

Guidance for Developing Assessment

Qualification title

NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills (600/0728/X)

Unit 01 Using Counselling Skills (K/502/6966)

- 1.1 Candidates should be able to accurately recognise a range of counselling skills when demonstrated by others and/or self in a counselling session within the course or in a commercially produced DVD. Evidence may be in the form of an evaluation sheet with skills already listed or in the form of a statement. Skills include initial boundary setting, invitation to talk, appropriate use of questions, appropriate challenge, clarification, echoing of key words, appropriate non-verbal communication, appropriate pace and tone of voice, paraphrasing and reflection, restating, immediacy, staying in the here and now, staying focussed on the helpee/client, appropriate self-disclosure, summary, staying with silence and management of endings. It is not expected that the candidate would be able to demonstrate all of these skills or to demonstrate any skills well.

In evaluation sheets and statements the candidate should use the terms helper or practitioner when referring to self or others on the course as users of counselling skills, reserving the term counsellor for qualified practitioners (eg on DVDs). Audio or video recordings of skills sessions in the context of the course in which the candidate is helper may be included in the portfolio. Any self-evaluation and, if produced, recordings of skills sessions within the course sessions can also form the basis of evidence for 1.2, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 and form part of the evidence for 4.1.

- 1.2 This evidence may be part of a written account (perhaps linked to Unit 02 evidence and/or part of the material used as evidence for 1.1) showing how the use of particular counselling skills can or did develop the relationship between the helper and the helpee and benefit the helpee. Helping relationships other than counselling relationships might include youth worker and client, social worker and client, nurse and patient, mental health support worker and client, teacher and pupil/student, and at least two of these or other helping relationships need to be referred to within the evidence.
- 2.1 Boundaries include: the context of the helping relationship, the type of help that can be provided and its limitations, the limits of confidentiality (including record keeping and discussion of counselling skills sessions with others for support and developmental purposes), time limits on helper-helpee sessions, avoidance of dual relationships and appropriate referral to other individuals and agencies. The candidate should describe the boundaries in the context of counselling skills sessions within the course and may also apply them to counselling or other helping relationships. Reference should be made in descriptions to relevant legislation, codes of practice/ethical framework and organisation policy. Evidence may be based around a helper-helpee contract used in skills sessions within the course or in other contexts.
- 2.2 The candidate should demonstrate within evidence for 1.1, 1.2 and 3.1 and 3.2 that they have been able to identify with a helpee the objectives the helpee has in regard to the counselling skills sessions. The candidate may be able to comment on how the process of setting objectives differs from person centred, CBT or psychodynamic perspectives. Objectives may include feeling better able to cope with a specific life event or relationship, development of particular aspects of personality (eg increased self-

esteem or confidence) or increased self-understanding. If the focus is a CBT one, the objective is development of specific coping strategies to deal with an identified issue.

- 3.1 This may be evidenced by the self-evaluation and feedback from others in regard to learning outcomes 1.1 and 1.2.
- 3.2 Again, this may be evidenced by the self-evaluation and feedback from others in regard to learning outcomes 1.1 and 1.2 accompanied by at least one more in-depth reflective account.
- 4.1 Candidates may describe useful strategies for ending a single session or longer term counselling skills relationship in a range of contexts, perhaps in response to a number of case study scenarios. Evidence produced for 1.1, 1.2, 3.1 and 3.2 may also help to evidence this learning outcome. Strategies may include preparation for endings at the start of the helping relationship, providing a “phased ending” with longer gaps between sessions, referral to other services and providing “safety nets” in the form of an arranged or on demand future session, telephone or email support.
- 4.2 This may be evidenced by accounts of the candidate’s own experience, by accounts of discussions, interviews and role plays in class and by responses to further questions in regard to the case study scenarios used for 4.1.

Unit 02 Introduction to Counselling Skills Theories (K/502/6630)

- 1.1 The candidate should refer to Sigmund Freud and any one other psychodynamic theorist and include descriptions of the following concepts in statements or assignments produced as evidence:

- ◆ the unconscious mind
- ◆ Id, Ego and Superego
- ◆ the psychodynamic stages of development and fixation
- ◆ mental defence mechanisms
- ◆ transference
- ◆ free association
- ◆ the interpretation of dreams.

