPD to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

Guidance: CPD may be undertaken in a variety of ways, including seminars, conferences, training courses, lectures, peer evaluation and private study of relevant materials such as academic journals and articles. It is recommended that an RJC registered practitioner undertakes at least 12 hours of CPD each year. Details of the RJC's CPD programme of events can be found at www.restorativejustice.org.uk/events.

Practitioners are also encouraged to develop their professional knowledge and experience by working towards RJC accreditation. Details of the accreditation process can be found by visiting www.restorativejustice.org.uk/practitioner-accreditation.

- e) Practitioners must ensure that they have a good understanding of the RJC practice guidance and how it applies to their role.

Guidance: The RJC practice guidance may be found in section five of this handbook. It covers preparation for restorative processes, including risk assessment and management. It also covers conferencing, outcome agreements, indirect and informal processes, sensitive and complex case management, co-working and supervision.

- f) Practitioners must not undertake sensitive and/or complex cases unless they have the skills, experience and knowledge to do so. A practitioner must be at either intermediate (with support) or senior level to conduct sensitive and/or complex cases.

Guidance: For the purposes of this Code 'sensitive case' is defined as any case involving:

- actual, or threats of, serious or sexual violence
- vulnerable participants (for example, vulnerable because of physical disability, age or mental impairment)
- domestic abuse
- risk of continuing harm

For the purposes of this Code 'complex case' is defined as any case involving:

- harm caused over a substantial period of time (more than three years)
- more than three perpetrators and/or more than three victims
- vulnerable participants (for example, vulnerable because of physical disability, age or mental impairment)
- risk of continuing harm or intention to cause further harm
- multiple agencies

Determination as to whether or not an individual practitioner is at senior or intermediate level is largely a matter of personal judgement and is defined by the RJC Practitioner Competency Framework (www.restorativejustice.org.uk/competency-framework) in terms of the amount of support or supervision required to handle serious cases.

A practitioner should be satisfied that he or she has the knowledge and skills necessary to handle the case in question and such consideration should take place in respect of each case before the practitioner accepts it.

g) Practitioners must not act in any case where there is a conflict of interest.

Guidance: Prior to accepting a restorative case, practitioners should consider whether or not a conflict of interest exists. A conflict of interest arises in a situation in which the practitioner's personal or professional experience has the potential to adversely affect the interests of participants in a restorative process. A conflict may occur in situations where a practitioner:

- knows or has social or family relationship with any of the participants
- has previously been in dispute with any of the parties or relevant agencies

h) Practitioners must comply with reasonable requests for information from the RJC.

Guidance: Such requests may be made by the RJC to support exercises aimed at monitoring Code compliance or to support the proper investigation of complaints and appeals. Compliance with an RJC request for information includes responding to requests within a reasonable timeframe and providing information requested.

Breach

- Evidence of breach of this Code by practitioners may result in suspension or permanent removal from the RJC Practitioner Register.
- The RJC Complaints Policy and associated Complaints Procedure set out the ways in which evidence of breach of this Code may be submitted to the RJC, how the RJC will investigate any alleged breaches and what sanctions may be applied. A copy of the policy can be downloaded from www.restorativejustice.org.uk/complaints-and-appeals.

Review

- This Code of Practice will be reviewed every three years through a process of consultation and amendment with the RJC Expert Advisory Group. The next review date for the Code is January 2019.