Advanced Diploma in Counselling

Course Information

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Advanced Diploma in Counselling

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Network Training's Advanced Diploma in Counselling course. This information book is designed to help you to prepare effectively for the course and to give you all the information you will need to enable you to make the most of the learning opportunities it offers.

Award Summary

Title of course/award	Advanced Diploma in Counselling
Accredited by	British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy, and National Counselling & Psychotherapy Society
Providing institution	Network Counselling and Training Ltd
Mode of study	Two taught years (part-time) with up to one further year to complete assignments and placement hours
Class contact hours	519.5 hours over two years
Level of study	Equivalent of Higher Education Level 5

Award Requirements

Satisfactory Completion of Core Elements

The course has three core elements which are formally assessed: counselling and related theory; counselling skills and practice development; and personal and professional development.

The three core elements are assessed via a combination of written and practical coursework. At the beginning of the academic year, you will be given detailed information about the coursework to be submitted, including deadlines and assessment criteria. Below is a summary of the assessed coursework which you will be required to complete.

Element 1: Counselling and related theory:

- three 4000-word essays (in Terms 1, 2 and 4)
- a 9000-word case study (in Year 2/3)

Element 2: Counselling skills and practice development:

- a 50–60-minute counselling practice demonstration and 4000-word critical evaluation (in Year 2/3)
- a 9000-word case study (in Year 2/3)

Element 3: Personal and professional development:

- a 4000-word personal development work self-assessment (in Term 3)
- a 4000-word personal development profile (in Term 6)

In order to achieve the Advanced Diploma award, you must pass all three core elements - i.e. counselling theory, counselling skills and practice development, and personal and professional development. In order to do this you must satisfactorily complete all the assessed coursework relating to each element. Unsatisfactory performance in one core element or piece of assessed coursework may not be compensated for by your performance in others.

Counselling Practice

During the course, you are required to complete **a minimum of 150 hours of supervised counselling practice**. You will be required to work under close supervision, receiving a minimum of 1.5 hours of supervision per month in the form of fortnightly one-to-one sessions. The placement must continue until you formally receive your award.

In order to commence a counselling placement, you will be required to have an up-to-date Enhanced DBS check. Your placement provider will make the DBS application on your behalf – if your placement is with Network you will be required to cover the cost of the application, which is likely to be in the region of £70.

If you are unable to complete the required minimum of 150 hours by the end of the sixth term, you will have up to one further year in which to complete this requirement, subject to satisfactory arrangements for supervision and accountability to the course staff. Please note that should you be unable to complete a significant proportion of the 150 hours by the end of the sixth term (i.e. around 40-50%), you may, under certain circumstances, be asked to repeat the second year of the course.

Personal Counselling

In order to offer an effective therapeutic relationship to the client, it is essential for you, as a trainee counsellor to develop your capacity to reflect in depth, to have a high level of self-awareness and self-understanding, and the capacity for effective self-monitoring. You are, therefore, required to enter into personal counselling for **a minimum of twenty sessions** at some point before the end of the second year of the course. A personal therapy log is available for the counsellor (s) to sign to evidence the number of counselling sessions attended. **Network Students cannot receive counselling from Network's Counselling Service due to the potential for conflicts of interest. A directory of private counsellors and counselling organisations is available on Google Classroom for students to refer to if seeking a counsellor.**

Guidelines on Personal Counselling for Advanced Diploma Students

- Sessions can be in person or online, or a combination of both. We would strongly encourage students to have some experience of what it is like to be a client in person. However, we recognise that some students may already be engaged in working with a counsellor online and will wish to continue to do so. The key consideration is finding a counsellor who offers an effective therapeutic relationship.
- Students are expected to find their own counsellor; tutors will not normally make recommendations or referrals.
- Counsellors must be qualified, registered and a member of a recognised professional body (e.g. BACP, NCPS). Ideally, Counsellors should also have at least 2 years post qualification experience.
- The counsellor's approach should resonate with that of the course, being person-centred, or person centred/integrative.
- Tutors will follow up in tutorial the issue of student engagement in personal counselling.
- It is expected that your learning from personal therapy will be reflected upon in your final Personal Development Profile.

Course Aims

Main Educational Aims

1. To enable students to function safely, competently and ethically as professional counsellors in a wide range of work settings.
2. To enable students to develop and apply an in-depth working knowledge and understanding of an integrative person-centred model of counselling, a general awareness and understanding of a range of other therapeutic approaches and a broad range of knowledge related to philosophy, human psychosocial and spiritual development, mental health/distress and ethics and the law.
3. To enable students to develop the capacity to form and sustain an effective therapeutic relationship and a high level of competence in the use of a broad range of generic counselling skills and interventions.
4. To enable students to become reflective practitioners who have a highly developed self-reflective capacity; who use supervision effectively both to reflect critically on their work and to address personal and professional development needs; and who engage in continuing professional development.
5. To enable students to develop research skills which will enable them to read, interpret and appraise counselling research, to engage in routine outcome and process monitoring of their practice and to engage in practitioner research.
6. To enable students to develop the capacity to engage in balanced philosophical/spiritual reflection in relation to counselling theory and practice.

Large Group

The Large Group comprises the whole student cohort, and is facilitated by the course tutors. It has a number of functions:

- to address course-related issues (e.g. giving information about assignments, planning the principal course exercises, addressing key course policies and procedures as necessary, etc.)
- there is the joint endeavour to work for trust and openness, and so facilitate growth by providing a safe space in which you will have the opportunity:
- to introduce any issue that you would like to explore with the group
- to learn about yourself in relation to a wide range of others and to understand others better
- to check out the reality of your assumptions about other people as well as others' perception of, and responses to, you
- to deal with any conflict or tension arising between group members

The final Large Group meeting of each term will include a Community Meeting (a dialogue of feedback on the course between students and tutors).