Accounts should be in the candidate's own words, and explanations should be in line with the level of the course.

- 1.2 The candidate should refer to Carl Rogers and include descriptions of the following concepts in statements or assignments produced as evidence:

- ◆ the actualising tendency
- ◆ conditions of worth (introjected values)
- ◆ the necessary and sufficient conditions for personality change
- ◆ the three "core" conditions of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard.

Accounts should be in the candidate's own words and explanations should be in line with the level of the course.

- 1.3 The candidate should refer to Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis and include descriptions of the following concepts in statements or assignments produced as evidence:

- ◆ irrational beliefs
- ◆ negative automatic thoughts
- ◆ faulty thinking (with examples)
- ◆ the ABC model
- ◆ Socratic questioning
- ◆ coping self-statement
- ◆ cost-benefit analysis
- ◆ goal setting.

Accounts should be in the candidate's own words and explanations should be in line with the level of the course.

- 1.4 The three approaches from 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 should be compared and contrasted in regard to a number of specific themes, for example, counsellor-client relationship, development of personality, how personality change occurs, "here and now" or past oriented.

- 2.1 Candidate statements might focus on one or more of the following themes:

- ◆ how theory underpins counselling skills and techniques and attitudes
- ◆ how the three major counselling approaches were originally developed and continue to develop
- ◆ the role of research in counselling with reference to the approaches in 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4.

Unit 03 Diversity and Ethics in the Use of Counselling Skills (M/502/6631)

- 1.1 This may relate to any agency or general area of paid or voluntary work that involves the use of counselling skills. Candidates should be asked to include a current copy of the ethical framework/code of practice and explain why they have selected it.
- 1.2 The candidate should be required to answer specific questions or produce an account applying the selected ethical framework/code of ethics to a case study scenario or scenarios. Brief annotations or highlighting of the document are not sufficient evidence.
- 1.3 Candidates should write a statement relating the ethical framework/code of practice to their own use of counselling skills in the course setting or in their paid or voluntary work setting if applicable. They may include, for example, an account of a particular on-going counselling skills situation or an event that facilitates discussion of ethical/unethical practice. The account should be in the first person.
- 2.1 Candidates should list and briefly explain the various bases of discrimination, for example, gender, race, sexuality, religion, age, class, physical appearance, disability and health status.
- 2.2 Candidates should provide a statement about discrimination in regard to one or more of the bases from 2.1 or in regard to other subtle forms of discrimination. This can be the candidate's own experience or that of another person. If the experience is that of another person and is in the form of a newspaper or magazine article, a book, TV programme or film, the student needs to produce a statement with his or her own summary of the discrimination and its effect on the individual rather than just include the source material. A reference for the source material should be included. It would also be possible to provide an audio or video recording of an interview carried out by the candidate if this is considered appropriate by the tutor.
- 3.1 Candidates should give the title of and briefly outline the purpose of the major UK anti-discriminatory legislation at the time of the delivery of the course. Candidates need to be clear about the difference between a law and an ethical framework/code of practice.
- 3.2 Candidates should produce an account in which they identify how they themselves and/or other users of counselling skills may react to others who are different from themselves in major and subtle ways and describe how this might influence the use of counselling skills. Responses may include reference to counselling skills sessions in class, experience in paid or voluntary work that includes use of counselling skills and material from textbooks and journals aimed at counsellors and users of counselling skills. Tutors may also introduce activities that facilitate identification and discussion of reactions to difference.
- 3.3 Candidates may be asked to respond with statements to scenarios in regard to use of counselling skills in a range of contexts and to identify situations from their own experience of counselling skills sessions within the course. They should be asked to apply relevant legislation and ethical framework/code of practice content to these situations and to explore how discrimination could be prevented or addressed and how difference could be celebrated. Reference might be made to sources of supervision and support and other resources available to case study characters or the candidate themselves as appropriate.

