



## **Group Award Specification for the:**

**Higher National Certificate in Counselling**

**Group Award Code: G8H6 15**

**Higher National Diploma in Counselling**

**Group Award Code: GM4H 16**

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# 1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the arrangements document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification.
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

The HNC in Counselling framework has been available since 2006 and has attracted a steady uptake of learners. Some of the component units have been revised under SQA's incremental change process to reflect the changing needs of the counselling sector. The factors influencing the revisions were:

- ◆ the need to update the terminology used in the units in light of current ways of working
- ◆ to ensure that the HNC continues to meet the needs of stakeholders, including learners, employers and approved centres
- ◆ the need to supplement the knowledge base to allow the opportunity for progression to the HND in Counselling

The HNC continues to assign a central role to the value base essential to professional practice and incorporates the knowledge and understanding of the counselling theories and skills required for progression into employment or further study.

It is designed to appeal not only to those whose primary role would be in a counselling context or setting, but also to the wider advice, guidance, health and social care sectors in that it could be accessed by those who required knowledge specifically drawn from counselling (eg community work, criminal justice, education and health services, voluntary organisations, social work and youth services).

The requirements of the HNC Group Award are unchanged in that learners will complete seven mandatory HN Units and five optional HN Units. The content of several of the component units has been revised to align with the knowledge requirements of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and therefore provide the underpinning knowledge and understanding to support progression to the HND in Counselling for those who wish to do so. In addition, the unit *Work Placement* at SCQF level 7 has been added to the optional unit list. The rationale behind this is that the recommended entry requirements for the HNC include participation in paid or voluntary work and achievement of this unit will recognise that work. It will also provide some preparation for the supervised placement component of the HND for those learners who wish to progress to that.

The HND in Counselling has been developed to provide a coherent framework at SCQF level 8 that meets the needs for professional employment in the sector. The factors influencing the development were:

- ◆ the need to provide a progression route from the HNC in Counselling for those specifically seeking a professional career in the counselling sector.
- ◆ the need to professionalise the industry, particularly in Scotland, by providing a qualification which meets the BACP requirements for individual entry to the professional register.

The HND in Counselling has been designed to enhance the quality of counselling services provision particularly in Scotland as it provides learners with the opportunity to develop counselling skills via supervised practice and develops their knowledge of the importance of contractual relationships and ethical and regulatory frameworks.

As the HND contains an e-assessment set by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), achievement of this will allow learners the opportunity to seek individual membership of the professional register held by them. Access to the professional register is at the discretion of the BACP.

There is further added value within the HND with the inclusion of a mandatory research unit at SCQF level 9 which develops the learner's knowledge and understanding of the research underpinning counselling practice and the importance of this research being current, evidence-based and ethical. Research is a core component of BACP requirements for individual registration.

There are also optional units designed to support counsellors to set-up in private practice if that is a route of interest.

It should be noted that only achievement of the full HND in Counselling will allow learners the opportunity to access the professional register

## **2 Qualification structures**

### **HNC in Counselling at SCQF level 7**

The HNC Group Award is made up of 12 SQA unit credits.

7 SQA Unit credits (56 SCQF points at SCQF level 7) are mandatory, including 1 SQA credit Graded Unit (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

A further 5 SQA unit credits (40 SCQF points) will be taken from the optional section of the framework giving the required 96 SCQF credit points to achieve the award.

The framework of the HNC in Counselling is set out in Section 2.1.

## HND in Counselling at SCQF level 8

The HND Group Award is made up of 30 SQA unit credits.

22 SQA unit credits are mandatory (176 SCQF points, of which 120 are at SCQF level 8 or above).

The mandatory section contains 3 SQA HN Graded Unit credits (24 SCQF points) of which 2 SQA credits (16 SCQF points) are at SCQF level 8).

A further 8 SQA unit credits (64 SCQF points) will be taken from the optional section of the framework giving the required 240 SCQF credit points to achieve the award.

The framework of the HND in Counselling is set out in Section 2.2.

