



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Vocationally Related Qualification

Advanced Diploma in Counselling 2006

Special Features

- Accredited National Framework Qualification
- Flexible unit structure
- Choice of option units
- Advanced Counselling Skills and Theory
- Prepares candidates for the profession of counselling

The specification will be published annually on the AQA Website (www.aqa.org.uk). If there are any changes to the specification centres will be notified in print as well as on the Website. In the case of any difference between the printed and the website version of the specification, the version with the highest number, as currently published on the AQA Website, is the definitive one.

Vertical black lines indicate a significant change or addition to the specification published for 2005.

Copyright © 2005 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications, including the specifications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this specification booklet for their own **internal** use.

Contents

Background Information

1	AQA Advanced Diploma in Counselling	5
2	Specification at a Glance	7
3	Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details	9

Scheme of Assessment

4	Introduction	12
5	Aims	13
6	Assessment Objectives	14
7	Scheme of Assessment	16

Subject Content

8	Unit 1 Mandatory – The Developing Practitioner	17
9	Unit 2 Mandatory – Therapeutic Practice	25
10	Unit 3 Humanistic Theory	30
11	Unit 4 Psychodynamic Theory	35
12	Unit 5 Cognitive Behavioural Theory	39
13	Unit 6 Theories of Loss and Grief	42
14	Unit 7 An Introduction to Transactional Analysis	47
15	Unit 8 Brief Therapy	51
16	Unit 9 Skills for Supervision	55
17	Unit 10 Working with Trauma	61
18	Unit 11 Working with Couples	65

19	Unit 12 Helping Children and Young People	71
20	Unit 13 Counselling in Organisations	74
Key Skills and Other Issues		
21	Key Skills	79
22	Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues	81
Centre-Assessed Components		
23	Guidance on Setting Centre Assessed Components	83
24	Supervision and Authentication	83
25	Standardisation	84
26	Administrative Procedures	85
27	Verification	86
Awarding and Reporting		
28	Grading, Shelf-Life and Re-Sits	87
Appendices		
A	Overlaps with Other Qualifications	89
B	External Assessment Procedure	90
C	Candidate Assessment Booklet	91
D	Course Registration Form	111
E	Centre Declaration Sheet	112

Background Information

1

AQA Advanced Diploma in Counselling

1.1 Introduction

The AQA Advanced Diploma in Counselling has been developed specifically to provide an effective developmental progression route for candidates whose ultimate qualification goal is to achieve Professional Status as a Therapeutic Counsellor. The target audience for this award is mature people who are seeking:

- progress towards achieving status as a professionally accredited counsellor and achieve eligibility for entry on to the United Kingdom Register of Counsellors (UKRC)
- to become counselling practitioners;
- to improve their performance, and prospects, in an existing career;
- a career change;
- to return to work after a career break.

The AQA Advanced Diploma is an appropriate vehicle for the Personal and Professional Development required for Life-long Learning.

These categories of people are not well served by existing provision, and this vocationally related qualification will provide the appropriate balance of support, guidance and process to the training and study which they will need to achieve their goals.

Counsellors are trained and practice from one of three main core theoretical models (Core models). Each model has its own unique characteristics and belief systems which both influences and shapes the counselling process.

In this specification unit one addresses all three main core models, candidates will learn the key concepts of each and also compare and contrast the effects of different core theories on the counselling process. On completion of Unit one the candidate is able to make an informed choice of core theoretical orientation for his or her own progression to counselling competency.

Unit two is set entirely on one or other of the core theories and is designed to facilitate candidates' progression to competency as a counselling practitioner in one of the core theories only and to prepare them to progress further into higher level study. AQA centres must only offer Unit two to single core theory groups. It is important that each

group is comprised of candidates all studying from the same core. This is to encourage best practice in teaching, and learning strategies, which will include group activities, peer learning and experiential learning methods.

AQA centres must therefore select which Core Model they wish candidates to work from. In selecting the core model(s) the centre should take into account: The availability of suitably qualified staff; candidates needs; local need and demand.

AQA centres may run more than one Unit two groups if they wish provided that each group only works from a single core theory.

Within a Core Model, candidates are challenged to evaluate theoretical and practical issues of equality of opportunity, particularly in the areas of race, class, gender, sexuality and sexual orientation. Advanced Counselling Skills are practised and candidates are prepared for the practical issues of working as a trainee counsellor in a placement.

2

Specification at a Glance

AQA Advanced Diploma in Counselling

2.1 The Qualification	To qualify for the full award a candidate must complete two Mandatory Units – 1 and 2 (VC21 and VC22) – plus two further option units chosen by the centre from the standard AQA list below.										
2.2 Guided Learning Hours	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Mandatory Units 1 and 2</td> <td>55 to 70 guided learning hours per unit.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option Units 3 to 13</td> <td>40 to 50 guided learning hours per unit.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Full Qualification</td> <td>190 to 240 guided learning hours.</td> </tr> </table>	Mandatory Units 1 and 2	55 to 70 guided learning hours per unit.	Option Units 3 to 13	40 to 50 guided learning hours per unit.	Full Qualification	190 to 240 guided learning hours.				
Mandatory Units 1 and 2	55 to 70 guided learning hours per unit.										
Option Units 3 to 13	40 to 50 guided learning hours per unit.										
Full Qualification	190 to 240 guided learning hours.										
2.3 Theoretical Approach	<p>The centre must choose a ‘Core’ theoretical approach for Unit 2</p> <p>Each course group may address only one of the following theoretical approaches to counselling.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Humanistic; 2. Psychodynamic; 3. Cognitive Behavioural. 										
2.4 Mandatory Units	<p>Unit 1 (VC21) The Developing Practitioner</p> <p>Internally assessed component V21C</p> <p>Externally assessed component V21W</p> <p>Unit 2 (VC22) Therapeutic Practice</p> <p>Internally assessed component</p> <p>Externally assessed component</p>										
2.5 Option Units	<table border="0"> <tr> <td rowspan="8">Theory Options</td> <td>Unit 3 (VC23) Humanistic Theory</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unit 4 (VC24) Psychodynamic Theory</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unit 5 (VC25) Cognitive Behavioural Theory</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unit 6 (VC26) Theories of Loss and Grief</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unit 7 (VC27) An Introduction to Transactional Analysis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unit 8 (VC28) Brief Therapy</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Skills Options</td> <td>Unit 9 (VC29) Skills for Supervision</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unit 10 (VC30) Working with Trauma</td> </tr> </table>	Theory Options	Unit 3 (VC23) Humanistic Theory	Unit 4 (VC24) Psychodynamic Theory	Unit 5 (VC25) Cognitive Behavioural Theory	Unit 6 (VC26) Theories of Loss and Grief	Unit 7 (VC27) An Introduction to Transactional Analysis	Unit 8 (VC28) Brief Therapy	Skills Options	Unit 9 (VC29) Skills for Supervision	Unit 10 (VC30) Working with Trauma
Theory Options	Unit 3 (VC23) Humanistic Theory										
	Unit 4 (VC24) Psychodynamic Theory										
	Unit 5 (VC25) Cognitive Behavioural Theory										
	Unit 6 (VC26) Theories of Loss and Grief										
	Unit 7 (VC27) An Introduction to Transactional Analysis										
	Unit 8 (VC28) Brief Therapy										
	Skills Options		Unit 9 (VC29) Skills for Supervision								
		Unit 10 (VC30) Working with Trauma									

Unit 11 (VC31) Working with Couples

Unit 12 (VC32) Helping Children and Young People

Unit 13 (VC33) Counselling in Organisation

3

Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details

3.1 Availability of Assessment Units	Assessment units and their components are available in two examination series, January and June. Candidates should be entered by the normal AQA deadlines of 21 October and 21 March respectively.
3.2 Course Registration	Courses for AQA Vocationally Related Qualifications must be registered with AQA by the course start date, using the form CS/VER /1.
3.3 Candidate Entry Details (Example)	<p>A centre is to run a complete Advanced Diploma in Counselling course comprising 2 mandatory units and option units 3 and 11, all of which are to be completed in two years. The course is to begin in September and end in June 2 years later. The centre must:</p> <p>(a) Register the course, using the course registration form CS/VER/1. The completed forms must be sent to Department A17 at the Guildford office by the course start date. This will enable AQA to provide centres with the essential documents needed for the course. To order CS/VER/1 forms contact: Department A17 at the Guildford office on 01483 477836 or e-mail counselling@aqa.org.uk.</p> <p>(b) Enter candidates for units and components Refer to '<i>AQA General Regulations</i>' section 5 'Entry Administration'.</p> <p>(i) Enter candidates for the mandatory unit 1 and its components for either the January or June series, as appropriate, using the following three codes:</p> <p>VC21 - The unit code; V21C - Internal coursework component; V21W - External written test component.</p> <p>(ii) Enter candidates for the option units for either January or June series, as appropriate. In this case the codes are:</p> <p>VC23 for Unit 3, and VC31 for Unit 11</p> <p>(iii) Enter candidates for the mandatory unit 2 and its components by 21 March for the June series in the final year, using the following unit codes:</p> <p>VC22 – The unit code; V22C – Internal coursework component; V22W – External assignment.</p>

- (iv) **Apply for the Award.** When candidates have completed the 2 mandatory units and two option units, they will have qualified for the Advanced Diploma in Counselling. The centre must claim the award using the **Award code 0516 at the same time as they enter for the final units; in this example, by 21 March.**

3.4	Single Unit Entry	Individual option units are available for certification. These may be used for continuing professional development purposes or to enable centres to offer a broader based course to meet a market demand. The procedure for registration and candidate entry remains the same as that described in 3.3 above.
3.5	Other Entry Considerations	Centres candidate admission procedures should include a screening/selection process in order to establish candidates' suitability for counselling training. <i>Prospective candidates for all counselling courses should be made aware that while on the course, high priority will be given to moral and ethical issues, equal opportunities and the importance of giving and receiving personal and sensitive information confidentially and in a non-judgemental way. This must be made clear to prospective candidates before they are admitted on to a counselling course.</i>
3.6	Prohibited Combinations	A candidate taking this qualification is prohibited from taking the AQA Advanced Certificate in Counselling.
3.7	Private Candidates	This specification is not available for private candidates.
3.8	External Assessment	Details of examination dates and the candidate entry procedure can be obtained through AQA offices. AQA Counselling examinations and tests are conducted in accordance with the Awarding Bodies' common <i>Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations</i> , as current at the time of the examination. Copies of <i>AQA General Regulations</i> for the Conduct of Examinations and Tests are available through AQA registered offices.
3.9	Access Arrangements and Special Consideration	AQA pays due regard to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in its administration of this specification. Arrangements may be made to enable candidates with disabilities or other difficulties to access the assessment. An example of an access arrangement is the production of a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment. Special consideration may be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances. Further details can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: <i>GCE, VCE, GCSE, GNVQ, Entry Level & Key Skills</i> This document can be viewed via the AQA web site (www.aqa.org.uk) Applications for access arrangements and special consideration

should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

3.10 Language of Examination

All Assessment will be through the medium of English. Assessment materials will not be provided in Welsh or Gaelic.

Scheme of Assessment

4

Introduction

4.1 Introduction

Assessment methods have been chosen to be in keeping with the Counselling ethos and practice as far as possible.

Mandatory units 1 and 2 are assessed internally and externally option units are assessed internally only.

Internal Assessment

AQA Advanced Counselling units are internally assessed by an assessor appointed by the centre, normally the course tutor. The methods of assessment to be used are specified by AQA to ensure parity for candidates on similar courses at AQA centres nationally.

Reliability and consistency of assessment is further assured by AQA's requirement for all internal assessors to attend AQA standardisation training prior to assessing candidates work.

AQA External Verifiers are appointed to each centre to monitor standards and to provide help and advice where necessary.

Larger AQA centres employing more than one tutor to deliver AQA counselling courses, at the same level, are also required to conduct standardising of assessment decisions between their team members.

External Assessment

The mandatory units 1 and 2 also feature an AQA externally assessed component.

AQA external assessment for counselling qualifications are to be conducted under normal examination conditions at the AQA centre, and candidates' work is marked only by AQA appointed examiners.

See also: Appendix C External Assessment Procedure

Criteria Referencing

All advanced counselling units are assessed by direct reference to assessment criteria specified by AQA.

Candidate results are reported as Pass (P) or Refer (R) only. There are no other grades for these advanced counselling qualifications.

4.2 Prior Level of attainment

Prospective candidates to be qualified to AQA's Intermediate Certificate in Counselling Skills level or its equivalent, in qualification or vocational experience.

4.3 Other Entry Requirements AQA centres are advised to establish formally the suitability of candidates for counselling training prior to admitting them to a course. This process should establish the candidates' willingness to abide by BACP's "*Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*".

AQA centres should also establish the candidate's willingness to share confidential/personal information with fellow candidates and centre staff and to maintain the circle of confidentiality.

4.4 Progression

4.4.1 Higher Education Successful candidates are presented with several opportunities to progress in education and training either within the counselling discipline or in another related subject area. For example:

- Campag Level 3 S/NVQ
- Higher counselling qualification
- Other higher qualifications

4.4.2 Employment Counselling is now established as an important service/function within a wide range of organisations. Successful candidates will have access to:

- (a) Enhanced employability
- (b) Improved performance in a job role
- (c) Promotion opportunities

5

Aims

On completion of the AQA Advanced Diploma in Counselling, the successful candidate will:

- have selected a suitable core theory for her/his own professional development;
- have acquired the knowledge, skills and self-awareness she/he will need to enable them to conduct one-to-one counselling in a variety of settings;

have acquired the knowledge and competence in counselling skills necessary to ensure the health and safety of both counsellor and client; both during counselling related activities and in consequence of such counselling related activity;

- be in a position to assemble evidence towards CAMPAG S/NVQ 3 Counselling Units;
- be in a position to assemble APL evidence for other vocationally related qualifications (e.g. Care, Guidance, Mediation, Social Work, Nursing);
- have experienced a learning environment that provides a safe and challenging atmosphere (thus mirroring a counselling relationship);
- Express commitment to continuing personal and professional development in counselling.

6

Assessment Objectives

6.1

On completion of the AQA Advanced Diploma in Counselling, the successful candidate will be able to:

- Identify and evaluate the key concepts of a Core Model;
- reflect on challenges to and limitations of the Core Model (e.g. In relation to settings);
- develop self awareness in relation to a Core Model;
- be able to make use of competence in advanced counselling skills and knowledge from a theoretical core model for counselling to make contracts with clients;
- work safely and ethically over the contracted period with clients with various presenting issues;
- analyse and evaluate own counselling practice;
- articulate awareness of their own needs in relation to professional issues;
- use awareness to address clients' needs and issues;
- contact and develop a working relationship with a Supervisor;
- the knowledge and ability to recognise potential risks to the health and safety of either the counsellor or client and to know what action should be taken to mitigate any such danger.

6.2 Assessment Methods

Centres must use the methods of assessment specified by AQA for all internally assessed components.

All AQA internal assessment processes are subject to external verification by AQA. External Verifiers must be informed of changes to internal assessment plans.

The following methods of assessment are to be used:

1. **A Journal** - to provide both formative and summative assessment of the candidates' developing knowledge and understanding. The journal is intended to capture the unique personal experience of the candidate and to encourage personal development.
2. **Essay**, or structured writing – to be completed towards the end of the unit. Allowing candidates sufficient time for their referrals to be reworked during the life of the course. The essay is to be a formal academic piece of work designed to test the candidate's knowledge of the key concepts of the unit i.e. theory, theorists and their effect on the counselling process.
3. **Practical Skills Role-Play** – The use of a simulated counselling interview is an integral part of the teaching process, which enables candidates to develop and perfect their use and application of counselling skills. This methodology is also used here to assess candidates' level of skill and their ability to adapt a process to incorporate additional learning from a core theory into their counselling. For assessment purposes candidates must work in threes (trio work) and each candidate must participate at least once in each of the following roles: Counsellor, Client and Observer. For the purpose of formal assessment separate assessment interviews are required and these must be scheduled toward the end of a course (unit). Tutors are to assess the candidates' achievement by combining direct observation and listening with further evidence provided orally by the candidate in debriefing following the assessed interview. The results to be recorded on an AQA Candidate Assessment Sheet (CAS) immediately.

Internal Assessors assess candidates' Journal entries formatively, beginning at an early stage in the Course to ensure that candidates are "on track" and also to provide information for giving essential feedback where they are not

Final assessment of the Journal and Essay is planned to allow candidates sufficient time to resubmit their work once more during the life of the course, in the event that their first attempt was referred.

