



Group Award Specification for:

**Professional Development Award in
Counselling Supervision at SCQF 11**

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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.

Background to the development of the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Counselling Supervision at SCQF level 11

In June 2017 SQA validated the HN Diploma in Counselling at SCQF level 8, a professional qualification that enables learners to qualify as counsellors and to seek registration with the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP).

At that time it was recognised that with an increase in qualified counsellors beginning independent practice there would naturally be an increased sectoral demand for appropriately qualified supervisors.

In addition, the Scottish Governments' 2018/19 Programme for Government included commitments to provide schools with better support to deal with wellbeing concerns and to direct children to counselling services. This commitment, which will be delivered in close partnership with local government, will ensure every secondary school in Scotland has access to a fully qualified school counsellor. There is a further commitment to ensure that counsellors will also be available in further and higher education. These commitments have been designed to align to and support the work of the Children and Young People's Mental Health Taskforce.

One of the Scottish Governments' key principles is that only fully trained and registered counsellors can work in schools.

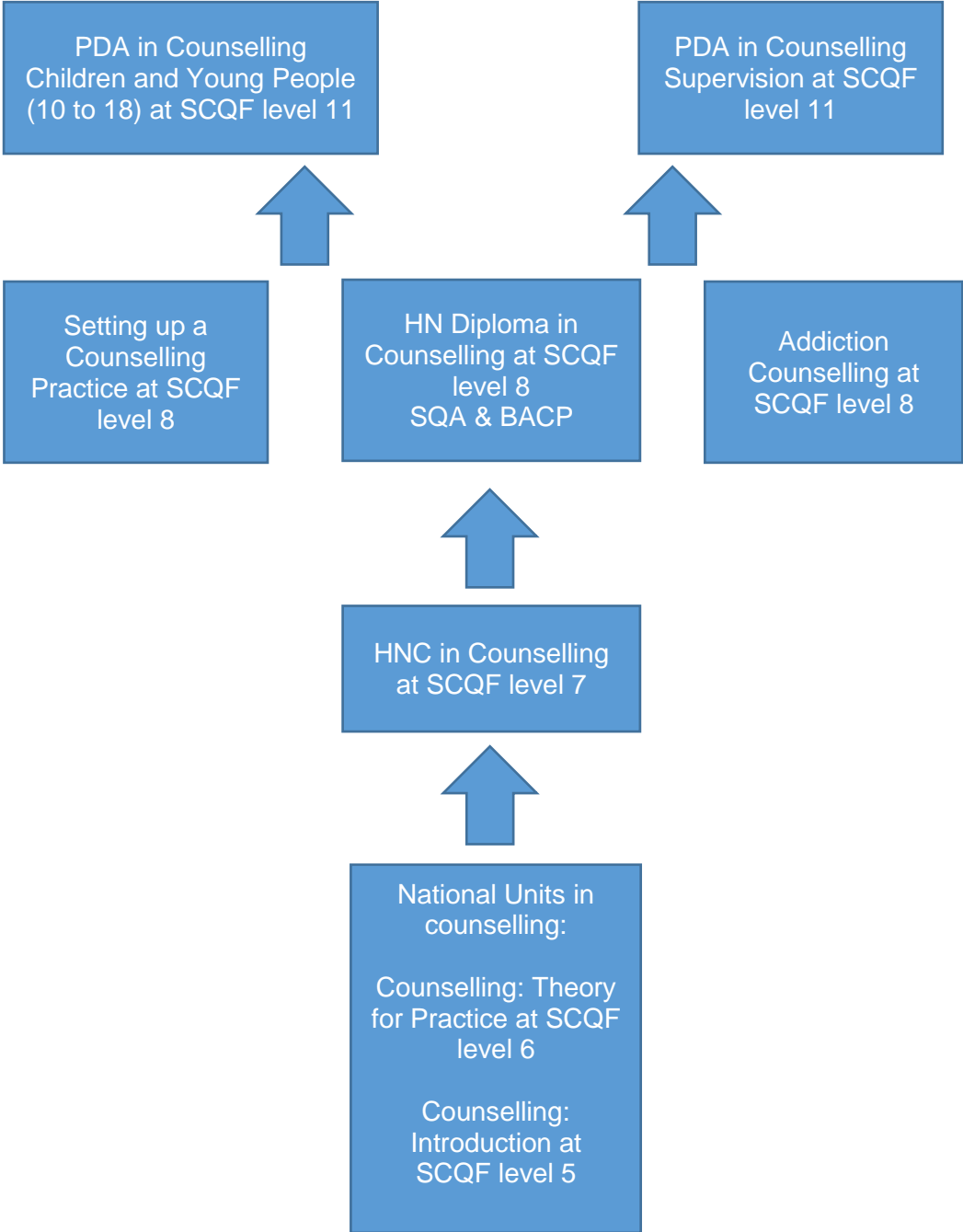
Supervision in counselling is when a counsellor uses the services of another counsellor or psychotherapist to review the way they work with their clients.