Theory Teaching

This is a mix of:

- PowerPoint presentations to introduce/develop your understanding of theory
- pairs work or small group work to explore the theory and/or relate it to practice
- demonstrations of theory in action
- debates
- tutor interviews
- structured course exercises
- creative work

Skills Practice Groups

On occasion there will be some specific skills teaching in the whole group, otherwise you will be divided into smaller Skills Practice groups (comprising a counsellor, client and observers), which, in Year 1, will generally be facilitated by a tutor. (In Year 2, the groups may sometimes be unfacilitated and will run on alternate weeks to the Reflective Practice groups.)

Clients will be asked to bring a "live" personal concern or issue and counsellors will have the opportunity to practise their practical counselling skills. At the end of the practice session, the counsellor will share their experience of the practice session and the wider group will offer their feedback to the counsellor.

Personal Development Groups

The Personal Development group seeks to facilitate growth by providing a safe space in which you will have the opportunity:

- to develop your awareness, understanding and acceptance of yourself and others
- to examine your own beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, values, responses and behaviour patterns as they arise in the context of your relationships with staff, peers and others
- to explore what is happening within you and in your interactions with others as result of your being on the course and training to become a counsellor
- to explore ways in which your past experiences may be impacting you in the here-and-now
- to become more aware of your interpersonal style and to develop your interpersonal skills
- to develop your capacity to be self-reflective about your strengths and limitations
- to work at identifying your 'blind spots' and 'growing edges' through receiving constructive feedback from others

Reflective Practice Groups

In Year 2 the cohort will be divided into two Professional Practice groups, each facilitated by a course tutor. These groups meet fortnightly (alternating with the Skills Practice groups). These groups are an opportunity for you to explore with the group any general issues relating to your counselling practice on placement. Examples of suitable issues to bring would be:

- "I'm having trouble bringing sessions to an end on time … "
- "I'm finding it difficult to talk to clients about payment for their sessions."
- "I'm not sure how to make initial contact with a client."
- "How can I facilitate my clients to explore at a deeper level?"

Learning Partnership Groups

In Year 2 the cohort will be divided into three or four Learning Partnership groups, these will not be facilitated but will be student directed. Groups will meet weekly. They are an opportunity to work collaboratively on areas that particularly interest you and on set group presentations, such as the small group seminars in Term 4 and the presentations on a topic of your choice in term 6.

COURSE CURRICULUM

Overview of the Course Curriculum

The Advanced Diploma curriculum comprises three core elements: -

- Element 1: Counselling and related theory
- Element 2: Counselling skills and practice development
- Element 3: Personal and professional development.

These three elements are closely interlinked and are delivered concurrently throughout each term. They consist of varying amounts of class contact hours and private study. Each element has its own approved aims and learning outcomes, content, teaching methods and assessment procedures.

Element 1: Counselling and Related Theory

The theoretical teaching on the course has two key aspects: counselling theory and applied psychology. The majority of the theory teaching will take place in weekly theoretical seminars lasting one and three quarter hours. Taking into account additional workshops, the course offers in total around 140 hours of theory teaching over the six terms (excluding private study and coursework). The curriculum consists of 8 modules:

Year 1

- Module 1: Person-centred theory and practice
- Module 2: Psychosocial and spiritual development
- Module 3: Counselling, ethics and the law
- Module 4: Counselling and mental health

Year 2

- Module 5: Online and phone counselling (OPT)
- Module 6: Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Module 7: Working with specific issues
- Module 8: Alternative counselling approaches
- Module 9: Spiritually oriented counselling
- Module 10: Counselling research

Element 2: Counselling Skills and Practice Development

The majority of the skills and practice development work will take place in small facilitator-led groups. In Year 1, these will take the form of skills practice groups which will meet for two hours each session. The primary focus will be on further developing your capacity to form and sustain a therapeutic relationship and your competence levels in practical counselling skills.

In Year 2, these groups will be fortnightly for one hour, alternating with Reflective Practice Groups. The primary focus will move towards developing your professional practice as a counsellor. The course offers in total approximately 160 hours of counselling skills training and practice development (excluding private study and coursework) over the six terms.

The curriculum consists of two modules:

Year 1

- Module S1: Counselling skills development

Year 2

- Module S2: Counselling practice development

Element 3: Personal and Professional Development

While it is recognised that personal and professional development may take place in the context of many different aspects of the course, the course also makes explicit provision for such development through work in personal development groups (which meet with a facilitator for 1.5 hours weekly throughout the course); through weekly large group work (1 hour per week); through the tutorial system and through other focused activities such as the learning journal. This personal development work will be focused through a combination of structured activities, experiential exercises and unstructured group work. Taking into account additional workshops and tutorials, the course provides approximately 200 hours of personal development work (excluding private study and coursework) over the six terms.

The curriculum consists of two modules:

Year 1

- Module P1: Personal development

Year 2

- Module P2: Personal and professional development

Outline of Year 1 Modules

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 1: Person-Centred Theory and Practice – Term 1

Overview

This module aims to enable you to acquire an in-depth working knowledge and understanding of the Core Self model, to develop your ability to apply it in working with a range of presenting problems and to enable you to develop the ability to make a critical appraisal of the model. It also seeks to enable you to develop an in-depth knowledge and understanding of humanistic person-centred counselling theory and practice, and to compare and contrast this approach with that of the Core Self model.

The Core Self Model

The Core Self model is an integrative person-centred model which was especially developed for this course. It is fundamentally person-centred in that it draws heavily on the work of Carl Rogers and other person-centred writers, and shares with its humanistic counterpart many of the philosophical assumptions and theoretical hypotheses that shape person-centred theory and practice. It is also person-centred in that it rests firmly on the belief that 'the relationship is the therapy' (Mearns and Thorne, 2000) – in other words, that it is the quality of the relationship between counsellor and client that lies at the heart of the effectiveness of the counselling process.

In a number of respects, however, it is both an adaptation and extension of existing person-centred theory. A number of key concepts and hypotheses are reworked, and new ones introduced. It also incorporates in an adapted form a number of ideas, concepts and insights from other therapeutic approaches and related theories such as attachment theory, transactional analysis, cognitive behavioural therapy, Jungian psychotherapy and existential psychotherapy.