Tutors must submit an assessment plan showing proposed assessment dates and times to AQA at the start of each Course (Unit). This information is essential for the AQA External Verifier, who may wish to attend practical skills assessment sessions, and for candidates

7

Scheme of Assessment

7.1 Introduction

The Advanced Diploma in Counselling is assessed by means of a combination of external and internal assessments.

External assessment are set and marked by AQA.

Internal assessments are marked by the Tutor and are externally verified by AQA.

The four assessment processes used throughout this specification are:

1. Journal;
2. Essay (or structured writing);
3. Study of Supervised Practice;
4. Practical role-play assessment.

7.2 External Assessment Methods

Mandatory Unit 1 AQA 2 hour test.

Mandatory Unit 2 Assignment 'Study of Supervised Counselling Practice'.

External assessments will be available each January and June from June 2003 onwards.

7.3 Internal Assessment Methods

For all units:

Journal;

Practical role-play assessment (skills units); and/or

Essay or structured writing (theory units).

Refer to the specification for details of assessment required for each unit.

Subject Content

8

Unit 1 *The Developing Practitioner (VC21)*

Mandatory Unit

8.1	About this Unit	<p>This Mandatory Unit is designed to introduce candidates to the three main “core theories” that underpin counselling. The unit provides opportunities for the candidate to discover the effect of core theories by studying each one in turn in relation to the three stages of a counselling process. The BACP <i>Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy</i> 2002 is observed throughout. This unique approach to the study of theory through practical application enables tutors to work within a counselling ethos throughout, providing for the candidate a broad base of theoretical knowledge with good practical examples of its application.</p>
8.2	Unit Specific Entry Requirements	<p>Refer to 4.2 Prior Level of Attainment and 4.3 Other Entry Requirements.</p>
8.3	Aims	<p>On completion of this Unit, the candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will know the essential qualities for building and sustaining a counselling relationship; • will appreciate the need for a firm grounding in a theoretical approach to counselling; • will understand the ethical dimension of counselling and the importance of always working within an appropriate code of conduct e.g. BACP’s <i>Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy</i>; • will understand the necessity to ensure the health and safety of both counsellor and client; • will be qualified to progress into higher education; • will be qualified and proficient in counselling to support progression to employment.
8.4	Objectives (Learning Outcomes)	<p><i>In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.</i></p>

Element I

Candidates will be able to:

1. Identify and understand the key concepts in Humanistic/Existential Theory;
2. Use the concepts to demonstrate an ability to establish the counselling relationship;
3. Reflect on the impact of self on the initial phases of the counselling process.

Element II

Candidates will be able to:

1. Identify and understand some of the key concepts of Psychodynamic Theory;
2. Use some of the techniques of Psychodynamic counselling to sustain the counselling relationship and to enhance client insight;
3. Identify how psychodynamic thinking relates to self and what the counsellor brings to the counselling relationship.

Element III

Candidates will be able to:

1. Identify and evaluate some of the key concepts of
 - (a) Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
 - (b) Loss and Separation Theory;
2. Use some of the techniques of CBT to assist clients to make positive use of endings;
3. Use self-awareness to bring the counselling relationship and process to an ethical close.

8.5 Scheme of Internal Assessment

The following assessment methods are required to assess candidates for this unit:

- Reflective journal.
- Practical role-play assessment of a complete counselling interview.
- An essay of 2000 to 2500 words.

Please also refer to Section 8.9 – Notes on the Scheme of assessment and to Appendix A.

8.6 Subject Content

8.6.1 Establishing the Counselling Relationship

Theory

The theory input for Element I focuses on Humanistic and Existential work, exploring how human needs and growth are part of the human condition and how the nature of the Client ⇔ Counsellor relationship is implicit in those theories.

Skills	Further counselling skills needed to establish an ethical counselling relationship.
Self-awareness	Awareness of the potential effects of own values, attitudes, behaviour on establishing the counselling relationship.
Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanistic concepts in relation to self and client • Maslow and the hierarchy of human needs • Rogers and the person-centred approach • The Core Conditions • The humanistic/existential view of the person • Limitations (e.g. Self in Society)
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling as a process • Health and safety issues for counsellor and client • Client expectations • Counsellor expectations • Forming a working alliance • Making a “contract” (boundaries) • Creating a safe setting (physical and psychological) • Working within levels of competence
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying own wants and needs • Factors impacting on ability to identify own needs • Fears and anxieties in relation to competence and expertise • The need for support • Clarify “ethical” for self in relation to clients

8.6.2 Sustaining the Relationship and Developing Insight

Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theory in-put for Element II focuses on Psychodynamic concepts. Focus is put on the effects of childhood experience and the notions of consciousness and the unconscious in relation to how they might present in a client.
--------	---

Skills	<p>Some aspects of particular or specialised techniques appropriate to working psychodynamically</p> <p>Health and safety issues for counsellor and client</p>
Self-awareness	<p>Own “presenting past”</p> <p>Own defence mechanisms</p> <p>Potential effects of the unconscious on the client ⇔ counsellor relationship.</p>
Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The pioneering work of Freud• Freud’s model of the Mind• Defence mechanisms• Ego strength and psychosexual development• Overview of developments from Freud’s pioneering work (e.g. Erikson’s psychosocial life-cycle; Jung’s Collective Unconscious; Klein’s “splitting”; Winnicott’s “nursing triad”)• Limitations
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psychodynamic techniques in relation to developing client insight• Health and safety issues for counsellor and client• Free association• Transference and counter-transference• Resistance and bringing to awareness• Making interpretations
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How early experience still influences self• Past experiences which still distress• The potential effect of these on the client ⇔ counsellor relationship• Awareness of the difference between the personal internal world and internal world of clients• The hidden self and the unfulfilled self• Power of the unconscious and its dynamic within the counselling relationship

- Risks in relation to competence

8.6.3 Evaluating and Concluding Counselling

Theory	The study of theory in Element III focuses mainly on Cognitive Behavioural Approaches to Counselling and on Theories of Separation and Loss.
Skills	Preparation for endings; looking to the future; enabling “moving on”; referring ethically. Health and safety issues for counsellor and client.
Self-awareness	Past experiences of “letting go” and how these may affect ending the counselling relationship; Evaluating own competence in relation to referral; ability to meet own future development needs.
Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality theory of Aaron Beck • Faulty thinking and maladaptive interpretations • “There is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so” • Albert Ellis and REBT • The A B C D E Framework • Preferences versus needs • Thinking and Cognitive restructuring • Bowlby and Separation and Loss
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the specific language of CBT • Health and safety issues for counsellor and client • Setting “homework” • Goals and targets • Debating/disputing the irrational • Using ending process to evaluate and look ahead • Structuring the ending process • Using contract boundaries to end • Referring ethically

Self-awareness

- Personal history of endings and legacy of these
- Dynamics of “letting go” in conflict with moving on
- Significance of moving on
- Life plan/needs and wants
- Implications for self as practitioner

8.7 What the Candidate will Learn from this Unit

During the course of study for this AQA unit, candidates will learn:

- the three main theoretical bases of counselling, the principal theorists and their theories, and how theoretical orientation affects the Counselling Process;
- the skill of conducting a safe competent counselling interview with an individual client, from different theoretical perspectives;
- the importance of “self-awareness” to a counsellor and strategies for dealing with matters of “self” in the counselling process;
- how and when to refer clients.

8.8 Essential Information for Tutors

Tutors must be aware that this Mandatory Unit forms the ‘core’ or foundation for the Qualification.

Option units are included in this AQA specification to enable course managers at the centre to devise and deliver a course to their own requirements. Perhaps to meet local needs or their own strengths

This AQA award is designated at Advanced level (level 3) in the National Framework of Qualifications. Therefore, it equates broadly with Advanced level/General Certificate of Education or an NVQ level 3.

The theory content of the award is intended to cover sufficient of the three main theoretical bases of counselling practice to demonstrate clearly to the candidates how counselling in practice is affected by its theoretical orientation. The aim is to enable the candidate to make an informed choice of a suitable core theory for his or her own development in counselling. Candidates are required to explore their own value and belief systems, and to reflect on these in their Journal entries. In the early part of the course, candidates may need extra help and support from the tutor to develop this skill. Tutors are required, therefore, to inspect early journal entries for all of their candidates and to provide them with appropriate help and guidance. To facilitate this, the course content is presented under three headings: Theory, Skills and Self-awareness. This feature will facilitate course design at the centre; tutors should ensure that the course design allows sufficient time for each of these.

Level:

Tutors must be aware of the level of this unit and set standards accordingly. The object is to support the candidate's progress from level two Counselling skills through to the point where they can reliably conduct one-to-one counselling interviews with clients. AQA Standardisation training is mandatory for all tutors and will provide essential guidance on level recognition.

8.9 Scheme of Assessment

This unit may be offered independently or be incorporated in a wider course of study with one or more of the option units.

The assessment objectives are to assess all candidates reliably, accurately and consistently to advanced level.

Each of the following assessment methods plays an important part in this process.

The Journal

The journal or working journal is probably the most important of all internal assessments and will provide both the tutor and the candidate with essential information about the candidates achievements, progression and errors.

Correct management of the journal by tutors will enable timely intervention when and where a candidate is failing to progress or is struggling with subject content.

Each candidate is required to keep a journal and to make an entry for each learning session of the course. This would normally be a minimum of 80% of the course time spent on the unit. In designing a course the tutor must plan assessment dates with care and must ensure that candidates are given sufficient notice of assessment deadlines.

Journal entries should be reflective, the candidates are attempting to understand and rationalise what they have learnt in the session. The process will help the candidate develop the valuable technique of describing not only what they have learnt but what it means to them.

The unique personal experience of learning and expressing that learning with clarity is an essential part of professional counselling.

The Essay

A single essay is included in the formal assessment process to encourage the candidates to read more widely and to develop their analytical skills. The essay should challenge the candidate to compare and contrast the three main core theories as covered by the subject content and to relate them to practical issues.

This process will also be useful as preparation for the AQA externally set assessment.

Practical – Role-play Assessment

To assess the candidate's skill requires a series of formally set role-play exercises to enable the assessor to witness/observe each candidate in role as Counsellor and observer. The process relies heavily on the

assessor's professional judgement. For this reason assessors must have attended AQA Standardisation training prior to assessing candidates practical skills.

Unit 2

Therapeutic Practice (VC22)

Mandatory Unit

<p>9.1 About this Unit</p>	<p>The centre must choose a “core theory” for this option and the entire course group must work to this core. This unit is designed to enable the candidate to become familiar with a ‘Core Model’ and to successfully develop personally and professionally to the point where he or she can conduct one-to-one counselling competently in a variety of settings and with a range of clients. By focusing the development on one core only, the unit is an ideal vehicle to prepare the candidates for progression into higher level study or to launch their counselling career.</p>
<p>9.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements</p>	<p>Refer to 4.2 Prior Level of Attainment and 4.3 Other Entry Requirements.</p> <p>To complete this unit, the candidate must find some supervised counselling work. This may be a placement or work with a voluntary organisation. The candidate must be supervise clinically and managerially. A minimum of 8 one-to-one counselling sessions is required to enable the candidate to complete the study.</p>
<p>9.3 Aims</p>	<p>On completion of this Unit, the candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will have acquired the knowledge, skills and self-awareness they will need to enable them to conduct one-to-one counselling in a variety of settings; • will have acquired the vocational competence to work as a counselling practitioner with individual clients in a structured, supervised setting; • will begin to develop an increased level of <u>self-awareness</u>, to encourage critical thought about their own assumptions, beliefs and value systems.
<p>9.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)</p> <p>Element I</p> <p>Evaluate and make use of a Theoretical Base.</p>	<p><i>In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.</i></p> <p>Candidates will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and evaluate the key concepts of the Core Model; 2. Reflect on challenges to and limitations of the Core Model (e.g. in relation to settings); 3. Develop self-awareness in relation to chosen orientation.

Element II

Candidates will be able to:

Working with the Process and Practice of Counselling (within the Core Model).

1. Use advanced skills, and skills specific to the Core Model, to contract with clients;
2. Work ethically over the contracted period with clients with various presenting issues;
3. Analyse and evaluate their own practice.

9.5 Scheme of Internal Assessment

The following assessment methods are required for this unit:

- Reflective journal covering at least 80% of the course sessions.
- Practical role-play assessment of a complete counselling interview.
- An essay of 2000 to 2500 words.

Please refer to Section 8.9 – Notes on the Scheme of assessment and to Appendix A.

9.6 Subject Content

9.6.1 Evaluate and make use of a Theoretical Base

This element explores some of the literature written by the recognised authors of the Core Model and other experts in the chosen field. It considers how the Core Model views the person and the implications for self and practice of working within the model.

- The philosophy of the Core Model
- Theorists associated with the Core Model
- History (social and cultural) relevant to the Core Model
- Key concepts
- Beliefs about the nature of the person inherent in the model
- Self in relation to the model
- Effects on practice
- Limitations

9.6.2 Work with the Process and Practice of Counselling (within the Core Model)

This element focuses on the practical use of the Core Model with clients and in a variety of settings.

- Skills and qualities appropriate to all models
- Skills specific to the Core Model
- Working with a “contract”
- The potential effects of “time limited” counselling

- Client limitation (within the Core Model)
- Counsellor limitation (within the Core Model)
- Working ethically
- Structuring the work
- The therapeutic “frame”
- Social, cultural, moral stresses on the “frame”
- What is process? Dynamics of the interaction

9.7 **What the candidate will learn from this unit**

Candidates will learn the underpinning theories that inform and shape counselling in practice. They will also learn the theory’s view of the “person” and how this fundamentally affects the counselling process.

Candidates will develop their counselling skills to the point where they can conduct a counselling interview with one client competently and consistently to a specified Core Model.

9.8 **Essential Information for Tutors**

This unit is focused on developing a counsellor within a specified “core” theory. The centre must choose a “core” at the outset. Mixed groups are not acceptable. It is important that the entire group develops simultaneously, because experiential learning and group dynamics play an important part in the learning process and the candidates’ personal development required for this unit.

A centre may choose to run separate groups for this component but each group must address a single “core”.

Tutors must be aware that this is a developmental unit – teaching and learning processes are therefore required to facilitate the candidates’ progress, growth and awareness to the point where they may be considered just competent and are ready to move on to the next stage of professional development at level 4.

Candidates are required to be personally involved in counselling either in an appropriate placement or at work at least for the last term or so of the course. They will need to do this in order to complete a Study of Supervised Practice for external assessment.

This requirement must be emphasised at the outset of the course, and help, advice and assistance must be given to ensure the candidate achieves this requirement.

Candidates who are already “placed” or working in a suitable environment may also wish to begin to assemble evidence for S/NVQ towards the end of this course – in which case they should be referred to the CAMPAG standards.

The AQA Option Units will help centres to achieve adequate coverage of theory and may also help in focusing settings.

Level:

Tutors must be aware of the level of this unit and try to avoid setting standards to an unachievable level. The object is to support the candidates' progress from level two Counselling skills through to the point where they can reliably conduct one-to-one counselling interviews with clients. AQA Standardisation training is mandatory for all tutors and will provide essential guidance on level recognition.

9.9 Notes on Scheme of Assessment

This unit may be offered separately or may be incorporated in a wider course of study in combination with one or more of the option units.

The assessment objectives are to assess all candidates reliably, accurately and consistently to advanced level.

Each of the following assessment methods will play an important part in this process.

The Journal

The journal or working journal is probably the most important of all internal assessments and will provide both the tutor and the candidate with essential information about the candidates achievements, progression and errors.

Correct management of the journal by tutors will enable timely intervention when and where a candidate is failing to progress or is struggling with subject content.

Each candidate is required to keep a journal and to make an entry for each learning session of the course. This would normally be a minimum of 80% of the course time spent on the unit. In designing the course the tutor must plan assessment dates with care and must ensure that the candidates are given substantial notice.

Journal entries should be reflective, the candidates are attempting to understand and rationalise what they have learnt in the session. The process will help the candidate develop the valuable technique of describing not only what they have learnt but what it means to them.

The Essay

A single essay is included in the formal assessment process to encourage the candidates to read more widely and to develop their analytical skills. The essay should challenge the candidate to relate core theory practical issues.

This process will also be useful as preparation for the AQA externally set assessment.

Practical – Role-Play Assessment

Throughout the course candidates should be encouraged to develop their counselling skills through simulated role-play exercises, working with their peers in trios where possible. By the completion of the unit candidates should be equipped to make good use of a core theory to conduct a complete (time limited) simulated counselling interview competently.

