

# EAPA UK Standards

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# Contents

1.	EAP Contracting . . . . .	2
2.	Implementation . . . . .	2
3.	Management Information and Reporting . . . . .	2
4.	Policies & Procedures . . . . .	3
5.	Complaints . . . . .	3
6.	Information Control: Record Keeping . . . . .	3
7.	Confidentiality and Data Protection. . . . .	4
8.	Business Operations and Service Delivery. . . . .	4
9.	Business Operations: People. . . . .	5
10.	EAP Service Delivery: Digital and Virtual . . . . .	5
11.	EAP Service Delivery: Counsellor Network (Affiliates) . . . . .	6
12.	EAP Service Delivery: Outcomes. . . . .	6
13.	EAP Counsellor Network: Case Management . . . . .	6
14.	EAP Counsellor Network: Risk Management . . . . .	6
15.	Clinical Governance . . . . .	7
16.	Availability . . . . .	7
17.	EAP Operations: Problem Identification and Initial Assessment . . . . .	7
18.	EAP Operations: Referral . . . . .	8
19.	EAP Operations: Short Term Problem Resolution . . . . .	8
20.	EAP Operations: EAP Support for Line Managers . . . . .	8
21.	EAP Operations: Manager Referral . . . . .	8

# Standards

## 1. EAP CONTRACTING

**STANDARD** An EAP must issue a contract to the purchaser for each contract period.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

- An EAP must provide a detailed description of all of the services being provided to the client organisation.
- The contract must contain a detailed complaints process

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION

**STANDARD** An EAP must work with the purchaser to ensure that steps are undertaken to properly implement, integrate and communicate/promote the EAP service.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

- An EAP should outline to the purchaser, in writing, how it must assist in the communication of the EAP program to employees and managers.
- An EAP must provide communication materials to the purchaser, during the life of the contract and not just at the start.

## 3. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AND REPORTING

**STANDARD** An EAP must offer management information reports to the purchaser.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

- An EAP must provide generic usage information reporting such as:
  - Cases presented
  - Contacts & new Contacts
  - Services used
  - Utilisation level
  - Use by gender
  - Web contacts
  - Referral types
- The report must detail the method of counting the data
- The report must identify any potential duplication of data and usage information
- The report must protect individual confidentiality and anonymity
- The method of calculating utilisation levels must be clearly explained

## 4. POLICIES & PROCEDURES

STANDARD	An EAP must have appropriate policies and procedures in place that underpins its work.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<p>Policies that cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Confidentiality</li><li>• Safeguarding vulnerable adults</li><li>• Safeguarding children and young people</li><li>• Diversity &amp; Inclusion</li><li>• Data protection</li><li>• Information security</li><li>• Complaints</li></ul>

## 5 . COMPLAINTS

STANDARD	An EAP must have a clear written complaints process.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<p>A complaints process must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define what is to be regarded as a complaint</li><li>• Identify a person to whom any complaint should be addressed, the method of making the complaint and any other requirements</li><li>• Identify by how the complaint will be investigated, reviewed and responded and the time scale</li><li>• Outline the process to be followed in the event of a dispute.</li></ul>

## 6. INFORMATION CONTROL: RECORD KEEPING

STANDARD	An EAP must create and maintain records of services to both service user and purchasing organisation that are consistent with the EAP service delivery model, purchasing and provider organisation policies, program procedures and all applicable legal and professional requirements.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An EAP must record all services delivered to the purchaser</li><li>• The purchaser shall be informed that a record will be kept of any contact with the service.</li><li>• Employees shall be informed that a record will be kept of any contact with the service.</li><li>• The content of records will be consistent with the scope of the service and detailed enough to provide management reporting.</li><li>• Affiliates shall be informed in writing that all records maintained in a format stipulated by the provider are the property of the provider.</li><li>• Records shall be kept, transferred and destroyed securely, with timeframes specified.</li><li>• Records should kept in line with other professional, legal and legislative requirements.</li><li>• Access to records should be kept in accordance with data protection, safeguarding and professional requirements.</li><li>• Access to electronic records should have appropriate access controls including password security.</li><li>• Individual Service users have a right to review their own records on request in accordance with Subject Access Request legislation. (Article 15 of UK GDPR)</li><li>• Service users will be provided upon request, guidance on how to access their personal information.</li></ul>

