

ABC AWARDS

LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE IN COUNSELLING SKILLS





www.abcawards.co.uk

LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE
IN
COUNSELLING SKILLS

Customer Service Statement

ABC strives to provide a prompt, high quality service to enable its centres, in turn, to meet the needs of its customers. A full copy of ABC's Customer Service policy can be seen on the web site. Any comments or suggestions are welcome.

Enquiries

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Those without Internet access may also wish to contact this office.

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Background

ABC, its Portfolio and Qualifications

ABC Awards (ABC) is approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to offer qualifications throughout the United Kingdom. QCA is the regulatory body for public examinations and publicly funded qualifications and also has the authority to monitor awarding bodies through quality audits. ABC has offices in Chorley, Nottingham and Taunton. ABC's current portfolio contains qualifications accredited onto the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) ranging from Entry Level to Level 6. NQF qualifications are eligible for funding under the Learning and Skills Act 2000. More information on funding can be obtained from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – www.lsc.gov.uk.

ABC specialise in developing Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs). These are designed to underpin much of the knowledge for the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and assist in the development of practical skills. In turn, NOS form the basis of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). Therefore, although VRQs have links with NVQs, they are not designed to deliver occupational competence and as such do not require delivery and assessment in the workplace. All ABC VRQs are mapped to the NOS for purposes of future accreditation of prior learning (APL) should learners opt to achieve the NVQ at a later date.

Centres offering ABC qualifications may be colleges, private training providers, community groups, adult education centres, schools, prisons and businesses.

ABC works closely with the relevant Sector Skills Council (SSC)/National Training Organisation (NTO) when developing a qualification for the NQF. A network of SSCs exists to lead the skills and productivity drive in industry recognised by employers. They bring together employers, trade unions and professional bodies working with the government to develop the skills that UK business needs. The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) has been established to underpin the SSC network and promote effective working between sectors – www.ssda.org.uk.

ABC has the support of Skills for Health for this particular qualification. They are the SSC responsible for the Counselling National Occupational Standards.

ABC VRQs are signposted for Key Skills or Basic Skills wherever possible. Whilst Key Skills are not a part of ABC VRQs, it is recognised that they are transferable skills that play an important role in developing personal effectiveness in adult and working life. Signposting illustrates which Key Skills may be realistically achieved through completion of this qualification; learners may apply to other Key Skills awarding bodies for certification once they have achieved and been assessed in the relevant units.

ABC VRQs also provide opportunities for developing an understanding of the wider curriculum (spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues and an awareness of environmental issues, health and safety considerations and European developments). Each component of the wider curriculum is signposted as appropriate.

Finally, ABC qualifications are generally available throughout the UK, unless otherwise stated. Please note however that different regulations exist in Scotland.

ABC provides all printed materials in English, however materials can be provided in Welsh and/or Irish (Gaeilge) where requested and where appropriate.

Further information, policies, procedures and forms can be obtained from www.abcawards.co.uk.

Centre Recognition and Qualification Approval

The policies and quality systems of a centre must be approved as a guarantee that learners will receive their entitlement to fair and equal treatment and have access to a high standard of tuition, resources and fair assessment opportunities. Centres must complete the appropriate application form when requesting to deliver an ABC qualification.

If a centre is approved to run qualifications by another awarding body within a sector in which an ABC qualification/unit sits it will be given approval to deliver that qualification subject to a check on any specific resources, human or physical that may be a requirement of that qualification and/or its assessment. Additional approval may be required. A fee may be charged for the external moderation or verification of these additional requirements.

The submission of any qualification approval documentation will be checked by a subject specialist by means of a visit to the centre or through postal moderation.

Centres should apply for approval prior to enrolling learners in order to guarantee the appropriate resources are in place to allow learners the maximum chance of success.

Health and Safety

Centres are required to ensure that health and safety regulations are adhered to at all times with regard to the health and well being of all staff and learners. Centres' health and safety policies should be sent to ABC, together with details of training available for staff and learners. In the assessment of a centre, the Moderator will give particular attention to health and safety practices/issues.

Staffing

The following staff/student ratios must be adhered to at the start of a course and maintained at that original level throughout a course: 1:12.

This ratio applies to all parts of the course as even theory is generally presented partially through experiential exercises and small group discussions.

It is expected that staff involved with the delivery of the course will be appropriately qualified to assess learners against the standards. It is recommended strongly that all trainers, group facilitators and supervisors used on a course should be members of a recognised professional Counselling body. All staff involved must abide to and be bound by a current Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

The ABC approval process requires prospective centres to provide names of the staff involved in delivery and assessment including their qualifications and relevant training/employment experience, plus staff development arrangements. Whilst these details are passed on to the External Moderator appointed by ABC, it is the Centre's responsibility to ensure tutors' qualifications are both bona fide and appropriate to the level of the qualification.

If there is a complete, or substantial, change in the team used to present the Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills, the centre will need to submit all relevant CVs to ABC and give written assurance that the new team will teach to the existing approved proposals. Failure to secure approval before using new staff on courses will invalidate course approval.

All staff must receive a copy of the proposal to which they are training.

Counselling trainers should have appropriate support and supervision arrangements including a named supervisor who is experienced in dealing with counselling training issues.

All course tutors must have the necessary qualifications, skills, experience and personal attributes to train learners at the appropriate level.