To assess the candidate's skill requires a series of formally set role-play exercises to enable the assessor to witness/observe each candidate in role as Counsellor and observer. The process relies heavily on the assessor's professional judgement. For this reason assessors must have attended AQA Standardisation training prior to assessing candidates practical skills

Unit 3

Humanistic Theory (VC23)

Theory Option

10.1 About this Unit

This Option Unit aims to provide candidates with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of theory, philosophy and practice of the Humanistic Approach to Counselling. A sound theoretical base is essential, as it gives structure and guidelines. It encourages consistency and helps to enable the client to feel safe; cared for, and able to trust the Counselling process.

A knowledge of Person Centred theoretical beliefs, as a system of meaning, will be helpful to those whose work involves communication and understanding of others. The approach centres on the importance of the relationship rather than techniques, and requires the user to become aware of personal inner thoughts, feelings and responses. It relies on the living relationship between counsellor and client; therefore, each relationship is unique and the demand on the personal qualities of the counsellor is considerable. The Person Centred Approach is concerned with “Being” rather than “Doing”, and gives more attention to the client’s frame of reference than other therapies. It is especially suitable for those who wish to provide a certain type of relationship, to enable the client to discover for himself, and within himself, the capacity for growth, change and personal development. It requires a substantial degree of self-confidence, self-acceptance and self-esteem. The approach is holistic, and may therefore require long-term Counselling.

While working from a Person Centred Approach, candidates may wish to add the judicious use of perspectives and techniques offered by Gestalt, Psychosynthesis and Existential approaches.

This Unit is suitable for those who wish to work as a Counsellor, or allied field, using Person Centred Counselling Skills and an Experiential Holistic Approach, in which the quality of the relationship is crucial to therapeutic growth.

It may not be suitable for those who wish to work with short-term therapy for a specific difficulty, or prefer the role of the “Expert”.

10.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

The course is suitable for anyone who desires more in-depth knowledge of the Humanistic Model.

10.3 Aims

On successful completion of this unit, the candidates will be able to:

- demonstrate their understanding of the Subject Content;
- compare and contrast the similarities and differences between those theories;
- describe the Person Centred Approach in depth;

- evaluate and discuss their view of the relevance and likely effectiveness when applying the Person Centred Approach to a Counsellor/Client situation in Supervised Practice;
- discuss professional ethical standards as outlined in the *BACP Ethical Framework for good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*;
- incorporate their learning into their personal and supervised practice;
- develop knowledge and understanding of Humanistic Counselling Theory;
- evaluate their own Personal and Professional Development;
- be in a position to progress professionally and academically to a higher level.

10.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

- On successful completion of this Unit, candidates will be able to:
 1. **Describe** the Person Centred Approach in depth, including:
 - knowledge and its origins;
 - exploration of the approach;
 - a brief Case Study to illustrate the Person Centred Counselling Approach;
 - evidence of understanding of the *BACP* Statement of Fundamental Ethics for Counselling and Psychotherapy, illustrated by at least one ethical issue.
 2. **Demonstrate** a basic understanding of the following Humanistic Models of Counselling:
 - Gestalt;
 - Psychosynthesis;
 - Existential.
 3. **Compare and Contrast** the:
 - similarities and differences of Person Centred Counselling and at least one Humanistic model.
 4. **Evaluate and discuss** their personal progress as a result of this Unit:
 - Personal development and inner growth;
 - Professional development.

10.5 Scheme of Assessment	Refer to Section 7. This Unit requires the following for internal assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Journal; and• Essay or structured writing.
10.6 Subject Content	The candidate will study the following Humanistic Holistic Models: Person Centred Approach; Gestalt; Psychosynthesis; Existential.
The Person Centred Approach – Carl Rogers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Origins of Person Centred Counselling <p>Carl Roger’s influence on the development of Counselling and psychotherapy, e.g. his achievements, beliefs, research, ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Philosophy <p>Include a basic understanding of the Philosophical base of the Person Centred approach; Personal demands which the approach places upon Practitioners; In-depth discussion of the Core Conditions; Writing a Case study to illustrate the counselling process at feelings level.</p>
Gestalt Therapy – Fritz Perls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Philosophy <p>Include a basic understanding of:</p> <p>Increasing self-awareness and self-responsibility required; Cycle of awareness and unhealthy ways of interrupting the process; Therapeutic styles used in therapy, e.g. the empty chair, and dream analysis.</p>
Psychosynthesis – Robert Assagioli	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Philosophy <p>Include a basic understanding of the : “Egg” model of the human psyche and the “Transpersonal” dimension; Use of drawings for self-exploration; Therapeutic use of sub-personalities; Use of Client’s “will” and creative visualisations.</p>
Existential – Yalom and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Philosophy <p>Include a basic understanding of the: Belief in equality, and the I-thou and I-it relationship; Four basic “Givens” of existence for Counsellor and Client; Use of key words – Death, Freedom, Isolation, Meaninglessness; Use of myths to aid understanding.</p>
Group Discussions	Tutor instructions and guidance on Assessment Elements of the Course.

10.7	Additional Learning from the Unit	Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).
10.8	What the candidate will learn from this unit	<p>Candidates will have a solid foundation knowledge of the Person Centred Approach and may choose to apply their learning when using Counselling Skills in a supervised Placement.</p> <p>It is intended that the three other Humanistic models will be experiential in presentation, which may therefore be useful for personal therapy, or act as an introduction to further study in a chosen Model, or be applied in the candidates' Supervised Placement.</p> <p>It is hoped that candidates will gain a love of meaningful theory and be inspired to further their reading.</p> <p>The candidate will have learned the value of recording experiences in a Journal, and will have produced an in-depth academic Essay on the Person Centred approach in counselling.</p> <p>Candidates will be in a position to progress professionally and academically to a higher level.</p>
10.9	Essential Information for Tutors	<p>Division of time is intended to be approximately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% Person Centred 45% Other Models (15% each) 5% Guidance and instructions for learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates will already have considerable knowledge of Counselling skills. This module provides Counselling Theory on a number of Humanistic models, which may be applied to the learner's Supervised Placement, or enhance his/her self-development. It must be stressed, however, that care needs to be taken when practising any model with limited knowledge or experience. • Learners are expected to read a given text/chapter before a session, and to be able to participate in group-discussions on the Person Centred element of the Course. • Humanistic Models, other than the Person Centred approach, are intended to be experienced by the learner with comparatively little theoretical input. As well as covering the subject matter above, opportunity should be taken wherever possible to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. link theory with Practice; 2. enable the learner to make useful connections to enhance self-development; 3. raise awareness of inner process; 4. encourage creative responses; 5. utilise creative ways of demonstrating the Models, e.g. drawing, visual, kinaesthetic exercises; 6. consider learners personal insights.

10.10 Recommended Reading

- BACP Statement of Fundamental Ethics for Counselling and Psychotherapy.*
- BACP Guidance and Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.*
- Person Centred** Mearns, D. and Thorne, B. (2000) 2nd Ed. *Person Centred Counselling in Action*. Dryden. Sage.
- Mearns, D. (1995). *Developing Person-Centred Counselling*. Dryden. Sage.
- Merry, T. (2000). *Learning and being in Person Centred Counselling*. PCCS Books.
- Rogers, C. (1990). *On Becoming a Person*. Constable.
- Rogers, C. (1991). *Client Centred Therapy*.
- Thorne, B. (1992) *Carl Rogers*. Sage. Constable.
- Gestalt** Mackewn, J. (1997). *Developing Gestalt*. Sage. London.
- Clarkson, P. (1998). *Gestalt Counselling in Action*. Sage. London.
- Clarkson, P. & Mackewn, J. (1993). *Fritz Perls*. Sage. London.
- Psychosynthesis** Assagioli, R. (1990). *Psychosynthesis*. Crucible. London.
- Whitmore, D. (1991). *Psychosynthesis Counselling in Action*. Sage. London.
- Parfit, W. (1990). *The Elements of Psychosynthesis*. Element Books.
- Existential** Smith, E.V.D. (1995). *Existential Counselling in Action*. Sage.
- Yalom, I. (1991). *Love's Executioner*. Penguin. London.
- May, R. (1993). *The Cry for Myth*. Souvenir Press. London.
- Compendiums** Nelson-Jones, R. (1995). *The Theory and Practice of Counselling*. Cassell.
- Hough, M. (1998). *Counselling Skills and Theory*. Hodder & Stoughton.
- Dryden, W. (1992). *Individual Therapy*. Open University Press.

Unit 4

Psychodynamic Theory (VC24)

Theory Option

11.1 About this Unit

This unit in Psychodynamic theory and concepts will provide a solid foundation in Psychodynamic counselling. It will focus on basic Psychodynamic concepts, and will use these as stepping stones for an understanding and awareness of a broader integration and application of Psychodynamic theory, its relationship to Humanistic theory and its place within counselling. The Psychodynamic underpinning of theoretical knowledge will place an emphasis on the pioneering work of Freud and the development of the Object Relations school, enhanced by the Existential/Phenomenological tradition.

The aim is to integrate these three major strands;

- Freud;
- Object Relations;
- Existential Phenomenological approach into sound counselling theory and practice.

The inclusion of the Psychodynamic school emphasises its key influence on subsequent schools of counselling and therapy and its paramount and central importance to an integrated awareness and broad theoretical underpinning of essential knowledge and key concepts intrinsic to counselling training.

It is useful for:

- Candidates who are interested in pursuing an interest in Psychodynamic theory and concepts;
- Candidates wishing to utilise this knowledge in counselling settings which emphasise Psychodynamic orientation;
- Candidates wishing to enhance their Humanistic practice by a broader understanding of key psychodynamic concepts, such as transference, counter-transference, projection, unconscious, defences, psychosexual development and interpretation.

It is essential for candidates to draw on a broad theoretical understanding to clarify and enrich their counselling practice and to enhance their own personal and professional development.

11.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

It is important to stress its total inclusion into the overall programme and its suitability and availability for ALL counselling candidates.

11.3 Aims

The overall aim of the Unit is to enable the candidate to develop and refine their understanding of Psychodynamic theory and concepts and its application to counselling practice. In context, the Unit aims to facilitate the integration of Freudian, Object-Relations and Existential/Phenomenological traditions, in order to create a critically informed and theoretically integrative foundation for the further development of the candidate's counselling theory and practice.

The Unit aims to:

- enable the candidate to identify transference, counter-transference, defences, splitting and projection in interactions with others – colleagues, relatives and counselling clients;
- develop the candidate's capacity to apply theoretical concepts and recognition of Psychodynamic theory within a counselling context;
- develop the candidate's capacity to apply theoretical concepts and recognition of Psychodynamic theory to their developing personal and professional awareness;
- develop the candidate's capacity to use a range of skills and theoretical understanding to communicate effectively within appropriate working relationships, maintaining suitable boundaries between counsellor and client;
- develop the candidate's capacity to identify past and present links (triangle of insight);
- develop the candidate's capacity to recognise and understand their own "agenda" or counter-transferential issues, process issues;
- broaden the candidate's understanding of the context of Psychodynamic counselling and its place within the wider context of counselling practice, including its inter-relationship with humanistic Practice.

11.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

Candidates will be able to identify the following by applying concepts to themselves and others:

- transference;
- counter-transference;
- projection;
- splitting;
- ego defences;
- past and present links:

- stages of development;
- existential concepts – TWO of the following: death, freedom, isolation, meaninglessness.

They will be able to identify, explain and apply the above concepts in a written journal, detailing interactions between themselves and others.

They will be able to describe and explain within a counselling context the importance of the following:

- Boundary issues – holding, containment, acting out, transference – positive and negative, counter-transference, projection, splitting, ego defences.
- Relationship issues – dependency, attachment, bonding and separation, developmental stages.

They will be able to give an explanation of the client’s process, the counsellor’s process and the interaction between the two. (Relationship).

11.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
- Essay or structured writing.

11.6 What the candidate will learn from this Unit

The purpose of this Unit is to provide the candidate with a comprehensive understanding of Psychodynamic theory and concepts. The first part of the Unit focuses on key theorists and concepts. When the candidate is sufficiently familiar with the approach, they are engaged in applying theory to practice, through experiential work and the exploration of role-plays and case studies. The purpose is to achieve a degree of competence in the arena of Psychodynamic Counselling. The Unit is designed to equip candidates with the necessary language and understanding and will serve as a foundation

for candidates wishing to study Psychodynamic theory in greater depth and those seeking placements with a Psychodynamic orientation. It will also enhance their appreciation of the Humanistic School of Counselling.

11.7 Essential Information for Tutors

Tutors should note that the candidate beginning the Unit may be unfamiliar with the Psychodynamic approach to Counselling. They should therefore aim to begin by introducing basic concepts and building upon the candidate's understanding and awareness, developing the candidate's capacity to utilise theories and concepts and the ability to apply absorbed knowledge to a range of case material. The aim is to enable the candidate to reach competence at level three. Tutors should abide by the BACP's *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy* and aim to provide clear role models for candidates in their delivery of the course.

The course is structured, enabling candidates to familiarise themselves with the basic theoretical approach. Each session then develops the initial understanding and grasp of material by facilitating experiential work, working with the candidate's own personal relationship to aspects of theory.

The final part of the course encourages the candidate to apply concepts learned generally to the arena of counselling through the exploration of case material.

11.8 Additional Learning from the Unit

Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units:

- B7 Develop the Counselling Relationship;
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process;
- B23 Make use of Supervision.

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

Unit 5

Cognitive Behavioural Theory (VC25)

Theory Option

12.1 About this Unit

This Unit introduces candidates to the principles and concepts of Cognitive Behavioural Theory. Candidates working, or hoping to work, in medical settings (e.g. Community Psychiatric Nursing) may be required to work from this orientation. It is also important that all trainees in Counselling have a knowledge of Cognitive Behavioural Theory, even if they decide not to adopt it as their main orientation, for comparative purposes. A complete overview of the main “roots” of counselling theory requires knowledge of this important area of psychological thinking.

12.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

Candidates for Advanced (Level III) awards will need to have appropriate literacy skills. (Centres will provide support for otherwise suitable candidates who might be disadvantaged in this area.)

An understanding that all counselling training involves experiential learning is necessary.

Candidates should hold a Level II (or equivalent) qualification in Counselling Skills.

12.3 Aims

This Unit aims to:

- provide candidates with an insight into the principles and concepts of Cognitive Behavioural Theory;
- provide an appropriately evaluative stance to the concepts;
- provide an understanding of whether or not cognitive Behavioural Theory is helpful multiculturally;
- help candidates consider the value of Cognitive Behavioural Theory to their own Core Model.

12.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

On completion of the Unit, candidates will be able to:

- explain the main theoretical principles of cognitive-behavioural theory;

- describe the work of Beck and Ellis;
- analyse the therapeutic process implied by the theory;
- reflect on the multicultural application of the principles;
- evaluate the contribution of the theory to a personal love Model.

12.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This Unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
- Essay or structured writing.

12.6 Subject Content

While working towards the outcomes, candidates should cover:

- the main principles of Cognitive Behavioural Theory:
the thinking process between stimulus and emotion;
collaborative working;
structured sessions;
goal orientated;
reality focused;
time limited.
- the work of Beck and Ellis;
- some of the language of Cognitive Behavioural Theory (e.g. Schemata);
- cognitive errors, e.g. personalising, globalising;
- implications for practice;
- consideration of theory, in relation to Equal Opportunity/Cultural Difference;
- the nature of and need for Supervision.

12.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units:

- B7 Develop the Counselling Relationship;
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process;
- B23 Make use of Supervision.

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

12.8 Essential Information for Tutors

Candidates at Level three will either:

- (a) be seeking the award to enhance their current functions role;

or

- (b) be aspiring to move on to Level four in order to become Counselling Practitioners.

Tutors need to pitch the level of knowledge appropriate for Level three. That is, that the Unit should be intellectually challenging, but that it should not seek to make proficient CBT practitioners. A firm base for those who *do* wish to practise should be the aim.

The language of Cognitive Behavioural Theory can be daunting, and tutors are recommended to provide, or work with candidate to compile, a basic glossary of terms.

Tapes of Ellis and Beck working with clients are available and can provide an insight into how the theoretical concepts evidence themselves in practice. As this is a theory Unit, a valuable link between theory and practice can thus be provided.

An evaluative stance should be taken throughout, to ensure that candidates appreciate both the strengths and the weaknesses of the theory.

BACP's Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy should underpin all work on this unit.

Unit 6

Theories of Loss and Grief (VC26)

Theory Option

13.1 About this Unit

Working with the bereaved and the terminally ill is a very important area in counselling, nursing, and social work. Particular areas where this unit may assist career progression are counselling in GP surgeries, palliative care, including hospice work, HIV/AIDS projects and the growing number of projects aimed at supporting the bereaved and the terminally ill.