### 2.1 HNC structure

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
<b>Mandatory section (all 56 SCQF credit points to be achieved)</b>					
F1ER	34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	1	8	7
F1ES	34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills Stage 2 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	1	8	7
F1ET	34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 3 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	1	8	7
F1EL	34	Counselling: Humanistic Counselling Theory	1	8	7
F1EP	34	Counselling: Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	1	8	7
F1EE	34	Counselling: Cognitive and Behavioural Counselling Theory	1	8	7
F1M4	34	Counselling: Graded Unit 1	1	8	7
<b>Optional units (a minimum of 40 SCQF credit points to be achieved)</b>					
F1EV	34	Counselling: Understanding Addictive Behaviours	1	8	7
F1EW	35	Counselling: Working with Addictive Behaviours	1	8	8
F1EX	35	Counselling: Working with Substance Misuse	1	8	8
F1EM	34	Counselling: Loss, Grief and Bereavement in a Counselling Context	1	8	7
F1EK	34	Counselling: Group Counselling Skills	1	8	7
DF4E	34	Developing Skills for Personal Effectiveness	1	8	7
HJ4W	34	Work Placement	1	8	7

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
HL9N	35	Counselling: Personal Development in a Therapeutic Setting	2	16	8
H0C4	35	Counselling: Self Evaluation for Counsellors	1	8	8
HT6X	35*	Counselling: Contemporary Cognitive and Behavioural Theory	1	8	8
HT6Y	35*	Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory	1	8	8
HT70	35*	Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	1	8	8
F1EN	34	Counselling: Personal Development in a Counselling Skills Setting	2	16	7
F1EJ	35	Counselling: Counselling Supervision	1	8	8

\*Refer to History of Changes for revision changes

## 2.2 HND structure

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
<b>Mandatory section (minimum of 22 SQA credits, 176 SCQF credit points)</b>					
<b>Mandatory units (20 SQA credits, 160 SCQF credit points)</b>					
F1ER	34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	1	8	7
F1ES	34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills Stage 2 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	1	8	7
F1ET	34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 3 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	1	8	7
F1EL	34	Counselling: Humanistic Counselling Theory	1	8	7
F1EP	34	Counselling: Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	1	8	7
F1EE	34	Counselling: Cognitive and Behavioural Counselling Theory	1	8	7
F1M4	34	Counselling: Graded Unit 1	1	8	7
HL9J	35	Counselling: Professional Standards	1	8	8
HL9P	35	Counselling: Psychopathology for Counsellors	1	8	8
HL9N	35	Counselling: Personal Development in a Therapeutic Setting	2	16	8
HL9K	35	Counselling Supervised Practice	3	24	8
HL9L	36	Counselling: Research Skills	1	8	9
HL9R	35	Counselling: Values and Principles for Practice	1	8	8

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
H0C4	35	Counselling: Self Evaluation for Counsellors	1	8	8
HN78	35	Counselling: BACP Certificate of Proficiency	1	8	8
HN8V	35	Counselling: Graded Unit 2	2	16	8
<b>Mandatory optional section (2 to 6 SQA credits to be taken)</b>					
<b>Group 1 (1 to 3 SQA credits to be taken)</b>					
HT6X	35*	Counselling: Contemporary Cognitive and Behavioural Theory	1	8	8
HT6Y	35*	Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory	1	8	8
HT70	35*	Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	1	8	8
<b>Group 2 (1 to 3 SQA credits to be taken)</b>					
H0C1	35	Counselling: Group Experience: Cognitive-Behavioural Approach	1	8	8
H0C2	35	Counselling: Group Experience: Humanistic Approach	1	8	8
H0C3	35	Counselling: Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach	1	8	8
<b>Optional units (4 to 8 SQA unit credits to be taken)</b>					
F1EV	34	Counselling: Understanding Addictive Behaviours	1	8	7
F1EW	35	Counselling: Working with Addictive Behaviours	1	8	8
F1EX	35	Counselling: Working with Substance Misuse	1	8	8
F1EM	34	Counselling: Loss, Grief and Bereavement in a Counselling Context	1	8	7
F1EK	34	Counselling: Group Counselling Skills	1	8	7
H0HL	35	Counselling: Deaf People	1	8	8
H0HN	35	Counselling: Course Residential Experience	1	8	8
HL9M	35	Counselling: Setting Up a Practice	1	8	8
H7V4	34	Preparing to Start a Business	1	8	7
DF4E	34	Developing Skills for Personal Effectiveness	1	8	7
HJ4W	34	Work Placement	1	8	7
F1EN	34	Counselling: Personal Development in a Counselling Skills Setting	2	16	7
F1EJ	35	Counselling: Counselling Supervision	1	8	8

## 3 Aims of the qualifications

The principal aim of these qualifications is:

- ◆ to provide a coherent and progressive learning programme relevant to the needs of the counselling sector in Scotland, achievement of which provides the opportunity for individual access to the BACP professional register.

### 3.1 General aims of the qualifications

All Higher National qualifications aim to allow learners to:

- ◆ develop transferable skills, including Core Skills.
- ◆ demonstrate interpersonal skills and the ability to work with others.
- ◆ develop personal effectiveness.
- ◆ develop critical thinking skills.
- ◆ progress within the SCQF framework and into higher education.
- ◆ provide opportunities for career progression.