Trainers should be qualified counsellors, preferably working towards professional accreditation as both a counsellor and a trainer, for at least 12 months and have a minimum of 200 hours counselling practice.

In assessing the suitability of course tutors, centres should adopt, as minimum criteria, the latest version of a recognised Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

All tutors should:

- Subscribe to a current recognised Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.
- Be in one-to-one supervision for their counselling casework.
- Be insured for professional negligence in respect of their counselling, supervision and training.

It is the responsibility of centres to ensure that course tutors satisfy the above requirements and have passed successfully all counselling courses attended.

A team approach is required, with a minimum of two tutors, at least one of who should have previous counselling training experience. The team leader should be indicated in the submission and should have substantial post-qualifying supervised counselling and training experience.

Evaluation and Review

There should be ongoing evaluation by the staff and learners and this should take place in the following ways:

- Learner self-evaluation
- Regular review of learning outcomes against agreed criteria
- Validation by suitably qualified and experienced internal assessor and internal moderator

Internal Moderation

ABC requires centres to implement a programme of internal moderation to ensure that:

- Learners gain access to fair and reliable assessment opportunities
- Everyone assesses to the same standards
- Assessment decisions of assessors are sampled and monitored to ensure consistency
- Assessors are supported with advice and guidance
- All work carried out is within agreed systems and procedures

Internal Moderators must not, under any circumstances, check their own assessment decisions.

Further guidance on Internal Moderation can be seen on the web site.

External Moderation

ABC will appoint, train and allocate External Moderators to:

- Visit each centre on ABC's behalf, usually once per academic year
- Monitor and sample learners' work to ensure that assessment decisions are fair, reliable, valid and consistent with required standards
- Liaise between centres and ABC to establish standardisation
- Establish goodwill and assist with any problems arising from the delivery of an ABC qualification

Further guidance on External Moderation can be seen on the web site.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

ABC encourages its centres to recognise the previous achievements of learners through APL. Prior achievements may have resulted from past or present employment, previous study or voluntary activities. However, learners on this programme should commit themselves for the whole course.

No remission should be offered for previous qualifications and ideally no accreditation should be allowed for prior learning. It is the belief of ABC that because counsellor skills/counsellor training takes place in small group settings in which members make a strong commitment to the group it is at minimum disturbing to the group if members are granted exemption from certain parts of the total learning experience.

ABC does recognise the increasing pressures on centres to accredit prior learning. Any centres wishing to pursue this route should present, at the time of approval, details of their proposals for accreditation of prior learning together with their educational and training rationale. However ABC will not accept an APL scheme intended to cover the whole of a programme. Once the assessor is satisfied that the evidence is authentic and current, s/he should assess the evidence against the requirements of the ABC unit(s) in the normal manner. Any queries should be referred to the Internal Moderator.

Unit Design

Each unit contains:

Learning Outcomes: defines what the learner needs to do.

Knowledge Requirements: defines what the learner needs to know. The **minimum** requirements are outlined.

Assessment Guidance: explains how the assessment may be carried out, depth of coverage expected, what *should* be included and what *could* be included.

Diversity

ABC will endeavour to ensure that through its policies, procedures and actions all learners entered for assessment are treated fairly and on an equal basis. All centres will be expected to have a clear commitment in support of this objective.

Access to ABC qualifications is open to all learners irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, creed, employment status, nationality, sexual orientation, marital status or special assessment arrangements. Centres must ensure that no learner is subjected to unfair discrimination on any of these grounds in relation to access to assessment and to the fairness of the assessment.

A copy of ABC's full policy can be seen on the web site.

Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills

QCA Accreditation No: 100/5139/9

Accreditation Start Date: 01/08/2005

Accreditation End Date: 31/12/2010

Certification End Date: 31/12/2013

Introduction

The counselling qualifications are run under the aegis of ABC and have Skills for Health support.

This qualification featured in this booklet involves a combination of internal and external assessment and has been accredited onto the National Qualifications Framework, thereby attracting LSC funding.

ABC's counselling qualifications have been in operation for over 20 years and were developed in response to the need to provide a structure for the approval of counsellor training programmes.

It is the intention of ABC to maintain and improve consistently high standards for three main reasons.

- Participants on courses may use the certificates awarded as evidence of levels of competency when seeking employment and/or working with people who are temporarily in the role of 'speaker'. Employers and speakers have a right to expect that certificates awarded by ABC reflect the levels of competency.
- Those providing training have a duty to provide not only a course of the appropriate standard but also need to be satisfied that certificates awarded by ABC reflect a consistency and uniformity of quality and standards.
- ABC has to be concerned that their credibility as an awarding body is maintained, improved and respected.

Separate guidelines exist for ABC's Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Concepts and the Level 4 Diploma and Advanced Diploma in the Theory and Practice of Counselling.

Aims

The ultimate aim of the scheme is the improved performance of those who use counselling skills. It is intended that learners be given the opportunity to develop a range of counselling skills and skills in self-awareness and self-assessment. These skills will be more effectively developed through a process which encourages learners to assume an active responsibility for their own learning and which enables them to establish principles and good practice from a shared analysis with fellow learners and staff of experiences on the course and related experiences.

For the Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills, the specific aims are:

1. To develop a repertoire of counselling skills at a consistent level.
2. To underpin these skills with an understanding of one major therapeutic model.
3. To increase the self-awareness of the person and their awareness of the impact that they have on people.

