



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach

Unit code: H0C3 35

Superclass: PM

Publication date: April 2017

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02

Unit purpose

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. During delivery for this unit, there will be regular opportunity for participation in Personal Development groups, community groups and ongoing personal reflection.

The Unit focuses on the theory and practice of group work from a psychodynamic perspective and therefore emphasises unconscious processes in groups.

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 will offer the candidates the opportunity to experience some of the techniques involved in a psychodynamic approach to group work. It will also give candidates the opportunity to facilitate such techniques. 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 psychodynamic approach to group development and process.
- 2 Review and evaluate own participation in the group.
- 3 Facilitate the group using a psychodynamic 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. The practical experience could be from work experience or simulated practice on a training course. In particular, candidates should have knowledge and understanding of psychodynamic approaches to counselling. This could be evidenced by possession of eg *Counselling: Psychodynamic Counselling Theory* (F1EP 34). Ultimately, entry is at the discretion of the centre.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credits 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

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach

Unit code: H0C3 35

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 psychodynamic approach to group development and process.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Psychodynamic theory
- ◆ Models of group work from a psychodynamic approach
- ◆ Advantages and disadvantages of using a psychodynamic approach in groups

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explain psychodynamic theory.
- ◆ describe models of group work.
- ◆ evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using psychodynamic approach in groups.

This evidence should 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: Psychodynamic Approach

Outcome 2

Review and evaluate own participation in the group.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Psychodynamic techniques
- ◆ Unconscious processes and their effect on individuals and the group
- ◆ Manifest and latent content in the group sessions
- ◆ Defence mechanisms

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/activities.

Evidence must cover all of the Knowledge and/or Skills listed.

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.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach

Outcome 3

Facilitate the group using a psychodynamic approach.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Psychodynamic approaches and techniques
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining boundaries
- ◆ Opening and ending sessions
- ◆ Manifest and latent content in the group
- ◆ Unconscious feelings and attitudes

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.
- ◆ identify manifest and latent content in the group.
- ◆ observe, listen and attempt to identify unconscious feelings and attitudes to help members gain insight.
- ◆ direct sessions using psychodynamic 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: Psychodynamic 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 psychodynamic perspective. The process of therapeutic change within the psychodynamic 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.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

Candidates will meet as a group on a regular basis and in time when 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 psychodynamic theories relating to group processes would be appropriate to start the Unit.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

There are three assessments for this Unit.

Outcome 1 could be assessed by a written, oral or signed presentation.

Outcome 2 could be assessed by a reflective account and feedback from the candidate's peer group.

Outcome 3 could be assessed by observation checklists based on the candidate's performance in facilitating a group session.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Candidates should provide evidence based on their experiences and observations of the dynamics in the group. The 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. Evidence could be in the form of a written, oral or signed presentation.

Outcome 2

Assessment should include the candidates own reflections on their participation in the group and also feedback from other members of the group. For the candidates own reflection this could include detailed personal Johari windows at the beginning, middle and end of the groups life. Feedback from peers should include observation and comment on how the candidate related to other members and the group facilitator. 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

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.

Candidates should facilitate one session of the group lasting approximately 30 minutes.

Evidence for the facilitation should be in the form of checklists completed by the group members and tutor.

Online and Distance Learning

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

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities throughout the assessment of this Unit to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* (Oral and Written), *Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*. It can also support the development of other transferable skills, such as, essay/report writing, referencing, citation and bibliography skills and thinking, analytical and critical skills.

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

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team, telephone 0303 333 0330.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Counselling Group Experience: Psychodynamic 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 psychodynamic perspectives and therefore the group work will have a psychodynamic approach.

This Unit 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.

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 knowledge and understanding of psychodynamic approaches to counselling.

This Unit has three Outcomes:

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

The group experience is challenging and often not an easy one. However; it is an experience which offers opportunity to experience personal relationships at a fairly intense level and enormous potential for personal development.

You will have the opportunity throughout this Unit to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* (Oral and Written), *Working with Others and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6. It can also support the development of other transferable skills, such as, essay/report writing and thinking, analytical and critical skills.