This Option Unit aims to provide candidates with an introduction to some of the key theories relevant to working with loss and grief. The experience of loss and our reactions to it is a universal one which takes many forms. Knowledge of theories which seek to explain the ways in which people respond to this experience is essential to support and inform effective practice by anyone working in a helping or caring profession. The course will be particularly helpful for anyone whose work brings him or her into contact with the bereaved and the terminally ill.

13.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

The AQA Intermediate Certificate in Counselling Skills or equivalent, or a Centre-devised APL process to establish the candidate's suitability.

Please note:

This Unit is not suitable for those who have recently experienced bereavement or other major loss in their own lives.

13.3 Aims

The Unit aims to enable candidates to:

- demonstrate their understanding of the theories and topics below;
- compare and contrast some of those theories;
- evaluate and discuss their view of the relevance and likely effectiveness of some of those theories to their own work;
- incorporate this theory into their work;
- be in a position to progress professionally and academically to higher level.

13.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

Specific learning outcomes are that on successful completion of the Unit, candidates will:

- **demonstrate** a basic understanding of:
 - how the major schools of counselling and psychotherapy view the experience of grief and loss;
 - at least two of the theories particularly focused on loss and grief.
- **compare** and contrast the views of the major schools in terms of:
 - their basic assumptions about human beings and how we are likely to react to loss;
 - their basic views of what is likely to constitute effective counselling for loss and grief.
- **evaluate** and discuss the relevance and effectiveness of at least two of the related topics to the learner's own circumstances.

13.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
- Essay or structured writing.

13.6 Subject Content

13.6.1 How the major schools of counselling and psychotherapy view the experience of grief and loss

The psychodynamic tradition	The power of unconscious processes.
Freud	Defences such as repression and denial as a reaction to loss. The close relationship between mourning and depression. Emotional investment and re-investment.
Klein	Love, guilt and reparation. Mourning and its relation to manic-depressive states. Depressive feelings as important and necessary. Loss can re-evolve effects of previous losses.

The humanistic/existential tradition	Facing the inevitability of death as a key factor in mental health. Loss and death as crisis of meaning.
Rogers	The core conditions as primary and fundamental. The individual client's experience of loss as unique.
The cognitive-behavioural tradition	Thoughts and beliefs as primary determinants of feeling and behaviour.
Beck	Loss as a stressor likely to exacerbate dysfunctional assumptions.

13.6.2 Theories particularly focused on loss and grief

Bowlby and Attachment Theory	Bonding Secure and insecure attachment Separation Patterns of attachment Stages of grief.
Kubler-Ross	Stages of dying.
Worden	Grieving as a process. Tasks of grieving to be worked through.
Murray-Parkes	Importance of the family as the unit of care in counselling.
Stroebe	A dual-process model of grieving. A balance between expression and inhibition.

13.6.3 Related Topics

Aspects of grief	Normal grief Inhibited grief Chronic grief Complicated grief Traumatic grief
Post-traumatic stress disorder	
Suicidal risk	
Depression	

13.7 Additional Learning from the Unit	Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units: B7 Develop the Counselling Relationship; B8 Monitor self within the counselling process; B23 Make use of Supervision. Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).
--	---

13.8	What the candidate will learn from this Unit	The candidate will gain an understanding of some or all of the major theories of grief and loss and related topics. They will be able to compare, contrast and evaluate them.
13.9	Essential Information for Tutors	Candidates will already have some understanding of the views of the three major schools on counselling in general. This module builds on that foundation by examining the main perspectives and models on which grief counselling is based. It will not be realistic in the time available to attempt an in-depth coverage of all of the theories described above. The following allocation of guided learning time is suggested.
Major schools' views of loss and grief: 8 – 10 hours	When considering the psychodynamic tradition, care should be taken to avoid being drawn into a lengthy exploration of the controversies and complexities of psychoanalysis. This would not be appropriate for this unit, where the focus needs to be on the client's experience of loss and grief and how certain fundamental theoretical concepts can assist the counsellor in what, in most cases, will be a relatively short series of sessions. Candidate will be doing well if they can grasp the Freudian and Kleinian ideas listed above and can discuss how they might apply to the actual examples of grief and loss they have experienced or witnessed. The humanistic and cognitive-behavioural traditions tend to be more immediately understandable. They are highly influential in counselling for grief and loss and should be given careful attention in class. The existentialist notion of loss and death as confronting us with questions about the meaning of life may be quite challenging for some candidates.	
Theories particularly focused on loss and grief: 18 – 20 hours	A basic grasp of Attachment Theory is fundamental to this Unit. Once this is accomplished, the pros and cons of viewing grieving as a process in which certain stages can be recognised should be explored and should provide opportunity for fruitful discussion in class. Worden and Murray-Parkes are the most important sources here. Stroebe's contribution in asserting that inhibition of expression has a place in grieving as well as catharsis is also important.	
Related topics: 8 – 10 hours	The subject of depression, how various practitioners understand it and how it may be treated, must be covered, as must the essential subject of how the counsellor is to understand and respond to suicidal ideation and intent. The various aspects of grief identified by theorists are likely to provide valuable discussion material, although an in-depth grasp of each of them is not essential. Time permitting, the increasingly employed diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can also be covered. Offering support to someone suffering from loss or bereavement is a tremendous challenge, and it should be stressed that such work is not for everyone.	

As well as covering the subject matter outlined above, opportunity should be taken wherever possible:

- to enable candidates to recognise normal and abnormal grief reactions;
- to raise awareness of attitudes and practices around death across cultures;
- to foster a critical and evaluative approach to the theories and concepts which deal with grief, loss and bereavement. The limitations of linear models which offer a map of sequential stages of grieving should be examined;
- to consider loss in its broadest sense, e.g. loss of limbs through amputation, diagnosis of chronic illness, miscarriage, birth of baby with disability, divorce, loss associated with abuse.

13.10 Recommended Reading

- Dickenson, D. and Johnson, M (eds) *Death, Dying and Bereavement* (Open University Press)
- Klass, D., Silverman, P. and Nickrnan, S. (eds) *Continuing Bonds: New Understandings of Grief*, Bristol P.A. (Taylor and Francis)
- Kubler-Ross, E. *On Death and Dying*, London (Tavistock)
- Lendrun, S. and Syme, G. *Grift for Tears: a practical approach to loss and bereavement counselling*, London, New York (Routledge)
- Murray-Parkes, C. *Bereavement: Studies of grief in adult life*, London, New York (Routledge)
- Raphael, B. *The Anatomy of Bereavement: a handbook for the caring professions*, London, New York (Routledge)
- Stroebe, M. (1992) *Coping with Bereavement: a Review of Grief Work*, in *Omega*, 26, 1:1942
- Walter, T. (1996) *A New Model of Grief: Bereavement and Biography*, in *Mortality*, 1(1): 7-25
- Worden, W. *Grief Counselling and Therapy: a handbook for the mental health practitioner*, London, New York (Routledge)
- Wortman, C. and Silver, R. (1989) *The Myths of Coping With Loss*, in *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 57, 3:349-57

Unit 7

An Introduction to Transactional Analysis (VC27)

Theory Option

14.1 About this Unit

Transactional Analysis is both a theory and a method of psychotherapy and counselling.

For the counselling practitioner, it provides wider opportunities for working with clients who may benefit from personal growth and change in their life.

Transactional Analysis may be used for individual or group work and with children, adolescents or adults. Transactional Analysis has proved to be particularly effective in counselling, social work, nursing, educational settings and in managing people more effectively.

Transactional Analysis methods may also be used to help people to become more effective communicators, developing within them skills and knowledge with which to analyse their own feelings and behaviour, and to encourage them to take greater responsibility for their own lives and personal development.

Transactional Analysis methods are useful for group training purposes for example, in managing change or resolving conflict between workers and their supervisor.

Transactional Analysis is an integrative theory and it draws ideas from several of the core theoretical approaches to counselling and, therefore, the processes are compatible with most of the more traditional counselling methods.

Transactional Analysis is a sufficiently flexible methodology to also be useful in short-term or brief therapy work and can also be usefully employed by the less experienced counsellor.

The central concepts of Transactional Analysis can be conveyed in relatively simple terms and thus it is more widely accessible than some other counselling processes.

14.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

There are no reasons for excluding certain classes of young people from the Unit, but care should be taken when recruiting candidates that they are prepared emotionally to take on the commitment of personal discovery.

14.3 Aims

The Unit aims to enable candidates to:

- understand the Transactional Analysis theory and structure of personality;
- use Transactional Analysis methods ethically;
- be in a position to progress professionally and academically to a higher level.

14.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

On successful completion of this Unit, the candidate will be able to:

- apply Transactional Analysis to personal growth and change;
- develop advanced communication skills which can be used in personal and professional life;
- evaluate and discuss a structured way of working using a contract system;
- incorporate Transactional Analysis theory into their work;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of:
 - how the theory and structure of personality relate to the three part model known as the Ego model;
 - how to apply such a model to their own behaviour and feelings;
 - the theory of transactions and the process of communication;
 - how to analyse the candidate's concept of his/her own life script;
 - redefining a life script to achieve autonomy;
 - how to evaluate their own self awareness, spontaneity and capacity of intimacy.

14.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
- Essay or structured writing.

14.6 Subject Content

The candidate will study the following in relation to Transactional Analysis theory:

Element I Theoretical background, to include;

- Eric Berne, Origins and development of Transactional Analysis;
- Self-awareness – recognition of difficulty;
- Motivation. Wanting change and having commitment;
- Ego states – parts of the personality that represent the three basic separate and distinct sources of behaviour;
- Definition and use of the Parent-Adult-Child Model;
- Contracting in Adult mode to set goals.

Element II Communication, to include:

- Untangling the child ego stage;
- Transactions;
- Strokes - Positive
Negative;
- Ways of time structuring.

Element III Life Script, to include:

- Drivers Injunctions and Permissions;
- Rackets and Stamps;
- Awareness of games and analysis;
- Changing decisions and new choices;
- Endings.

14.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units:

- B7 Develop the Counselling Relationship;
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process;
- B22 Work in teams;
- B23 Make use of Supervision.

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

14.8 What the Candidate will Learn

The candidate will:

- help the client gain understanding of how he/she has been experiencing difficulties and encourage the client's personal responsibility;
- help clients look for personal change through use of the Ego model;
- take joint responsibility for achieving contract goals based on a contractual method;
- work through these goals and help the client to move out of script and into autonomy.

14.9 Essential Information for Tutors

Ideally, the Unit will be taught by a Transactional Analysis (TA) practitioner, but tutors qualified to at least Level IV, with a good knowledge of TA, may be equally appropriate.

As well as covering the subject matter, opportunity should be taken to encourage the necessary joint respect for counsellor and client during all interactions and involvement.

This is always present in a counselling relationship, but in Transactional analysis it relates especially to an awareness of the power dynamics which occur when setting up contracts and challenges. The importance of working in a creative spontaneous way to enable movement and growth should be promoted.

14.10 Assessment

This Unit is assessed internally by the tutor and externally moderated by the AQA verifier.

Journal Knowledge and understanding of course content will be assessed by means of a reflective journal for each session taught.

Essay This will enable candidates to demonstrate their ability to understand the theory, evaluate to personal experience and likely effectiveness.

Assessing tutors must be aware that it is essential to assess the journal entry early so that candidates can have constructive positive feedback.

Final submission of the Journal and Essay must allow sufficient time for candidates to resubmit their work once during the normal life of the course in the event that their attempt is referred. Tutors will need to submit an assessment plan to the AQA external verifier at the start of the unit.

Unit 8

Brief Therapy (VC28)

Theory Option

15.1 About this Unit

This Level III Option Unit is for those people who wish to use Brief Therapy within a range of settings. The focus is on the theoretical basis of Brief Therapy as derived from the strategic approaches to counselling/psychotherapy of, for example, Jay Haley's Strategic Psychotherapy, Steve de Shazer's Solution Focused Brief Therapy, and William Hudson O'Hanlon's Solution Oriented Therapy. The psychodynamic tradition rooted in Freudian and post-Freudian models is not addressed. Candidates might be involved with auditing their work, to give an accurate professional account of its process and outcomes. Therefore, a likely audience for the course could include: mental health practitioners, educationists, social services, line managers, HR personnel and counsellors working in organisations, CAB's and Debt Advice services, and a variety of charities actively engaged with their clients, particularly those working within the field of alcohol and substance abuse.

This Unit is needed because an increasing number of the patient population are expressing the need to discuss their personal issues rather than only receiving medication from their doctors for mental health difficulties. There is a corresponding demand from employees to have support in dealing with their issues, and as these can impact upon their productivity at work, employers also want a counselling service. The third strand is fuelled by the gradually changing philosophy of charities that seek to empower their clients in dealing with the difficulties they are faced with in their lives. Brief Therapy may provide a structured, time-limited framework that is both productive and economical. It therefore fulfils many of the requirements stemming from the above trends.

Recent research indicates that counselling compares favourably with the usual GP care in the management of anxiety and depression, and counselling has enhanced the speed of recovery for patients suffering from a range of psychological conditions. Moreover, follow-up studies indicate that their recovery is sustained. Brief therapy, therefore, contributes to effective results. Similarly, the workforce of an organisation has shown reduced levels of absenteeism when counselling has been provided.

- 1 Mackay, M. in *Counselling at Work*, Winter 2000
- 2 Kay, Sibbald, Ward, Bower et al. *British Medical Journal*, December 2000 (in Hodson, *Counselling at Work*, Summer 2001)

15.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

Candidates should have a Certificate in Counselling Skills or equivalent, or have been through a Centre-devised process to establish their suitability.

The Unit would not be suitable for candidates who wish to study models oriented towards longer term work, such as Psychodynamic or Existential counselling.

15.3 Aims

This Unit is designed for trainee or experienced counsellors planning to work in settings where the concept of psychological welfare is supported. It aims to:

- act as a springboard to developing the candidate's understanding of Brief Therapy (BT) practice and theory while remaining grounded and congruent with the Level III framework. It should therefore prepare the candidate to take a constructively critical perspective on the strengths and limitations of BT;
 - facilitate the candidate in taking up the opportunity to develop a counselling career within organisations where there is a growing need for BT;
 - Hone the candidate's professional and academic skills in preparation for further study at Higher Level leading to full practitioner status.
-

15.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

By the end of the unit, candidates should:

- demonstrate their understanding of the theories and topics presented;
 - compare and contrast two of those theories;
 - critically analyse the potential for effective outcomes using Brief Therapy and how this may be integrated into their work.
 - indicate some of the potential outcomes of a Brief Therapy model in terms of its effectiveness and relevance to their work.
-

15.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
 - Essay or structured writing.
-

15.6 Subject Content**1. How the main Models of Brief Therapy Have Developed.**

Brief Strategic Approaches of Milton Erickson as developed by Jay Haley – Foundations in communication within a time-limited paradigm.

Gerard Egan’s Skilled Helper Model – a potential framework for time-limited work.

Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg and the Brief Solution Focused model – the steps involved in doing brief therapy.

William Hudson O’Hanlon – a Solution Oriented approach – a comparative and contrasting model with de Shazer’s.

2. A critical evaluation of two of the main approaches to Brief Therapy in terms of their view of the person and the principles of the therapeutic relationship.
3. Outcomes – comparative studies of Brief Therapy, variables affecting outcomes (e.g. the therapeutic alliance, client characteristics, client actions and experiences of Brief Therapy, counsellor characteristics and actions in Brief Therapy).

15.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units:

- B7 Develop the Counselling Relationship;
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process;
- B23 Make use of Supervision.

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

15.8 Essential Information for Tutors

Before embarking on this unit, candidates will have some understanding of the views of the three major schools (Psychodynamic, Behavioural and Humanistic) so that Brief Therapy is placed in context.

In spite of its apparent simplicity, working with Brief Therapy is a sophisticated skill with a firm theoretical basis rooted in the belief, (and increasingly supported by firm scientific evidence) that effective therapeutic interventions may be used in the first eight sessions of counselling clients.

It is expected that throughout delivery of the module:

- the candidate will be exposed to the ethical principles and challenges implicit to Brief Therapy;
- debate will be encouraged about the suitability and contra-indications of using Brief Therapy. This will include diversity issues, mental health problems and personal styles of communication amongst the client cohort;

- there will be a climate of constructive critical and evaluative discussion, which is presented in a summative way through keeping a journal and presenting the Discussion Paper.

15.9 Suggested Reading

Bergin, Allen, E. and Garfield, Sol L. (eds) (1994), *Fourth Edition Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behaviour Change*. (Wiley).

Berg, Insoo Kim and Dolan, Y.(2001), *Tales of Solutions: A Collection of Hope-Inspiring Stories* (Norton).

Cade, Brian and O'Hanlon, William Hudson (1993), *A Brief Guide to Brief Therapy* (Norton).

de Shazer, Steve (1985), *Keys to Solution in Brief Therapy* (Norton).