Outcomes

By the end of the course learners should be able to:

1. Use competently and effectively a range of counselling skills, specifically:
 - a) **Initiating** a counselling skills interaction.
 - b) **Functioning** in the interaction with the use of the following skills:
 - i. Attentiveness and rapport building
 - ii. Active listening, including the use of minimal encouragers and the managing of silence
 - iii. Empathic listening
 - iv. Effective questioning
 - v. Paraphrasing and summarising
 - vi. Focusing and challenging
 - vii. Reflecting on the counselling skills process and immediacy
 - viii. Awareness of boundaries including referrals
 - ix. Works at appropriate pace
 - x. Checks understanding with the speaker
 - c) **Concluding** individual sessions.
 - d) **Ending** a series of sessions.

NB Depending on the theoretical orientation underpinning the counselling skills the emphasis on the use of each of the skills will change but, nonetheless, we would want each learner to have a sound grasp of each of the above skills.

2. Demonstrate awareness and acceptance of the principles in a recognised code of practice such as the current BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy specifically by:
 - respecting other people's views, attitudes, belief structures, and cultures, especially those who are disadvantaged in society by reason of class, race, religion, disability, age, gender, or sexual orientation
 - demonstrating a commitment to anti-oppressive practices and none discriminatory use of counselling skills.
3. Recognise and accept that they are not trained and qualified counsellors.
4. Show a working understanding of one model of counselling and an awareness of two other models and ways of working and of the need to avoid the danger of using techniques based on a limited understanding.

5. Value and make use of casework supervision within their own organisational settings to obtain support and further learning and development of their counselling skills through this process.
6. Reflect constructively on themselves, their own life experiences, and their interactions with others and evidence their own personal and professional growth processes.

Target Group

The Level 3 Certificate is intended for two broad classes of learners:

- Those who seek the course as an entrance to their training to become a qualified professional counsellor
- Those who wish to acquire a repertoire of counselling skills for use in other work areas, and who have no wish to become a professional counsellor, e.g. nurses, social workers and teachers

Entry Requirements

Progression from a Level 2 programme to Level 3 is not necessarily automatic.

Those wishing to enter a Level 3 course must satisfy the following entry requirements:

1. One of the following:
 - Successful completion of the ABC Counselling Concepts Certificate or its equivalent, e.g. a recognised Introductory Counselling Course or
 - Have received as part of their professional/career training an introduction to counselling skills. In particular tutors should obtain satisfactory evidence relating to attendance, quality of course and methods of assessment to ensure that such courses meet the minimum criteria outlined for a Counselling Concepts Course.

AND VERY IMPORTANTLY

2. **Satisfy the course tutors of their suitability for and commitment to the course. ABC would recommend that all potential learners be provided with an individual interview** and that whenever feasible a pre-course group/meeting should be used, which should include at least one self-awareness exercise. Ideally, group interview methods should be incorporated into the selection process to assess the ability of learners to engage in group training methods. Because experiential learning in small group situations is often powerful, it is sensible to remind potential learners of the kind of experience they can expect. Face-to-face communication is more likely to convey this than the printed word.

There will be a need over an appropriate period to negotiate/re-negotiate appropriate learning contracts.

Each centre is required to notify the awarding body of its policies on access and equality of opportunity. Within the parameters of these policies, a centre is expected

to recruit with integrity on the basis of a learner's ability to contribute to and successfully complete the qualification.

Selectors should strongly discourage partners and persons in close relationships from attending the same course. Evidence indicates the potential emotional damage and impact both on the group and on their relationship through exposure to this type of training.

Selectors should seek evidence that the learner's primary need is not to use the course for personal therapy.

NB This last requirement is important. Without in any way denigrating personal responsibility for autonomy, trainers do have personal responsibility for the well-being of each learner; the provision of a safe, secure and supportive learning environment for the learners; and ultimately to the people with whom learners will use their acquired counselling skills.

Progression Opportunities

The Level 3 Counselling Skills course is essentially practical. The award can be integrated within other provision in this vocational area, and successful completion of the qualification allows learners direct progression to further study and training, and eventually employment. **Throughout, by the publicity of the course, it should be made very clear that learners are being trained in the use of counselling skills and are not being trained as counsellors.**

Learners could progress to ABC's Level 4 Diploma / Advanced Diploma in the Theory and Practice of Counselling. On successful completion of the Diploma / Advanced Diploma, learners may progress onto Postgraduate and Post Qualifying courses in counselling studies that are designed to enhance the practice, skills and knowledge of a practising counsellor. This provides academic progression alongside a recognised career pathway. It combines the professional aspects e.g. theoretical knowledge, counselling skills development, self-appraisal and commitment to provision of an ethical quality service and professional development element, which is necessary to ensure that the counsellor is fit to practice. Many learners progress towards national accreditation status with lead bodies such as BACP, UKCP, etc.