## 7. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

STANDARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. An EAP must have a clear confidentiality statement.</li><li>b. An EAP must adhere to UK Data Protection legislation.</li></ul>
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Confidentiality is a central tenet of an EAP service and must be maintained.</li><li>• An EAP must explain confidentiality and its boundaries to purchasers.</li><li>• An EAP must have a written statement which fully informs service users about their rights regarding the scope and limitations of confidentiality. This statement shall be communicated and made available to every service user before assistance is offered. In the case of telephone or online counselling it will be expected that the statement will be read out or typed out and verbally agreed or agreed to online by the service user. A copy will be sent by e-mail if requested by the service user.</li><li>• Every employee of an EAP must personally contract to a confidentiality agreement.</li><li>• An EAP must have clear guidelines and procedures as to when confidentiality will be breached, such as threat to life or others and child protection.</li><li>• An EAP must have clear consent to disclose information about a Service user, for example as part of a management referral.</li><li>• An EAP must protect service user information from disclosure with appropriate levels of security. Access levels for different staff within an EAP shall be clearly defined.</li><li>• All offices from which EAP services are provided must be located and designed so as to ensure service user's privacy.</li></ul>

## 8. BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

STANDARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. An EAP must ensure that their services are provided through a distinct and separate business function that provides a clearly identifiable and systematic EAP delivery system.</li><li>b. An EAP must ensure that procedures are in place to enable consistent and effective delivery of services. They will be continually reviewed and developed in response to EAP objectives and business needs.</li></ul>
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An EAP must ensure that it has sufficient resources to provide a safe, professional and clinical service.</li><li>• An EAP must employ at least one manager having a minimum of two-years' experience of direct EAP service management provision.</li><li>• An EAP must have in place a clinical director role who is qualified to at least (or above) any one or more of - BACP accredited, HCPC registered practitioner psychologist, NCS accredited professional registrant, UKCP registered psychotherapist, and has a defined role to prevent professional malpractice.</li><li>• An EAP must be an organisational member of a counselling body recognised by Professional Standards Authority.</li><li>• The EAP must have a separately identified function with its own policies, written procedures and identified personnel, reporting relationships and responsibilities. These procedures will describe all the important EAP processes, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The access routes to the EAP (telephone, digital, virtual, face to face).</li><li>• Processes which ensure confidentiality</li><li>• The processes for problem identification or assessment, referral and for short-term resolution.</li><li>• EAP participation in case monitoring, follow-up, treatment, case closure, reports and non-compliance.</li><li>• EAP participation in such related areas as manager referrals, procedures relating to stress, harassment, trauma, disability, mental health, substance misuse and discipline.</li></ul></li><li>• Each procedure will outline the scope of the work entailed.</li></ul>

## 9. BUSINESS OPERATIONS: PEOPLE

STANDARD	An EAP must ensure that an adequate number of professionals are available to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the EAP, in conjunction with purchaser service level agreement.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An EAP must ensure that adequate staffing levels and skills are available for each service user considering the size, geographic location for delivery, diversity and scope of the contracted programme.</li><li>• An EAP must evidence standards for supporting staff and quality assurance. Examples are – ISO-9001, Investors in People or equivalent practice.</li><li>• An EAP must evidence that staff have the knowledge, skills, qualification, training, competence and experience necessary to perform their tasks effectively.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that all staff must have a minimum of an annual written performance review to include a personal development plan for continuing professional development.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that all staff comply with their policies and procedures including duty of confidentiality and data protection and their accountability for service delivery and quality.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that all staff are familiar with, and work consistently within, the UK EAPA Code of Ethics.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities to other professional codes of ethics as appropriate and the requirement to identify and resolve actual or perceived conflicts of interest.</li><li>• An EAP must have in place systems to identify and address unacceptable practice, conduct or concerns around mental health.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and have policies and processes in place to raise concerns or grievances.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that all clinical professionals are undertaking adequate clinical supervision.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that all clinical professionals are indemnified. Including those supporting International contracts (where a separate indemnity may be required).</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that clinical professionals are registered with a relevant regulatory body.</li><li>• Clinical professionals must have completed at least 450 hours of tutor-led counselling professional training with student placement. They must have a minimum of 450 hours of practice supervised to at least 1.5 hours per calendar month and have practiced for at least three years</li></ul>