Unit 04 Counselling Skills and Personal Development (T/502/6632)

- 1.1 Responses, written in the first person, should reflect the candidate's own values and beliefs rather than those of an idealised user of counselling skills. Case studies showing ethical dilemmas and/or possible reactions to various situations and activities which identify personal priorities may help candidates identify their basic values and beliefs.
- 1.2 This explanation might be based on the candidate's own values and beliefs as identified for 1.1, but could usefully also involve values and beliefs within case study material in order to introduce a range of further attitudes that may have helpful or unhelpful influences on a helping relationship.
- 1.3 Statements should be personal to the candidate but possible motivations might be suggested as a foundation for identifying, exploring and expressing own motivation. These might include a wish to give something back after own success in life, an interest in the workings of the mind, a wish to give others the benefits of own life experiences and insights, a wish to make amends or a wish to develop a career aim.
- 1.4 Again, a statement should be personal to the candidate, but general examples of blocks to listening and learning might be suggested as a foundation for the candidate's exploration and expression of own personal blocks. These blocks may be physical, social and emotional and relate to educational opportunities, relationships with others in different contexts and to self-awareness and understanding.
- 1.5 A description of benefits might be linked to guidelines for good practice in the task of giving and receiving feedback on use of counselling skills, with an explanation from the candidate about how this aids development. Various opportunities within the course for giving and receiving feedback and reflecting on what has been gained from this may be used to add depth to the evidence. For example, a candidate might include a copy of the written feedback that he or she has given to other candidates about their use of counselling skills, about their presentation in regard to another course unit or in regard to a book or DVD review they have written. They would then identify what they gained personally by giving this feedback. The candidate might also include feedback they themselves have been given by other candidates and by their tutor in regard to counselling skills, presentations and reviews and identify their own learning and development from receiving the feedback. Learning journals might include reference to discussions and other activities in which specific responses to and from others are explored.
- 2.1 Candidates can identify, rate and/or compare their skills and qualities against those seen as requirements for a good practitioner in the field of emotional support. The BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice identifies personal qualities, as do many counselling skills resources. Skills are as identified for Unit 01, learning outcome 1.1.
- 2.2 Candidates should identify the areas in which they need further development based on their evidence for 2.1, and may also add any specialist training or higher level training they feel is needed before they can work in particular paid or voluntary helping roles that involve use of counselling skills.
- 2.3 Candidates should turn areas identified for 2.2 into SMART targets, with the acknowledgement that development of some personal skills and qualities is on-going. A SMART target is one that is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time limited.
- 3.1 These needs should be personal to the candidate and informed by needs identified specifically in counselling skills sessions within the course. It may be useful to consider

these in terms of the tasks of supervision, eg emotional support needs, learning needs in regard to counselling skills and ethical, legal and good practice considerations in the context of skills work sessions.

- 3.2 Candidates should identify and describe how they would access the support available to them in regard to skills work sessions and in relation to any other significant needs identified within or outside of the course, eg a realisation that they are influenced by past experiences of rejection, trauma or bereavement. Support would include that provided by the tutor, by the centre (eg student support services), the local community (counselling and other helping services, support groups, GP and NHS services) and on-line (web sites providing information and help in regard to specific issues and conditions).
- 3.3 This can be addressed in a more general way to include descriptions of the personal and professional support that is available to counsellors and users of counselling skills, eg supervision from a counselling supervisor, counselling supervision groups, support from peers and colleagues, support from line managers, advice and information from professional bodies and support from workplace mentors. Candidate responses should not be limited to information about support for qualified or trainee counsellors and may include responses to needs and issues in case study material.
- 4.1 This could be evidenced by candidate entries in a reflective journal that relate specifically to counselling skills sessions and by self-evaluation and reflection sections of counselling skills evaluation sheets.
- 4.2 This should be linked to candidate reflective journals, counselling skills, self-evaluations and feedback from tutors and other candidates, and is best addressed as a summary at the end of the course. The candidate needs to identify what he or she has gained overall from self-reflection and the reflections of others.