Supervision in counselling forms part of the counsellor's professional and personal development and ensures they work in a safe and ethical way.

As clinical supervision of practice is an ethical requirement to maintain counselling registration it was recognised that the creation of the new counsellor roles would add to the demand for a relevant counselling supervision course in further education.

This new PDA in Counselling Supervision aims to help meet that need by providing a nationally certificated and quality assured qualification for experienced counsellors who wish to expand their knowledge and skills beyond their clinical practice.

The following table sets out the SQA Counselling Qualification Provision.



2 Qualification structure

SQA's Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are flexible qualifications for industry, training and education and can be used to either extend or broaden professional and vocational skills.

Professional Development Awards:

- ◆ At SCQF levels 7–12 will be made up of a minimum credit value of 16 SCQF credit points
- ◆ Will be made up of at least two units
- ◆ Will have at least half the SCQF credit points at the level of the group award
- ◆ Will be made up of mandatory and/or optional units which reflect the title of the group award
- ◆ Will be aligned to National Occupational Standards, or other professional body standards, as appropriate to the group award area
- ◆ PDAs can comprise HN, NQ and workplace-assessed units
- ◆ All units will be validated and credit rated by SQA

This advanced level PDA is comprised of three mandatory HN units providing 4 SQA credit points; 16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 10 and 16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 11, thereby meeting the design principles.

The content of the PDA in Counselling Supervision has been written to align with the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) Counselling Supervision Training Curriculum and validated at SCQF level 11.

This level recognises the additional responsibility, professionalism, leadership and management skills required of those working in a clinical supervisory role.

The assigned level reflects the SCQF level 11 characteristics that successful learners will achieve:

- ◆ Knowledge that covers and integrates most, if not all, of the main areas of a subject discipline — including their features, boundaries, terminology and conventions.
- ◆ A critical understanding of a range of specialised theories, principles and concepts.
- ◆ A critical awareness of current issues in a subject/discipline and one or more specialisms.
- ◆ Use of a range of specialised skills, techniques, practices and/or materials which are at the forefront of, or informed by, forefront developments.
- ◆ Practice in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional level contexts.
- ◆ Apply a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry.
- ◆ Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to issues which are at the forefront of, or informed by, developments at the forefront of a subject/discipline.
- ◆ Develop original or creative responses to problems and issues.
- ◆ Critically review, consolidate and extend knowledge, skills practices and thinking in a subject discipline.
- ◆ Deal with complex issues and make informed judgements in situations in the absence of complete or consistent data/information.

2.1 Framework

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J3HJ	37	Counselling Supervision: Introduction	1	8	10
J3HK	37	Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision	1	8	10
J3HL	38	Counselling Supervision: Practice	2	16	11

3 Aims of the qualification

The principal aim of this qualification is to provide a consistent minimum standard to which Counselling Supervisors are trained.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are aimed at developing the skills of those already in professional employment, in this case as counsellors. They are principally designed for those already in a career or vocation who wish to extend or broaden their skills base.

