



GENERIC SUPERVISION ASSESSMENT TOOL (GSAT)

USER MANUAL

GSAT BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

The Generic Supervision Assessment Tool (GSAT) for supervisors (GSAT-SR), supervisees (GSAT-SE), and third-party assessors (GSAT-A) are multi-perspective tools designed to assist supervisors, supervisees, educators, and researchers understand the core evidence-based competency skills critical to facilitating effective supervision regardless of practice setting or profession. The GSAT-SR, GSAT-SE, and GSAT-A assist in providing multiple lenses to reflection on supervisor competency, as supervisors and supervisees bring diverse perspectives, biases, experiences, and knowledge to the supervision relationship, and have different interpretations of supervisor competence. The GSAT's multiuse functions strengthens feedback processes and contributes to the enhancement of supervisor self-efficacy through identification of strengths and areas for development.

There are two fully validated GSAT versions available for use. The GSAT-SR supervisor self-assessment tool has 26 competency items specific to the competencies inherent in facilitating effective supervision. These items are grouped into four subscales ('*fundamental feedback processes*', '*goals and tasks*', '*respect*', and '*enabling supervisory practices*'). The GSAT-SE supervisee feedback tool has 21 items grouped into two subscales ('*foundational competencies enabling effective feedback*' and '*fundamental accountability, safety and awareness processes*').

The third tool, the GSAT-A is a promising new tool designed and piloted as an impartial observational assessment tool for use by third parties to assess recorded supervision sessions against supervisor competencies. The GSAT-A was designed for multiple application, for instance, for supervisors reflecting on supervision practice with their own supervisor through review of recorded sessions, and by supervision educators and

researchers. Pilot results indicate the GSAT-A has good interrater reliability, provides opportunity for feedback on demonstrated skills and enhances the reflective practice possibilities of the GSAT-SR and GSAT-SE. The GSAT-A has the same 26 items structure as the GSAT-SR grouped into the same subscales (*'fundamental feedback processes'*, *'goals and tasks'*, *'respect'*, and *'enabling supervisory practices'*) which makes comparisons of supervisor self-assessment and the objective third-party assessor easy.

ATTRIBUTION AND USE OF THE GSAT AND ASSOCIATED RESOURCES

The GSAT tools and all related resources are freely available. The authors of the tools must be acknowledged in all research and publications using the GSAT tools and or the user manual (Hamilton et al, 2021). Permission to utilise the GSAT resources does not provide any endorsement of any individuals, groups, or organisations, who utilise this work. The GSAT must not be distributed to third parties and/or be used for any commercial purposes without first seeking the permission of the lead author and Griffith University (sarah.hamilton@griffithuni.edu.au or shamilton.gsats@gmail.com).

THE VALIDITY OF THE GSAT AS SUPERVISION ASSESSMENT TOOL

The GSAT-SR and GSAT-SE were developed and psychometrically validated by a multidisciplinary expert group that had a balanced ratio of frontline practitioner experience and expert voices. The comprehensive validation methodology included a pilot of the tool, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with independent sample sets of participants. The EFA and CFA and analyses were undertaken in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25, 2016) and R statistical software version 4.0. (R Core Team, 2020), and identified the tools factor structures, and tested construct validity, external validity reliability and generalizability.

Participants involved in the validation of the GSAT-SE and GSAT-SR represented a broad workforce cross section of with more than 12 professional disciplines Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Participating supervisors (661 in total) and supervisees (633 in total) represented a range in supervision experience from novice new graduate experience with supervision through to decades of experience in clinical supervision and training. For full information on the GSAT development and validation please refer to Hamilton et al, 2021.