### 3.2 Specific aims of the qualifications

The HNC in Counselling has the following specific aims, to:

- 1 provide an award for those working in the sector who wish to build on their existing knowledge and/or experience.
- 2 encourage best practice.
- 3 understand the main theoretical concepts and approaches to counselling and develop underpinning knowledge of counselling ethics and boundaries.
- 4 explain and demonstrate the practice of skills using a relationship-centred model of counselling.
- 5 explain and demonstrate personal learning and development within the course of the programme.
- 6 provide learners with counselling specific knowledge and skills applicable to a number of specialist areas.
- 7 provide learners with the opportunity to progress to the HND in Counselling.

The HND in Counselling has the following specific aims, to:

- 8 provide progression from the HNC in Counselling for those specifically seeking a professional career in the counselling sector.
- 9 professionalise the industry, particularly in Scotland, by providing a qualification which meets the BACP requirements for individual entry to the professional register.
- 10 emphasise the importance of contractual relationships and ethical and regulatory frameworks.
- 11 develop learner's counselling skills in practice with clients in a range of counselling settings.
- 12 develop the learners skills in research, self-evaluation and personal development.
- 13 develop learners awareness of the health, safety and security requirements for safe working.



### **3.3 Graded units**

#### **3.3.1 Counselling Graded Unit 1**

This graded unit will be assessed by the use of a project in the form of a case study which should be based upon a simulated realistic counselling experience. The developed practical case study should provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates the application of knowledge and understanding to a situation that involves a counselling environment.

The case study should show evidence that the learner is able to integrate their counselling knowledge and skills. The case study samples across the following mandatory units:

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

*Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 2 of the Three Stage Integrative Model*

*Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 3 of the Three Stage Integrative Model*

*Counselling: Psychodynamic Counselling Theory*

*Counselling: Humanistic Counselling Theory*

*Counselling: Behavioural and Cognitive Counselling Theory*

#### **3.3.2 Counselling Graded Unit 2**

This graded unit will be assessed by the use of a project in the form of a case study which should be based upon actual counselling experience, building on the skills and knowledge gained in the simulated classroom assessment of Graded Unit 1.

The developed practical case study should be based on a client from placement and provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates the application of knowledge and understanding whilst contributing to the required 100 hours supervised practice.

The case study should show evidence that the learner is able to integrate knowledge and understanding into their practice. The case study samples across the following units:

*Counselling: Professional Standards*

*Counselling: Psychopathology*

*Counselling: Personal Development in a Therapeutic Setting*

*Counselling: Placement and Supervised Practice*

*Counselling: Research Skills*

*Counselling: Values and Principles of Practice*

*Counselling: Self Evaluation for Counsellors*

Plus one theory unit and one approach unit selected from the following:

Theory units

*Counselling: Contemporary Behavioural and Cognitive Theory*

*Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory*

*Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory*

Approach units

*Counselling: Group Experience: Cognitive-Behavioural Approach*

*Counselling: Group Experience: Humanistic Approach*

*Counselling: Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach*

## **4 Recommended entry to the qualifications**

The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this programme has been provided as guidance.

Entry to the qualifications is at the discretion of the approved centre, however for public (client) protection and in line with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) guidance and resources for education providers, entry to the HND should be based on the criteria stated in Section 4.2.1.

The HCPC Guidelines can be accessed here:  
<http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/providers/guidance/>

It is recommended that centres develop a process and checklist encompassing their own entry requirements and the standards set out by HCPC and BACP to assist them in evidencing their decisions.

Note: to ensure consistency of recruitment to the HND, a reference from the centre that awarded the HNC in Counselling should be obtained for each applicant (where the HND centre is different from the HNC centre)

Centre selection procedures for Counselling applicants should be consistent with their course rationale.

Applicants must be provided with detailed and accurate information about the course, including its structure, aims, staffing, content, assessment process, fees (where applicable) and expected timescales. Please refer to Section 6.6.

### **4.1 HNC Entry**

For entry to the HNC in Counselling, the following recommendations are made:

- ◆ Appropriate National Units from SQA, eg Counselling Theory for Practice: an Introduction (or equivalent units from other awarding bodies at SCQF level 6 or above)
- ◆ Participation in voluntary/paid work experience in a counselling setting
- ◆ Other relevant related qualifications (such as HNCs in Social Care, Health Care, Diploma in Social Work, Degree/Diploma in Nursing, etc may be considered)
- ◆ Experience in working with people who have experienced substance misuse problems, eating disorders, relationship problems

## 4.2 HND Entry

Successful completion of the HND in Counselling provides the opportunity to access the professional register held by the BACP therefore learners must have achieved the HNC in Counselling as it has been designed to provide the underpinning knowledge of theories and ethics required to progress to the HND, ie no APL into Year 2 for those learners presenting with other qualifications is allowed.