Haley, Jay *Uncommon therapy: The Psychiatric Techniques of Milton H. Erickson*, M.D.

O'Hanlon, William H. and Weiner-Davis, M. (1992), *In Search of Solutions: A new direction in psychotherapy* (Norton).

O'Hanlon, William H. and Wilk, J. (1987), *Shifting Contexts: The generation of effective psychotherapy* (Guildford).

Palmer, Steve and Gladeana McMahon (eds) (1997), *Handbook of Counselling* (2nd Edition, Routledge).

Walter, John L. and Peller, Jane E. (1992), *Becoming Solution-Focused in Brief Therapy* (Brunner/Mazel).

Author's note: the editions I have cited are from my own stock; therefore, tutors may wish to seek later editions. American spellings have not been anglicised.

Unit 9

Skills for Supervision (VC29)

Skills Option

16.1 About this Unit

Supervision is ethically essential for counsellors, and is strongly recommended for users of counselling skills. The BACP Guidance on Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy *Codes of Ethics and Practice* and its Framework for Ethical Practice make this clear. Because the term “supervision” has so many connotations, trainees need help to use counselling Supervision effectively. This Unit enables candidates to use Supervision to support, monitor and improve their practice.

It is also acknowledged that candidates for the Level III Award may well be in managerial supervisory roles (e.g. Social Workers, Senior Nurses, Personnel/Human Resources managers). Therefore, the Unit offers insight into how counselling skills can enhance this function, particularly in the sensitive use of process and structure. The practical as well as the ethical is thus considered.

16.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

Candidates selecting Skills for Supervision as their option unit should:

- have literacy skills at an appropriate level (centres will provide support in this area for candidates who are otherwise suitable);
- hold a qualification at Level II (or equivalent) in Counselling Skills, or Skills and Theory;
- have an understanding of the requirements of experiential learning;
- undertake to become familiar with appropriate Codes and with the BACP Ethical Framework of Good Practice;
- have completed the AQA Advanced Unit 1;
- be able to access a placement where they can practise (in order to gather suitable material);
- be able to locate and work with a Supervisor acceptable to the centre and to AQA.

16.3 Aims

This Unit aims to enable candidates to:

- identify the type(s) of Supervision they need to work ethically and effectively;
- make a Supervision Contract;
- recognise material appropriate for Supervision and to practise open presentation of it;

- review evidence for how Supervision informs and improves practice;
- prepare for Level IV work.

16.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

While working through the Unit, candidates will be achieving the following learning outcomes:

- identifying supervision needs and select an appropriate Supervisor;
- agreeing a supervision contract which covers roles and responsibilities and clarifies boundaries;
- selecting case material for Supervision;
- presenting material openly to Supervisor;
- using Supervision feedback and the supervisory relationship to improve practice;
- reviewing effects of Supervision on Professional and Personal Development.

16.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
- Practical role-play assessment.

16.6 Subject Content

While working towards the outcomes, candidates should cover:

- an exploration of the nature of and need for Supervision;
- health and safety issues for counsellor and client;
- the differences between managerial and counselling Supervision;
- appropriate BACP Codes and Framework;
- at least one model of Supervision, e.g. formative, normative, restorative, Clinical Rhombus, Hawkins and Shohet;
- the boundaries establishing the working alliance;

- the parallel process phenomenon;
- practising skills as Supervisor and person being supervised;
- using Supervision for professional and personal development.

16.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

While achieving this Unit, candidates may also gain evidence for S/NVQ Level III Units.

- A5 Evaluate and develop own work
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process
- B23 Make use of Supervision

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

16.8 Essential Information for Tutors

Although much of the practical element of this Unit will be non-face-to-face tuition, since it will derive from the candidate's placement work, the in-class tuition should be mainly experiential in order that skills can be practised in a safe learning environment.

An important area for instruction and focus should be related to the *purpose, methods, models and process* of Supervision. In range terms this would cover:

The Purposes of Supervision	Accountability; responsibility to and for; personal and professional development.
Methods	One-to-one; group; peer; triad and their advantages and disadvantages, particularly in relation to theoretical orientation.
Models	Formative, Normative, Restorative, Clinical Rhombus; Hawkins & Shohet.
Process	The parallel process; (other) ethical and equal opportunity issues; the working alliance; boundaries.

The skills areas should help candidates to develop skills of *negotiation*, both for contracting and for maintaining the working alliance. Candidates also need to practise the giving and receiving of *feedback*. This can usefully be done in triad work, which can also highlight parallel process issues, and the differences/similarities between Counselling and Supervision.

In discussion or small group work, candidates may usefully explore confusion/tensions arising in Supervision; the desirability (or otherwise) of same orientation; the limits of personal and professional competence (both as Supervisor and person being supervised) and how to monitor case load.

16.9 Assessment Practices

The simulated contracting interview should last for no less than 20 minutes and no more than 30 minutes. The simulation should follow the usual counselling practice of triad work, with Supervisor, person being supervised and Observer. The Observer is required to check off on the assessment sheet that items of CONTENT have been included. The tutor role is to monitor process skills separately, as the tutor moves from triad to triad. The tutor is then able to “match” both assessment records to ensure competence.

The simulated supervision interview following the same pattern should last for no less than 30 minutes. The assessment sheets for both Observer and Tutor are the same. Candidates while supervised, should be reminded that they should demonstrate good skills while in that role and that the Tutor (while valuing the Observer input) is the assessor.

Candidates who are referred in practicals may be given a second attempt and tutors need to allow time for this.

Candidates may be deemed practically competent when both elements are achieved. Tutors should model good Supervision practice in feedback, especially to referred candidates.

Time limits for the written coursework are at the tutor’s discretion, but should be realistic.

OBSERVER SHEET FOR CONTRACTING

Note to observer: Put a tick against each item you observe and make a brief note of what was said. The order is not important. **Please note** that you are not looking at style, or relationship building, which will be monitored by your tutor.

ITEM	SEEN?	EXAMPLE
PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS		
Time, length, frequency Place Costs involved Recording Record Keeping		
BOUNDARY ISSUES		
Confidentiality Personal/Professional Organisational Contractual		
ETHICAL ISSUES, e.g.		
Code(s) of Practice		
OTHER		
Roles and responsibilities of each party Model for Supervision Agreement to review		

ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR CONDUCTING THE SUPERVISION INTERVIEW

NAME

CRITERION	MET?	EXAMPLE
The agenda was clarified		
The person being supervised:		
Identified practice issue(s)		
Explored reaction to client(s)		
Considered strategies for achieving client goals		
Challenged/accepted challenge to practice		
Time was kept		
Stayed within working alliance		
Other (e.g. confidentiality)		
Rationale for model used was given		
Case load management was reviewed		

Tutor/Observer Comments:

Unit 10

Working with Trauma (VC30)

Skills Option

17.1 About this Unit

This Unit aims to increase awareness and, in counselling or in areas associated with mental health (both understanding of *trauma*, *post-trauma stress*, *post-traumatic stress disorder*, *critical incident stress* and *critical incident stress debriefing*). Whether working in a caring profession (voluntary and statutory), candidates will benefit from an increased knowledge of trauma and its associated signs and symptoms. Candidates are helped to gain insight into how critical incident debriefings are conducted and the counselling skills which are needed, while observing the differences between a debrief and counselling as therapeutic interventions for emotional shock.

17.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

- Candidates should be skilled to Level II (or equivalent) in Counselling or Counselling Skills.
- An understanding that the Unit requires a considerable amount of experiential work is essential.
- Candidates should not recently have suffered any form of trauma or close bereavement.
- Candidates should be able to access Support and Supervision.
- Candidates should have good support networks, as working with trauma can create stress in those not immediately affected.
- The core Unit of either the AQA Advanced Certificate or of the Diploma (Advanced) should have been completed or be in progress.
- All candidate should undertake to become familiar with and abide by appropriate Guidance on Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy with the BACP *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*.

17.3 Aims

The overall aims of this Unit are to enable candidates to:

- clarify the terms trauma, post-trauma stress (PTS), critical incident stress (CIS) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
- recognise the signs and symptoms of PTS, CIS and PTSD;
- identify pre-disposing factors;
- understand the significance of debriefing;
- facilitate coping strategies for victims and self.

17.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

While working on this Unit, candidates will be achieving the following learning outcomes:

- clarify the term “trauma”;
- identify the differences between PTS, PTSD, CIS;
- define traumatic and critical incidents;
- gain familiarity with relevant sections of DSM IV, its uses and limitations;
- recognise signs and symptoms of PTS, PTSD, CIS;
- identify pre-disposing factors and coping styles;
- evaluate the two main models of debriefing.

17.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
- Practical role-play assessment.

17.6 Subject Content

In order to achieve the learning outcomes, candidates will work on:

- defining trauma;
- health and safety issues for counsellor and client;
- recognising signs and symptoms;
- identifying thoughts, feelings, behaviours, physical manifestations;
- evaluating helpful aftercare;
- eliciting positives;
- PTSD and DSM IV;
- pre-disposing factors;
- coping styles/strategies;
- referral
- supervision/care of the helper/counsellor;

- debriefing critical incidents and critical incident stress;
- models of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing;
- structure of a debrief.

17.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units:

- A5 Evaluate and Develop own Work
- A7 Operate referral procedures
- B6 Ensure a structured counselling setting
- B7 Develop the counselling relationship
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process
- B22 Work in teams
- B23 Make use of supervision
- B2 Assist clients to decide on options for meeting their requirements

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

17.8 Essential Information for Tutors

It is important that candidates appreciate the difference between a Debrief and counselling. Frequent reminders that a Debrief may be therapeutic, but that it is not therapy, may be necessary.

Attention should also be drawn to recent discussion concerning the efficacy of Debriefing. The BACP Journals have extensive articles and correspondence relating to this. As with all counselling, or counselling related intervention, an evaluative approach should be taken.

A good bank of case material will be helpful, particularly in helping candidates to be clear about the differences between PTS, PTSD and CIS. There is evidence from those working in this field that there can be confusion about the differences, and that this can sometimes lead to escalation of symptoms and to inappropriate or untimely referral. Clarity is important. As candidates are working at Advanced Level III, it should be possible to ensure that the significance of these differences is fully understood. Case study material is a vivid way of illustrating the point(s).

Candidates should be encouraged to compile a data bank of appropriate referral agencies. As a group task this can also be a helpful way of building support networks and of networking within the group, which could be invaluable after the course. A “health warning” that working with trauma can create considerable stress and that working without support/supervision is not only unethical, but could be psychologically damaging, might be a useful contracting area for group work. There is opportunity here for tutors to model good practice.

The relevant sections of DSM IV could be condensed into bullet points and used as handouts.

The debriefing simulation may create anxiety. Tutors may offer to role-play the case study themselves. However, experience suggests

that many candidates are comfortable about role-playing and that the experiential and skills practice work on the course will have encouraged this. Care should be taken about staying in role and with de-roling.

Candidates need to pass both assessment elements. A second attempt at the practical is allowed for referred candidates.

17.9 Assessment for a Critical Incident Debrief

Candidate's name:

Date

	Assessment for a Critical Incident Debrief		Pass	Refer
1.	The candidate	States clearly which model they intend to use Structures the interview (NB the ordering is crucial).		
2.	Introduction	The aim of the debrief is explained. The process and method is outlined. "Health warnings" about feeling worse. Ground rules (confidentiality; from past to present to future); not therapy.		
3.	Eliciting Facts	What happened before the incident? What happened during the incident? What did you do? How did others react to you?		
4.	Mental Response	Thoughts at the time. Results of thoughts. Rationale (why did you do it?).		
5.	Emotional Response	Sensory. Emotional. Since the incident.		
6.	Normalisation	Emphasis on the normality of the responses. The abnormality of the incident		
7.	Mobilising Support			
8.	Ending			
9.	Follow-Up			

Tutor Feedback:

Unit 11

Working with Couples (VC31)

Skills Option

18.1 About this Unit

Difficulty with relationships is arguably the most frequently presenting problem for Counselling (although couples do not always present together). Insight into relationship dynamics is valuable for helpers and counsellors who work one-to-one, as well as for those actually working with couples. This Unit therefore gives candidates insight into the dynamics of adult relationships (which will be of value in many areas of helping and support); it also explores the skills and strategies of working with a dynamic between two people simultaneously. Issues of self-awareness are reflected on, particularly in relation to collusion with one partner or the other. Since the relationship is, so to speak, “in the room”, candidates are helped to revisit the skill of immediacy and of challenging the “here and now”. Ethical issues are stressed.

18.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

Candidates for this Award should:

- have a Level II Counselling or Counselling Skills Award;
- be confident in Stage II Counselling Skills, particularly immediacy;
- have completed, or be in the process of completing, the Core Unit of the AQA Advanced Certificate or Diploma (FE);
- undertake to become familiar with the BACP *Ethical Framework for Good Practice*;
- have appropriate literacy skills (for otherwise suitable candidates, centres will provide learning support for those experiencing difficulty).

18.3 Aims

In meeting each of these objectives, tutors and candidates must recognise that the health and safety of both the counsellor and the candidate, potential dangers and appropriate action to minimise damage must be considered.

The overall aims of this Unit are to provide candidates with:

- insight into the factors contributing to the dynamics of couple relationships;
- understanding of theoretical approaches to relationship interaction;
- the ability to assess communication issues between couples;
- strategies and skills for working with couples;
- heightened self-awareness.

18.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

While working through the Unit, candidates will be achieving the following learning outcomes:

- understanding some of the causes of couple conflict;
- becoming aware of health and safety issues for counsellor and client;
- appreciating how causes manifest in current couple dynamics;
- considering theoretical perspectives on couple interaction;
- practising strategies and skills appropriate for working with couples;
- gaining some insight into sexual problems and the need for supervision;
- developing self-awareness.

18.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
- Practical role-play assessment.

18.6 Subject Content

In meeting each of these objectives, tutors and candidates must recognise that the health and safety of both the counsellor and the candidate, potential dangers and appropriate action to minimise damage must be considered.

While studying this Unit, candidates should cover the following topics:

- attraction
 1. conscious preferences
 2. unconscious memories
 3. social expectations
 4. cultural/religious differences;
- health and safety for counsellor and client;
- distance and intimacy;
- expectations (fantasy and reality);
- meeting own and other's needs;

- manifestations of conflict (e.g. poor communication; blaming; silence; infidelity; smothering)
- interpretation of conflicts;
- theoretical approaches
 1. CBT
 2. REBT
 3. Psychodynamic
 4. Systems
- skills for working, especially here-and-now skills, and for helping to improve communication;
- awareness of own role and dangers of colluding;
- ethical issues
 1. referral (e.g. for sexual problems)
 2. disclosure (e.g. for abuse)
- level of competence (e.g. in cultural issues);
- supervision/support.

18.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

While meeting the learning objectives for this Unit, candidates may also acquire *some* evidence for S/NVQ Level III Counselling Units, although it should be noted that the Units are targeted at those working one-to-one with clients. Couple counselling sometimes necessitates separate work, before bringing the two people together for joint work.

- A5 Evaluate and Develop own Work A7 Operate referral procedures
- B6 Ensure a structured counselling setting
- B7 Develop the counselling relationship
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process
- B23 Make use of supervision
- B1 Enable clients to access and use information
- B2 Assist clients to decide on options for meeting their requirements
- B3 Provide support for clients in planning a course of action

Candidates may also gather evidence for Key Skills, Level 3.

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

18.8 Essential Information for Tutors

“Working with Couples”, although most likely to refer to heterosexual couples, may also involve work with same sex-couples. Tutors need to draw this to candidates’ attention, perhaps as part of self-development. Self-awareness generally is important for this Unit and tutors should help candidates to challenge their own principles and prejudices with regard to intimate relationships, which may be uncomfortable.

Sex therapy has an established, specialised, training and although the topic should be introduced on the course, candidates should be aware of the need to refer. On the other hand, presenting problems may be masking sexual problems and helpers need some knowledge in order to detect this.

When couples seek help for their relationship, communication is usually at a very low point or it may be in a state of change and transition (e.g. the use of silence). Some understanding of the cycle of communication is helpful here and an appreciation that the helper’s role may be (especially in early stages of work) to re-establish communication. Skills of paraphrase and reflection, to ensure that each partner “hears” the other, need to be practised. Candidates will already be familiar with these skills, but need practice in using them to *interpret*. The difference between re-establishing communication and refereeing needs emphasis.

Candidates will need help to enable them to see the *relationship*, rather than the individuals, as the “client”. Working in the here-and-now is therefore very important, and extensive practice of the skill of *immediacy* is essential, as is use of appropriate *challenge*, which needs linking to self-awareness about not being perceived as blaming or as taking sides.