Hamilton, S. J., Briggs, L., Peterson, E., Slattery, M., O'Donovan, A. (2021). Supporting conscious competency: Validation of the Generic Supervision Assessment Tool (GSAT)

GSAT APPLICATIONS (GSAT-SR, GSAT-SE, GSAT-A)

The GSAT tools are downloadable in both manual paper form with instructions for manual calculation of results, and fillable PDF in Adobe Reader with automatic calculations (refer to *Instructions downloading and using fillable PDF* at the end of this guide). The tools are short and easy to complete, generally taking 15-20 minutes to answer. GSAT tools can be used in multiple ways:

- The **GSAT-SR** can be completed as an **independent supervisor led self-assessment reflection** to enhance and develop supervisory skills. However, on completion of the GSAT-SR we would strongly encourage supervisors discuss their results with their supervising supervisor or a peer and consider strengths and areas for improvement.
- **GSAT-SR and GSAT-SE supervision dyad reflection.** Supervisors can invite supervisee to provide feedback on their experience of supervision with the completion of the GSAT-SE. The combined use of the GSAT-SR and GSAT-SE enhances the joint understanding of supervisor competencies, highlights the importance of regular supervisee feedback on the experience of supervision effectiveness, and can contribute to improved supervisory practice. When considering inviting supervisees to complete the GSAT-SE please refer to the section '*Supervisors seeking feedback from a supervisee (GSAT-SE).*'
- **GSAT-SE** can be used as a **supervisee self-directed reflective activity** to review the supervision they are receiving and expand knowledge of the broad range of skills that contribute to supervisor competence and effective supervision. When considering use of the GSAT-SE as self-directed activity supervisees are recommended to refer to the section '*Supervisees using GSAT-SE.*'
- **GSAT-A as an objective third-party assessment of supervisor competency.** The GSAT-A can be used alongside the supervisor self-assessment GSAT-SR, and supervisee experience GSAT-SE. Supervisors (in partnership with their supervisee) can use the GSAT-A with a **supervising supervisor** or mentor to review recordings of current supervision sessions. The GSAT-A can also be applied more formally by **educators** to aid specific feedback to the trainee by assessment of skill acquisition post supervision training, or **researchers** investigating supervisor competency. When considering application of the GSAT-A please refer to the section '*Considerations for the Application of the GSAT-A.*'

Outcomes from application of the GSAT tools can be enhanced when undertaken within regular effective feedback processes, with clear consideration given to the intent of the application, means for exploring results, and a commitment to translating the information gathered into practice.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE GSAT-A

The GSAT-A can be used for providing independent observations of supervisor competency either in training sessions or in supervision sessions. The GSAT-A can be used to enhance supervision of supervisor practice through regular reviews of recorded supervision sessions. When used in supervision of supervision the GSAT-A would ideally be used to review authentic unscripted recorded supervision sessions in conjunction with the GSAT-SR self-assessment and GSAT-SE feedback.

The GSAT-A can be used by educators undertaking supervision training as a means of providing structured constructive feedback to the trainee supervisor on demonstration of essential skills for effective supervision. For enhanced feedback in training settings the GSAT-A is best applied along with the GSAT-SR (self-evaluation tool) and GSAT-SE (supervise experience), so participants can compare differences in perception of skill application.

When utilising the GSAT-A as part of research it is recommended that due consideration is given to establishing the moderation methodology so to ensure consistency of scoring and feedback. It is also very important to consider how GSAT-A raters will account for biases, professional and cultural influences, and differences in interpretation of competencies. This is especially important when using the GSAT-A for research that includes an international participant pool and multiple disciplines.

It is important to follow best practice when using video recordings as part of any third-party assessment process. It is recommended that when using the GSAT-A the following steps be considered as part of the implementation:

- Consent of the supervisor and supervisee in producing a video recording of a supervision session for the purpose of observation of supervisor practice. Consent should be detailed and inclusive of (but is not limited to) aim, objectives, parameters of use, confidentiality/privacy, storage criteria, protect of client/patient information, rights of supervisee to change their mind, feedback processes.
- Consideration and discussion of best practice regarding any requirements for seeking consent of the clients/patients/families discussed in the supervision video.
- When rating recorded supervision sessions, consideration needs to be given to the influence of participant anxiety on rating as the process. As the very act of

producing examples of supervision practice for rating by a third-party can be uncomfortable and emotionally arousing, and therefore could influence the perception of the supervisory alliance by the observing rater.