Qualification Structure

The ABC Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills has been allocated 150 guided learning hours to include one residential experience or equivalent and is made up of the following units:

*Numbers in brackets denote QCA Accredited Unit Numbers

| UNIT | TITLE | GUIDED LEARNING HOURS | WEIGHTING |
|------|---|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Creating a Counselling Skills Professional Framework *(A/103/1211) | 30 | 20 |
| 2 | An Introduction to Counselling Theory *(F/103/1212) | 30 | 20 |
| 3 | Basic Counselling Skills *(J/103/1213) | 60 | 40 |
| 4 | Personal Development And Growth for Counselling *(L/103/1214) | 30 | 20 |
| | TOTAL | 150 | 100% |

NB Anti-discriminatory Principles and Practices should permeate the whole Programme.

The LSC definition of 'guided learning hours' is "all times when a member of staff is present to give specific guidance towards the learning aim being studied on a programme. This includes lectures, tutorials, and supervised study in, for example, open learning centres and learning workshops. It also includes time spent by staff assessing learners' achievements. It does not include time spent by staff in the day-to-day marking of assignments or homework where the learner is not present. It does not include hours where supervision or assistance is of a general nature and is not specific to the study of the learners". Centres should bear this in mind when planning qualification delivery.

Class contact hours include the residential components or equivalents, but exclude individual tutorial support, individual supervision and personal counselling. Centres found to not be offering the hours given above will have their approval withdrawn immediately.

In addition to the 150 guided learning hours, we estimate that most learners will need to allow 60 hours for self-study and assignment preparation.

The course content is designed specifically to train learners in the basic counselling skills and interventions that can be seen as of universal application within the counselling and therapeutic field, although the emphasis given to each skill can vary according to the particular theoretical persuasion.

The successful completion of the course will not qualify any person as a trained professional counsellor.

The course must adhere to a recognised code of practice such as the Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Qualification Delivery

Centres should adopt a delivery approach that supports both the vocational nature of this qualification and the particular group of learners. Units in the Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills contain both practical learning outcomes and (often) more theoretical knowledge requirements, so delivery should ensure appropriate association between theory and practice. The aims, aspirations and experience of the learners should also be considered.

Centres must ensure that adequate arrangements are in place for supporting learners. This could be either through separate tutorial/assessment sessions or through the use of time within structured study sessions.

A participative, experiential approach to training will be more demanding of time and energy of course tutors than a simple didactic approach. A co-operative style in planning, teaching and evaluation will be necessary, since the involvement of learners in small group work will require a high level of communication and understanding between members of the tutorial team. Course content and method can be planned, approaches can be modified, and the talents of the tutorial team can be applied, through a process of regular consultation and evaluation.

Given the nature of the learning involved, learners should have access to counselling provision for themselves, if they so choose.

Trainers should provide an appropriate referral list at the start of each course. ABC requires that personal counselling should not be provided by any course tutor within their organisation to any student to avoid the inherent difficulties of role conflicts and professional boundaries.

Within approvals ABC would like to see full details of the learner support offered.

It is recognised that a learner may be asked to leave a course prior to completion. Centres should indicate in their proposals how this matter would be dealt with.

The counselling models upon which a course is based should be stated in all publicity and information.

Publicity materials should state what level of course is offered, the aims of that course, the assessment requirements and what certification is offered.

In accordance with the ethical principles adopted for this type of training, providing institutions are required to provide all potential learners with the details of the full costs of their training, e.g.

- Fees for Tuition and Certificates
- Cost of Residentials, including any special costs for Special Requirements
- Estimate of Costs for -
 - i. Books and Other Materials
 - ii. Supervision
 - iii. Personal Counselling
 - iv. Any costs for extending the course beyond the contracted limit.

It is recommended that for all course levels a student handbook be provided which amongst other things should incorporate:

- Statements about the course philosophy, major therapeutic models of the course, and the aims and objectives of the course
- Specification outlines
- Assessment procedures emphasising an 80% attendance requirement and the mandatory attendance requirement on residential events or their equivalent. Please note it should be stated particularly that frequent early leaving or late arrival would result in non-attendance being recorded.

Training Methods

These should be compatible with the approach(es) on offer, and be predominantly based on a small group training method **with a staff/learner ratio not exceeding 1:12.**

1. Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
2. The learning should be participative and experiential, subject to the free choice of point 1 but without any avoidance by members that would be detrimental to their learning.
3. Time should be set aside for learners to reflect on the learning process.
4. The keeping of a personal record or journal is strongly recommended.
5. Evaluation should be ongoing and participative.
6. Experiential group work should be a course requirement to increase both awareness of the attitudes of self and others, and reflection upon group processes.
7. Learners should be prepared to work on their own material in the speaker and listener role with peers as listeners and to reflect on the process.
8. Learners should have considerable practice in the listener role with opportunities for constructive feedback from other course members and course tutors. This work should ideally involve audio-visual review practice used within a specific training framework.
9. Learners should have experience of working in a small, closed, ongoing group with a suitable qualified and experienced member of staff.

Centres are recommended to provide information and guidance to their learners on the availability and type of employment the programme may lead to and on the progression routes available for further education and training in the counselling field.

It is hoped that opportunities provided by the specification will be fully used to introduce related and general/key skills studies.

Residentials

It is recognised that for a variety of valid reasons many centres are finding it increasingly difficult to secure full attendance at residential events. Therefore, ABC is prepared to consider submissions which:

- Provide the equivalent of a residential experience without losing all of the essential ethos of a residential, e.g. two long consecutive days (in different premises from those used normally) with no 'sleep over' requirements.

- Detail alternative experiences that would be acceptable for those individual learners who, for valid reasons, cannot or did not attend a residential or its equivalence.