The model also seeks to draw together the person-centred and the spiritual in a meaningful synthesis and in this respect might best be described as a person-centred psychospiritual model. Key assumptions about human spirituality and spiritual development are clearly and explicitly articulated in the context of its philosophical and theoretical framework. These are well grounded in the work of other philosophers, psychologists and therapists and in insights that have emerged from the world's major wisdom traditions.

The model also recognises the importance of being willing and able to address this dimension of human experience in the counselling room.

Syllabus

- The history and development of counselling.
- The key assumptions, hypotheses and concepts of the Core Self model.
- Humanistic person-centred counselling theory and practice, and its relationship with the Core Self model.
- Recent developments in person-centred theory and practice.
- Evaluating the Core Self model.
- Reading and interpreting counselling research; relevant research findings.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) An in-depth working knowledge and understanding of the key philosophical and theoretical assumptions and theoretical concepts of the Core Self model and the ability to apply it in practice.
b) The ability to make a critical appraisal of the Core Self model and to recognise its strengths, weaknesses and limitations.
c) An in-depth knowledge and understanding of humanistic person-centred counselling theory and practice, and the ability to compare and contrast this approach with the Core Self model.

Assessment

Theoretical essay – 4000 words.

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 2: Psychosocial and Spiritual Development – Term 2

Overview

The principal aim of the applied psychology aspect of the course is to introduce you to relevant concepts and insights derived from the study of psychology – in particular, social, developmental and abnormal psychology, and personality theory – in order to enhance your understanding of human behaviour and psychological functioning.

This module in particular aims to enable you to acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of key aspects of human development (focusing primarily on personality, social and spiritual development) and an understanding of the relevance of this for counselling practice. During the module you will be introduced to concepts and insights derived from applied developmental psychology. You will explore the factors affecting human development and will be introduced to the work of Erikson, Levinson and others on life stages, tasks and transitions and the work of Fowler, Jacobs and others on faith and spiritual development.

Syllabus

- Human psychosocial development.
- Life-span development theory.
- Attachment theory.
- Stage/task theories of psychosocial development.
- Life transitions theory.
- Narrative construction theory.
- Models of faith/spiritual development.
- Relevant research findings.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) A detailed knowledge and understanding of the key psychosocial and faith/spiritual development theories.
b) An ability to apply this knowledge and understanding to your work with clients.

Assessment

Theoretical essay – 4000 words.

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 3: Counselling, Ethics and the Law – Terms 2-3

Overview

During this module, you will study in depth the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions and the NCPS Code of Ethical Practice. You will consider ethical considerations around the importance of confidentiality, setting and maintaining professional boundaries, notes and record keeping, and risk assessments. You will also explore different ways of dealing with a range of ethical issues and dilemmas commonly encountered in counselling practice. Finally, you will study aspects of British law relevant for counselling practice.

Syllabus

- The BACP and NCPS Ethical Frameworks.
- Boundaries.
- Confidentiality.
- An ethical problem-solving model.
- Dealing with ethical dilemmas.
- Counselling practice and the law.
- Notes and record keeping.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) An in-depth knowledge and understanding of current professional codes of ethics and practice.
b) An awareness and understanding of the ethical issues and dilemmas that may arise within the context of the counselling relationship, and the ability to deal appropriately and sensitively with such issues and dilemmas.
c) A sound knowledge and understanding of the legal issues relevant to the practice of counselling.

Assessment

Assessed via the case study (due in Year 2/3) – 9000 words.

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 4: Counselling and Mental Health – Term 3

Overview

The principal aim of this module is to introduce you to relevant concepts and insights derived from the study of abnormal psychology – the study of psychopathology and abnormal behaviour – and to consider their implications for counselling theory and practice. You will explore definitions of normality and abnormality, and concepts of mental health and mental illness or disorder. You will be introduced to the classification of mental disorders and will be given a broad overview of their causes and treatment. This medical model will then be contrasted with a person-centred perspective on mental distress. You will also explore the complex relationship between body, mind and spirit and the concept of people as psychosomatic beings, and you will look at the issues and difficulties involved in assessing the need for psychiatric help and in relating to other professionals/agencies involved in the care of your clients.

Syllabus

- The medical model of mental distress.
- Understanding the process of psychiatric diagnosis/classification of disorders.
- Causes/treatment of key mental disorders.
- Psychotropic drug use; key side effects; impact on counselling process.
- A person-centred perspective on mental health/distress.
- Working with the suicidal client.
- Working with the client who self-harms.
- Working with abuse survivors.
- Working with the impact of trauma.
- Assessing the need for psychiatric help.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) A sound knowledge and understanding of concepts of mental health and disorder and of the medical model of mental distress.
b) An understanding of a person-centred perspective on mental distress.
c) Awareness and understanding of the range of mental health problems, their causes and treatments.
d) The capacity to assess the need for psychiatric help.
e) The ability to relate to other professionals/agencies in a professional, respectful manner which seeks co-operative solutions in the best interests of your clients.

Assessment

May be assessed via the case study (due in Year 2/3) – 9000 words.

ELEMENT 2: COUNSELLING SKILLS AND PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT
Module S1: Counselling Skills Development – Terms 1 to 3

Overview

This module aims to enable you to consolidate the learning you achieved during certificate level training through deepening your capacity to form and sustain an effective therapeutic relationship and to communicate the core conditions at high levels. In addition, you will be given further opportunities to develop your competence in the generic counselling skills common to most counselling approaches and in the more advanced skills of working with transference, resistance and emotional pain. There will also be a focus on developing the skills of interpersonal process recall (IPR) in order to increase your awareness and understanding of process and to develop further your capacity to be a self-reflective practitioner.

