Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

Unit code: F1ER 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to develop the skills and knowledge required to apply Stage 1 of the Three-stage Counselling Process.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1 Explain the concept of counselling.
2 Describe the three-stage counselling model.
3 Demonstrate Stage 1 Skills with a range of clients.
4 Evaluate and reflect upon personal learning and development within Stage 1.

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to the Unit is at the discretion of the centre, however candidates should have well developed communication skills. It would also be beneficial if candidates had completed Unit EF4J 11 *Introduction to Counselling*.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication, Problem Solving and Working with Others at Higher level in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes. This Unit is part of the Group Award HNC Counselling.

Assessment: Specific advice on assessment for this Unit is given for each Outcome. Candidates must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified for each Outcome in order to pass the Unit. Outcomes 1 and 2 are assessed by extended response questions. Outcome 3 is assessed by simulation./role-play using an observation checklist and Outcome 4 by a reflective account.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

Unit code: F1ER 34

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain the Concept of Counselling

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Helping strategies in the caring professions, voluntary and statutory
- BACP definition of Counselling
- Boundary Issues
- Equality of Opportunity
- Role of Counsellor
- Importance of theory in relation to competence
- Key features of telephone counselling

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- identify different helping strategies within the caring professions including one example of voluntary and one example of statutory provision
- define Counselling
- explain boundary issues
- explain the importance of equality of opportunity in the counselling relationship
- explain the importance of theory in underpinning competence

Assessment Guidelines

Evidence should be generated through a written assignment consisting of extended response questions.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

Outcome 2

Describe the Three-Stage Counselling Model

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Core conditions — empathy, unconditional positive regard, congruence
- Three Stage Process and necessary skills
- Theoretical concepts fundamental to each stage

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to cover the specified Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- describe the core conditions
- outline the counselling process and identify the skills involved
- explain theoretical concepts fundamental to each stage

Assessment Guidelines

Evidence should be generated through a written assignment consisting of extended response questions.

Outcome 3

Demonstrate Stage 1 Skills with a Range of Clients

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Range of clients
- Counsellor/Client relationship
- Counselling skills
- Difficulties commonly arising in counselling relationships

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to cover the specified Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- manage the interview
- apply counselling skills
- negotiate difficulties commonly arising in Stage 1

Assessment Guidelines

Evidence could be generated by observation of candidate in role of counsellor and recorded using an observation checklist.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

Outcome 4

Evaluate and Reflect upon Personal Learning and Development

Knowledge and/or Skills

- Self awareness and personal growth in relation to Unit content
- Increased awareness of relationships
- Reflection

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to cover the specified Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- describe knowledge/skills gained
- describe the impact on relationships
- describe insights into relationships
- critically evaluate their own development

Assessment Guidelines

Written and or oral reflective account to show that the candidate can demonstrate development and personal learning.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F1ER 34

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

Superclass category: PM

Original date of publication: April 2007

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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This specialist Unit is designed to allow candidates to build up a knowledge and understanding of relationship-centred counselling. In order to achieve the Outcomes as stated, this Unit requires that the student will take notes in lectures and discussions, compile given assessments, read relevant books and articles as advised, watch relevant videos and take part in and contribute to group discussions and exercises. This Unit should be integrated with other counselling Units comprising of counselling skills and the associated theory Units and is intended for those preparing to work or already working in this field.

The Unit may be focused on the Humanistic model.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Outcome 1

Outcome 1 introduces and outlines the concepts underpinning counselling:

(a) Helping strategies; the application of helping skills within a variety of caring professions eg social work, nursing, community care.
(b) BACP definition.
(c) Boundary issues: timing, confidentiality, ethics, qualifications, experience, counselling approach.
(d) The transition of Equal Opportunities from policy to application within counselling practice and the impact on clients.
(e) Counselling environments/opportunities: the teaching should cover the different settings in which counselling could take place eg telephone/email/face to face.
(f) Importance of sound knowledge and theory to underpin development and competence.

Outcome 2

Outcome 2 introduces the three-stage counselling model. In this Outcome the following should be covered:

- The core conditions of: empathy; unconditional positive regard; congruence. The counselling process in terms of the three stages:
  1 Exploration
  2 Understanding/insight
  3 Action.
- Skills: basic empathy; advanced empathy; positive action.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

- Appropriate use of reflecting, paraphrasing, summarising, open questions, silence and non-verbal communication in conveying empathic understanding.
- Appropriate use of advanced empathy, challenging and immediacy.
- Appropriate use of the SMART guidelines (Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, Time-Orientated) — Quickthink, use of Forcefield Analysis and Decision Balance techniques and concepts.
- Examples of theoretical concepts:

Humanistic

The facilitative climate and its dependence on the three core conditions.

Psychodynamic

The unconscious: the distortion of the unconscious dynamic via transference and/or counter transference.

The parallel process within the counsellor which echoes the feelings of the client e.g. blocked, confused.

Projective identification, ie the counsellor being left 'holding' something which originated in the client.

Cognitive and Behavioural

Thoughts related to behaviour.

Outcome 3

Outcome 3 is designed to allow candidates to put theory into practice. Safety of students is paramount so it is important to stress that simulation/role-play is acceptable here. The following should be covered:

(a) Range of clients: reluctant, open, distressed, confused, angry and anxious.
(b) Management of client.
Introduction, contract policies. Presenting concern, focus, time management and ending.
(c) Basic empathy skills:
Reflecting, paraphrasing, summarising, open questioning, responding to silence, focussing and moving a session forward.
(d) Common difficulties:
Reluctant clients, pacing, client rambling, excessive probing, anxiety over confidentiality, unease with silence, fear of change and shame.
(e) Candidates should be encouraged to develop observation skills and to reflect on the client/counsellor relationship and Outcome of the counselling session.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model

Outcome 4

Outcome 4 gives candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their personal learning and apply the counselling concepts to their relationships. This may be integrated into a course journal if one is being kept. The following should be considered:

The impact on relationships with: friends, family and course members.

Key texts:

Cully. S (1991)
Integrative Counselling Skills in Action
Sage Publications
ISBN 0-8039-8277-1

Egan. G (1998)
The Skilled Helper — Sixth Edition
Brookes-Cole
ISBN 0-534-34-948-X

Hill. CE, O'Brien. K (1999)
Helping Skills
American Psychological Association
ISBN 1-55798-572

McLeod J (1998)
An Introduction to Counselling — Second Edition
Open University Press
ISBN 0-335-19709-4

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication, Problem Solving and Working with Others at Higher level in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Open learning

Due to the experiential and participatory nature of the content of this Unit, it is not appropriate for open learning.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* **(www.sqa.org.uk)**.

General information for candidates

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This Unit is designed to allow you to develop the specialist skills and knowledge required to apply Stage 1 of the three-stage Counselling Process.

On completion of the Unit you will be able to:

- explain the concept of counselling
- describe the three-stage counselling model
- counsel a range of clients using Stage 1 skills
- demonstrate personal learning

You will be assessed in this Unit by a range of methods. Outcomes 1 and 2 will be assessed by written questions, Outcome 3 by observation of you in the role of the counsellor and Outcome 4 is assessed by a reflective account.