- How will any emotion or discomfort associated with video recording and sharing of feedback be acknowledged, held and processed?
- Checking of any professional registration or workplace governance and confidentiality processes that may inform the recording of supervision and application of GSAT to reviews of videos.
- Consideration of the impact of any dual relationships.
- Joint understanding and agreement on using formal tools to aid supervision feedback processes:
 - How will it support your usual summative and formative feedback practices?
 - How frequently will this process be used, and how will its usefulness be evaluated?
 - When applied to supervision of supervisor reflection will the supervisee in the video recording be made aware of the 'who, why, what' e.g., who the supervising supervisor is, are there any dual relationships that need to be transparent?
 - What level of transparency will be applied to giving the supervisee feedback on the outcome of the video reflection?
 - What cultural considerations that need to be discussed?
- If used in conjunction with a formal evaluation process assessing supervisor competency for supervision training or registration will the supervisee be notified of the outcome?
- Consider what best practice feedback processes will be used to enhance the feedback reflection for the supervisor.
- Risk – when applying the GSAT-A clarify processes for any third-party assessor noting of a 'Fatal flaw'. As defined in the tool a 'fatal flaw' is an unacknowledged and/or unaddressed ethical or safety issue with potential or actual risk of harm to the welfare of the client/s, supervisee, organisation or public. Application of the GSAT-A should include information on how 'fatal-flaw' feedback will be raised and reflected on, who should know, implications, and methods for follow-up?
- Provision of clear information on the setting up of video recording. For example, in the piloting of the GSAT-A supervision dyads started the recorded session with a brief description of the purpose of the recording, their joint consent, clarification that they were not using identifiable client information. Supervisors and supervisees can also consider summarising aspects the third-party observer may not see, for instance how long they had been meeting for supervision, if they have a current supervision agreement etc.

SUPERVISORS SEEKING FEEDBACK FROM A SUPERVISEE (GSAT-SE)

In maintaining a healthy supervisory working alliance, it is important supervisors establish and maintain an effective supervisory feedback culture.

It is crucial that supervisors consider how and when they will invite supervisees to complete a GSAT-SE and how they will ask supervisees to provide formative feedback on their supervision. Before inviting feedback, it is strongly recommended that supervisors first discuss the process with their own supervisor or peer and consider:

- The intended application and outcomes.
- How the GSAT fits with your current regular feedback processes.
- The relational context of the current supervisory working alliance.
- The power dynamics in the current supervision relationship.
- Impacts of any dual relationships.
- The supervisors own experience of seeking focused specific feedback (summative and formative) on their competency or capability in the past.
- The current understanding and experiences regarding the giving and receiving of feedback in the supervision relationship (including the processes for checking understanding of feedback received).
- Strategies to strengthen or support the feedback environment so supervisees feel safe and respected to give feedback.
- Currency of the supervision agreement regarding formative evaluation processes and the application of supervision tools/measures as part of the supervisory working agreement.
- How any emotion or discomfort associated with inviting feedback be acknowledged, held and processed. Reflect on any possibility of emotion influencing the receipt of feedback or its application to practice.
- Planning for the future; consider how you will utilise the GSAT in an ongoing way to inform your practice.

The GSAT is not intended to replace purposeful regular supervisory alliance conversations. The GSAT should only enhance supervisory practices already in place. For useful guidance on effective feedback mechanisms please refer to Weallans et al, 2021.

Weallans, J., Roberts, C., Hamilton, S., & Parker, S. (2021). Guidance for providing effective feedback in clinical supervision in postgraduate medical education: a systematic review. *Postgraduate medical journal*.