## 10. EAP SERVICE DELIVERY: DIGITAL AND VIRTUAL

STANDARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. All EAP clinical staff delivering virtual or digital services must have training and competence in digital and virtual delivery.</li><li>b. EAP affiliates delivering virtual or digital services must have completed training, and have competence in delivering digital or virtual services.</li></ul>
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EAP clinical staff must have attended training in digital and virtual counselling sufficient to provide competence in this work.</li><li>• EAP affiliates delivering services on behalf of EAP providers must have attended training in digital and virtual counselling sufficient to provide competence in this work.</li></ul>

## 11. EAP SERVICE DELIVERY: COUNSELLOR NETWORK (AFFILIATES)

STANDARD	An EAP must have a clear recruitment policy and management procedures for the affiliates they use to provide services.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An EAP must have a robust affiliate recruitment process that will include due diligence checks on qualifications, insurance cover, experience and professional accreditations</li><li>• Affiliates must be provided with a contract which clearly defines their specific roles and responsibilities, including procedures to be followed, lines of communication, boundaries, and expected performance criteria. This must include the management of service users at risk and escalation procedures.</li><li>• An EAP must carry out regular audit evaluation of its affiliates.</li><li>• An EAP must check annually that its affiliates remain a member of an appropriate professional body, with reporting of complaints status and declaration of any investigation into their conduct or practice.</li><li>• An EAP must check annually that its affiliates have professional liability insurance cover.</li><li>• An EAP must ensure that they update their affiliates on any changes to their policies, procedures or processes.</li><li>• An EAP must comply with the UK EAPA code of ethics.</li><li>• An EAP's affiliates must be given appropriate information about EAP delivery policy and procedures.</li><li>• Records must be kept of all affiliates who have contact with service users. These records will show:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relevant clinical and professional qualifications and their verification.</li></ul></li></ul>

## 12. EAP SERVICE DELIVERY: OUTCOMES

STANDARD	An EAP must have in place a methodology to measure outcomes of counselling delivered to service users.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Face to face counselling must have in place an outcome measure.</li><li>• Digital and virtual counselling may have an outcome measure in place.</li><li>• Outcome can be measured on a representative or sample basis.</li></ul>

## 13. EAP COUNSELLOR NETWORK: CASE MANAGEMENT

STANDARD	Regular case management must be provided to the EAP's affiliates managing their referred cases.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<p>An EAP must ensure that case managers are clinical professionals with substantial experience of service user assessment, including assessment for psychological and mental health issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Case managers must themselves be supported by clinical professionals in the field of mental and behavioural health and who have additional experience of crisis and suicide risk assessment.</li><li>• In the event of a crisis the case manager will agree a procedure for immediate urgent action.</li><li>• In the event of a critical incident the case manager will agree a procedure for immediate action or response.</li></ul>

## 14. EAP AFFILIATE COUNSELLOR NETWORK: RISK MANAGEMENT

STANDARD	An EAP must have a clearly defined clinical risk protocol for the management of risk cases that includes clinical escalation and consultation processes.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An EAP must have a risk management policy that includes clinical risk and safeguarding when required.</li><li>• An EAP must have adequate professional liability cover.</li></ul>



## 15. CLINICAL GOVERNANCE

STANDARD	An EAP must evidence an appropriate Clinical Governance structure.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clinical issues are discussed</li><li>• Quality is audited</li><li>• Clinical policies are implemented</li><li>• Complaints are audited</li><li>• EAP standards are reviewed</li><li>• Risks are evaluated and recorded with risk level and mitigation</li></ul>