Syllabus

Much of the agenda will be student-led but it will cover the following key areas:

- Communication of the core conditions.
- Re-visiting middle stage challenging skills.
- Working at relational depth.
- Interpersonal process recall skills.
- Case management skills.
- Understanding and using supervision.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) A well-developed capacity to form and sustain a therapeutic relationship and to communicate the core conditions at high levels.
b) A well-developed ability to manage a counselling session.
c) High levels of competence in a broad range of the foundational counselling skills.
d) A well-developed understanding and awareness of process.
e) A well-developed capacity to be a self-reflective practitioner and to reflect critically on your practice, identifying both strengths and areas for further development.

Assessment

A readiness to practice assessment completed during Terms 2-3.

ELEMENT 3: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Module P1: Personal Development – Terms 1 to 3

Overview

This module has a number of key aims. First and foremost, it aims to facilitate your personal growth, to develop further your self-reflective capacity and to enable you to identify and address those personal development issues which arise in the context of your practice and have the potential to inhibit your ability to work effectively with your clients. It seeks to develop further your awareness and understanding of yourself including your own unique value, attitude and belief systems; your needs, fears, vulnerabilities and personal 'blind spots'; your personality preferences; your interpersonal skills and style and the balance of your personal and interpersonal strengths and areas for further development. It will help you relate the theoretical ideas and concepts you encounter during the course to your own personal development.

It also aims to enable you to take responsibility for your own learning and personal development, and to develop the ability to set and review your personal development goals. Finally, it also seeks to enable you to develop the capacity to appraise yourself openly, honestly and accurately, and to learn from consultation with and feedback from others.

Syllabus

Much of the agenda will be student-led but it will cover the following key areas:

- Application of Core Self model theory to self.
- Own configurations of self.
- Rogers' stages of growth model and its application to self.
- Exploring own attachment history and style.
- Exploring own psychosocial and spiritual development.
- Exploring own mental health and well-being.
- Self-support and self-care strategies.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) A measure of your own personal growth and development in a number of areas.
b) A significant degree of awareness and understanding of yourself and others.
c) The ability to take responsibility for your own learning, and to set and evaluate your own personal learning goals.
d) A significant degree of awareness of your personal and interpersonal strengths, and an awareness of how these might impact on your relationships with others and on your work with clients.
e) A significant degree of awareness of your own personal and interpersonal areas for further development, and an awareness of how these might impact on your relationships with others and on your work with clients.

Assessment

A personal development work assessment (due in Term 3) – 4000 words.

Outline of Year 2 Modules

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 5: Online and Phone Therapy (OPT) – Term 4

Overview

This is a stand-alone module with the aim of equipping you to work online and by phone, covering the following BACP competencies.

Syllabus

- OPT media and technology
- The scope of OPT working
- Ethical and professional practice
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Facilitation of OPT sessions
- Communication and therapeutic skills
- OPT working with a new client
- Confidentiality and data protection
- Risk
- Working with psychological processes
- Self-care
- Supervision

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) An awareness and understanding of the issues involved in online and telephone counselling.
b) Competence in practical online and telephone counselling.

Assessment

Tutor observation/assessment of online/telephone counselling skills.

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Term 4

Overview

In this module, you will study the socio-cultural context of the counselling relationship, including the wider societal framework within which a range of counselling contexts take place. You will be introduced to the theory of human systems and the concept of 'Working within Diversity' (Khan 2023) and will explore their relevance for counselling practice. You will learn about the work of other mental health professionals and issues relating to working within multidisciplinary teams. You will explore the politics of counselling, looking especially at issues relating to social and interpersonal power, and to social disadvantage and difference. You will also explore multicultural counselling and feminist counselling approaches, and will consider issues relating to race, gender, sexuality and relationships, which are relevant for the counselling process.

Syllabus

- The socio-cultural context of counselling.
- Understanding human systems; systemic counselling approaches.
- Working within diversity.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Culturally-sensitive counselling.
- Working with marginalised clients
- Gender, sexuality, and relationship diversity and counselling.
- Issues of power in counselling practice.
- Neurodivergence.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) An awareness and understanding of the social-cultural context of the counselling relationship.
b) An awareness and understanding of systems theory and of its relevance for counselling practice.
c) An understanding of the politics of counselling and issues relating to power and privilege and of social disadvantage and marginalisation of clients.
d) An awareness and understanding of working within diversity, and issues relating to sexuality, gender and relationships
e) An understanding and awareness of intersectionality and its relevance to working within diversity in the counselling relationship
f) An understanding and awareness of the work of other health professionals and the issues involved in working as part of a multidisciplinary team.

Assessment

Theoretical essay – 4000 words.
An in-class presentation (not formally assessed)

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 7: Working with Specific Issues – Term 4

Overview

The key aims of this module are to develop your awareness of the specific challenges around working with significant issues that are not covered elsewhere in the curriculum.

Syllabus

- Disordered eating.
- Loss and bereavement.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you should be able to demonstrate:

- An awareness and understanding of eating disorders.
- The ability to apply the Core-self model to an understanding of eating disorders.
- An awareness and understanding of recent models of working with loss and bereavement.
- The ability to work in a person-centred way with loss and bereavement.

Assessment

No formal assessment. However, an awareness of issues covered in this module, if they come up in the client work chosen for the Case Study and Counselling Practice Demonstration evaluation (due in year 2/3) students are expected to comment on learning from this module in relation to their work with these clients.

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 8: Alternative Counselling Approaches – Term 5

Overview

The key aims of this module are to develop your awareness of the range of counselling approaches in the field, to develop your knowledge and understanding of some of the other principal counselling approaches. This will include training in online and phone therapy.

You will be introduced to the philosophical and theoretical frameworks underlying these other approaches to counselling, and will study their counselling styles and methods. In addition, they will be compared and contrasted with the Core Self model. Relevant research findings will be considered. You will also be introduced to the concepts of eclecticism and integration, and to the debate concerning the relative merits of theoretical purity versus theoretical integration. You will explore the process of integration, and be introduced to guidelines for effective integration of both theoretical concepts and counselling techniques. Finally, you will be resourced in developing your own philosophical and theoretical framework as a counsellor.