SUPERVISEES USING GSAT-SE

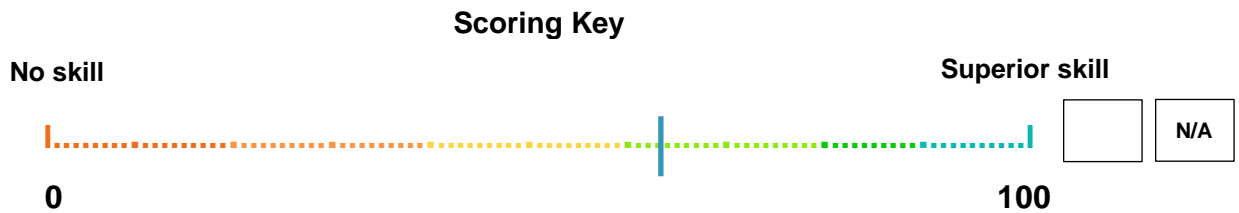
Sound communication and informed regular feedback processes between supervisors and supervisees are essential factors for successful supervision. As a formative supervision feedback tool, the GSAT-SE allows supervisees to reflect on the effectiveness of their current supervision. The GSAT-SE gives specific feedback to the supervisor on the application of core supervisory skills for facilitating supervision. The intent of the GSAT-SE is to strengthen:

- supervisee knowledge of competencies for effective supervision,
- supervisory working relationships,
- dialogue on supervision skills, and
- the regular giving and receiving of feedback.

Whether completing the GSAT-SE as a self-directed activity, or because asked by a supervisor, please consider the following if you plan to provide feedback based on the GSAT-SE results to your supervisor:

- What was the original intent of completing the GSAT-SE? Reflect on how, when, and why you are using the GSAT-SE.
- Have you used formal feedback tools with your supervisor in the past, what were the positive or negative implications?
- What is your comfort level and experience of giving feedback in this supervision relationship and how might that impact on using the GSAT-SE with your supervisor?
- Do you feel safe to discuss your level of comfort in giving feedback with your supervisor?
- If your supervisor initiated the use of the GSAT-SE has there been a conversation on how feedback will be facilitated, and results used?
- Consider your experience of feedback and safe reflection upon feedback content and emotion.
- Planning for the future; consider how this feedback will inform your work together and any further use of the GSAT-SE or other tools as part of your practice together.
- Seek guidance from a senior colleague or manager if using the GSAT-SE has raised any concerns regarding the quality, or safety, of your current supervision.

INTERPRETATING GSAT SCORES



Rating	Scoring key examples
0 - 19	Absence (0) of essential skill or Inappropriate application (1-19) of essential skill.
20 - 39	Limited skill with problems evident.
40 - 59	Foundational level of skill with minor problems evident.
60 - 79	Proficient level of skill with consistent level of practice
80 - 89	Advanced level of skill with high level of consistency in practice
90 - 100	Expert level of skills with consistently high level of practice evident.
N/A	N/A May have the skill but its application was not applicable to supervision sessions.

The GSAT provides users with individual subset scores and an overall competency score. The competency summaries provide specific feedback to the supervisor about their strengths and areas for future development. The GSAT uses a colour assisted visual analogue (VAS) rating scale to allow for increased sensitivity of feedback for each competency item and includes a non-applicable (N/A) option for those items not related to the supervision being undertaken. The agility of the GSAT scoring system ensures the tool can assist individual supervisor's self-reflection and highlight on-going learning needs and goals and can be strengthened when utilised with supervisee feedback from the GSAT-SE.

The GSAT Scoring Scale serves as a guide to understand the proficiency level of supervisors at each developmental level from limited through to expert. GSAT scores can be interpreted and utilised in multiple ways to strengthen feedback and reflection processes:

1. The **total score** provides you with an overall rating of your supervisor competency. Total score average is the sum of all GSAT items answered divided by number answered (total number answered excludes N/A).