### 4.2.1 HND specific entry requirements

In order to evaluate the learner's potential to develop the relevant attributes and in the interest of future client safety, they must also be assessed against the following criteria prior to admission to the course:

- ◆ Self-awareness, maturity and stability
- ◆ Ability to make use of and reflect upon life experience
- ◆ Capacity to cope with the emotional demands of the course
- ◆ Ability to cope with the intellectual and academic requirement
- ◆ Ability to form a helping relationship
- ◆ Ability to be self-critical and use both positive and negative feedback
- ◆ Awareness of the nature of prejudice and oppression
- ◆ Awareness of issues of difference and equality
- ◆ Ability to recognise the need for personal and professional support
- ◆ Competence in, or the aptitude to develop generic professional skills including, literacy numeracy, information technology, administrative skills, self-management skills, communication and interpersonal skills.

These criteria may be evidenced with a combination of the following as necessary, eg:

- ◆ Personal statement and interview by course staff
- ◆ Fitness to study assessment paper
- ◆ Witness testimony from supervisors or other suitably qualified people
- ◆ Prior educational achievement
- ◆ Core Skills profiles, SQA Higher (National 5) Units in English/Communication/Mathematics/Arithmetic/Information and Communication Technology/Administration/Business

## 4.3 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

The following Core Skills entry criteria are provided as guidance for entry to the HNC.

<b>Core Skill</b>	<b>Recommended SCQF entry profile</b>	<b>Associated assessment activities</b>
Communication	6	Written and oral assessments, group work and discussions, presentations
Numeracy	5	Evidencing resource scoping and management
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Counselling research, use of word processing and presentation packages
Problem Solving	6	Negotiation, adapting to changing circumstances
Working with Others	6	Simulated counselling experience, group work and peer review

## **5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs**

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in national occupational standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skills, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

## 5.1 Mapping of qualification specific aims to units

Code	Unit title	Specific aims												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
F1ER 34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	X	X	X	X			X		X		X	X	
F1ES 34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills Stage 2 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	X	X	X	X			X		X		X	X	
F1ET 34	Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 3 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	X	X	X	X			X		X		X	X	
F1EL 34	Counselling: Humanistic Counselling Theory	X	X	X	X			X		X				
F1EP 34	Counselling: Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	X	X	X	X			X		X				
F1EE 34	Counselling: Cognitive and Behavioural Counselling Theory	X	X	X	X			X		X				
F1M4 34	Counselling: Graded Unit 1	X	X	X	X			X		X			X	
HL9J 35	Counselling: Professional Standards	X	X	X	X			X		X	X			X
HL9P 35	Counselling: Psychopathology for Counsellors	X	X	X	X			X		X				
HL9L 35	Counselling: Personal Development in a Therapeutic Setting	X	X	X	X			X		X			X	
DF4E 34	Developing Skills for Personal Effectiveness	X			X	X							X	
HL9K 35	Counselling: Supervised Practice	X	X		X				X	X	X	X		
HL9L 36	Counselling: Research Skills	X	X			X	X		X	X			X	
HL9R 35	Counselling: Values and Principles for Practice	X	X			X	X		X	X	X			X
H0C4 35	Counselling: Self Evaluation for Counsellors	X	X			X	X		X	X			X	

Code	Unit title	Specific aims												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
HN78 35	Counselling: Certificate of Proficiency (BACP)	X	X			X	X		X	X				
HN8V 35	Counselling: Graded Unit 2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
HT6X 35	Counselling: Contemporary Behavioural and Cognitive Theory	X	X			X	X		X	X				
HT6Y 35	Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory	X	X			X	X		X	X				
HT70 35	Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	X	X			X	X		X	X				
H0C1 35	Counselling: Group Experience: Cognitive-Behavioural Approach	X	X			X	X		X	X				
H0C2 35	Counselling: Group Experience: Humanistic Approach	X	X			X	X		X	X				
H0C3 35	Counselling: Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach	X	X			X	X		X	X				
F1EV 34	Counselling: Understanding Addictive Behaviours	X	X			X	X		X	X			X	
F1EW 35	Counselling: Working with Addictive Behaviours	X	X			X	X		X	X	X		X	
F1EX 35	Counselling: Working with Substance Misuse	X	X			X	X		X	X	X		X	
F1EM 34	Counselling: Loss, Grief and Bereavement in a Counselling Context	X	X			X	X		X	X			X	
F1EK 34	Counselling: Group Counselling Skills	X	X			X	X		X	X	X		X	
H0HL 35	Counselling: Deaf People	X	X			X	X		X	X			X	
H0HN 35	Counselling: Course Residential Experience	X	X			X	X		X	X			X	
HL9M 35	Counselling: Setting Up a Practice	X	X			X	X		X	X	X		X	X

