



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Humanistic Approach

Unit code: H0C2 35

Superclass: PM

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Version: 02

Unit purpose

This Unit is aimed at candidates who want to become counsellors. It would also suit those whose primary role is not counselling but who would like to enhance their practice. This Unit recognises that counsellors and other professionals do not only work one to one with individuals, they also work with groups. As such this Unit gives candidates an experience of being a member of a group and the opportunity to relate to other group members.

The Unit focuses on the theory and practice of group work from a humanistic approach.

This Unit is an experiential learning opportunity. This means that candidates will experience what it is like to be part of a group on a regular and ongoing basis. During delivery for this unit, there will be regular opportunity for participation in Personal Development groups, community groups and ongoing personal reflection. The group will be the training group to which they belong and will offer the candidate the opportunity to experience some of the techniques involved in a humanistic approach to group work. The Unit recognises the importance placed on this type of learning from academics in the field. 'Experiential groups of different kinds are powerful sources of personal development learning and work'. [Mearns 2003 Developing Person-Centred Counselling.] The content of the unit is underpinned by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling

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

- 1 Explain the humanistic approach to group development and process.
- 2 Review and evaluate own participation in the group.
- 3 Facilitate the group using a humanistic approach.

General information (cont)

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should have prior knowledge, understanding and practical experience of counselling. This could be demonstrated by possession of the HNC Counselling G8H6 15 (or equivalent). The practical experience could be from work experience or simulated practice on a training course. In particular, candidates should have knowledge and understanding of humanistic approaches to counselling. This could be evidenced by possession of *Counselling: Humanistic Counselling Theory* (F1EL 34). Ultimately, entry is at the discretion of the centre.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**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.*

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

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 forms part of the HND in Counselling.

There is a degree of flexibility in the delivery of the Unit. Some centres may deliver short sessions on a weekly basis for the duration of the course, whilst others may prefer to offer longer sessions over a shorter period of time. The Unit lends itself to both options.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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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 humanistic approach to group development and process.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Humanistic theory
- ◆ Models of group development from a humanistic approach
- ◆ Advantages and disadvantages of using a humanistic approach in groups

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explain humanistic theory.
- ◆ describe models of group development from a humanistic approach.
- ◆ evaluate advantages and disadvantages of using a humanistic approach in groups.

The candidate will relate the theory of group development and process from a humanistic approach to their experiences and observations of the dynamics in the group. This evidence will be gathered in open-book conditions at an appropriate point in the Unit.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Humanistic Approach

Outcome 2

Review and evaluate own participation in the group.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Humanistic approaches
- ◆ Humanistic group work techniques

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ reflect and evaluate own participation in group sessions.

Evidence in the form of the candidates own reflections on their participation in the group and records of feedback from a minimum of two other members of the group is required for this Outcome.

This evidence will be gathered in open-book conditions at an appropriate point in the Unit and must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills listed.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Humanistic Approach

Outcome 3

Facilitate the group using a humanistic approach.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Humanistic approaches and techniques
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining boundaries.
- ◆ Opening and ending sessions.
- ◆ Enabling participation.

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ time the session and maintain boundaries.
- ◆ enable others to participate
- ◆ direct sessions using humanistic techniques.

Evidence for this Outcome will be in the form of records of two checklists, one gathered from the whole group and one from the tutor, in relation to candidate's performance in facilitating the group on one occasion.

Evidence will be gathered under open-book conditions at an appropriate point in the Unit.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Humanistic Approach

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 Unit is aimed at candidates who want to become counsellors or those whose primary role is not counselling, who would like however, to enhance their practice.

This Unit recognises that counsellors and other professionals do not only work one to one with individuals, they also work with groups. As such this Unit gives candidates an experience of being a member of a group and the opportunity to relate to other group members.

The Unit focuses on the theory and practice of group work from a humanistic approach. The process of therapeutic change within the humanistic school of counselling should underpin the context and delivery of this unit.

This Unit is an experiential learning opportunity. This means that candidates will experience what it is like to be part of a group on a regular and ongoing basis. The group will be the training group to which they belong and could be called the 'personal development group'. The Unit recognises the importance placed on this type of learning from academics in the field. 'Experiential groups of different kinds are powerful sources of personal development learning and work'. [Mearns 2003 Developing Person-Centred Counselling.]