2. The **subscale scores** provide a breakdown of scores on each of the subscales and identifies strengths and areas for improvement. It is recommended supervisors reflect on which colour they mainly sit within. If for example, results sit mainly in the orange or yellow levels this can highlight areas a supervisor may wish to develop further or highlight areas for building self-awareness and goals for learning. Where supervisors sit comfortably in green or the blue levels, it is important to reflect on how this informs supervision outcomes, where strengths sit and opportunities for extension. It is recommended that supervisors utilise GSAT feedback to create goals and personalised action plans for continuing supervision education.
3. **Breakdown of difference in ratings** are important as they support critical reflection on patterns that sit within the global average score. The overall score may not be reflective of overall competency. Reflection on each subscale result may indicate specific areas for development and assist the development of a personalised action plan for creating steps to utilise the information you gained from the GSAT into your practice.
4. **Consideration of N/A ratings.** If supervisors have applied more than 4 N/A in subscale 1 and subscale 4 and/or have more than 1 N/A in subscale 2 and subscale 3 then they would not be demonstrating adequate competency for facilitating effective supervision. Similarly, for supervisees completing the GSAT-SE no more than 4 N/A in subscale 1 or subscale 2 can be applied.
 - a. As N/A represents a real response reflection should be undertaken on the use of N/A in relation to specific competency items is suggested when considering results. The N/A ratings application applied in use of the GSAT-SR and GSAT-SE should be compared in any future use of the tools.
5. **Comparison of GSAT-SR with GSAT-SE.** It is ideal to enhance the supervisor self-assessment ratings (GSAT-SR) with inclusion of supervisee feedback (GSAT-SE). This may highlight differences in perceptions of supervisor facilitation of a competency that could be processed within a supervision session (when the supervisee feels comfortable to do this).
6. **Comparison of GSAT-SR and GSAT-SE with GSAT-A.** To obtain more objective feedback, supervisor self-assessment ratings (GSAT-SR), and supervisee feedback (GSAT-SE) can be compared with feedback from a third-

party assessment (GSAT-A) of a recorded supervision session or 'live' supervision sessions in training environments.

GSAT COMPETENCY SUMMARIES

These summaries provide a guiding description of what a supervisor's practice should be for each competency level. As a supervisor's practice may differ across work settings and throughout their career, it is important to assess practice on a regular basis.

(0-19)	(20-39)	(40-59)	(60-79)	(80-89)	(90-100)
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Absence of skill

0 Absence of essential skill where the skill/s should have been applied to the supervision working relationship to ensure effective supervision outcomes.

Inappropriate application

1 – 19 Inappropriate application or performance of essential skill/s. Practice consistently falls below the line of expected skill, knowledge, and behaviours for appropriate application of this skill which is likely to impact on supervisory outcomes. The supervisor is advised to seek support and training to improve application of skill in this area. It is recommended that the supervisor reflects with a third party (such as their supervising supervisor), on how to improve future supervision practice.

Limited skill

20 - 39 Limited knowledge or understanding of supervisory skills and techniques that at times are not accurate, do not achieve the intended outcome, or frequently fall below the standards for effective supervisory practice. This would indicate a need for reflection on application of skills with consideration of supervisory development learning goals, skills development and learning opportunities as part of regular supervision of supervision.

Foundational skill

40 – 59 Foundational application of competencies that reflect skills at the novice or developing level of experience. Has knowledge of supervision concepts, skills, principles, and behaviours. Has safe, sound foundational skills in translating competencies into practice and enhancing the supervisory relationship.

Proficient skill

60 – 79 Proficient practice skills with moderate level of expertise. Able to apply skills accurately and consistently to multiple competency domains. Can successfully facilitate discussions around these competencies, the application of and principles of each competency, and their importance in enhancing effective supervisory outcomes. Utilises resources to support goals and tasks. Demonstrates ethical practice and has a visible commitment to the supervisee's development. Establishes and maintains a healthy supervisory working relationship and upholds safe practice.

Advanced skill

80 – 89 Advanced level of skills and knowledge for providing supervision. Demonstrates a high level of capability in most competency domains. Confidently translates nuances related to supervision competencies to the supervisee in easily understood and relatable means. Uses processes or practices in supervision which improve the supervisory working relationship, and outcomes of agreed goals and tasks. Demonstrates ethical and safe practice to a high standard.

Expert

90 – 100 Expert supervisory skills that consistently exceed expectation, set an exceptional standard, are safe and ethically sound. At all times the supervisor displays a consistently high level of performance and expertise in relation to the skills, attitudes, values, and behaviours of all competency domains. Demonstrated excellence in strategic application of skills and knowledge. Draws on a broad repertoire of strategies to facilitate supervision for the benefit of the supervisee.