Tutors need a good “bank” of Case material to give candidates as wide a perspective as possible.

Candidates referred on the practical element may have a second attempt. Tutors need to allow sufficient time for this.

Access to video or audio recording is essential.

18.9 Criteria for the Practical Assessment

Candidate's Name		Date: _____		
	The candidate:		Pass	Refer
1.	Opened the session appropriately			
2.	Established boundaries	time		
		confidentiality		
		not blaming		
		own role		
3.	Facilitated communication			
4.	Used paraphrase and reflection sensitively			
5.	Reflected meaning <i>and</i> feeling(s).			
6.	Kept the relationship as focus			
7.	Attempted to work in the here-and-now			
8.	Used immediacy confidently			
9.	Gave the interview a recognisable structure			
10.	Ended appropriately (e.g. referred; set "homework" etc)			

18.10 Criteria for the Analysis

Candidate's Name

Date

	The candidate:		Pass	Refer
1.	Accurately identified skills used			
2.	Commented on their effectiveness			
3.	Discussed the overt conflict			
4.	Attempted an interpretation of causes			
5.	Clarified the approach used			
6.	Described own reactions to each partner			
7.	Reflected on the management of the reactions			
8.	Reflected on any ethical issues			
9.	Attempted a prognosis			
10.	Identified how Supervision would help			

Tutor Comment:

Unit 12

Helping Children and Young People (VC32)

Skills Option

19.1 About this Unit

This Option Unit aims to provide candidates with the skills, knowledge and insights needed for this special area of practice. It focuses on the particular boundary issues which obtain when working with children and young people (e.g. the Children Act; confidentiality; parental or other consent). The particular pressures impacting on young people in the 21st century (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) are a central focus. The module is underpinned by the concept of “transition” as this applies to children and young people.

Candidates may approach the skills work from any theoretical base, provided that they can offer a sound rationale based on their learning in the Core Unit.

The Unit is especially valuable for those working with young people: e.g. teachers, youth leaders, probation officers, intermediate care workers, social workers, careers personnel.

The Primary Learning goal for the Option Unit is that candidates can:

- conduct an ethical and empathic counselling interview;
- evaluate the principles and knowledge which inform their practice.

Police authority clearance is required if the candidate is working with children.

Current legislation, e.g. Home Office Circular 47/1993 (*Protection of Children: Disclosure of Criminal Background of Those With Access To Children*) must be observed.

19.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

Candidates should have performed competently in the Core Unit, especially the skills element.

Some organisations or individuals may wish to acquire only Unit Certification, as relevant to their particular field of practice. Centres will then need to ensure that:

- training in counselling skills has been undertaken;
- the candidate has read and understood the BACP Code of Ethics and Practice for Counsellors;
- the candidate is aware that there is a written component for assessment and appropriate arrangements for this need to be in place.

All candidates will be made aware of legal restrictions applying to working with children and young people.

19.3 Aims

On successful completion of this Unit, the candidate will:

- understand the essential differences between counselling adults and counselling children and young people;
 - know legal restrictions and moral ethical issues pertaining to counselling children and young people;
 - have the ability to conduct effective counselling interviews with a child or a young person;
 - be able to evaluate the principles of counselling children and young people.
-

19.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

Specific learning outcomes are that on successful completion of the Unit, candidates will:

- appreciate the special factors impacting upon counselling children and young people;
 - identify the particular pressures created by the transitions confronting children and young people;
 - adapt communication and counselling skills to an appropriate level for child or young person;
 - recognise the importance of supervision and referral when working with children and young people;
 - conduct “competent” simulated interviews with children and young people.
-

19.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
 - Practical role-play assessment.
-

19.6 Subject Content

Element I Issues of Consent

Health and Safety issues for counsellor and client

The Children Act

Confidentiality (especially as it applies to minors) and Disclosure (BACP guidelines)

Impact of sociocultural factors on development

Issues of Power

Role conflict (e.g. for Self; with other supporting agencies).

Element II Concept of Life Transitions

Transition in relation to counselling

Particular transitions of childhood and adolescence

Stresses of these

Implications for practice

Element III Counselling Skills (especially contracting)

Communication (appropriate levels)

Conflict

Supervision

19.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units:

A5 Evaluate and Develop own Work

A7 Operate referral procedures

B6 Ensure a structures counselling setting

B7 Develop the counselling relationship

B8 Monitor self within the counselling process

B23 Make use of supervision

B1 Enable clients to access and use information

B2 Assist clients to decide on options for meeting their requirements

B3 Provide support for clients in planning a course of action

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

Unit 13

Counselling in Organisations (VC33)

Skills Option

20.1 About this Unit

This Option Unit aims to provide candidates with the skills, knowledge and understanding needed for this specialist area of practice.

With the increased provision of counselling services for large organisations, there has been a growth in demand for well-qualified practitioners who are able to interface with both employers and employees in the workplace. The demand for counselling has been fuelled by not merely a fear of litigation resulting from occupational stress, but also by well-documented research that indicates therapeutic interventions leading to change can have a positive impact upon employees' productivity.

An understanding of the nature of counselling contracts with organisations is central to this work, regardless of whether the counsellor practises on site or is affiliated to a counselling service provider to the client organisation. Boundary issues also give rise to pressures within the parameters of improving the organisation's business effectiveness while helping employees to increase their personal well-being.

This Unit is underpinned by the concept of transition and change as applicable to employees and organisations functioning in a climate of economic, cultural and political vicissitudes. The counselling skills model is that of Brief Solution Focused Therapy. Such a model is well-suited to the time-limited, outcome-orientated nature of organisational counselling.

The Unit is suitable for counselling practitioners and staff using counselling skills as part of their job, e.g. occupational health advisers, line managers, human resources personnel and careers officers.

20.2 Unit Specific Entry Requirements

The Unit is suitable for candidates who have at least a Level two or equivalent Certificate in Counselling Skills, or have been through a centre-devised process to establish their suitability.

The unit is not suited to practitioners who are wedded to long-term process-orientated work such as Psychodynamic counselling.

It is advisable that candidates have some experience of working in an organisation.

Candidates should also understand:

- that the unit does not equip them to be fully qualified counsellors;
- that there is both a written component (Journal) and a requirement to demonstrate the skills learnt. These components will be formally assessed.

20.3 Aims

The Unit aims to:

- act as an arena for developing the candidate's understanding of practising counselling in organisations in an ethical and principled way;
- enable the candidate to develop a counselling career within an organisation where there is a growing need for strategies to alleviate the increased occupational stress;
- hone the candidate's professional and academic skills in preparation for further study at Higher level leading to full practitioner status.

20.4 Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

In meeting each of these objectives, candidates must be made aware of the risks to the health and safety of both the counsellor and the client associated with the counselling process, with particular reference given to coping with aggression, violence and emotional involvement.

By the end of the course, candidates should be able to:

1. Evaluate their developing skills through reflecting on feedback in discussion with their peers and tutor, and by keeping a journal. The Journal should be a formative, normative and summative document derived from the course material;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the qualities essential to an effective therapeutic outcome;
3. Conduct a counselling session showing empathy, an understanding of the process through their chosen interventions, and boundary issues.

20.5 Scheme of Assessment

Refer to Section 7. This unit requires the following for internal assessment:

- Journal; **and**
 - Practical role-play assessment.
-

20.6 Subject Content (as relating to the above objectives)

- Setting the Scene
- On-site counselling compared with a counselling service provider: tensions, strengths and challenges to boundaries;
 - Health and safety issues for counsellor and client;
 - Employees' issues and their impact upon the workplace;
 - The two or three-cornered contract for counselling.

- Organisational Pressures
- Transition and change in the workplace;
 - Redundancy issues;
 - Co-worker difficulties;
 - Alcohol and substance abuse;
 - Personal problems from "outside" the organisation.

- Solution Focused Brief Therapy
- Fundamental principles and stance of Solution Focused Brief Therapy.
- the assumption that clients have the solutions to their own problems;
 - the empowering nature of a co-operative approach;
 - the likelihood of positive outcomes through clearly defined goals.
1. Defining the goals
 2. The Miracle Question – possibilities of a range of outcomes in making changes; Scaling progress – helping to make vague meanings specific actions.
 3. The exceptions frame – noticing the small differences that make the difference.
 4. Positive feedback as an agent of change.

20.7 Additional Learning from the Unit

Candidates may be able to gather evidence for S/NVQ level III counselling Units:

- A5 Evaluate and Develop own Work
- A7 Operate referral procedures
- B6 Ensure a structured counselling setting
- B7 Develop the counselling relationship
- B8 Monitor self within the counselling process
- B22 Work in teams
- B23 Make use of supervision
- B1 Enable clients to access and use information
- B2 Assist clients to decide on options for meeting their requirements

- B3 Provide support for clients in planning a course of action
- B4 Support clients in implementing a plan of action

Evidence for Key Skills Units may be acquired (see Section on Key Skills).

20.8 Essential Information for Tutors

Prior to attending the course, candidates will have some understanding of the three major schools so that counselling in organisations has a context.

Candidates will also need to have experience, understanding and use of basic counselling skills which must include active listening, empathy, reflecting feelings and congruence. In spite of its apparent simplicity, Solution Focused Brief Therapy requires well-developed skills so that effective therapeutic interventions may be used from the start of the time-limited framework which the organisation demands.

It is expected that throughout the delivery of the course, candidates:

- will appreciate the pressures of work-based counselling and particularly the rigours of setting up the two or three-cornered contract (among counsellor, client, the organisation and the counselling service provider).
- will work towards understanding the issues in organisational transition and change in the light of a recessionary period and amore litigious culture.
- will be exposed to the ethical principles and challenges implicit in both counselling employees and using the Solution Focused Brief Therapy model.
- will take a constructively critical stance to the model in relation to its view of human beings and its potentially harmful or effective results.

20.9 Useful Reading

Berg, Insoo Kim and Dolan, Y. (2001) *Tales of Solutions: A Collection of Hope Inspiring Stories*, Norton

Carroll, Michael (1996) *Workplace Counselling*, Sage

De Shazer, Steve (1985) *Keys to Solution in Brief Therapy*, Norton

Walter, John L. and Peller, Jane E. (1992) *Becoming Solution Focused in Brief Therapy* Bunner/Mazel

O'Connell, Bill (1998) *Solution Focussed Therapy*, Sage

Wilgosh, Ron et al. (1998) *Solution Focussed Therapy*.

Key Skills and Other Issues

21

Key Skills

21.1 Introduction

Counselling is an activity, which relies almost entirely on interpersonal communicating. Therefore, candidates studying for this AQA award will be presented with many opportunities to address the key skill of *Communication*. Certainly there will be opportunities in every unit of this course to provide evidence for C3.1a, C3.2 and C3.3.

Although there is no specific requirement on this course for candidates to make a presentation, it would not be difficult for such an activity to be included, if the course tutor should wish it. In which case, C3.1b could also be addressed.

The award also provides a wide range of opportunities for candidates to produce evidence for the key skills of *Improving Own Learning* and *Working with Others*. Such opportunities are clearly present in all of the units.

There are virtually no opportunities, however, for producing evidence for *Application of Number* and very few for *Information Technology unless* the candidate uses a word processor for written work, and such limited opportunities are available in every unit.

21.2 Mapping to the National Occupational Standards

It is important to be aware that the main purpose of this AQA Vocationally Related Award is to facilitate the candidate's progression from National Framework (NF) Qualification level 2 to NF advanced. Which implies that much of the work candidate's do on and for the course will not be at the 'level'. On successful completion of this award, the candidate will be very well prepared to start to undertake complex counselling assignments with individual clients, and may well have begun this process before the course is completed. At this point the candidate will be in a position to start to compile a portfolio of evidence for NVQ accreditation if he/she wants to do so. It is unlikely that candidates would want to address the AQA award and the NVQ simultaneously and this would not normally be encouraged.

The links between the AQA advanced units and the National Occupational Standards, however, are clear and are shown within each unit and also in the table below.

	NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS	
	CAMPAG S/NVQ MANDATORY UNITS	AQA advanced units
A5	Evaluate and Develop own Work	ALL UNITS
A7	Operate referral procedures	2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13
B6	Ensure a structured counselling setting	2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13
B7	Develop the counselling relationship	2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13
B8	Monitor self within the counselling process	1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13
B22	Work in teams	13
B23	Make use of supervision	2, 9
	CAMPAG S/NVQ ADDITIONAL UNITS	
B1	Enable clients to access and use information	2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
B2	Assist clients to decided on options for meeting their requirements	2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
B3	Provide support for clients in planning a course of action	2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
B4	Support clients in implementing a plan of action	2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
B13	Work with the caller on the telephone	

22

Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

22.1 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural Issues	An important design feature of AQA Counselling awards is their strict adherence to the BACP's <i>Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy</i> . The principles and guidelines contained therein inform every aspect of AQA Counselling awards. Candidates are required to consider the moral and ethical consequences of their learning and subsequent activity at every part of this specification.
22.2 European Dimension	AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification. European examples should be used where appropriate in the delivery of the subject content. Relevant European legislation is identified within the specification where applicable.
22.3 Environmental Issues	AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report " <i>Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education</i> ", 1993, in preparing this specification.
22.4 Legal Issues	<p>It is important that counsellors are aware of the legal issues that effect, or potentially effect, counselling and counsellors in practice.</p> <p>Although this advanced award does not include legal issues in its subject content, tutors must ensure that all candidates are aware of the legal consequences and implications related to the practice of counselling. In particular, matters such as the following should be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts and Contractual obligations; Equal Opportunities; Discrimination; Children Act; Human Rights; Data Protection.
22.5 Health and Safety	This specification will encourage the development of a sense of responsibility for the health and safety of the self and others. Particular opportunities should be exploited to promote these issues.
22.6 Citizenship	This specification will assist with the development of candidates' reflection on and sense of social and moral responsibility. Opportunities will be available for the development of knowledge and understanding of responsibilities. The specification will assist with the development of the skill of enquiry and communication of topical issues.
22.7 Avoidance of Bias	AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification to avoid bias of any kind.

22.8 Issues for Centres in Wales and Northern Ireland

Terms, legislation or aspects of government that are different from those in England should not disadvantage candidates in Wales or Northern Ireland. Where such situations might occur, the terms used have been selected as neutral, so that programmes can be developed to reflect local and regional circumstances.

Centre-Assessed Components

23

Guidance on Setting Centre-Assessed Components

23.1 Advisors

Advisors will be available to assist centres with any matters relating to internally assessed work. Details will be provided when AQA knows which centres are following the specification.

24

Supervision and Authentication

24.1 Supervision of Candidates' Work

Candidates' work for assessment must be undertaken under conditions, which allow the tutor to supervise the work and enable the work to be authenticated. If it is necessary for some assessed work to be done outside the centre, sufficient work must take place under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate each candidate's whole work with confidence.

24.2 Guidance by the Teacher

The work assessed must be solely that of the candidate concerned. Any assistance given to an individual candidate which is beyond that given to the group as a whole must be recorded on the Candidate Assessment Sheet for each unit.

24.3 Unfair Practice

At the start of the course, the supervising tutor is responsible for informing candidates of the AQA Regulations concerning malpractice. Candidates must not take part in any unfair practice in the preparation of coursework Unit work to be submitted for assessment, and must understand that to present material copied directly from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be regarded as deliberate deception. Centres must report suspected malpractice to the AQA Malpractice Officer.

24.4 Authentication of Candidates' Work

Both the candidate and the tutor are required to sign declarations confirming that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own. The teacher declares that the work was conducted under the specified conditions, and records details of any additional assistance.

25.1 Standardising Meetings

Annual standardising meetings will usually be held in the autumn and spring terms. Centres entering candidates must send a representative to the meetings when:

- they have not previously taught and assessed AQA Advanced Counselling Units;
- two years have expired since they were last standardised;
- there has been a serious misinterpretation of the specified requirements;
- the nature of practical role plays set by a centre has been inappropriate;
- where there has been a serious misinterpretation of the specification requirements;
- where a significant adjustment has been made to a centre's assessments in the previous year;
- where a new member of staff takes overall responsibility for delivery and assessment.

25.2 Internal Standardisation of Marking

The centre is required to standardise the assessment across different tutors and tutor groups and within and across Units to ensure that all work at the centre has been judged against the same standards. If two or more tutors are involved in marking Units, one tutor must be designated as responsible for internal standardisation. Common pieces of work must be marked on a trial basis and differences between assessments discussed at a training session in which all teachers involved must participate. The tutor responsible for standardising the marking must ensure that the training includes the use of reference and archive materials such as work from a previous year or examples provided by AQA.

Confidentiality is an important issue for counselling courses and candidate's confidential work should not be seen by other centre staff unless they are also qualified counsellors and bound by the BACP's Ethical Framework.