Code	Unit title	Specific aims													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
H7V4 34	Preparing to Start a Business	X	X				X		X				X		X
HJ4W 34	Work Placement	X	X			X								X	

Specific aims, to:

- 1 provide an award for those working in the sector who wish to build on their existing knowledge and/or experience.
- 2 encourage best practice.
- 3 understand the main theoretical concepts and approaches to counselling and develop underpinning knowledge of counselling ethics and boundaries.
- 4 explain and demonstrate the practice of skills using a relationship-centred model of counselling.
- 5 explain and demonstrate personal learning and development within the course of the programme.
- 6 provide learners with counselling specific knowledge and skills applicable to a number of specialist areas.
- 7 provide learners with the opportunity to progress to the HND in Counselling.
- 8 provide progression from the HNC in Counselling for those specifically seeking a career in the counselling sector.
- 9 professionalise the industry, particularly in Scotland, by providing a qualification which meets the BACP requirements for entry to the professional register.
- 10 emphasise the importance of contractual relationships and ethical and regulatory frameworks.
- 11 develop learner's counselling skills in practice with clients in a range of counselling settings.
- 12 develop the learners skills in research, self-evaluation and personal development.
- 13 develop learners awareness of the health, safety and security requirements for safe working.

## 5.2 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualifications

D = developed, E = Embedded

Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills Stage 2 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 3 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Humanistic Counselling Theory	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Behavioural and Cognitive Counselling Theory	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Graded Unit 1	D	D	D				D	E	E	E	D	D
Counselling: Professional Standards	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D	D



Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
Counselling: Psychopathology for Counsellors	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Personal Development in a Therapeutic Setting	D	D	D				D		D			
Counselling: Supervised Practice	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Research Skills	D	D				D	D	D	D	D		
Counselling: Values and Principles for Practice	D	D	D				D	D	D	D		
Counselling: Self Evaluation for Counsellors	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D		
Counselling: Certificate of Proficiency (BACP)	D	D					D	D	D			
Counselling: Graded Unit 2	D	D				D	D	E	E	E	D	D
Counselling: Contemporary Cognitive and Behavioural Theory	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	D	D	D				D	D	D	D	D	D

Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
Counselling: Group Experience: Cognitive-Behavioural Approach	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Group Experience: Humanistic Approach	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Understanding Addictive Behaviours	D	D	D			D	D	D	D			
Counselling: Working with Addictive Behaviours	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Working with Substance Misuse	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Loss, Grief and Bereavement in a Counselling Context	D	D	D			D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Group Counselling Skills	D	D	D					D	D	D	D	D
Counselling: Personal Development in a Therapeutic Setting	D	D	D				D		D			
Counselling: Deaf People	D	D	D			D		D	D			
Developing Skills for Personal Effectiveness	D	D	D	D			D	E	E	E	D	D

Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
Counselling: Setting Up a Practice	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D		
Preparing to Start a Business	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Work Placement	D	D	D			D	D	E	E	E	E	E

### 5.3 Assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment				
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 1 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	Extended response to questioning	Observation	Reflective account		
Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 2 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	Extended response to questioning	Observation	Reflective account		
Counselling: Relationship-Centred Counselling Skills: Stage 3 of the Three-Stage Integrative Model	Extended response to questioning	Observation	Reflective account		
Humanistic Counselling Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Personal journal/reflective account		
Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Reflective account		
Cognitive and Behavioural Counselling Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Reflective account		
Integrative Counselling Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Reflective account		
Counselling: Graded Unit 1	Project based case study				
Counselling: Professional Standards	Holistic integrated assessment Outcomes 1–3			Reflective Account	
Counselling: Psychopathology	Holistic integrated assessment, open-book report				
Counselling: Personal Development	Essay	Observation			
Counselling: Supervised Practice	Integrated assessment evidence		Learner interview/checklist/reflective account	Fortnightly reflective journal	Final reflective account

Unit	Assessment				
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
Counselling: Research Skills	Integrated assessment: Report				
Counselling: Values and Principles of Practice	Extended response to questioning	Extended response to questioning	Reflective accounts		
Counselling: Self Evaluation for Counsellors	Portfolio of evidence maintained throughout course				
Counselling: BACP Certificate of Proficiency	(BACP) Closed-book online assessment				
Counselling: Graded Unit 2	Project-based case study on client practice				
Counselling: Contemporary Cognitive and Behavioural Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Personal journal/reflective account		
Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Personal journal/reflective account		
Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Personal journal/reflective account		
Counselling: Contemporary Integrative Counselling Theory	Written/oral assignment	Written/oral assignment	Personal journal/reflective account		
Counselling: Group Experience: Cognitive-Behavioural Approach	Presentation, reflective account				
Counselling: Group Experience: Humanistic Approach	Presentation, reflective account				
Counselling: Group Experience: Psychodynamic Approach	Presentation, reflective account				

