Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board

Remote supervision policy

Why supervision is important

Supervision is crucial to protecting public health and safety by ensuring that practitioners who have not yet reached certifying status carry out sanitary plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying under the control and direction of a certifying practitioner.

Checking remote supervision arrangements

Neither the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006 (**Act**) nor the Board's registration and licensing notices (**Notices**) prevent supervision from being carried out remotely. However, the Board considers that remote supervision carries significantly higher risks than normal supervision. For this reason, the Board now assesses all supervision arrangements where the supervisor and the supervisee are located in different regions.

This policy sets out how the Board carries out remote supervision assessments.

Delegation to the Registrar

The Board has delegated the exercise of its responsibilities for assessing remote supervision arrangements to the Registrar.

Supervision requirements

The Act states that supervision means that the supervisor exercises the control and direction necessary to ensure:

- the work is performed competently
- appropriate safety measures are adopted while the work is being carried out
- the completed work complies with the Building Regulations 1992 (for sanitary plumbing and drainlaying) and the Gas (Safety and Measurement) Regulations 2010 (for gasfitting).

The Board's Notices also require supervisors to ensure:

- the supervisee is competent to perform the work they undertake
- the supervisee is adequately supervised while carrying out the work
- the supervisee complies with all relevant regulations
- the supervisee can produce their Board authorisation card on request
- if the supervisee is a limited certificate trainee, they only carry out work in their direct presence for the first 12 months

- if the supervisee is working under an exemption under supervision, they only carry out work in their direct presence for the first 24 months.

The Board considers that the risks with remote supervision are that, in practice, the supervisor cannot, or may not meet all of their supervision responsibilities above.

When the Board will assess supervision arrangements

The Board will assess any supervision arrangement where the supervisor and the supervisee are identified as being in different regions of the country.

How the Board will assess remote supervision arrangements

Where the Board identifies that a supervisor is in a different region to the person or people they are wanting to supervise, their licence renewal application and that of the supervisee or supervisees will be put on hold while the Board gathers information from the supervisor about how they propose to supervise the remote supervisees.

The information the Board will seek will include:

- the numbers of people the supervisor is supervising (both local and remote)
- the locations of the remote supervisees
- the authorisations held by the supervisees (both remote and local)
- the kinds of work the remote supervisees will be carrying out
- how they will carry out the different aspects of their supervision responsibilities for the remote supervisees, eg assessing and assigning work, monitoring work, testing and verifying work, training, record keeping
- their written arrangements with the remote supervisees (employment or supervision agreements)
- their supervision policies, procedures, and practices
- whether they will be using nominated people as part of their supervision and, if so, how they will do this.

Approving or not approving remote supervision arrangements

Once all of the information has been collected, it will be assessed to determine whether or not it helps to lessen the risks that the supervisor cannot or will not be able to meet their supervision responsibilities.

Approving remote supervision

If the Board is satisfied that that supervisor would be able to meet their supervision responsibilities in relation to a remote supervisee, their supervision arrangement will be approved and the supervisor's licence/authorisation renewal application will be granted.

Not approving remote supervision

If the Board is not satisfied that the supervisor would be able to meet their supervision responsibilities in relation to a remote supervisee and the Board does not consider there are any additional steps the supervisor could take to address the Board's concerns about their remote supervision arrangement, the supervision arrangement will not be approved and the supervisee's licence/authorisation renewal application will be declined.

Working with supervisors

If the Board is unsure whether or not the supervisor would be able to meet their supervision responsibilities in relation to a remote supervisee, Board staff may work with the supervisor to see if there are steps the supervisor could take to address the Board's concerns in their case. This may result in the supervision arrangement being approved if the Board can be satisfied, or not approved if the Board cannot be.

Version management

Date	Details
March 2024	Approved by Chief Executive
March 2027	Next review date