Syllabus

- The counselling field.
- Psychodynamic approaches.
- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).
- Existential and transpersonal approaches.
- Transactional Analysis (TA).
- Gestalt.
- Inner Child therapy.
- Eclectic and integrative approaches.
- The process of therapeutic integration.
- Relevant research findings.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) An awareness of the range of counselling approaches in the field.
b) a broad knowledge and understanding of the other principal counselling approaches – i.e. psychodynamic and transpersonal approaches, cognitive behavioural therapy, Transactional Analysis and Gestalt – and the capacity to compare and contrast these with the Core Self model.
c) A broad knowledge and understanding of the issues involved in online and telephone counselling; competence in practical online and telephone counselling.
d) An awareness and understanding of eclectic and integrative approaches to counselling.
e) An understanding of the process of integration and of the principals involved in achieving effective integration of theoretical ideas and counselling techniques.
f) The capacity to articulate your own philosophical/theoretical framework as a counsellor.

Assessment

Case study (due in Year 2/3) – 9,000 words.

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 9: Spiritually-Oriented Counselling – Term 6

Overview

The principal aim of this module is to develop further your understanding of the spiritual dimension of human experience, and to equip you to recognise and work with the spiritual problems and issues which clients may present in counselling. In order to do so, we shall draw on insights from the psychology of religion, from relevant counselling theory and from the world's major wisdom traditions.

You will look at the concepts of religion and spirituality in depth and explore different forms of religious and spiritual experience. You will be introduced to the concepts of salugenic and pathogenic religion and spirituality and will explore the relationship between spirituality and mental and physical health. You will also explore the way in which different religions/spiritual traditions make sense of human suffering – a key issue which is of particular relevance for the spiritually-oriented counsellor. Finally, the module also aims to develop your ability to examine and articulate your own philosophical/spiritual framework, and to understand how this framework might shape and impact on your counselling practice.

Syllabus

- The importance of embracing the spiritual dimension in therapy.
- Soul listening; the concept of soul work.
- The relationship between psychological and spiritual development.
- Understanding the concepts of religion and spirituality.
- Religious and non-religious spirituality; individual differences in spirituality.
- Understanding spiritual experience.
- Recognising and working with spiritual problems and issues.
- Pathogenic and salugenic religion/spirituality and its relationship with mental and physical health.
- Spiritual abuse.
- Relevant research findings.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) An in-depth understanding of the concepts of spirituality and religion and of the spiritual dimension of human nature.
b) An ability to recognise and work effectively with the spiritual problems and issues people may bring to counselling.
c) The capacity to articulate clearly your own philosophical/spiritual framework and an awareness of how this might shape and impact on your practice.

Assessment
No formal assessment. However, an awareness of sociocultural context of counselling, and issues covered in this module are expected to be commented on in the Case Study and Counselling Practice Demonstration evaluation (due in year 2/3).

ELEMENT 1: COUNSELLING AND RELATED THEORY
Module 10: Counselling Research – Term 6

Overview

This module covers the role of research in counselling, reading and interpreting research, understanding research findings and their relevance for practice, types of counselling research, methods of evaluating the outcome and process of therapy (including CORE) and the challenges involved in becoming a research practitioner.

Syllabus

- The role of research in counselling; evidence-based practice.
- Quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Understanding and interpreting research studies.
- Methods of evaluating the outcome and process of therapy.
- The knowledge and skills required to be an effective research practitioner.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) An awareness and understanding of different types of counselling research.
b) The ability to read and interpret research studies effectively.
c) An awareness of a range of outcome and process measures, and how to apply these.
d) An understanding of the ways in counselling research can be carried out in the context of practice.

Assessment

No formal assessment, however students are required to conduct a non-formally assessed research presentation in class.

ELEMENT 2: COUNSELLING SKILLS AND PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT
Module S2: Counselling Practice Development – Terms 4-6

Overview

In this element in the second year, there is less of a focus on counselling skills development and more of an emphasis on developing your capacity to function competently and ethically in working with a wider range of presenting problems, and on developing your own personal approach and style as a professional counsellor. There will be a key emphasis on increasing your capacity to work at relational depth and to use yourself therapeutically, and on developing your ability to work with the spiritual dimension of people's experience. In addition, you will have the opportunity to explore a range of skills and interventions beyond those required for competence in the Core Self model and to consider the issues and difficulties involved in integrating these effectively into your practice. You will also explore the challenges involved in working with process in counselling.

Syllabus

- Working at relational depth.
- Process work in counselling.
- Therapeutic use of self.
- Conducting initial/risk assessments.
- Focusing techniques.
- Working with creative techniques.
- Working with the spiritual dimension of experience.
- Talking about sex/sexuality/gender; working with gender identity/sexual issues.
- Working cross-gender.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) A high degree of congruence and consistency between your current counselling practice and your philosophical/theoretical orientation.
b) A well-developed ability to manage the counselling process effectively.
c) A well-developed ability to form and sustain a therapeutic relationship and to communicate the core therapeutic qualities of unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence at high levels.
d) The competent and ethical use of a broad range of counselling skills, and the ability to select appropriate strategies/interventions and understand their impact on the counselling process.
e) A well-developed ability to reflect critically and in a theoretically informed manner on your practice, and to evaluate personal strengths and areas for development.
f) A well-developed awareness and understanding of process, and a developing ability to work effectively with process-related issues.

Assessment

- Counselling practice demonstration and 4000 word critical evaluation (due in Year 2/3).
- Case study (Year 2/3) – 9000 words.
- Placement Log and 2000 word Placement Learning Statement (on completion of the placement).