Unit	Assessment				
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
Counselling: Group Experience: Integrative Approach	Presentation, reflective account				
Counselling: Understanding Addictive Behaviours	Extended response to questioning	Extended response to questioning	Extended response to questioning	Journal/reflective account	
Counselling: Working with Addictive Behaviours	Extended response	Extended response to case study	Observation	Journal/reflective account	
Counselling: Working with Substance Misuse	Extended response	Extended response to case study	Observation	Journal/reflective account	
Counselling: Loss, Grief and Bereavement in a Counselling Context	Extended response	Extended response to case study	Observation	Journal/reflective account	
Counselling: Group Counselling Skills	Responses to questioning	Observation	Observation		
Counselling: Personal Development in a Therapeutic Setting	Essay	Essay	Essay	Essay	
Counselling: Deaf People	Investigative portfolio	Case presentation			
Counselling: Course Residential Experience	Portfolio of evidence covering planning documentation, observation and peer review and a reflective account/evaluation				
Counselling: Setting up a Practice	Extended response (holistic assessment)				
Preparing to Start a Business	Business and marketing plan				
Work Placement	Holistic assessment via portfolio of evidence gathered throughout unit				

## 6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

The purpose of the HNC in Counselling is primarily to develop the learner's knowledge of counselling theories. There is no client work involved at this level, however every opportunity should be taken to deliver and assess the knowledge and skills in a realistic working environment or a suitable simulation of one. This will allow learners to experience the environments, conditions and constraints they are likely to come across when working in the sector and support progression to the HND in Counselling where that is the chosen route.

The HND is designed to allow learners to undertake supervised practice with clients in placement and demonstrate their counselling skills. When undertaking the HND, learners are required to apply for student membership of the BACP.

### 6.1 Placement hours

It is mandatory that learners successfully achieve 100 supervised, face to face counselling hours in placement. If a learner fails to achieve this within the allotted time for the placement unit there is opportunity to grant an extension under the following circumstances:

- (i) The learner can evidence that they have made every effort to secure the required hours.
- (ii) The circumstances surrounding the short fall are beyond the learner's control.
- (iii) The learner's clinical supervisor supports the extension.
- (iv) Any extension granted, should be negotiated within the delivery centre although it is recommended that this for a period of no longer than 12 months from the time the unit should have completed.
- (v) During any extension period, learners will be supported by their placement mentor and clinical supervisor.

### 6.2 Sequencing/integration of units

The HNC in Counselling must be completed prior to accessing year two of the HND.

If optional unit HJ4W 34 *Work Placement* is delivered this should be during Year 1/the HNC year to allow learners to focus on the mandatory supervised practice unit in Year 2/HND.

A pro forma 'Readiness to Practice' checklist and a suggested timetable have been developed and are available to download from the Counselling HND webpage on the SQA website.

Before beginning any placement/work with clients, learners should complete the following units:

*Counselling: Professional Standards*  
*Counselling: Psychopathology for Counsellors*  
*Counselling: Values and Principles for Practice*

and

- ◆ Outcomes 1–3 of the supervised placement unit

The BACP Certificate of Proficiency unit should be completed at the end of the course as it is designed to test the safe application of knowledge prior to independent practice.

## 6.3 Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website here: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/67029.html>

With reference to the highlighted criteria above, RPL from qualifications other than the HNC in Counselling may not be utilised to access Year 2 of the HND in Counselling.

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

### 6.3.1 Professional recognition

Successful achievement of the HND in Counselling provides the opportunity for individual access to the professional register held by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). Entry to the register is at the discretion of the BACP.

## 6.4 Opportunities for e-assessment

Access to the professional register held by the BACP is dependent upon achievement of the HND and the BACP Certificate of Proficiency (COP).

The COP is an assessment of knowledge, delivered via e-assessment.

An Assessment Support Pack (ASP) has been developed for delivery and assessment via Solar for the unit:

HL9L 36 *Counselling: Research Skills*



## 6.5 Support materials

A list of existing ASPs is available to view on SQA's website.