26

Administrative Procedures

-
- 26.1 Register the Course** A course may comprise one or more VRQ units.
Register each course before its designated start date using the official form CS/Course Details/1.
The completed form must be sent to: Department A17, AQA, Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8XJ.
CAS and other documents needed to run a VRQ course are despatched to centres on receipt of the completed registration form.
-
- 26.2 Enter Candidates** Enter Candidates for each unit separately as described in section.
-
- 26.3 Record of Coursework Assessment Grades** Use a CAS to record each candidates achievement of learning outcomes for each unit, as and when the candidate achieves the learning outcome satisfactorily.

Record P – if candidate is successful

or R – if candidate is not yet successful
-
- 26.4 Compile Evidence for Verification** The following documents are to be made available to AQA External Verifiers during the course:
- candidates marked written work;
 - the CAS;
 - a scheme or programme of work for the unit.
-
- . 26.5 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration** AQA pays due regard to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in its administration of this specification.

Arrangements may be made to enable candidates with disabilities or other difficulties to access the assessment. An example of an access arrangement is the production of a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment. Special consideration may be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances.

Further details can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document:
GCE, VCE, GCSE, GNVQ, Entry Level & Key Skills
This document can be viewed via the AQA web site (www.aqa.org.uk)

Applications for access arrangements and special consideration should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.
-

Verification

27.1 Verification

AQA verifiers are allocated to a centre and will be responsible for reporting to AQA on the overall quality of assessment and delivery of all AQA counselling qualifications at the centre.

The External Verifier will normally visit centres annually to meet with curriculum managers and other tutor staff. In some cases, a postal only verification may be authorised by AQA where this is appropriate.

External Verifiers will also advise and support the centres.

The External Verifiers moderate the marking of all of the centre's coursework to ensure that it is assessed consistently at the national level.

The External Verifier will also visit centres to observe practical role-play assessments.

External Verifiers are empowered to require centres to re-mark candidates' work if they are not satisfied with the standard.

It is important that centre staff co-operate with the AQA External verifier.

External Verifiers produce an annual report on each centre. A copy of the report will be sent to the named centre contact.

27.2 Post-Verification Procedures

The centre receives a report form giving feedback on the appropriateness of the tasks set, the accuracy of the assessments made, and the reasons for any adjustments to the marks.

Some candidates' work may be retained by AQA for archive purposes.

27.3 Verification Procedures

Verification of the internally assessed marked coursework at each level; both in progress and on completion of units.

Awarding and Reporting

28

Grading, Shelf-Life and Resits

28.1	Grading System	Individual assessment Unit results will be reported. P – Pass and R – Refer only.
28.2	Marking of Each Unit	Each internally assessed unit contains its own set of assessment criteria, contextualised specifically to the content of that unit. Each unit will be assessed according to its own criteria, which will be expressed at the level required to achieve a pass.
28.3	Qualification	P grades are required for every assessed component of every unit of the appropriate combination of units to qualify for a Diploma. In all other cases a component results slip will be provided. See section 3 for details.
28.4	Shelf-Life of Unit Results	The shelf life of individual Unit results, prior to certification of the qualification, is limited only by the shelf life of the specification.
28.5	Assessment Unit Re-Submissions	Each assessment unit may be resubmitted during the lifetime of the course at the discretion of the centre.
28.6	Quality Assurance	AQA is committed to the maintenance of national standards and will provide advice about, and verify the assessment of, candidates' work in centres.

Appendices

A

Overlaps with Other Qualifications

B

External Assessment Procedure

C

Candidate Assessment Booklet

D

Course Registration Form

E

Centre Declaration Sheet

A

Overlaps with Other Qualifications

A.1	GCSEs	None.
A.2	Vocational GCSEs	None.
A.3	Advanced Level	None.
A.4	GNVQ	None.
A.5	Other Vocationally-related Qualifications	The AQA Advanced Certificate in Counselling and the AQA Advanced Diploma in Counselling have the same option units. The two awards are designed for different markets and the subject overlap is entirely appropriate and does not affect the validity of either award.
A.6	Relationship with National Occupational Standards	Where a clear relationship exists with national occupational standards, details are stated in the <i>About This Unit</i> section of the specification.

B

External Assessment Procedure

-
- B.1 Conduct of the Examination** The Heads of Centres are responsible for the paper conduct of the examination in accordance with the joint awarding bodies *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations*.
- Extended assessments are available from AQA for the January and June series of examinations each year from June 2003.
-
- B.2 Unit 1** The extended assessed component is a 2 hour written question paper taken under normal examination conditions. Candidates are allowed to bring into the examination clean unmarked text books for reference and/or a clean unmarked copy of BACP's *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy* 2002. For own use only.
-
- B3 Unit 2** The externally assessed component of unit 2 is a 2500 word assignment. Assignment brief and other information is available from AQA on request or is available from AQA website www.aqa.org.uk
-
- B.2 Study of Supervised Practice** The Study of Supervised Practice must be submitted to AQA on the assessment date presented by AQA.
- AQA will retain scripts but provide centres with an opportunity to access scripts. Centres will be provided with results for each candidate of either 'pass' or 'refer'. Centres will have opportunities to make enquiries upon results.

C

Candidate Assessment Booklet



Candidate Assessment Booklet

For

0510 and 0515

AQA Advanced Certificate and Diploma in Counselling

Reprinted 2004

Copyright © 2004 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Assessment and Qualifications Alliance
Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XJ Tel: 01483 506506

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales 3644723 and a registered charity number 1073334.

Registered address AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX. *Dr Michael Cresswell Director General.*

Foreword

This booklet is to be made available to candidates at the beginning of the course.

The AQA courses are designed to help candidates achieve the learning outcomes specified by the awarding body in order to pass the component units and the full qualifications.

By providing candidates with access to the learning outcomes that they are required to achieve from the outset, AQA is making every effort to make the assessment process both transparent and fair. There will be no surprises and no reason for confusion over what must be achieved. This open assessment system allows both candidates and their tutors to know in advance what is required of them. The assessment process has been designed to provide opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their achievements in such a way that it can be assessed. The assessing tutor is required to judge whether or not each candidate has met the required standard to pass the assessed coursework elements of each unit.

This booklet is designed to provide candidates with information and advice which will help them to make the best of their course.

Introduction

This booklet is intended for candidates who have joined a course at an AQA centre and are aiming to achieve an AQA Advanced Certificate or Advanced Diploma in Counselling. These nationally accredited qualifications are part of the national framework of qualifications. This means that their worth will be more clearly understood by employers and by other important stakeholders than would be a non-national framework qualification. Progression routes and opportunities for successful candidates, either to further AQA qualifications or to other higher level qualifications, are also more apparent.

You can use this booklet to help you understand what you must do in order to pass the units and achieve an AQA Advanced qualification. It will also help you to see how your course will enable you to achieve the required standards.

The Qualifications: an Overview

These are unitised awards (qualifications), which means that you must aggregate (complete) a specified combination of unit passes in order to qualify for the award of an AQA Advanced Certificate or Advanced Diploma. AQA Advanced Counselling Units are awarded biannually, in January and June, and can be aggregated over time.

e.g.

The Advanced Certificate comprises Unit 1 (VC21 The Developing Practitioner) and two other units from the list of option units (3 to 13)

The Advanced Diploma is a qualification which requires you to pass four units. Unit 1 (VC21 The Developing Practitioner), Unit 2 (VC22 Therapeutic Practice) and two other units from the list of option units (3 to 13)

Courses at centres

Unitised qualifications are very flexible and allow centres to design courses in many different forms. Some centres choose to offer single units. Others prefer to select a combination of units and offer them as a coherent course. You must pass the appropriate combination of units to qualify for an award.

Units

AQA Advanced Counselling Units are completely independent of each other. Each must be entered, assessed and its results reported separately.

There are two types of AQA Advanced Counselling Unit, **mandatory units** and **option units**.

Mandatory units

Unit 1 (VC21 The Developing Practitioner) is mandatory for both the AQA Advanced Certificate and the AQA Advanced Diploma.

Unit 2 (VC22 Therapeutic Practice) is mandatory for the AQA Advanced Diploma only.

Mandatory units have two separate assessment components and you must pass both to be awarded the unit: for example, unit one has the code **VC21** and its two components are V21C and V21W.

V21C is the code for the internal, or centre-marked, component of unit VC21. This component comprises the coursework that you must complete and which is marked/assessed at the centre. This particular component has three coursework assessments, and you must pass them all in order to pass the component. They are: a journal; skills role-play; and an essay. All three coursework assessments are marked at your centre, normally by your tutor.

V21W is the code for the externally assessed component of VC21. It consists of a 2 hour essay type examination, which is available twice a year at the dates and times set by AQA.

Unit **VC21** is awarded automatically after you have passed both of its components V21C and V21W.

Unit VC22 is also a mandatory unit but it applies only to the Advanced Diploma Qualification. It, too, has two components: V22C and V22W.

V22C is the code for the internal or centre-marked component. This component comprises coursework, and the assessment processes are the same as for V21C.

V22W is the externally assessed component. In this case, however, it takes the form of externally assessed coursework entitled “A Study of Supervised Practice”. The study is to be completed at the same time as your coursework for unit VC22. You must complete the work in your own time and hand it in to your centre for marking by a January or June deadline. The work is then sent to AQA for marking. You will not get this work back from AQA and so you should keep your own copy.

AQA provides a detailed briefing document for to all of its candidates for this assessment. You must be sure that your centre hands this to you at the start of unit VC22. The study must consist of a minimum of 8 hours of personal experience of formal, supervised, one-to-one counselling practice. This must be concurrent with your coursework for the unit. As this is a form of examination, the AQA deadline is absolute. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Option units

Two option units complete your study requirements; these are chosen by the centre.

You will need to pass at least two option units, as well as the designated mandatory unit(s), to qualify for either the Advanced Certificate in Counselling or the Advanced Diploma in Counselling.

Option units are designed to extend the candidates’ scope of study, either in a particular theoretical perspective or in a specific application for counselling, depending on the centre’s course design.

Although some centres may offer more than two different option units, each group of candidates must study only one unit at a time. Units are not available to individual candidates to study alone.

Option units can stand alone: for example, for continuing professional development purposes. A unit certificate is available from AQA for this purpose.

Unlike the mandatory units, option units have no externally (AQA) assessed component. They are entirely internally assessed through coursework. Each option unit has two separate assessment processes. Theory units feature a journal and an essay, whilst the application units feature a journal and a practical skills role-play assessment.

Marks and grades

There is no graduated mark system for AQA counselling qualifications; your coursework will be marked as either Pass (P) or Refer (R). Refer is not the same as fail-it simply means that you have not passed yet.

It is your responsibility to do all of the coursework set by your centre for each unit that you enter, and through that work to show that you have achieved the learning outcomes of the unit to the level required.

AQA specifies which coursework you must do for each unit, and sets the assessments standards that it will be marked against.

In the event that the coursework you present for marking does not achieve the standard, it will be graded ‘R’ by your centre. You may be given a second opportunity to get it right, and be allowed some extra time to rework it. You will get this opportunity, however, only if you present your initial coursework for marking on time, and you will *only* be given one such opportunity. You will be given a specific deadline date, by which time the additional work is to be completed. If you are unable to meet this second deadline, your tutor will not re-mark your work.

In the event that your reworked coursework still does not pass there will be no further opportunity for you to amend it. It will, therefore, remain as R and you will not have passed the unit. Units which are 'referred' in this way may be entered again, in a later series.

External or AQA marked assessments

These are formal examinations and therefore normal examination rules apply.

There will be no further opportunity for you to rework externally marked AQA assessments once they have been submitted to AQA. Therefore, even if you do not pass, the result will stand.

However, you will be able to enter the referred component again in a later examination series.

Verification

External verification is the process by which AQA checks that the marking of coursework at each centre is at the standard it requires. All coursework marked by tutors at a centre is subject to verification by AQA. Your coursework marks may, therefore, be adjusted by an external verifier. If your marks were to be downgraded to R from P as a result of external verification, you would normally be allowed a limited amount of extra time to amend the work as necessary.

Learning outcomes

The term 'learning outcome' is one that you should get to know and understand, as it describes in detail what you need to do to pass.

In order to pass an AQA advanced unit, you must achieve all of its 'learning outcomes'. Learning outcomes are written statements which explain what somebody must achieve, in terms of learning, knowledge, understanding, and/or skills, to pass. Some of the learning outcomes for advanced units require you to do a substantial amount of study and coursework and may take up several sessions of your course. Other learning outcomes are shorter and require less working input. They are all equally important and you must achieve them all.

The assessment processes, such as the journal, essay and role-play, are designed to enable you to show when and how you have met all the learning outcomes. Regardless of what is taught, it is your responsibility to learn the subject matter and to show that you have achieved the learning outcomes satisfactorily. You cannot pass a unit unless you can show in your assessed coursework that you have met all of its learning outcomes. You must be sure to check this out with your tutor and to get to know the learning outcomes. It is equally important for you to attend every session of your course so that you do not miss important information. In the event that you are unavoidably absent for one or more of the course sessions, you must discuss the matter with your tutor, and, if possible, undertake additional study to compensate.

Internal (Centre) Assessment of Coursework

Your tutor will explain the coursework that you must do for each unit, and how and when it is to be marked.

It is entirely your responsibility to complete the coursework when required to, and to present it to your tutor for marking on time. Your tutor may legitimately refuse to mark any of your coursework if you present it late.

In the event that you are prevented from completing coursework on time, because of circumstances beyond your control, you must discuss the matter with your tutor as soon as possible before the deadline. You may be eligible for special consideration, which cannot be given retrospectively.

Coursework is marked at the centre and will be awarded either Pass (P) if it is at the standard or above, or Refer (R) if it does not meet the standard.

To pass a unit, you must pass all of its assessments, or elements. Three assessments are used for AQA advanced level units:

- the journal
- the essay
- the practical role-play.
-

All units require you to complete a journal, and one or both of the others. You must consult the unit's internal scheme of assessment to establish what else is needed.

AQA unit assessment is available in examination series, twice a year, in January and in June. You must enter units and qualifications, through your centre, for one of these series. You must be sure that you know which examination series your units are entered for, and make sure that your work is submitted on time for marking. AQA deadlines for examination series are absolute, and late marks cannot be accepted.

Your unit results are published, and results slips sent to your centre on results day. Your centre will inform you of this date and issue you with your result.

It is important to realise that each of the assessment processes is an opportunity for you to demonstrate how you have progressed, to show what you have learned, and how and when you achieved the learning outcomes of a unit.

Remember

It is your responsibility to:

- attend your course regularly, to keep your journal up to date and to hand it to your tutor for marking;
- attend practical assessment sessions as required by your centre;
- present written coursework for marking when required to by your tutor;
- attend external examinations;
- present externally assessed work on time.

Failure to meet any one of these requirements may result in you not passing; make sure you know the dates for getting your work in for marking.

***Please note:** It is sensible for you to make and retain a copy of any written work that you submit for assessment, in case the original is misplaced or damaged.*

Authenticity

The written work that you submit for marking must be your own and you must not quote from another person's work unless you acknowledge the fact formally. To do so may result in your disqualification. You are required to sign a declaration to confirm that you have produced your work without unfair help from other people.

Finally

You must take great care to protect the identity of other people who may, for one reason or another, feature in your written work, particularly if you intend to make reference to something personal relating to an actual person. In order to preserve confidentiality, you must not use actual names or reveal personal details. Talk to your tutor about this, as he or she may have a preferred protocol.

Assessment Methods

1 The Journal

A journal entry is a written, reflective account of a course session. In it, you should summarise what has been covered in the session, and describe how this has affected your knowledge and understanding of the subject. You should also describe its affect on your feelings. Journal entries are written in the first person, as if you are writing to yourself. Your tutor will read your journal from time to time, and will mark it to assess your progress and achievement. The journal is an important learning tool for you; writing it will reinforce your learning from the session and also help you to develop your summarising and note-taking skills.

You are required to maintain a written, reflective journal to cover each unit that you study. Your journal entries are used to assess your progress and achievement for the unit.

A well-structured journal will enable you, and your tutor, to map and to monitor your progress. It will help you to identify important learning points; to identify your strengths and weaknesses, and to pinpoint those subject areas that you may need to study in more detail. Therefore, your journal will:

- (a) reinforce your learning and understanding of the subject matter;
- (b) provide you with a permanent record of your learning and development;
- (c) help to develop your sense of self and self awareness;
- (d) develop your summarising and note-taking skills;
- (e) help you to clarify your understanding of ethical values and principles, and to embrace ethics as essential to good counselling practice.
- (f) help you to know and understand the importance to counsellors of taking measures to ensure the safety of all parties in a helping relationship.