ELEMENT 3: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Module P2: Personal and Professional Development – Terms 4-6

Overview

In the second year, this element will focus primarily on enabling you to explore your own shadow (your repressed self) and to develop your awareness and understanding of 'blocks' within yourself which inhibit your ability to be fully present to your clients, to achieve mutuality within your relationships and to work at relational depth. There will also be a focus on developing further your awareness of your own values, attitudes and prejudices, of the power dynamics within your relationships and of the ways in which these might impact on your work with clients. There will also be a continuing focus on helping you to relate the theoretical ideas and concepts you encounter during the course to your own personal development.

Syllabus

Much of the agenda will be student-led but it will also cover the following key areas:

- Exploring the repressed self (or shadow).
- Exploring own transferences.
- Applying theoretical ideas from TA, CBT and Inner Child therapy to self.
- Exploring own value system.
- Exploring own prejudices.
- Exploring own attitudes to/use of power.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the element, you should be able to demonstrate:

a) A measure of personal growth and development in a number of areas.
b) Evidence of personal soundness – i.e. a well-developed self-reflective capacity, a high degree of personal integrity and the absence of major intra- or inter-personal difficulties which may inhibit the ability to work safely and competently with clients.
c) The ability to take responsibility for your own learning and to set and evaluate your own personal learning goals.
d) A significant degree of awareness of your personal and interpersonal strengths, and an awareness of how these might impact on your relationships with others and on your work with clients.
e) A significant degree of awareness of your own personal and interpersonal areas for further development, and of the way in which these might impact on your relationships with others and on your work with clients.

Assessment

A 4000-word personal development profile.

Year 3

On completion of the two taught years, you have up to one further year to complete any outstanding assignments and placement hours. Most students can expect to go into a third year. To support you as you continue with your studies in Year 3, you will be:

- Required to attend one seminar a term.
- Required to attend one tutorial a term.
- Encouraged to form Peer Support Groups so that you can meet regularly in small groups to support each other through the third year.

Year 3 students continue to have representation at the termly Course Management Committee meetings, and to have access to the course library and Google Classroom.

ASSESSMENT

Core Assessment Criteria

The central aim of the Advanced Diploma course is to enable you to function safely, competently and professionally as counsellors in your work setting. The ability to offer a therapeutic relationship and to work safely, competently and effectively is dependent to a large extent on three core qualities: sound knowledge and understanding of counselling theory; competence in the use of counselling skills; personal soundness. Consequently, there are three core assessment criteria which must be met by all students in order to meet the course requirements and to achieve the award:

Core Criteria

The three core assessment criteria which must be met by all students:

- Evidence of detailed knowledge and understanding of counselling theory and the ability to apply this to counselling practice.
- Evidence of competent and ethical counselling practice.
- Evidence of personal soundness – i.e. a well-developed self-reflective capacity, a high degree of personal integrity and the absence of major intra- or inter-personal difficulties which may inhibit the ability to work safely and competently with clients.

These three core criteria form the core assessment criteria for the items of written and practical coursework which must be completed satisfactorily each year.

Criteria for Assessed Coursework

The following is a list of the assessment criteria for each of the items of coursework which must be submitted for assessment over the year. You will need to refer to these criteria specifically as the various points of assessment occur.

Theoretical Essays

These should be **4000 words** in length (plus or minus 10%) and should meet the following criteria:

Core Criteria:

1. The question as set is answered fully, relevantly and appropriately (i.e. all essential aspects of the topic are covered; it is to the point throughout, with no digression; appropriate strategy is used e.g. describing, analysing, discussing, comparing and contrasting, criticising etc. depending on the terms of reference of the question).
2. Demonstrate a breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of relevant theory, expressed using appropriate language.
3. Theoretical ideas, practical examples and personal experience are linked.
4. Demonstrate a well-developed reflective capacity appropriate to the essay.

Additional Criteria:

5. Demonstrate the ability to organise the material presented in a logical way, to express thoughts, ideas and arguments clearly and fluently.

6. Evidence of a considerable breadth of relevant reading and research which is applied purposefully to the particular essay title, and of the ability to analyse and evaluate a wide range of information in an informed manner.

Case Study

You are required to submit an in-depth case study of your work with a client. This will be used to assess both your ability to apply your theoretical knowledge and understanding, and the competence of your practice.

The assignment should comprise a statement of no more than **1000 words** outlining your own theoretical/philosophical framework followed by the main case study of **8000 words** in length (plus or minus 10%). It should show:

Core Criteria:

1. Evidence of a high degree of congruence and consistency between current counselling practice and philosophical/theoretical orientation, and of the ability to reflect on practice in a theoretically informed manner.

2. Evidence of a well-developed ability to re-conceptualise the client's problems using a clear theoretical framework.

3. Evidence of an in-depth understanding of the counselling process and of the process of change.

4. Evidence of the ability to select appropriate strategies/interventions and to understand their impact on the counselling process.

5. Evidence of a well-developed awareness and understanding of process.

6. Evidence of a well-developed ability to be a self-reflective practitioner - i.e. to demonstrate a high level of self-awareness and a well-developed ability to evaluate personal strengths and areas for development.

7. Evidence of the ability to apply learning from the process of supervision to work with the client.

Additional Criteria:

8. Evidence of the ability to organise the material presented in a logical way and to express thoughts, ideas and arguments clearly and fluently.

9. Evidence of a high level of competence in the use of the language of the topic.

Counselling Practice Demonstration (CPD)

You are required to submit a recording of an entire counselling session with a client, accompanied by a written evaluation of the session as a whole including an in-depth commentary on a 15 minute section of the session.

Assessment Criteria:

Part 1 The counselling session

The recording should show:

1. Evidence of a high degree of congruence and consistency between current counselling practice and philosophical/theoretical orientation.

2. Evidence of a well-developed ability to manage a counselling session.

3. Evidence of a well-developed ability to form and sustain a therapeutic relationship and to communicate the core therapeutic qualities of unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence at high levels.

4. Evidence of the competent and ethical use of a broad range of counselling skills.

Part 2 - The critical evaluation

The critical evaluation of the counselling session should be **4000 words** in length (plus or minus 10%). It should show:

Core Criteria:

1. Evidence of a well-developed ability to reflect critically on the handling of the counselling session and to evaluate personal strengths and areas for development.