ASPs have been developed for the following units:

HN8V 35	<i>Counselling: Graded Unit 2</i>
HL9L 36	<i>Counselling: Research Skills</i> (e-assessment available via Solar)
HL9K 35	<i>Counselling: Supervised Practice</i>
HL9R 35	<i>Counselling: Values and Principles for Practice</i>
HL9J 35	<i>Counselling: Professional Standards</i>

## 6.6 Resource requirements — General

Centres must provide appropriate accommodation and learning and teaching resources, library facilities, learning support facilities and access to appropriate recording equipment.

## 6.7 Course-specific resource requirements

Please note that when applying for approval to deliver the HND in Counselling the following additional course-specific approval information is mandatory within the application. The information provided will be scrutinised during the initial approval visit and at subsequent external verification visits.

- ◆ Centre Counselling course rationale
- ◆ Staff involved in course delivery — refer to Section 6.7.1
- ◆ Detailed learner entry requirements which must be in line with the stated rationale
- ◆ Centre course leaflet (or link to web-based course information)
- ◆ Pro forma placement contract (an example placement contract) is available to download and use from the Counselling subject page of the SQA website  
<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/33179.html>

The following link accesses the SQA's guidance for centres that utilise secondary assessment sites, eg for placements. This guidance should be used in conjunction with BACP resource requirements listed.

[www.sqa.org.uk/.../Use\\_of\\_Assessment\\_Sites\\_Not\\_Owned\\_or\\_Managed\\_by\\_the\\_Centre.docx](http://www.sqa.org.uk/.../Use_of_Assessment_Sites_Not_Owned_or_Managed_by_the_Centre.docx)

## 6.7.1 Staff requirements

As the HND in Counselling is a professional qualification there are additional staffing and resource requirements that approved centres must adhere to. These criteria will be subject to ongoing external verification by SQA.

- (a) The course must have at least two core members of staff who have involvement in the admission, assessment, course management and decision making, in addition to teaching.
- (b) All staff members involved in the delivery of the Year 2 HND Counselling Units must be a member of or be eligible for membership of, an appropriate body with a complaints procedure to which they are subject.
- (c) All core staff members (placement mentor, clinical supervisor, teaching and assessment staff) involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme should be qualified, current and competent to practice and teach the blend of skills appropriate to the rationale and philosophy of the course. These staff must work within the BACP ethical framework and their working practices should be compatible with the rationale and philosophy of the course.
- (d) Training staff should be familiar with and agree to work within the current BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (2016).

The BACP ethical framework can be accessed here:

[https://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical\\_framework/](https://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical_framework/)

### Safety of learners, clients and the professional team

Staff must adhere to a fully developed procedure to maintain the safety of learners, clients and the professional team. In addition, formal procedures must be in place to terminate the training of incompetent, incapable or ethically unsound trainees. Areas to be covered include:

- ◆ Commitment to clients
- ◆ Ethics
- ◆ Values
- ◆ Principles
- ◆ Personal moral qualities
- ◆ Conclusion
- ◆ Good practice
- ◆ Putting clients first
- ◆ Working to professional standards
- ◆ Respect
- ◆ Building an appropriate relationship
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Accountability and candour
- ◆ Supervision
- ◆ Training and education
- ◆ Research
- ◆ Care of self as a practitioner
- ◆ Responding to ethical dilemmas and issues

## 6.7.2 Resources for applicants to the course

Applicants must be provided with detailed and accurate information about the course, including its structure, aims, staffing, content, assessment process (including placements), expected timescales and fees (where applicable), eg indemnity insurance, which is an ethical requirement for safe working prior to any placement, BACP student membership costs, \*PVG application costs (some centres may cover the cost of PVG on behalf of the learner).

It is advised that centres provide a course leaflet or ensure this information is available online for learners. It is strongly recommended that these topics are also covered within any formal induction into the course.

In the event of the programme being withdrawn or of departmental failure, learners may apply to other SQA approved centres to complete their course. Entry, however is at the discretion of the centre.

## 6.7.3 \*Disclosure (PVG)

All previous offences identified via the Disclosure procedure will be considered on a case by case basis and will be formally assessed by a panel consisting of the core course team. The panel can request additional information to assist it in assessing the disclosure. They may also interview the applicant to obtain further information. The panel will consider the seriousness of the disclosure, the length of time that has elapsed, and whether there is evidence of sufficient personal learning and appropriate development. This process is framed within the context of risk assessment and safety.