RESEARCH APPLICATIONS

COMPARING GSAT WITH OTHER TOOLS

If you wish to compare results from the GSAT visual analogue scale scoring system to other psychometrically validated tools that use Likert scales, you can convert the Likert scores to visual analogue scores using the following formula. Where X is the Likert score and A is one less than the maximum number on the Likert scale:

$$\frac{X - 1}{A} * 100$$

For example, a 7-point Likert scale can be converted to visual analogue scale using the formula:

$$\frac{X - 1}{6} * 100$$

and a 5-point Likert scale can be converted to a visual analogue scale using the formula:

$$\frac{X - 1}{4} * 100$$

During validation, the GSAT was used alongside the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory SWAI (Efstation et al., 1990) and Supervision Evaluation and Supervisory Competence Scale V2 (SE-SC, Gonsalvez et al., 2017).

ANALYSIS OF N/A IN RESEARCH DATA SETS

The GSAT tools have an N/A option for respondents to select for skills deemed not relevant to the focus of the supervision relationship being assessed. Or in the case of the GSAT-A, where the assessor feels the skill was not required in that single supervision session.

As N/A responses are true responses and not 'missing data' only complete cases (no N/A responses) were used in the validation of the GSAT-SR and GSAT-SE exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). To account for any possible response bias in the results due to the removing cases with N/A from the analysis an exploratory analysis was undertaken. This allowed for a better understanding of response behaviour and whether specific GSAT items were more likely to receive N/A responses, and to explore whether the answers these respondents gave to the items they did answer (0-100) differed from the behaviour of respondents who never used N/A in scoring the GSAT.

This was achieved through splitting the two independent datasets into two parts:

1. complete cases (i.e., complete dataset) and
2. cases where the respondent responded N/A to any item (i.e., N/A dataset).

This allowed for calculation of the percent of N/A data by item and to compare the item responses provided by respondents in each dataset. When the distribution of responses (0-100) for each item in the complete and N/A response datasets was examined for each data set, no significant differences were found in the median responses in the datasets. Suggesting that there was no response bias difference between the groups that would be likely to bias the results.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DOWNLOADING AND USING FILLABLE PDF

1. Download the fillable PDF GSAT tool to your computer or network drive, and then open it with Adobe Reader to complete.
2. It is important to use the latest version of **Adobe Reader**. If you do not have Adobe Reader on your computer it is free to download use, you can source the software here: [Adobe Acrobat Reader DC Install for all versions](#)
3. If you are using a **Mac** do not use the preview program. **Adobe Reader** is the only program that will allow you to see and use all the functions of the tool.

4. It is recommended you do not use Chrome PDF viewer, or you will not be able to see or use all the functions of the GSAT tool. Please only open with Adobe Reader.
5. When completing the GSAT tool, you can type directly into each field. When providing word responses font is preselected and cannot change. You can only use regular upper and lower cases and the system will not accept underlined text or bold, italics, apostrophes, dashes etc.
6. When typing your score into each items response box you cannot exceed 100 on a scale of 0-100 or you will receive a warning alert when you attempt to answer the next item.
7. When applying N/A to the item you all that is required is a click on the N/A box and a tick will appear.
8. You can save your data and re-open the same file later to complete or enter additional information.
9. Once completed you can click on 'clear the form' and the GSAT tool will refresh itself.
10. To save your form go to the Adobe Reader menu and select **File** then **Save As** and once you have chosen your location for saving click **Save**
11. If you are **unable to view or download** the GSAT tool fillable PDF file using Adobe Reader, first check your viewer preferences. Close your browser, open Adobe Reader, go to the menu bar, click on **Edit**, then **Preferences**, then **Internet**, under Options check to make sure that view in PDF Brower is not your selected option instead select Adobe Reader. If this still fails, you can opt to download the manual paper version of the GSAT tool.