2. Evidence of an in-depth understanding of the counselling process.

3. Evidence of a well-developed awareness and understanding of process.

Additional Criteria:

4. Evidence of the ability to organise the material presented in a logical way and to express thoughts and ideas clearly and fluently.

5. Evidence of a high level of competence in the use of the language of the topic.

The Personal Development Work Self-Assessment

This is an assessment of your personal development work on the course over the first year of your training and it will include both a self-assessment and a peer assessment of your work. There will be a primary focus on assessing your work in both the large group and the personal development group and its impact on your personal development.

Assessment Criteria:

The personal development work self-assessment should be **4000 words in length** (plus or minus 10%).
It should show:

Core Criteria:

1. Evidence of the ability to set and evaluate your own personal development goals.
2. Evidence of personal soundness - i.e. a well-developed self-reflective capacity; a high degree of personal integrity and the absence of major intra- or inter-personal difficulties which might inhibit the ability to work safely and competently with clients.
3. Evidence of a significant degree of awareness of your personal and interpersonal strengths and of how these might impact on your work with clients.
4. Evidence of a significant degree of awareness of your personal and interpersonal areas for development and of how these might impact on your work with clients.

Additional Criterion:

5. Evidence of the ability to organise the material presented in a logical way and to express thoughts and ideas clearly and fluently.

The Personal Development Profile

The personal development profile is your summative self-appraisal at the end of the course and is used to assess your personal development learning. The personal development profile should be 4000 words in length (plus or minus 10%). It should show:

Core Criteria:

1. Evidence of personal growth and development over the year in a number of areas.
2. Evidence of personal soundness - i.e. a well-developed self-reflective capacity, a high degree of personal integrity; the absence of major intra- or inter-personal difficulties which may inhibit the ability to work safely and competently with clients.
3. Evidence of the ability to set and evaluate your own personal development objectives.
4. Evidence of a significant degree of awareness of your personal and interpersonal strengths and of how these might impact on your work with clients.
5. Evidence of a significant degree of awareness of your personal and interpersonal areas for development and of how these might impact on your work with clients.

Additional Criterion:

6. Evidence of the ability to organise the material presented in a logical way and to express thoughts and ideas clearly and fluently.

Placement Joint Learning Statement

You are required to submit a placement joint learning statement at the end of your counselling placement. This will be written jointly with your supervisor and will be used to assess your performance during your placement, covering the three areas of counselling theory, counselling skills and personal development.

You are required to write your own evaluation of your performance during your placement. Guidelines will be issued to you for the completion of this statement. It takes the form of a 2000 word self-assessment of your work on placement. NB This part of your learning statement will not be formally assessed.

Your supervisor will also be required to write an assessment of your performance, which will include his/her recommendation of an overall Pass or Fail grade. You will have the opportunity to comment on your supervisor's assessment of your work. Your supervisor's statement will cover the following key areas:

Theoretical Knowledge and Understanding

1. Evidence of a sound knowledge and understanding of counselling theory and the ability to apply such knowledge and understanding to the counselling relationship/process.

2. Evidence of the ability to integrate theoretical understanding and counselling practice. (NB the student's work should demonstrate congruence and consistency between current counselling practice and philosophical/theoretical orientation.)

3. Evidence of the ability to re-conceptualise the client's problems using a use a clear theoretical framework.

4. Evidence of an in-depth understanding of the counselling process.

Counselling Skills

1. Evidence of the ability to form an effective therapeutic relationship and to communicate the core therapeutic qualities of unconditional positive regard, congruence and empathy at high levels.

2. Evidence of the competent and ethical use of a broad range of counselling skills.

3. Evidence of the ability to select appropriate strategies/interventions and to understand their impact on the counselling process.

4. Evidence of the ability to make effective use of supervision and of the ability to apply learning from the process of supervision to work with clients.

Personal Development

1. Evidence of a significant degree of awareness and understanding of self.

2. Evidence of a well-developed awareness and understanding of process.

3. Evidence of the ability to be a self-reflective practitioner - i.e. to demonstrate the ability to reflect critically on practice and to evaluate personal strengths and areas for development.

Fitness to Practice

The Advanced Diploma course leads to a professional qualification which entitles you to practise as a professional counsellor and to register with a professional, statutory or regulatory body. Consequently, in addition to meeting the key learning outcomes of the programme, you must also satisfy the Board of Examiners that, in respect of your health and conduct, you do not constitute a risk to clients and that you meet the requirements of the relevant professional bodies. This applies both to your attendance at training sessions and to your work on placement.

A student who is deemed not fit to practice may be required to suspend or withdraw from their studies.

Examples of circumstances that might render a student unfit to practise are given below:

Conduct

- Offences against the vulnerable, including children, the elderly or the mentally incapacitated.
- Failure to act in a way to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those who are vulnerable.
- Exploiting the vulnerability of a client, including establishing a sexual relationship.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Acting in a violent manner.
- Conviction of a criminal offence.
- Repeated inappropriate behaviour towards others.
- Falsification of client or other professional records.
- Failure to meet standards of professional conduct (as defined by the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions but also in terms of general reliability, punctuality, attendance, ability to meet deadlines etc.)

Physical, Mental and Psychological Health and Wellbeing

- A serious physical illness or the presence of severe mental distress which might impair your ability to work safely and competently with clients.
- The presence of serious intra- or inter-personal psychological problems which might impair your ability to work safely and competently with clients.

Fitness to Practice Procedures

Should the staff have significant concerns about your fitness to practise, a three-stage fitness to practice procedure will be initiated, as follows:

Stage 1: Communication of concerns to the student

Any concerns will be communicated to the student via verbal and written feedback in the context of a one-to-one meeting. This meeting will normally be conducted by the student's personal tutor but may also be attended by the senior tutor or course leader. At this initial meeting, staff will explore their concerns with the student and discuss with the student how these concerns might be addressed over the coming weeks. Staff will seek to work supportively with the student so that an action plan can be drawn up to enable the issues that have emerged to be addressed. A date will be set for a review meeting. The personal tutor will circulate a written record of the Stage 1 meeting.