## 16. AVAILABILITY

STANDARD	An EAP service must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The EAP service must be available for service users all day, every day, to assist in problem resolution and clinical assessment of needs.</li><li>• An EAP must be able to support an organisational Critical Incident 24/7</li></ul>

## 17. EAP OPERATIONS: PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND INITIAL ASSESSMENT

STANDARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. An EAP must provide initial assessment of employees presenting to the EAP as service users, to establish service users eligibility and suitability for counselling or other assistance via the EAP.</li><li>b. Initial assessment must be available 24/7.</li><li>c. An EAP must provide an initial assessment to an organisation that presents with a critical incident situation.</li></ul>
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All service users must have a mental health assessment at first contact to fully assess the service user needs, whereafter referral to relevant support services or treatment pathway will be made.</li><li>• Clinical staff who undertake initial assessments must have successfully completed, face to face classroom tuition, and graduated from a minimum of a one-year full time or two-year part-time counselling qualification that included a supervised placement with a minimum of 100 contact hours as an integral part of the course.</li><li>• Clinical staff involved in initial assessment must follow clearly detailed procedures and protocols for the assessment and documenting of problem identification, Service user needs and managing risks.</li><li>• Initial assessment procedures and protocols must detail guidelines for crisis situations and escalation to a qualified clinician.</li><li>• Where initial assessment/triage is digital, there must be a human interaction with a suitable clinical staff as detailed above, to manage risk and for signposting of service users not suitable for EAP intervention.</li><li>• For organisational Critical Incidents, clinical staff must be competent in Critical Incident Assessment.</li></ul>

## 18. EAP OPERATIONS: REFERRAL

STANDARD	An EAP must have a process to manage the service referral or treatment pathway following initial assessment.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An EAP must maintain appropriate professional boundaries in researching referral options, in making the referral and in follow up.</li><li>• Following initial assessment, an EAP must refer service users to an appropriate service or treatment pathway for the assessed problem.</li><li>• An EAP must signpost or refer onward to services outside of the EAP when the assessed problem is not appropriate to the EAP provision or to the purchaser.</li><li>• When an EAP refers a service user to another service, feedback mechanisms must be in place to ensure the case is received, progressed, concluded, and any outcome measures used. This must be done on an informed consent basis.</li><li>• An EAP must have knowledge of or be able to identify, when needed, local referral possibilities in light of the purchasing organisation's employee population.</li><li>• Referral options must be discussed with the service user and explanations given of the options, together with any further funding approval.</li><li>• Appropriate consent should be in place to share clinical data if needed to progress the case.</li></ul>

## 19. EAP OPERATIONS: SHORT-TERM PROBLEM RESOLUTION

STANDARD	An EAP must establish guidelines and procedures to determine if and when to provide support in line with the agreed contract.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Service users must be made aware of the boundaries and limitations in the delivery and session model in which the EAP will be working, and the limits of confidentiality.</li><li>• Signposting options outside of the EAP services should also be clearly explained where appropriate.</li></ul>

## 20. EAP OPERATIONS: EAP SUPPORT FOR LINE MANAGERS

STANDARD	An EAP must be able to provide help and support to line managers of the client organisation
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for line management on how to intervene constructively, consistently and sensitively to help employees with problems such as mental health, personal relationships or workloads.</li><li>• Support and information upon request to ensure that line managers understand their own boundaries and what is appropriate support for the employee.</li><li>• Guidance and information on how to make a referral to the EAP for support</li><li>• Guidance and information on human aspects of critical incidents</li></ul>

## 21. EAP OPERATIONS: MANAGER REFERRAL

STANDARD	An EAP must provide methods to accept referrals from the organisation and its representatives; this can include, but not limited to, line management, occupational health, wellbeing services, digital apps, and Human Resources department.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A clear procedure is in place for referrals and is available to all parties.</li><li>• An EAP must obtain informed consent from the service user that clearly details the level of feedback to be given to the referrer.</li></ul>





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