Resources

The individual centres must make adequate resources available. This may include IT provision (access to the Web and Word Processor), access to libraries, and so on. This is particularly important to support learners with their 60 hours of self-study and assignment preparation. This provision is routinely checked when scheme approval is requested and its continued availability is checked on each moderation visit.

Assessment

Assessment is a combination of internal and external assessment. Further information can be seen on the ABC web site.

A minimum attendance of 80% is required for course completion. Attendance at residential training events or their equivalents will be mandatory and ABC will require evidence of attendance as part of the successful completion of the course, unless documentary evidence can be made available of exceptional circumstances that prevented attendance. This will be subject to any variations notified to ABC in the original submission and agreed to by them.

Criteria for, and methods of, assessment should be clearly stated and be understood by course members at the beginning of the course. Please see the ABC web site for the assessment criteria and the Tutor and Assessment guidelines.

External assessment

Unit 3 (Basic Counselling Skills) will be externally assessed, in two parts: a standard video or standard audiotape, CD or DVD of 30 minutes plus a presentation of the recorded material in the form of a written report (2500 words +/- 10%). Both components will be externally marked according to the criteria – each component has an overall pass mark of 40%. Learners must pass both components to achieve this unit.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MUST THE EXTERNALLY ASSESSED UNITS BE MARKED INTERNALLY.

Internal Assessment

Units 1, 2 and 4 will be internally assessed, each unit having a pass mark of 40%.

Plagiarism

Any scripts found to contain work that has not been cited as clearly belonging to another source will be failed.

External Assessment Re-sits

Please refer to the ABC web site or the Examination Officers Guide for fees.

In the case of a failed result for Counselling Skills, ABC will indicate which component (e.g. recording or written report) has failed. Learners are only required to re-sit the failed component.

Centres must enter learners for external assessment re-submissions at least 28 working days before the date of re-submission. Please use the EX1 form and enter the re-submission date as the examination date.

Certification

Awarding is at Level 3.

Successful completion of the course and the award of the Certificate in Counselling Skills will be based upon the following table:

| | Evidence |
|------------------------|---|
| 80% Attendance | Attendance Register |
| Professional Framework | Report: 40% Pass - Internal Assessment |
| Introduction to Theory | Essay: 40% Pass - Internal Assessment |
| Skills Assessment | Recording and Written Report: 40% Pass - External Assessment |
| Personal Growth | Statement: 40% Pass - Internal Assessment |

Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills

Qualification Content

Unit 1 Creating a Counselling Skills Professional Framework

30 Guided Learning Hours

Unit Summary

This unit is intended to deepen the learners' understanding of the significant differences between a person who uses counselling skills in another occupation and a fully trained and qualified counsellor. To achieve this end goal, the unit will generate understanding of the key legal and ethical issues (based on a Counselling ethical framework), particularly when working within a multi-cultural and diverse society. The need for and the importance of case-work and managerial supervision will be highlighted.

Learning Outcomes

Learners will be expected to:

1. Define what is meant by the use of counselling skills and distinguish between a person who uses counselling skills and a trained counsellor.
2. Understand a current recognised Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy and compare and contrast the differences between a recognised professional Counselling body requirements and those of other professional bodies or employing organisations.
3. Identify the key issues surrounding confidentiality, professional conduct and responsibility, boundaries, speaker welfare, legal responsibilities, including an ability to demonstrate an awareness of the cultural diversity in society.
4. Understand the role responsibilities, practices and tasks in one to one casework supervision and the importance of management supervision.
5. Ensure that the working environment supports the speaker and worker's physical, emotional and mental safety requirements, e.g. health and safety issues, cultural diversity.

Knowledge Requirements:

Learners should understand:

- The definition of what is meant by the phrase 'a person using counselling skills' and counselling.
- A current recognised Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy
- The differences between the requirements of a recognised professional Counselling body and those of other professional bodies or employing organisations. Specifically identify the key issues surrounding confidentiality, professional conduct and responsibility, boundaries, speaker welfare, health and safety requirements, legal responsibilities. In particular, creating a safe and secure working environment in which both the speaker and the worker can feel safe and secure.
- The importance of and need for casework and management supervision. The differences, role responsibilities, practices and tasks in one to one casework supervision and managerial supervision. Group supervision methods.

Assessment Guidance:**Internal assessment:**

A 1,750 word (plus or minus 10%) Professional Framework report which meets all the assessment criteria. Please see the ABC web site for the assessment criteria and the Tutor and Assessment guidelines.

Unit 2 An Introduction to Counselling Theory

30 Guided Learning Hours

Unit Summary

This unit will present one major therapeutic model in sufficient depth to empower the person to reflect constructively on its value and use when working with people and as part of the process of the person becoming more reflective. For comparison purposes two other models will be presented at an awareness level.

Learning Outcomes

Learners will be expected to:

1. Have a theoretical and conceptual underpinning to counselling skills work with speakers, based on basic understanding and knowledge of the historical development, philosophy and key principles of the major therapeutic model presented and which provides the conceptual underpinning for the counselling skills.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of two other counselling models to compare and contrast with the main model.
3. Realise the dangers of using methods and techniques from other therapeutic schools without adequate training/experience.
4. Understand more clearly the concept of “self” and the development of self concepts.
5. Be aware of the holistic nature of the person, including spiritual values and beliefs.

