Supervisors Guide to Reflective Practice During the Case Review

<u>Notes on booklet</u>

This document provides the content for the guide, please note that:

- Font, layout, branding will be done professionally by ASC (ignore current layout/font etc). Once this has been done, emma.williams@open.ac.uk is happy to review the final version.

- A final round of proof reading after layout/branding

Introduction to Reflective Practice.

Reflective practice involves taking the time to 'think about' or 'reflect' on what we do. Reflecting thoughtfully on your work is vital for improving your own self-awareness, effectiveness, professional development, and team learning. By examining our practice and paying attention to our thoughts, knowledge, actions, and beliefs we can start to identify opportunities for learning and operational improvements. The process of facilitated reflection and action learning allows participants to think critically and analytically about professional practice. The intention being to gain an insight and to use any learning to maintain good practice, gain confidence, recognise opportunities for development and establish an action plan for next steps. Furthermore, reflective practice can identify issues with wellbeing and work-related stress.

There are various models of reflective practice. A useful method for a case review is the action learning approach, as this facilitates discussion and reflection across differing elements of the investigation team.

Taking part in a reflective practice-based review provides an opportunity for individuals (self-care and development needs), teams (joined up action plans and improvement), leaders (staff productivity) and the organisation (learning and outcomes).

The ability and opportunity to discuss team and individual challenges to a case, reflect on opportunities and record what went well and why, offers investigation teams to critically reflect together about the case and its' progress. These reflections will impact and contribute to actions in practice.

Grant &
Kinman (2020)
Promoting emotional resilience
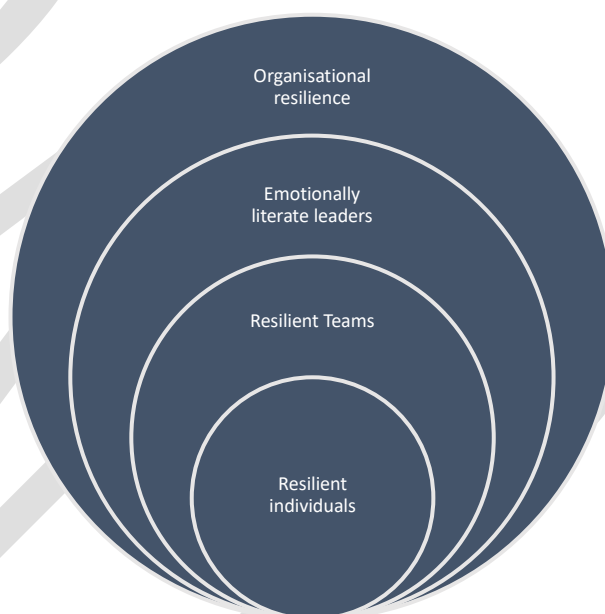
Action Learning Sets

Action Learning fosters learning in the workplace and is a process which involves working on real challenges, in this context a RASSO case review. The review should incorporate the knowledge and skills of the group of people involved in the case, alongside a facilitator (or more experienced officer) combined with good, open and insightful questioning. The emphasis is upon giving everyone time to make use of the collective experience, insights and potential support from their peer group. The review process should involve critical thinking, problem solving, personal / team learning at each stage of the case, a discussion of challenges, where things went well and signposting to further learning sources or anything else that helps the progression of the case.

The review helps to work on the problem through supportive but challenging questioning rather than jumping straight to a solution. This encourages a deeper understanding of the

issues involved, challenging underlying assumptions, and exploring ways forward. As well as reflecting on the issues, the group are encouraged to report back on progress at each reflective practice point of the investigation.

How does each reflective practice point work?

Step 1 – Presenting the case: At this stage, the supervisor should conduct a welfare check on the officers and consider the workload of the officers assigned to the case. One person provides an update on the case and identifies one key issue/problem the investigation is facing; this update and problem definition should be completed with no interruptions

Step 2 – Asking peer questions: At each meeting the supervisor, engagement officer, disruption officer and others involved in the case will work through issues relating to investigation, the victim, and the suspect. Questions will be focused on clarifying the issues and problems being addressed.

Step 3 – Ideas for a way forward: The group then reflects on the current case by asking critical questions and allowing for a bottom up solution. I.e. the officer presenting the problem comes to a solution themselves as a result of the questions being asked. Putting forward ideas and solutions as to what action should be taken needs to be avoided. Where could there be improvements and where did the team feel they needed further learning and / or support should also be documented.

Step 4 – Reflection & Action Planning: The relevant officer should then decide which actions they will take as a result of the session. Results from these decisions should be discussed at the start of the next learning meeting. The Supervisor notes any learning requirements or promising practice and updates the Investigation Professional Development Unit (IPDU) to consider CPD needs or feedback to the wider learning and development team about how the learning can be disseminated. This feedback of learning is vital to the success of this process. All too often, the learning points are lost. A routine method to capture learning to feed back into any subsequent training is vital. Where issues of welfare are identified arrange a 1-2-1 to discuss the necessary support required.
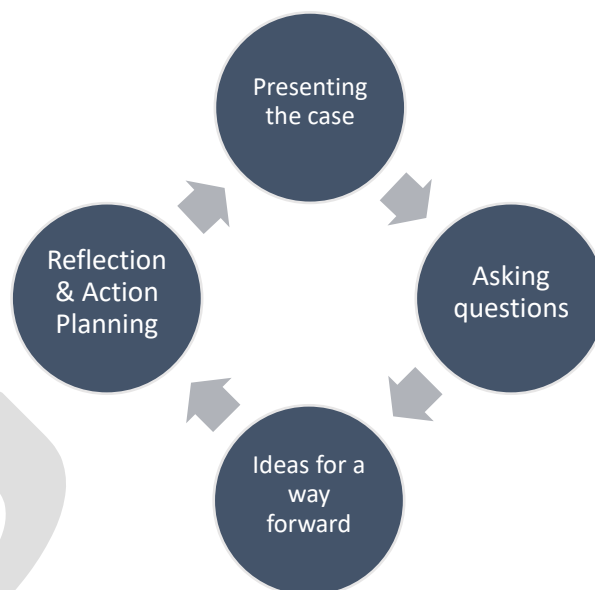
The case reviews should allow for each member of the investigative team to play a role in the process. The group should:

- Listen actively
- Be attentive to the feelings of others
- Ask questions that encourage a broader and more critical understanding of the problem
- Probe and challenge each other's personal interpretations
- Be supportive, encouraging, and empathetic
- Give feedback appropriately, honestly, and with discretion
- Observe the agreed 'ground rules' for conduct

- Never diagnose, recommend, interpose your own agenda or give personal solutions
- Never judge or impose own values
- Ask open questions that encourage reflections

Some questions that the groups may ask could include:

?'s for clarification	?'s that probe	?'s that support action
- What happened? - How do you see it? - What makes you say that? - What else can explain the situation? - Could you say more about how you felt? - Who might help you? - What obstacles do you envisage? - So, what you're saying is? - Have you done X,Y or Z?	- What is the difference between the current situation and the way you would like it to be? - Can you explain? - What exactly…? - Who else matters? - Can you give an example? - What happened…and? - How do you feel? - What assumptions are you making? - Do you feel you're making an impact?	- If all decisions rested on you, what would you do? - What are your options for action now? - What other possibilities exist? - Where could you get more information about? - Who else might have a view about this? - What development and learning needs are there arising?

Interlinking the Process of Ongoing Case Reviews: Key investigation points, learning and reflections

The next section of this guidance offers some ideas for questions you might want to think about at each reflective practice point during a case review. This list is not exhaustive and should be iterative depending on the case details and context.

RP1: Reflection with First Responder
1. What are the reflections on the first contact with the victim? 2. Has the victim been provided with the leaflet and has an awareness of the process? 3. Were there any challenges when the victim was seen – what worked well to overcome these / what might have been done differently? 4. What information do we need and how might we gather that? 5. What are the investigative strengths and how can we build these into the investigative strategy? 6. What are the perceived obstacles and how can we overcome them collaboratively? 7. Any issues for the officers involved? 8. Any identified learning areas? 9. Next steps
RP2: Primary Investigative Strategy
1. What intelligence is available on the suspect? 2. Has the ISVA been identified and the victim updated? 3. Are safeguarding issues covered for the victim – what is working well and what might be done differently to improve this? 4. Reflections on the forensic collection? 5. Plans to regularly review and update the investigative strategy?

6. Any reflections on decisions made?
7. Are others at risk in the context of both sexual and non-sexual offending?
8. What can be done to address any challenges?
9. How are the case team feeling?
10. Any identified learning areas?

RP3: Following advice from CPS

1. What other avenues can you explore for intelligence and evidence on the suspect?
2. What other creative ways could be considered here to build the case and disrupt the suspect?
3. Could other options be considered -civil order etc?
4. What rationale are there for the decisions and has this been recorded for learning?
5. What are the decisions to date – what has worked well and what has not achieved the proposed outcomes?
6. Key points for learning?
7. How are case team feeling?
8. Has the victim been updated and being supported?

RP4: Full code test stage

1. Has this been applied on the assumption of an unbiased jury?
2. What impacted on the decisions – what is the team's evaluation of those decisions?
3. Has all the information about suspect's offending behaviour been considered?
4. Have the investigative strengths been prioritised over the negative points of the case – discuss this critically and note all learning
5. Has the victim been updated to date and are safeguarding issues maintained?
6. Any team issues identified and noted for supervisors / wellbeing issues

RP5: Exit strategy

1. Has everything been provided to the ISVA through the engagement officer to update the victim and provide information about other options?
2. Are there any reinvestigation opportunities?
3. What decisions can be reviewed at this stage – where is the learning and what might have been done to improve the situation?
4. Could feedback from the CPS facilitate learning for the team?
5. If there is a charge is the engagement officer able to continue to be the SPOC for the victim and liaison between them and the disruption officer?
6. Harness of learning to date and where required development needed?
7. Update on officer wellbeing / workload and support where needed

RP5: Post Outcome

1. Independent audit process where a sample of cases are subject to independent reviews from personnel external to the investigation
2. Review all details of case and capture learning / development needs
3. What worked well in the investigation and what could have been done differently?
4. Have the decisions been critically reviewed and reflected on?
5. Have other officers not involved in this case been able to review decisions and provide objective considerations?
6. Have officers been recognised for their work and involvement in this investigation?
7. Have the learning issues been captured?
8. Any issues identified for the problem profile – analytical involvement?

Reflective practice through learning sets is critical to supporting the learning and development of staff, building professional investigative expertise and officer wellbeing. Allowing time for teams to do this properly is highly recommended for real transformational change in the area of RASSO investigation. It is useful for testing new ways of working, dealing with complex cases, identifying new ideas and ways of working and supporting organisational development and change.