Stage 2: Review meeting

The personal tutor (and, where appropriate, the senior tutor or course leader) will meet again with the student to review the progress that has been made in addressing their concerns. The student may choose to be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague. The action plan will be reviewed and the student will be required to present evidence of the progress they have made to date in dealing with the issues raised.

Should sufficient progress have been made, this will be communicated to the student both verbally and in writing and no further action will be taken. Should the staff consider, however, either that the student has not addressed the issues or that insufficient progress has been made to enable him/her to be fit to practise, this will be communicated to the student both verbally and in writing, and a date for a further meeting will then be set in order to reach a decision about whether or not the student should continue on the course. (It may, for example, be in the student's best interests to take a break from counselling or suspend their studies and re-commence at a later date.)

Stage 3: Decision-taking meeting

This will be attended by the student, the course leader, the personal tutor, the senior tutor, and any other members of the training team who have worked closely with the student. Where possible, there will be an independent presence there, for example in the person of the Course Consultant. This group of persons comprises a Fitness to Practise Panel. The student may also choose to be accompanied by a colleague. The decision as to how to proceed and whether or not the student should continue on the course on the basis of their fitness to practise will be reached at this meeting, and then communicated to the student both verbally and in writing. A report will be prepared for the external examiner with whom the final decision will lie, and the decision taken will then be ratified by the Examination Board.

Early Termination of a Student's Training

The central aim of the Advanced Diploma course is to enable students to develop the ability to establish and maintain an effective therapeutic relationship and to function safely, competently and ethically as counsellors. The ability to offer a therapeutic relationship and to work safely, competently and ethically is dependent to a large extent on three core qualities: knowledge and understanding of counselling theory; competence in the use of counselling skills; and personal soundness. Consequently, there are three core assessment criteria which must be met by all students in order to meet the course requirements and to achieve the award:

Core Criteria

- Evidence of a breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of counselling theory and the ability to apply this to counselling practice.

- Evidence of a high level of competence in the use of counselling skills.

- Evidence of a high degree of personal development/soundness - ie a high level of self-awareness; a well-developed capacity for in-depth reflection; a high level of resilience and personal robustness; a high degree of personal integrity; a sound knowledge of counselling ethics and the ability to apply this to counselling practice; the absence of major intra- or inter-personal difficulties which might inhibit the ability to work safely and competently with clients.

These three core criteria form the core assessment criteria for the items of written and practical coursework which must be completed satisfactorily. In addition, in relation specifically to personal development, it is important to note that:

Where a student has satisfactorily completed all assessed items in each of the three core elements, but is judged to have failed to meet the core criterion for personal development/soundness**, tutors reserve the right to refer or fail the student on the basis of that criterion only.**

Should the staff have significant concerns about a student's ability to meet one or more of these three core criteria, such concerns will be communicated to the student via verbal and/or written feedback as soon as they arise. This will be done in the following way:

Stage 1: Communication of concerns to the student
Any concerns will be communicated to the student *as soon as they arise* via both verbal and written feedback in the context of a one-to-one interview. This interview will normally be conducted by the student's personal tutor but may also be attended by the senior tutor or course leader. At this initial meeting, staff will explore with the student how their concerns might be addressed over the remaining period of the course and will work with the student to draw up an action plan to enable the issues that have emerged to be addressed. A date will be set for a review meeting. The personal tutor will circulate a written record of this Stage 1 meeting.

Stage 2: Review meeting
The student's personal tutor (and where appropriate, the senior tutor or course leader) will meet again with the student to review the progress that has been made in addressing their concerns. The student may choose to be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague. The action plan will be reviewed and the student will be required to present evidence of the progress they have made to date in dealing with the issues raised.

Should sufficient progress have been made, this will be communicated to the student both verbally and in writing, and no further action will be taken. Should staff consider, however, that the student has not addressed the issues or that insufficient progress has been made to enable the student to meet the core personal development/soundness criterion, this will be communicated to the student both verbally and in writing. A date for a further meeting will then be set in order to reach a decision about whether the student should be referred or failed on that criterion.

Stage 3: Decision-taking meeting
This meeting will be attended by the student, the senior tutor or course leader, the student's personal tutor and any other members of the course staff who have worked closely with the student. The student may also choose to be accompanied by a colleague. The decision as to whether to pass, refer or fail the student on the basis of the core personal development criterion will be reached at this meeting and then communicated to the student both verbally and in writing. A report will be prepared for the external examiner with whom the final decision will lie, and the decision will be then ratified by the Board of Examiners.

Appeals

A student will have the right to appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners and will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making an appeal in good faith. Disagreement with the judgement of the Board of Examiners cannot in itself constitute grounds for an appeal.

Before considering whether or not there are grounds for appeal, it is essential that the student consults with the chair of the Board of Examiners, or a delegated representative, to see if any informal resolution of the matter can be achieved.

Network Counselling and Training has established procedures for complaint and redress which may arise during the training programme and expects these to be resolved as and when they occur. In this context, alleged inadequacy of tuition or any other arrangements during the programme will not constitute grounds

for an appeal unless there are exceptional circumstances for the matter not to have been raised until after the decision of the Board of Examiners had been reached.

The basis for an appeal shall be either:

(a) that, at the time of the three-stage process, there existed circumstances which had adversely affected the student's performance/development which, for the most exceptional reasons, the student was unable to communicate to staff before they reached their decision. In making such a case, the student shall provide valid documentary evidence where appropriate. Other than in exceptional cases, retrospective medical certification will not be accepted as valid; or

(b) that there has been an administrative error or procedural irregularity during the conduct of the relevant process of such a significant nature as to have materially affected the outcome.

Notice of an appeal must be given within 10 working days of publication of the decision by the Board of Examiners.

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