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

Candidates will meet as a group on a regular basis and in time as trust develops they will relate to each other openly and honestly. It is a challenging learning experience and a supportive learning environment is important. Some input on group processes would be appropriate to start the Unit. There is opportunity for the delivery and/or assessment of this unit to be integrated with F1EG 35 - Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

Candidates will demonstrate their understanding of the humanistic approach to group work by relating theory to practice.

Candidates will demonstrate their ability to participate in the group using a humanistic approach by reflection on self and gathering feedback from other group members.

Candidates will demonstrate their ability to facilitate the group using a humanistic approach by gathering feedback from other group members.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Humanistic Approach

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Explain the humanistic approach to group development and process.

Candidate's evidence will be based on their experiences and observations of the dynamics of the group and could be in the form of a written, oral or signed presentation, observed by the tutor using an appropriate observation checklist. Assessment for this Outcome should come near the end of the Unit as candidates will need time to participate in the group and observe the group dynamics.

Outcome 2

Review and evaluate own participation in the group.

The candidates own reflection could include detailed personal Johari windows at the beginning, middle and end of the group's life. Feedback from a minimum of two peers in the group should include observation and comment on how the candidate related to other members, the group facilitator and also how they participated in group activities. Assessment for this Outcome should come towards the end of the Unit as time will be needed to allow the candidate to participate in several sessions of the group.

Outcome 3

Facilitate the group using a humanistic approach.

Evidence for this Outcome will be in the form of records of two checklists, one gathered from the whole group and one from the tutor, in relation to candidate's performance in facilitating the group on one occasion. It is recommended that the checklists are based on the candidate's performance in facilitating a group session lasting approximately 30 minutes. Assessment for this Outcome should come towards the end of the Unit as time will be required for candidates to have opportunities to facilitate group sessions.

Online and Distance Learning

This Unit is not suitable for online or distance learning as it is an experiential learning experience of relating to others in a group setting.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There will be opportunities to gather evidence towards Core Skills of *Communication*, *ICT* and *Working with Others* in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. It can also support the development of other transferable skills, such as, essay/report writing and thinking, analytical and critical skills.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Humanistic Approach

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Additional information added to clarify the unit content, context and delivery is underpinned by the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling	26/04/2017

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Humanistic Approach

This Unit is suitable for you if you are aiming to become a counsellor, or if your primary role is not counselling but you work with people and would like to enhance your knowledge and understanding.

This Unit recognises that counsellors and other professionals do not only work one to one with individuals, they also work with groups. As such this Unit gives you an experience of being a member of a group and having the opportunity to relate to other group members.

The Unit focuses on the theory and practice of group work from the humanistic approach and is an experiential learning opportunity. This means that you will experience what it is like to be part of a group on a regular and ongoing basis. The group will be the training group to which you belong and the group members will be your colleagues on the course. The group could be called the 'group' or the 'personal development group'. The Unit recognises the importance placed on this type of learning from academics in the field. 'Experiential groups of different kinds are powerful sources of personal development learning and work'. [Mearns 2003 *Developing Person-Centred Counselling*.]

You should have some prior knowledge, understanding and practical experience of counselling. This could be demonstrated by possession of the HNC Counselling. The practical experience could be from work experience or simulated practice on a training course. In particular, you should have some prior knowledge and understanding of humanistic approaches to counselling.

This Unit has three Outcomes:

- 1 Explain the humanistic approach to group development and process.
- 2 Review and evaluate own participation in the group.
- 3 Facilitate the group using a humanistic approach.

The group experience is challenging and often not an easy one. However, it is an experience which has enormous potential for personal development and an opportunity to experience personal relationships at a fairly intense level. As the group develops you will hopefully move away from superficial ways of relating to others, towards the development of congruence.

Throughout the assessment of this Units, you will have the opportunity to develop the Core Skills of *Communication*, *Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*. It can also support the development of other transferable skills such as, essay/report writing and thinking, analytical and critical skills.