All PDAs aim to allow learners to:

- 1 Develop transferable skills, including Core Skills
- 2 Demonstrate interpersonal skills and the ability to work with others
- 3 Develop personal effectiveness
- 4 Develop critical thinking skills
- 5 Progress within the SCQF framework and where possible into further or higher education
- 6 Provide opportunities for career progression

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

The specific aims of this PDA are to allow learners to:

- 1 Understand the facilitative role and responsibilities of the supervisor, practicing ethically and working sensitively within the competency of the supervisee
- 2 Understand the importance of effective preparation and the structure and process of supervision groups
- 3 Develop the leadership and management skills required in group supervision
- 4 Recognise the importance of case load management
- 5 Demonstrate skills underpinned by a deep understanding of theoretical approaches
- 6 Understand the role of the supervisory stance
- 7 Understand the concepts and principles of therapeutic work
- 8 Recognise the impact of specific psychological content to supervisory work
- 9 Recognise the value of consultancy
- 10 Effectively assess the competence of supervisees
- 11 Critically analyse attainment of required standards and manage serious concerns

3.3 Mapping of qualification specific aims to units

Code	Unit title	Aims										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
J3HJ 37	Counselling Supervision: Introduction	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
J3HK 37	Counselling Supervision: Theoretical Models and Approaches	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
J3HL 38	Counselling Supervision: Practice	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team.

Learners must be registered counsellors who have a minimum of one year post-qualification experience and be currently engaged in a counselling supervisory relationship. For learners intending to work as a counselling supervisor in the context of counselling children and young people — they **must** be able to demonstrate their experience in counselling the age group they will be supervising.

Learners may benefit from having previously completed the HN units *Counselling: Supervised Practice* and/or *Counselling: Supervision*, which provide a perspective of supervision from the viewpoint of the supervisee.

4.1 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 would 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.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	6	High level verbal engagement with supervisees and advanced report writing skills
Numeracy	6	Numeracy will be developed during planning, monitoring and reporting activities
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	6	ICT will be developed through the use of desktop packages, research analysis and report writing
Problem Solving	6	Critical analysis of standards, and managing and responding to serious concerns
Working with Others	6	Developing relationships with supervisees/value of consultancy, working in an organisational context

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 skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of trade body standards

The content of the PDA in Counselling Supervision at SCQF level 11 has been written to align with the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) Counselling Supervision Training Curriculum.

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/2044/bacp-counselling-supervision-training-curriculum.pdf>

This curriculum covers the generic and specific counselling competences commissioned by the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP), Skills for Health and NHS Education for Scotland.

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/clinical-educational-and-health-psychology/research-groups/core/competence-frameworks-8>

5.2 Mapping of units to the National Generic Competence Framework for Counselling Supervision

This framework was commissioned by the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP), Skills for Health and NHS Education for Scotland.

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/clinical-educational-and-health-psychology/research-groups/core/competence-frameworks-8>

National generic competences for Counselling Supervision

Generic competences describe the essential underpinning knowledge and skills required for supervision of all therapy modalities. They apply to areas of practice such as establishing and maintaining a working alliance with a supervisee, the ability to work with difference and ethical practice.

- 1 Ability to employ educational principles which enhance learning
- 2 Ability to enable ethical practice
- 3 Ability to foster competence in working with difference
- 4 Ability to adapt supervision to the organisational and governance context
- 5 Ability to form and maintain a supervisory working alliance
- 6 Ability to structure supervision sessions
- 7 Ability to help the supervisee present information about clinical work
- 8 Ability to help the supervisee reflect on their work and on the usefulness of supervision
- 9 Ability to use a range of methods to give accurate and constructive feedback
- 10 Ability to gauge the supervisee's level of competence
- 11 Ability for supervisor to reflect (and act on) on limitations in own knowledge and experience

Specific competences for Counselling Supervision

The specific competences cover topics such as working with groups in supervision and the ability to apply standards in practice.