In addition to this, the BACP will also consider whether the actions of the applicant may result in any of the following:

- (i) bring the reputation of BACP into disrepute.;
- (ii) bring the reputations of counselling and/or psychotherapy into disrepute.
- (iii) result in BACP's private business being brought into the public domain.
- (iv) impede the legitimate activities of the organisation.
- (v) give good reason to believe an applicant could misrepresent, or has already misrepresented, his/her/the organisation's membership status.
- (vi) give good reason to believe there could have been a serious breach of BACP's Codes of Ethics and Practice/Ethical Framework if the applicant had been a member of the Association at that time and/or the Association's Professional Conduct Procedure could not be used at that time.
- (vii) give good reason to believe the applicant has not or will not work to BACP's Ethical Frameworks for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy and Research respectively.

SQA's Qualification Approval application form can be accessed here:

[http://www.sqa.org.uk/files\\_ccc/Qualification\\_Approval\\_Application.pdf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Qualification_Approval_Application.pdf)

## 7 General information for centres

### Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

### Internal and external verification

As previously stated, all staff members involved in the delivery (including internal and external verification) of the Year 2 HND Counselling Units must be a member of or be eligible for membership of, an appropriate body with a complaints procedure to which they are subject.

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

Internal and external verification should include scrutiny of the course staff Continued Professional Development (CPD) records in relation to their involvement in professional development and consultation.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* ([www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment)).

## 8 General glossary of terms

**Embedded Core Skills:** is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

**Finish date:** The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the group award
- ◆ the group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

**Graded unit:** Graded units assess learners' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the units of the group award. Their purpose is to add value to the group award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage learners to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

**Lapsing date:** When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the group award
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period

**SQA credit value:** The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

**SCQF:** The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk).

**SCQF credit points:** SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

**SCQF levels:** The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

**Signposted Core Skills:** refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

## 8.1 Sector specific glossary of terms

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

The BACP Register was established in 2012 and was the first psychological therapists' register to be accredited by the [Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care](#). An independent body accountable to Government, the Authority was set up following the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to oversee health regulators such as the General Medical Council. It developed the [accredited register scheme](#) to quality assure registered practitioners working across a range of social care settings.

The main purpose of the Register is to protect the public and help you find a therapist you can trust. It aims to reassure clients, employers and the general public that a BACP-registered practitioner adheres to high standards of proficiency, professionalism and good practice.

### **BACP Certificate of Proficiency (CoP)**

The Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) is a free, computer-based, multiple choice assessment that allows members to demonstrate their awareness of the knowledge, skills and abilities required to be a professional counsellor / psychotherapist. It is based on case studies of practice situations, all written by counselling and psychotherapy professionals.

The CoP establishes, for the first time, a standardised measurement of minimum competence, which all practitioners should have and which all clients have a right to expect. It enhances confidence in the profession of counselling and psychotherapy within the wider community.

### **The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)**

The HCPC are a regulatory body, set up to protect the public. They keep a [register](#) of health and care professionals who meet the [standards](#) for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

## History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

**NOTE:** Where a unit is revised by another unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter learners for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date
02	<b>Revision of Units:</b> F1EF 35 Counselling: Contemporary Behaviour and Cognitive Theory (Finish date 31/07/2017) has been replaced by HT6X 35 Counselling: Contemporary Cognitive and Behaviour Theory. (Start date: 01/08/2016). F1EG 35 Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory (Finish date 31/07/2017) has been replaced by HT6Y 35 Counselling: Contemporary Humanistic Counselling Theory (start date: 01/08/2016). F1EH 35 Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory (Finish date 31/07/2017) has been replaced by HT70 35 Counselling: Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling Theory (Start date 01/08/2016).	28/07/17

## Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of this qualification.

## 9 General information for learners

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Counselling is designed for a range of learners from different sectors where counselling skills are useful. It can be an entry route to further education or utilised as continued professional development (CPD) for those already employed in other professions, eg nursing.

The Higher National Diploma (HND) in Counselling is a professional qualification, aimed at those who wish to become qualified counsellors and seek entry to the professional register held by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Entry to the HNC is at the discretion of the delivering centre, however it would be beneficial if you had some experience of working or volunteering in a counselling setting and had already achieved relevant units, eg *Counselling Theory for Practice* at SCQF level 6.

You will complete 12 SQA HN credits, 7 of which are mandatory with the remaining 5 being selected from a range of optional units.

There is no client practice at this level but you will be expected to demonstrate how you have integrated your counselling knowledge into practice via simulated classroom exercises.

Entry to the HND is also at the discretion of the delivering centre, however previous completion of the HNC in Counselling is required for entry to Year 2.

A total of 30 SQA HN credits must be achieved, 22 of which are mandatory with the remaining 8 being selected from a range of optional units.

The HND has been designed to support you to gain 100 hours of supervised client practice. You will demonstrate how you integrate advanced counselling knowledge and skills into your practice.

Throughout the qualification your Core Skills in *Communication*, *Numeracy*, *Working with Others*, *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Problem Solving* will also be developed.