Remember

You write the journal entries for both assessment and personal development purposes. It is important, therefore, to keep your journal in a form which is easily readable, and which can be referenced quickly. The rules of presentation are as follows:

- a maximum of 800 words per session
- A4 sheets single-sided
- typed or word processed
- double-spaced
- a right-hand margin of minimum one inch to allow tutor/verifier comment
- pages numbered sequentially
- entries kept in chronological (date) order in a lightweight binder (not in individual, punched, plastic pockets)
- each entry to identify: the date of the session; the subject matter; the unit/component.

Both tutors and external verifiers may legitimately refuse to mark journals which are not legible or properly ordered.

For the purpose of assessment, you must make your journal available to your tutor on request. He/she may wish to see your journal entries regularly, particularly at the beginning of a course, to monitor your progress. Your journal may also be sent through the post to an external verifier. You should, therefore, take precautions to protect the identity of both clients and other students.

Towards the end of each unit/component, your tutor will tell you when he or she will formally mark your journal, ascertain whether that you have achieved the knowledge and understanding required for the unit/component. At this point, you should write one further entry to summarise the entire unit.

The following criteria indicate how you tutor will mark your journal.

Internally assessed element

Working Journal Assessment Criteria

The Candidate

The Candidate:

1. writes an entry on the course material, for each session, of up to 800 words;
2. relates learning from each session to:
 - (a) self-awareness
 - (b) understanding of others;
3. shows evidence of continuing self-development;
4. writes with a personal approach and voice.

2 The Practical Skills Role-play

You can expect to spend a significant amount of time on your course working in trios with your peers to develop counselling skills and to learn how to incorporate ideas and key concepts of the unit you are working on into the counselling process and practice. You will simulate counselling interviews and assume appropriate roles. You will also learn some analytical skills and begin to understand the process of therapeutic intervention.

Role-play exercises are essential for your development, as they provide a safe platform for you to experiment, try things out and to hone your counselling skills in preparation for your first counselling interview with actual/real clients.

For assessment purposes, you will be required to participate in complete simulated counselling interviews with your peers. You will be required to participate in three roles: Counsellor, Client and Observer.

Your performance in role play will be marked against the criteria below and also against the learning outcomes for the unit.

Throughout the unit, you are required to possess a good knowledge of the prevailing ethical standards for counsellors in the UK, to accept them and to apply them consistently.

The standard assessment interview is of 20 minutes' duration, followed by 10 minutes of discussion and debriefs.

Internally assessed element

Practical Skills Role-play Assessment Aims

Counsellor Role

The role of the counsellor is:

- (a) to demonstrate the ability to work within a therapeutic alliance;
- (b) to show, in discussion afterwards, why the candidate worked in the way he/she did, and to evaluate the candidate's part in the process and to discuss how the choice of orientation was demonstrated.

Observer Role

The role of the observer is to:

- (a) to demonstrate the ability to give feedback in a reflective and considered way;
- (b) to show understanding of how the “counsellor” worked within a therapeutic alliance.

No notes should be taken.

Notes for Guidance

The Practical Assessment will take place toward the end of the unit.

The candidate will be orally assessed in the roles of both counsellor and observer.

The candidate in the counsellor role will be expected to show an ability to work with the client in furthering the therapeutic process, and to discuss this process after the session.

The candidate in the observer role will be expected to evaluate his/her understanding of the counsellor's role in this interaction.

Internally assessed element

Practical Skills Role-play Assessment Criteria

Observer Role

The observer shows understanding of working within a therapeutic alliance by giving specific examples of what happened in the role-play. In so doing, the observer:

- (a) gives balanced feedback to the “counsellor” about the skills used;
- (b) offers feedback in an appropriate manner;
- (c) comments on how the relationship was maintained;
- (d) evaluates the “counsellor’s” use of appropriate concepts and skills arising from specific theoretical perspectives.

Counsellor Role

The “counsellor” maintains the relationship throughout the session by:

- (a) working within an ethical framework;
- (b) working for the benefit of the “client”;
- (c) applying and wiring appropriate concepts and skills from theoretical perspectives.

In discussion afterwards, the “counsellor” offers some explanation of the interaction between “counsellor” and “client” by:

- (a) explaining the approach;
- (b) describing and discriminating between:
 - thoughts and feelings which were the “counsellor’s”
 - thoughts and feelings which were the “client’s”;
- (c) showing understanding of the process.

3 The Essay

An essay is included in those units where knowledge and understanding of underlying theories and key concepts is considered necessary, and/or there is a need for candidates to relate theory to practice, to demonstrate analytical and, communication skills, and to provide evidence of research and further reading.

Essay writing is a powerful and proven learning tool when it is done well. Like so many things in life, however, the finished product is only as good as the preparation put into it.

When writing an essay it is important to develop good writing techniques; here are some basics to follow if you are not sure of the procedure.

1. Define your topic – This is actually much more important than it might at first seem. State clearly in no more than a sentence or two what your theme is to be.
2. Define your audience – In this case, it will be whoever is to assess the work, either your tutor or an AQA examiner.
3. Plan ahead – Start with the deadline and work backwards; allow extra time for unexpected developments.
4. Gather resources – people and references.
5. Research-read, experiment, gather data and take notes. Organise data on index cards or computer files, etc.
6. Organise your notes with a pre-writing exercise: mapping or outlining etc.
7. Write first draft (rough)- use good logic to develop your theme. What are you trying to do? Are you defining, describing, comparing or criticising?
8. Final draft – read through the rough draft critically. Does your first paragraph draw your audience into the topic? Is there a flow from paragraph to paragraph? Have you proved your point throughout the essay? Have you made good use of quotations? Have you summarised and concluded your argument? Finally, is the work presented well and within the prescribed word limit?

Remember, if you are unsure about your ability to write an essay, look for support; most centres have learning support facilities. Your tutor will help and will be able to direct you to the resources available to you. You will find lots of advice on writing and study techniques in libraries and also on the Internet. If in doubt, ask!!

Internally assessed element

Essay Assessment Aims

The Essay as an assessment method is required for Mandatory and Theory Option Advanced level Units.

Essay titles must be relevant to the unit concerned, and are either imposed by the centre or are the subject of agreement between the tutor concerned and the candidates.

Essays are included in certain units where it is considered that it would be an appropriate vehicle for assessing the candidates: for example, where it is considered important that the candidates should have acquired good theoretical, critical or analytical understanding of the subject matter and its key concepts.

Advanced level essays are intended to be a formal piece of academic work. An essay will provide an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of the unit concerned, and to relate this knowledge and understanding to the defined learning outcomes for the unit. Ethical and safety issues are central to the notion of professional counselling practice, and this should be reflected in the candidates' written work.

The centre's assessment planning should take account of the degree of research and reading necessary to produce an essay at this level, and allow time for candidates to complete their work. There may be provision to allow more time for some candidates to rework their essay, if on the first attempt they have not quite achieved the necessary standard. This privilege is to be strictly restricted to those candidates whose first essays were submitted for marking on or before the tutor's deadline, and where the errors are relatively minor. Such reworking is to be strictly time-limited and restricted to one further attempt.

The aims of the Essay are:

- (a) to enable the candidate to demonstrate, in written form, sufficient knowledge and understanding of the units' subject matter;
- (b) to facilitate the candidate's ability to communicate his/her knowledge by the writing of a clear, structured piece of work;
- (c) to assist the candidate's developing reflection on the units' subject matter in relation to personal and professional applications.

Notes for Guidance

The title for the Essay must be appropriate for the purpose and is to be set either by the centre or by agreement between the candidate and the tutor.

The prescribed length of the essay is between **2000 and 2500** words.

Essays must be word processed or typed. The work must include quotations and standard references, bibliography, a word count and a front sheet (see page 19).

Course tutors must set a final date by which this work must be submitted for marking and verification.

Candidates must comply with the centre's time-limits and submit essays for marking on or before the deadline. The centre/tutor may refuse to mark work which is late.

Special consideration may be given to work which is delayed by extreme and unforeseen circumstances provided that the centre is informed about the circumstances and agrees an alternative procedure before the due submission date.

Example of a suitable essay title (for unit 1)

From what theoretical perspective do you want to work with clients? What personal and professional factors have influenced your choice?

Essay Assessment criteria

1. ***The candidate presents material professionally by:***
 - (a) writing to the prescribed length of between 2000 and 2500 words;
 - (b) using appropriate references;
 - (c) referencing according to the guidelines;
 - (d) presenting a bibliography according to the guidelines.
2. **The candidate presents the work in a cogent and coherent way.**
3. **The candidate shows range and depth of reading.**
4. **The candidate explores the choice of a “core” theoretical perspective by:**
 - (a) discussing key concepts which have particular meaning for him/her;
 - (b) comparing and contrasting the chosen theoretical perspective with other “Core” theoretical approaches;
 - (c) showing understanding of the ethical and safety issues associated with his/her chosen approach;
 - (d) analysing a range of relevant personal factors;
 - (e) analysing a range of relevant professional factors.

Presenting Written Work for Internal Assessment

Written coursework is important, and it is your responsibility to complete all of the assessed work for the units that you are studying, and to submit it for marking on the dates given to you by your tutor.

It is important that your written work is easily read and well presented. The rules of presentation are as follows:

- maximum word count must be observed
- A4 loose leaf sheets, single-sided
- typed or word processed
- double-spaced
- right-hand margin of minimum one inch to allow tutor/verifier comment
- pages numbered sequentially
- presented in a lightweight binder (not in individual, punched, plastic pockets)
- each piece of work to identify: the candidate's name, the title, if applicable the date, the subject matter, the Unit/component.

Both tutors and external verifiers may legitimately refuse to mark any written work which is not legible or properly ordered.

If you quote from another work, or a book etc., you must acknowledge the fact. Not to do so is plagiarism and could result in your disqualification. The quotation used must be contained within quotation marks and may also be italicised, i.e. "*It is extremely common in Western cultures for clients to view their struggles in a 'linear' or 'blaming' context.*" (Gunzberg and Stewart, 1994)

This is true whether your quotation is taken from a book, a magazine, a journal article or from the Internet.

Bibliography

At the end of your essay, you must add a bibliography. This should be divided into **Primary Texts** and **Secondary Texts**. Primary texts are those texts from which you have quoted in your essay. Secondary texts are any other texts which you may have read as a background to your studies and which have influenced your work. For example:

Primary texts

Berne, E. (1964) *Games People Play*, Penguin.

Zellan, A. (1995) Was Freud a Darwinian? *Journal of Analytic Trends* 4, 402-420.

Laszlo, J. (R.25.3.00) *Therapy Over the Internet – Research and Finances* <http://rdz.stjohns.edu/-storm/ethguid>

Secondary texts

Smith, E.V.D. (1995) *Existential Counselling in Action*, Sage.

To summarise

To qualify for an award, you must pass both the mandatory unit(s) and two other option units.

Mandatory units have two assessed components;

- (a) AQA set and externally marked components:
- (b) an internal centre-marked coursework component comprising:
 - a journal
 - a practical skills role-play assessment and/or
 - an essay.

Option units have one internally marked component, comprising;

- a journal
- a practical skills role-play assessment and/or
- an essay.

Your coursework-journal, practical skills role-play assessment and essay- is marked internally by your centre (a course tutor), and is externally verified by AQA.

Throughout your course, emphasis will be put on the high importance of moral, ethical and health and safety issues with regard to the responsible use of counselling skills.

The British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) publication *An Ethical Framework for Counselling and Psychotherapy* is an essential reference.



Stag Hill House
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7XJ
Tel: 01483 506506
Fax: 01483 300152
Web: www.aqa.org.uk

AQA ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN COUNSELLING

ESSAY FRONT SHEET

Please complete following information:

Candidate's Name:

Candidate Number:

Centre Name:

Centre Number:

Number of words:

Number of Pages:

Title:

Declaration of Authenticity

I declare that the work I have submitted for assessment is entirely my own, and I have received no unfair advantage over other candidates whilst compiling and writing the work. I have not copied the work of others except where I have acknowledged the quotation formally.

Name: (Print)

Signed:

Date:

Tutor's Statement

I am the tutor for this unit and I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the above statement is true.

Name: (Print)

Signed:

Date:



Centre-assessed work
Candidate Record Form
 January/June 2006

VRQ – Advanced Units in Counselling

Centre Name: Centre No:

--	--	--	--	--

Candidate Name: Candidate No:

--	--	--	--

This is to be completed by the candidate.

Sources of advice and information

1. Any help or information you have received from people other than your tutor(s) must be clearly identified in the work itself.
2. Any books, information leaflets or other materials (e.g. videos, software packages or information from the Internet) which you have used to help you complete this work must be clearly acknowledged in the work itself. To present material copied from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be regarded as deliberate deception.

NOTICE TO CANDIDATE

The work you submit for assessment must be your own.

If you copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you, or if you cheat in any other way, you may be disqualified from at least the subject concerned.

Declaration by candidate

I have read and understood the **Notice to Candidate** (above). I have produced the attached work without any help from other people apart from that which I have declared in the work itself. I have acknowledged all source materials in the work itself.

Candidate's signature: Date:

This form should be completed on each occasion when the candidate submits work for assessment in this specification. The form should be attached to the candidate's work and retained at the Centre or sent to the External Verifier as required.

PTO

This side is to be completed by the tutor/assessor.

Marks must be awarded in accordance with the instructions and criteria in the Subject Content section of the specification.

Supporting information to show how the marks have been awarded should be given on the Candidate Assessment Sheets and in the form of annotations on the candidate's work.

Please complete the boxes to show the marks awarded and add any summative comments which seem appropriate in the space below.

Unit Code	Centre mark (P/R)
VC21	
VC22	
VC23	
VC24	
VC25	
VC26	
VC27	
VC28	
VC29	
VC30	
VC31	
VC32	
VC33	

Concluding comments

Details of additional assistance given (if any)
Record here details of any assistance given to this candidate which is beyond that given to the class as a whole and beyond that described in the specification. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Tutor/assessor's signature: Date:

D

Course Registration Form

CS/VER/1



AQA VRQ COUNSELLING REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete a separate form for each course and send it to AQA 28 days **prior** to the course start date.

1. Centre details

Centre name _____ Centre number

--	--	--	--

Course manager _____ Telephone number _____

Tutor(s) _____ Telephone number _____

Address for course
Please enclose directions to site.

2. Course details

Course units	Unit 1				Unit 2				Unit 3				Unit 4			
Unit code	V	C			V	C			V	C			V	C		
Examination series																

Course start date:

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Course end date:

--	--	--	--	--	--

Regular attendance details: Day Start time End time

Additional sessions: (state, Day School, Week-end, etc.)

Date Start time End time

Date Start time End time

3. Assessment plans

Use the following table to show dates when centre assessed work will be available for external verification.

	VC			VC			VC			VC		
	Day	Mnth	Yr	Day	Mnth	Yr	Day	Mnth	Yr	Day	Mnth	Yr
Journal												
Practical												
Essay												

Signed

Date

Name in block capitals

Centre to detach and retain Pink copy. Return other copies to:
Subject Officer A17, AQA, Stag Hill House, Guildford, GU2 7XJ



Centre Declaration Sheet



Centre-assessed work

Centre Declaration Sheet

2006

VRQ in Counselling

Specification Title: Unit Code(s): VC...../VC...../VC...../VC.....

Centre Name: Centre No:

--	--	--	--	--

Authentication of candidates' work

This is to certify that marks have been awarded in accordance with the requirements of the specification and that every reasonable step has been taken to ensure that the work presented is that of the candidates named. Any assistance given to candidates beyond that given to the group as a whole and beyond that described in the specification has been recorded on the Candidate Record Form(s) and has been taken into account. The marks given reflect accurately the unaided achievement of the candidates.

Signature(s) of tutor(s) responsible for assessment

Date:

Tutor 1 Tutor 2

Tutor 3 Tutor 4

Tutor 5 Tutor 6

(continue overleaf if necessary)

Internal standardisation of marking

Each centre must standardise the assessments across different tutors and tutor groups to ensure that all candidates in the centre have been judged against the same standards. If two or more tutors are involved in marking, one of them must be designated as responsible for standardising the assessments of all tutors at the centre.

The tutor responsible for ensuring standardisation must sign declaration (a).

If all the work has been marked by the same person, that person must sign declaration (b).

I confirm that [please tick either (a) or (b)]

(a) *the procedure described in the specification has been followed at this centre to ensure that the assessments are of the same standard for all candidates; or*

(b) *I have marked the work of all candidates.*

Signed: Date:

Signature of Head of Centre Date:

This form should be completed and sent to the External Verifier with the Centre Mark Sheet.