Knowledge Requirements:

NB The theory content shown below will be delivered from the therapeutic perspective of the providing centre (e.g. Person Centred, Psychodynamic or Cognitive-Behavioural).

NB Research evidence indicates that there are over 500 therapeutic approaches being practised currently in the United Kingdom. However the most prevalent models practised are the three mentioned as examples).

Learners should understand:

- The historical development, philosophy and key principles of the major therapeutic model used by the centre that underpins the counselling skills.
- Childhood development issues and adult life transitions and the concept of “self” as they may affect the working relationship between speaker and worker.
- A basic appreciation of two other counselling models to compare and contrast with the main model.
- The dangers of using methods and techniques from other therapeutic schools without adequate training.

Assessment Guidance:

Internal assessment:

A 2,500 word essay (plus or minus 10%) which meets all the assessment criteria. Please see the ABC web site for the assessment criteria and the Tutor and Assessment guidelines.

Unit 3 Basic Counselling Skills

60 Guided Learning Hours

Unit Summary

Learners, through practice in the class-room situation, will examine a range of skills used within the counselling profession. Additionally they will understand that sessions in which counselling skills are used are professionally managed activities with a start, middle and end. Cultural differences are recognised, acknowledged and worked with.

Learning Outcomes

Learners will be expected to:

1. Have an understanding of the following:
 - a. Attentiveness and rapport building
 - b. Active listening, including the use of minimal encouragers and the managing of silence
 - c. Empathic listening
 - d. Effective questioning
 - e. Paraphrasing and summarising
 - f. Focusing and challenging
 - g. Reflecting on the counselling skills process and immediacy
 - h. Awareness of boundaries including referrals
 - i. Working at appropriate pace
 - j. Checking understanding with the speaker

NB Depending on the theoretical orientation underpinning the counselling skills the emphasis on the skills will change but, nonetheless, we would want each learner to have a sound understanding of each of the above skills.

2. Initiate a counselling skills interaction by developing rapport and trust, specifying what is on offer, the limitations to any service provided and time boundaries, agreeing a working arrangement with the speaker, and specifying the professional code of conduct being followed.
3. Open second and subsequent sessions.
4. Conclude appropriately and sensitively, within defined time boundaries, an individual session including summarisation of themes.
5. End appropriately and sensitively a series of sessions including identifying the signs of an ending, as for example increased and sustained speaker autonomy and responsibility, the speaker having realistic perceptions of the worker and the counselling skills process, the speakers increased acknowledgement of their external world, and the absence of dependency on the worker or the counselling skills process.
6. Recognise, celebrate and work with differences stemming from cultural diversities as they impact in one-to-one interaction.

Knowledge Requirements:

Learners should understand:

- Opening a counselling skills interaction: developing rapport and trust; specifying what is on offer, the limitations to the service provided and time boundaries; agreeing a working agreement with the speaker; specifying the professional code of conduct being followed, making specific reference to confidentiality limits such as boundary issues, harm to self and others and complaints procedures.
- Opening second and subsequent sessions.
- Developing the use of the following counselling skills
 - a. Attentiveness and rapport building
 - b. Active listening, including the use of minimal encouragers and the managing of silence
 - c. Empathic listening
 - d. Effective questioning
 - e. Paraphrasing and summarising
 - f. Focusing and challenging
 - g. Reflecting on the counselling skills process and immediacy
 - h. Awareness of boundaries including referrals
 - i. Working at appropriate pace
 - j. Checking understanding with the speaker

This work should be undertaken based on specified work settings, e.g. illustrative material could be drawn from work settings such as mentoring, welfare advice, personnel work, victim support befriending, social work interventions with the elderly, hospice care provided by nurses and care assistants. At this level it is not expected that learners will need to find a placement as all the training will be classroom based.

- Ending a counselling skills session appropriately and sensitively for a speaker: within agreed and defined time boundaries; summarisation of themes and future work (if applicable); hearing and paying particular attention to “door knob” comments.
- Ending appropriately and sensitively a series of sessions: identifying the signs of an ending, as for example increased and sustained speaker autonomy and responsibility; the speaker having realistic perceptions of the worker and the counselling skills process; the speakers increased acknowledgement of their external world; and the absence of dependency on the worker or the counselling skills process.

Assessment Guidance:**External assessment:**

A recording of 30 minutes plus a written report of 2,500 words (plus or minus 10%). Please see the ABC web site for the assessment criteria and the Tutor and Assessment guidelines.

Unit 4 Personal Development and Growth for Counselling

30 Guided Learning Hours

Unit Summary

This unit will lead to increased self-awareness and an examination of prejudices and assumptions, including culturally based differences and diversities, particularly in interaction with others. Also an increasing awareness of group processes and dynamics will be integral to the unit.

Learning Outcomes

Learners will be expected to:

1. Evidence and own their personal growth and increased self-awareness.
2. Demonstrate the impact of the dynamics and processes of the learning group on their continued learning about self and about self in interaction with others, including issues of power, influence and conformity and vulnerability.
3. Identify the increased self-awareness and insight into self obtained from the use of structured exercises and from learning sessions with or without an agenda and/or tasks.
4. Measure own growth in self-awareness throughout the course.
5. Evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses as a person who uses counselling skills and create a personal development plan.