- 1 Ability to help the supervisee practice clinical skills
- 2 Ability to incorporate direct observation into supervision
- 3 Ability to conduct supervision in group formats
- 4 Ability to apply standards

Code	Unit title	Generic supervision competences											Specific supervision competences				
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	
J3HJ 37	Counselling Supervision: Introduction	X				X	X	X	X	X			X				
J3HK 37	Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision			X									X			X	
J3HL 38	Counselling Supervision: Practice		X	X	X							X	X	X	X		X

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Unit code	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
J3HJ 37	Counselling Supervision: an Introduction	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J3HK 37	Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J3HL 38	Counselling Supervision: Practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualification

The following table sets out the recommended holistic assessment methods.

This strategy mirrors the BACP Post-Qualification Diploma assessment requirements. It should be noted that a minimum 80% learner attendance on the course is required.

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Counselling Supervision: Introduction	Learner portfolio of a minimum 2,500 words supported by a reflective journal		Peer group-work and reflection	n/a
Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision				n/a
Counselling Supervision: Practice	Continuation of learner portfolio and reflective journal, and in addition: Minimum of 40 hours logged counselling supervision practice; Minimum of 10 minutes logged consultative supervision; Minimum of one 10 minute recording of counselling supervision practice, transcribed with process comments			

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

Clinical supervision in the counselling context

Supervision involves a counsellor discussing their clinical work formally with an experienced colleague, and receiving constructive feedback on how they are doing and is essential to how practitioners sustain good practice throughout their working life. Supervision provides practitioners with regular and ongoing opportunities to reflect in depth about all aspects of their practice in order to work as effectively, safely and ethically as possible.

Each unit specification contains the essential knowledge, understanding and skills that are required to be covered within the delivery and assessment of this PDA. The following additional information is provided to support delivery of the course.

1 Fitness for purpose

- ◆ Supervision is career-long, not just for trainees/newly qualified. It a learning journey for both parties
- ◆ Supervision will change over time — what works for trainees/nq will differ from the needs of experienced practitioners
- ◆ Supervision must be 'safe'
- ◆ Experienced practitioners need a more collegiate, non-hierarchical approach based on the core conditions, trust and equality — a meeting of equals/'supervision alliance'
- ◆ Supervisors need supervision too!

2 The power differential (power play/power dynamics)

- ◆ Importance of recognising roles and responsibilities and nature of the relationship
- ◆ Accountability and safeguarding — 'duty of care'? What are the boundaries?
- ◆ Importance of the relationship and the core conditions is unequivocally linked to safety
- ◆ Needs to be an acknowledgement of where is supervisee 'is', ie trainee/newly qualified/experienced
- ◆ Supervisor will have a more educative role with trainees/newly qualified
- ◆ There can be such a thing as 'harmful supervision' — abusive supervision exists but often goes unacknowledged and can be deeply damaging for the supervisee. This can have a variety of manifestations:
 - Manner of the supervisor — aggressive/dismissive vs supportive/engaging
 - Personal presentation — eg inappropriate clothing/hygiene
 - Physical environment — could be as simple as the layout of seating arrangements creating barriers to something more serious causing a feeling of being trapped in the space by the supervisor
 - In extreme cases, bullying or coercion to seeing things the way the supervisor perceives them with no acknowledgement of the views of the supervisee
 - Supervisees need enabling to 'walk away' and find a new supervisor where necessary — some feel trapped/unable to seek change seeing it as a 'failure' on their part rather than an unhelpful dynamic. Some also have supervisor allocated by employing organisation so feel unable to question the choice.
 - Unhelpful/harmful supervision can lead to loss of trust and lack of respect

3 Nature of supervision

- ◆ Not necessarily developmental, particularly where experienced practitioners are concerned. There can be a perception that the 'supervisor knows more/best' but while this may be true for trainees/newly qualified, this is not always the case.
- ◆ Needs of experienced practitioners will differ and a more collegiate approach should be sought
- ◆ Definitely not 'policing'
- ◆ Should be supportive; inclusive; enabling
- ◆ Ethical tensions need to be recognised and acknowledged by both parties in an open and transparent manner
- ◆ Supervision should be restorative — practitioners need a reflective space; to be able to unburden themselves and relieve stresses
- ◆ Recognition of at what point does supervision become personal therapy?
- ◆ Supervision should promote best practice and above all support and protect clients

It will be beneficial if teaching also includes discussions on appropriately and safely utilising online technology, eg telephone, skype, text and video-conferencing.

