Mindfulness-Based Supervision (MBS) and Reflective Teaching Support (RTS)

Mindfulness teachers benefit from a range of reflective and developmental support throughout their professional lives. At BAMBA, this support is broadly categorised as either **Mindfulness-Based Supervision (MBS)** or **Reflective Teaching Support (RTS)**.

Both contribute to safe, ethical and effective practice. Both support ongoing learning and development. The distinction lies in their purpose rather than their format.

A teacher may engage in different combinations of MBS and RTS throughout the year depending on their individual needs, stage of development and area of focus.

Definitions

Mindfulness-Based Supervision (MBS)

Mindfulness-Based Supervision is a reflective partnership in which a mindfulness teacher and supervisor engage in mindful inquiry into teaching practice. Grounded in embodied awareness, mutual curiosity and professional responsibility, it offers a dedicated space to explore successes, challenges, ethical questions, practitioner wellbeing and ongoing development.

Its purpose is not to assess or direct, but to support learning, reflection and the deepening of mindfulness teaching practice.

Teachers engage with a Mindfulness-Based Supervisor when:

- Teaching mindfulness-based programmes, curricula or approaches in any setting.
- Supervising mindfulness teachers.
- Applying for initial BAMBA registration.
- Renewing BAMBA registration.
- Meeting supervision requirements set out within BAMBA Professional Standards and Good Practice Guidelines.

BAMBA Registration and Renewal

Mindfulness-Based Supervision is a core requirement of BAMBA registration and renewal. Teachers must engage in supervision with an appropriately experienced supervisor and submit the required supervision documentation as part of their application or renewal process.

The supervisor does not need to be listed on the BAMBA Supervisors Register. However, they should have a substantial mindfulness background and a good understanding of the BAMBA Professional Standards, Good Practice Guidelines and Ethics and Professional Conduct Framework.

Supervisors supporting BAMBA registration or renewal will be asked to confirm supervision arrangements and support the teacher's ongoing professional development and ethical practice.

Reflective Teaching Support (RTS)

Reflective Teaching Support (RTS) is a broad term used to describe the range of support that may contribute to a mindfulness teacher's ongoing development.

This may include:

- Mentoring
- Programme development
- Innovation and new approaches
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Exploration of contemplative traditions and practices
- Business development
- Leadership development
- Professional development
- Personal reflection and growth

While distinct from Mindfulness-Based Supervision, RTS may sometimes be provided by a BAMBA-registered Mindfulness-Based Supervisor where they have the skills, knowledge and experience to support the teacher's area of inquiry.

Teachers are encouraged to seek support from the individual best suited to their developmental needs, whether that is a supervisor, mentor, trainer, consultant, coach or another suitably experienced practitioner.

Reflective Teaching Support complements, but does not replace, the Mindfulness-Based Supervision required for BAMBA registration and renewal.

A Balanced Approach to Professional Support

BAMBA recognises that mindfulness teachers benefit from a range of professional support activities throughout their careers. There is no prescribed ratio of Mindfulness-Based Supervision (MBS) to Reflective Teaching Support (RTS).

Teachers may engage in different combinations of support according to their individual learning, development and professional needs.

For example, a teacher may have a greater need for RTS in a particular year due to programme development, innovation, business development, leadership responsibilities, research interests or wider contemplative study. Equally, another teacher may engage in more frequent supervision due to the nature of their teaching practice or professional responsibilities.

BAMBA encourages teachers to access a broad and appropriate mix of support. While Reflective Teaching Support can complement and enhance professional development, it does not replace the requirement for Mindfulness-Based Supervision where supervision is required for BAMBA registration, renewal or professional practice.

Forms of Mindfulness-Based Supervision (MBS) and Reflective Teaching Support (RTS)

Both Mindfulness-Based Supervision (MBS) and Reflective Teaching Support (RTS) may take place in a variety of formats, including one-to-one, group and peer-based settings.

The distinction lies not in the format of the interaction, but in its purpose.

MBS focuses on reflective inquiry into mindfulness teaching practice, professional responsibility and ethical conduct.

RTS focuses on broader developmental, educational, professional or personal support needs.

One-to-One

Individual sessions with an appropriately experienced supervisor, mentor, trainer, consultant or coach.

For MBS, the focus remains mindfulness teaching practice, ethical considerations, embodiment and professional responsibility.

For RTS, topics may include professional development, programme development, innovation, contemplative practice, leadership, business development, career progression, or personal and professional reflection.

Group

Structured supervision, learning, reflection or development opportunities delivered within a facilitated group setting.

For MBS, the group is guided by an appointed supervisor and provides participants with equitable opportunities to explore teaching practice, embodiment, ethical considerations and professional responsibility.

For RTS, groups may take the form of mentoring circles, communities of practice, professional development programmes, innovation forums, leadership groups or other facilitated learning environments.

Peer

Two or more teachers meeting for mutual reflection, learning and support.

For MBS, peer supervision provides additional opportunities for reflective inquiry and shared learning. Under BAMBA Professional Standards, peer supervision may contribute up to 50% of annual supervision activity, but does not replace the requirement for formal supervision.

For RTS, peer support may include collaborative learning, sharing resources, discussing emerging practice, exploring professional challenges and supporting ongoing growth and development.

For detailed guidance on peer supervision, including its purpose, structure, process, contracting and the development of safe and supportive learning cultures, please refer to the BAMBA Peer Supervision Guidance Notes.

Working with a Mindfulness-Based Supervisor

A Mindfulness-Based Supervisor supports teachers to reflect on their teaching practice, professional development, ethical responsibilities and embodied presence as a mindfulness practitioner.

The supervisory relationship should provide a safe, respectful and appropriately challenging environment in which teachers can:

- Reflect on their teaching experiences.

- Explore ethical questions and professional dilemmas.
- Consider participant welfare and safeguarding issues.
- Deepen their embodied mindfulness practice.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Maintain alignment with BAMBA Professional Standards and Good Practice Guidelines.
- Support safe, ethical and effective delivery of mindfulness teaching.

Summary

Mindfulness-Based Supervision and Reflective Teaching Support are complementary forms of professional support.

Mindfulness-Based Supervision focuses on mindfulness teaching practice, ethical responsibility and professional standards. It is a core requirement for BAMBA registration and renewal.

Reflective Teaching Support provides wider opportunities for learning, growth and development across professional, educational, personal and organisational contexts.

Teachers are encouraged to engage in a broad and appropriate mix of both, seeking support that best meets their needs while ensuring that any BAMBA supervision requirements are fulfilled through Mindfulness-Based Supervision.