Knowledge Requirements:

Learners should understand:

- Increased self awareness and insight into self, including prejudices and assumptions obtained.
- Creating Personal Development Plans including strengths and weaknesses.
- Group Tasks, maintenance, dynamics and processes.

Also to include, as appropriate, differences stemming from class, religion, disability, gender, race, age and sexual orientation.

Assessment Guidance:

Internal assessment:

A statement of 1,750 words (plus or minus 10%) of the learner's journey for increasing self-awareness through the course. Learners need to state their strengths and limitations as seen at the end of the course and any further development plans, which are pertinent to counselling or related fields. The statement needs to be in analytical form addressing each of the criteria. Please see the ABC web site for the assessment criteria and the Tutor and Assessment guidelines.

Please note that centres must use the unit titles, learning outcomes and assessments as laid down in this specification, however content is only suggested and centres therefore may make some changes to the content and time allocation to units on submission of their proposal. In the case of Unit 2 they should relate it specifically to the main therapeutic model chosen.

Appendices

1. National Occupational Standards Mapping

For information purposes, this mapping shows the links to the national standards. Learners completing this qualification may be able to use some of their evidence for APL against the associated NVQ; however this would be at the discretion of the NVQ Awarding Body.

2. Key Skills Signposting

For information purposes, this signposting shows the links to the Key Skills. Learners completing this qualification may be able to use some of their evidence for APL against the associated Key Skill; however this would be at the discretion of the Key Skill Awarding Body.

3. Wider Curriculum Signposting

For information purposes, this signposting shows how the ABC Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills provides opportunities for the learner to develop an understanding of the wider curriculum (spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues and an awareness of environmental issues, health and safety considerations).

4. Glossary and Acronyms

An explanation of some of the terms, phrases and abbreviations commonly used throughout ABC documentation.

Appendix 1 National Occupational Standards Mapping

The ABC Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills is mapped to the following national standards:

ENTO Counselling Level 3 (current January 2005)

| ABC UNITS | | National Occupational Standards |
|-----------|--|---|
| 1 | Creating a Counselling Skills Professional Framework | A5.1, A5.2, A5.3, A7.1, A7.2, A7.3, A7.4 B6.1, B6.2, B8.1, B8.3, B22.1, B23.1, B23.2, B23.3, B23.4 |
| 2 | An Introduction to Counselling Theory | A5.2, B6.1, B6.2, B8.2 |
| 3 | Basic Counselling Skills | A5.3, A7.1, A7.2, A7.3, B2.1, B2.2, B2.3 B4.1, B4.2, B6.1, B6.2, B7.1, B7.2, B7.3, B7.4 |
| 4 | Personal Development and Growth for Counselling | A5.1, A5.2, B2.1, B2.2, B2.3, B8.1, B8.2 |

Appendix 2 Key Skills Signposting

The ABC Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills is mapped to the following Key Skills:

Level 3 Communication
 Level 2 Information Technology
 Level 3 Working with Others
 Level 3 Improving own Learning and Performance
 Level 3 Problem Solving

| Communication Level 3 | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| Key Skill | ABC Unit | Signposting |
| C3.1a Contribute to a group discussion about a complex subject | All Units | Evidence could be generated by involvement in a group discussion on a unit related topic |
| C3.1b Make a presentation about a complex subject, using at least one image to illustrate complex points | All Units | Evidence could be generated by making a presentation on a unit related topic, using images where appropriate |
| C3.2 Read and synthesise information from two extended documents about a complex subject. One of these documents should include at least one image. | All Units | Evidence could be generated when completing work related to the unit. It could link to C3.1b |
| C3.3 Write two different types of documents about complex subjects. One piece of writing should be an extended document and include at least one image. | All Units | Evidence could be generated when completing work related to the unit. The extended document could be the internally/externally assessed work produced. |

| Information Technology Level 2 | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| Key Skill | ABC Unit | Signposting |
| IT2.1 Search for and select information for two different purposes | All Units | Evidence could be generated by the research outlined in C3.2 above |
| IT2.2 Explore and develop information, and derive new information, for two different purposes | All Units | Evidence could be generated by the research outlined in C3.2 above |
| IT2.3 Present combined information for two different purposes. Your work must include at least one example of text, one example of images and one example of numbers | All Units | Evidence could be generated by presenting any of the coursework requirements on a computer with the inclusion of charts, tables, etc. where applicable |

| Working with Others Level 3 | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Key Skill | ABC Unit | Signposting |
| WO3.1 Plan complex work with others, agreeing objectives, responsibilities and working arrangements | All Units | Evidence could be generated by planning group projects |
| WO3.2 Seek to establish and maintain cooperative working relationships over an extended period of time, agreeing changes to achieve agreed objectives | All Units | Evidence could be generated by carrying out the projects agreed in 3.1 |
| WO3.3 Review work with others and agree ways of improving collaborative work in the future | All Units | Evidence could be generated by evaluating the group performance and suggesting areas for improvement |