It is considered ethically desirable to receive at least some elements of regular supervision by the same method of communication that is used with clients, in order to gain direct experience of the strengths and limitations of the chosen way of working.

Changing the method of communication with clients introduces new challenges and opportunities that can be greatly assisted by appropriate training. Good practice requires that anyone making significant differences in their practice should give careful consideration to what will be involved and have taken adequate steps to be competent in the new ways of working before offering services to clients.

It is recommended that learners are signposted to the following factsheet:

- ◆ *Working Online in the Counselling Professions; BACP Good Practice in Action 047 Fact Sheet*

Delivery

A variety of teaching approaches is encouraged as this helps learners engage with the course content, eg lectures, working in pairs, group-work and visits by experienced counselling supervisors can be supplemented by using presentations and hand-outs. Provision of a recommended reading list will benefit learners in their self-directed learning.

Practical sessions with peers, perhaps using simulation/case studies, is essential as this allows the learner to demonstrate the application of theories and knowledge to their practice.

A minimum of 80% learner attendance is a requirement of this PDA.

The delivering centre must ensure learners are aware of requirements around attendance.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

The units should be delivered in the order presented:

Unit 1: *Counselling Supervision: Introduction*

Unit 2: *Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision*

Unit 3: *Counselling Supervision: Practice*

There are opportunities for centres to integrate delivery of *Counselling Supervision: Introduction and Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision* and for skills practice in class groups to take place.

Counselling Supervision: Practice is practice-based and embeds the mandatory client work (40 hours logged counselling supervision practice; Minimum of 10 minutes logged consultative supervision; Minimum of one 10 minute recording of counselling supervision practice, transcribed with process comments) so should not be accessed until the underpinning knowledge skills and competences covered in *Counselling Supervision: Introduction and Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision* have been achieved.

Suggested session timetables have been included within the unit specifications. Holistic assessment is recommended — please see Section 5.4.

6.2 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 www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA unit(s) may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression

There are currently no articulation agreements in place.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres wishing to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

6.4 Support materials

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

6.5 Resource requirements

Staff involved in the delivery and assessment of the units contained in the PDA should be registered counsellors who have been in practice for a minimum of two years and must have experience as a practicing supervisor in the age group they will be supervising/delivering/assessing.

Information on staff qualifications and experience will be scrutinised at the qualification approval stage.

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.

Internal and external verification

All assessments used within this these qualification should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

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).

8 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.)

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

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)

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.

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.

Unit: Subject units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

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

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) and Clyde College (Annie'sland) 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 content of the PDA in Counselling Supervision has been written to align with the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) Counselling Supervision Training Curriculum and validated at SCQF level 11.

This level recognises the additional responsibility, professionalism, leadership and management skills required of those working in a clinical supervisory role (who will already be post-qualified experienced counselling practitioners)

There are three units to complete:

- 1 *Counselling Supervision: Introduction*
- 2 *Counselling: Theoretical Models and Approaches in Professional Clinical Supervision*
- 3 *Counselling Supervision: Practice*

The content clarifies the role of the counselling supervisor and the underpinning theoretical models used to help you develop and consolidate the skills necessary to facilitate supervisory practice. Throughout the course you will learn how to establish and maintain an effective supervisory relationship and acquire the understanding and the skills needed to enable the supervisee to make successful use of supervision.

There is a minimum 80%* attendance requirement to achieve this PDA, with a minimum of 40 hours logged counselling supervision practice; minimum of 10 minutes logged consultative supervision; minimum of one 10 minute recording of counselling supervision practice, transcribed with process comments.