| Improving Own Learning and Performance Level 3 | | |
|---|-----------------|---|
| Key Skill | ABC Unit | Signposting |
| LP3.1 Agree targets and plan how these will be met over an extended period of time, using support from appropriate people | All Units | Evidence could be generated by agreeing targets for the unit |
| LP3.2 Take responsibility for your learning by using your plan, and seeking feedback and support from relevant sources, to help meet targets. Improve your performance by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying a complex subject • Learning through a complex practical activity Further study or practical activity that involves independent learning | All Units | Evidence could be generated by carrying out learning and assessment activities as agreed in LP3.1 |
| LP3.3 Review progress on two occasions and establish evidence of achievements, including how you have used learning from other tasks to meet new demands | All Units | Evidence could be generated by reviewing progress with a tutor |

| Problem Solving Level 3 | | |
|--|-----------------|--|
| Key Skill | ABC Unit | Signposting |
| PS3.1 Explore a complex problem, come up with three options for solving it and justify the option selected for taking forward | All Units | Evidence could be generated by identifying any problems that occur and exploring possible solutions |
| PS3.2 Plan and implement at least one option for solving the problem, review progress and revise your approach as necessary | All Units | Evidence could be derived from attempting to resolve the problem identified in PS3.1 |
| PS3.3 Apply agreed methods to check if the problem has been solved, describe the results and review your approach to problem solving | All Units | Evidence could be generated from an evaluation of actions to resolve the problem identified in PS3.1 |

Appendix 3 Wider Curriculum Signposting

With regard to the enhancement of spiritual understanding, two definitions within the Oxford English dictionary state *'of the human spirit or soul, not physical or worldly'* and *'of the Church or religion'*. This qualification does contribute to an understanding of spiritual issues throughout.

The word 'Moral' can be defined as *'of or concerned with the goodness and badness of human character or with the principles of what is right and wrong in conduct'*. In the delivery of the qualification a tutor must undertake to instil in a learner the difference between good and bad practice, most significantly in those practices relating directly to their employment. So in the context of the latter definition, an understanding of moral issues may be gained from this award.

A definition of 'Ethical' is given as *'morally correct, honourable'*. To integrate into a working environment, an individual will always be required to conform to accepted principles of conduct, professionally as well as personally, and the lessons learnt during this programme of study should stand them in good stead.

A definition of 'Social' is *'of the mutual relations of people or classes living in an organised community'*. There will be developing understanding of social issues gained from working together during delivery of the qualification.

'Cultural' can be defined as *'the customs and civilisation of a particular people or group'*. Cultural awareness permeates this qualification.

Health and Safety issues run throughout the entire award and its importance should be emphasised at every opportunity.

Environmental awareness does not feature in this programme.

Appendix 4 Glossary and Acronyms

ABC

ABC Awards

Accreditation

The process through which the regulatory authorities (QCA) confirm that a qualification and the associated specification conform to the regulatory criteria

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

The process of recognising a learner's previous achievements or learning

Assessment

The process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the assessment criteria (requirements that must be met in order to achieve success, or a given grade) for a qualification or unit, or part of a unit

Awarding Body

An organisation or consortium that awards qualifications

Basic Skills

Basic Skills refers to the ability to read, write and speak English/Welsh and use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general

Centre

An organisation or consortium accountable to an awarding body for the assessment arrangements leading to a qualification or units

Centre Approval

A process through which a centre wishing to offer ABC's qualifications is confirmed as being able to maintain the required quality and consistency of assessment and comply with other expectations of the awarding body

External Assessment

A form of independent assessment where assessment tasks are set, and learners' work assessed, by the awarding body

External Moderator

An individual appointed by the awarding body to ensure accurate and consistent standards of assessment, across centres and over time

Independent Assessment

Assessment of learners' work that is carried out by assessors who do not have a vested interest in the outcome

Internal Assessment

Assessment where assessment tasks are set, and learners' work assessed, wholly within the learner's centre, subject where appropriate to external moderation

Internal Moderator

An individual appointed by the centre to secure accurate and consistent standards of assessment, both between assessors operating within a centre and between centres offering the same award

Key Skills

General skills that apply across occupational and academic fields and assist in improving learning and performance

Knowledge Requirements

The part of the ABC qualification that the learner needs to know

Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

The body responsible for funding and planning education and training for over 16-year-olds in England

Learning Outcomes

The part of the ABC qualification that the learner needs to do

Level

The level at which a qualification is positioned in the National Qualifications Framework

Moderation

The process of checking that assessment standards have been applied correctly and consistently between assessors, between centres and over time, and making adjustments to results where required to compensate for any differences in standard that are encountered

National Occupational Standards (NOS)

Statements which describe the outcomes of competent work in an occupational field

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The framework used by the regulatory authorities to position qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)

NVQs are work-related, competence based qualifications that reflect the skills and knowledge needed to do a job effectively throughout the country. They represent the national standards recognised by employers

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)

Government-designed statutory organisation required to establish national standards for qualifications in England and secure consistent compliance with them (the regulatory authorities in Wales and Northern Ireland are ACCAC and CCEA respectively)

Sector Skills Council (SSC)

A body recognised by the regulatory authorities as responsible for formulating and reviewing standards of occupational competence for an employment sector

Scheme Approval

A process through which a centre wishing to offer a particular qualification is confirmed as being able to maintain the required quality and consistency of assessment and has the correct resources, facilities and equipment specific to the qualification

Unit

The smallest part of a qualification that is (generally) capable of certification in its own right

Vocationally Related Qualification (VRQ)

VRQs are linked to NVQs but are different. They are designed to underpin much of the knowledge for the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and assist in the development of practical skills and do not have to be delivered in the workplace