

POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE  
IN CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# COUNSELLING SKILLS

## HANDBOOK

Continuing Education  
Learning & Teaching  
Services Hub  
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### **Further information on being a student at UEA**

The University produces a **Central Student Handbook**, accessed via the UEA Portal, which contains a wide range of information on being a student at UEA.

From the PORTAL <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/> click on the FACULTY tab, then from MY UEA GROUPS (right hand side), click on CENTRAL STUDENT HANDBOOK. From the left hand column click on TAUGHT STUDENTS, which will take you to a list of subjects you can access for further information. These include:

- *Regulations*
- *Marking criteria, marking policy & reassessment*
- *Examination Guidance*
- *Plagiarism and Collusion*
- *Submission of Work for Assessment*
- *Reassessment*
- *Requests for Concessions against Regulations (eg temporary withdrawal (intercalation); change of module enrolment; course transfer)*
- *Academic Advisors*
- *Programme Specifications*
- *Prizes and Scholarships*
- *Students with Disabilities*
- *Complaints and Appeals*
- *The Diploma Supplement*

Your attention is drawn in particular to the section on *Plagiarism and Collusion* which is subject taken very seriously by the University. You may find that your tutor will also remind you about plagiarism issues during your course, especially prior to undertaking assessed coursework.

# **Post-graduate Certificate in Continuing Professional Development: Counselling Skills**

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## **Aims & Objectives**

The Counselling Skills course provides a coherent programme of study at Post-graduate Level. It offers adult students an opportunity to engage in Higher Education on a part-time basis.

This one year part-time Certificate course provides students with an opportunity to acquire both the practical experience and the theoretical understanding required to use Person-centred counselling skills competently. It is aimed at those who want to improve their counselling skills in a work-related context or a voluntary helping capacity, as well as those whose work includes a specific counselling type role. The course is also a suitable preparation for a Diploma in Counselling.

Prospective students will need to demonstrate the following in their application and personal statements:

- Satisfactory completion of Introduction to Counselling Skills
- Satisfactory completion of Introduction to Person Centred Theory and Practice
- Some experience of a helping role in which counselling skills are used.
- Opportunities to use their developing counselling skills during the course
- Sufficient time for private study.

As a rough guide we advise setting aside 8 hours a week for a Certificate starting in January and 6 hours for a November start Certificate. This will include time for guided reading, keeping a reflective learning journal, using counselling skills in work or voluntary work and completing coursework assignments.

The aims and objectives of the Counselling Skills Certificate are:

- To provide in-depth experience and comprehensive knowledge of counselling skills using a person-centred approach.
- To develop in students the appropriate skills, conceptual understanding, reflexivity and self-awareness to respond in a variety of situations.
- To provide an understanding of the theoretical foundations of the Person Centred approach and its application to the practice of counselling skills.
- To develop students' ability to critically evaluate current research and to engage in research into their own practice and the wider application of the approach.
- To develop students abilities to pursue independent work-based and academic research.
- To enable students to reflect critically on the ethical and professional issues involved in the use of counselling skills.
- To facilitate progression to further postgraduate study and professional development.

## **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course it is expected that students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of Person Centred personality theory and its underlying theoretical concepts.

- Demonstrate their ability to embody the core conditions of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard and be able to relate practice to theory.
- Demonstrate their ability to reflect critically on the ethical and professional issues involved in the use of counselling skills and in the counselling and psychotherapy professions.
- Demonstrate how counselling skills could be applied in their own working environment.
- Identify their personal values, prejudices and influences and apply a critical self-reflective analysis.
- Relate and participate actively within a group.
- Give and receive feedback constructively.
- Demonstrate an increased understanding and awareness of their own thoughts, feelings and behaviour and apply a reflective approach to identifying how these may be perceived and understood by others.
- Demonstrate an ability to reflect critically on the ethical and professional issues involved in the use of counselling skills and in the counselling and psychotherapy professions.
- Demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate current research and to engage in independent work-based and academic research.

## **Course Structure**

The course is one academic year in duration (or the equivalent) and consists of one 60 credit module. There will be weekly class sessions, a number of full day weekend workshops and a residential weekend.

The residential weekend is an integral part of the course and attendance is required so that students are able to gain the full benefit from their studies. It is also an enjoyable experience, and enables groups to bond and work together in a way that is less possible during normal weekly classes.

Attendance at the weekend will be from 5pm on Friday until 4pm on Sunday. Students should also be aware that once they are registered on the Counselling Skills course, the fee due for the residential weekend is non-refundable.

The course has three main areas of emphasis, which are inter-related so that sessions will usually contain elements of each:

- Personal Development
- Theory and Professional Issues
- Counselling Skills

### **Personal Development**

#### **Aims:**

To enable students to:

- Develop an understanding of their own thoughts, feelings and behaviour.
- Develop self-awareness including an awareness of their own prejudices, boundaries and limitations.
- Develop an understanding of the way behaviour is perceived and understood.
- Identify and enhance inter-personal styles of communication and relating.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

- Identify their own personal values, prejudices and influences.
- Relate and participate actively within a group.
- Give and receive feedback constructively.
- Demonstrate an increased understanding and awareness of their own thoughts, feelings and behaviour and how these may be perceived and understood by others.

**Course Content:**

- Experiencing the process of establishing, developing and maintaining relationships with others.
- Working within a group context towards the creation a safe environment.
- Practising the skills of appropriate self-disclosure and the giving and receiving of feedback.
- Maintaining an experiential journal.
- Deepening understanding of the origins of own patterns of behaviour.

**Theory and Professional Issues****Aims:**

To give students a grounding in Person-centred theory and its application to the practice of counselling skills and the ethical and professional issues involved.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to demonstrate:

- A basic understanding of Person-centred personality theory.
- A practical and theoretical understanding of the core conditions of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard.
- An awareness of ethical and professional issues confronting practitioners of counselling skills.
- An understanding of the application of counselling skills in their own work.
- An awareness of another theoretical approach.

**Course Content:**

- An introduction to the work of Carl Rogers and the Person-centred Approach.
- Person-centred personality theory.
- The therapeutic conditions of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard.
- Professional issues of confidentiality and ethics for practitioners of counselling skills.
- Special topics, such as bereavement, will be discussed and there will be further opportunities for understanding the development and application of counselling skills.
- Comparisons between the Person-centred Approach and other theoretical frameworks.

# Counselling Skills

## Aims:

To develop students' ability to:

- Offer the core conditions of empathic understanding, unconditional positive regard and congruence, within a helping relationship.
- Respond to a wide variety of people in different situations.
- Relate to others in depth.

## Learning Outcomes:

Students will develop the capacity to:

- Listen and respond in a variety of situations.
- Recognise and use the skills of active listening.
- Respond with appropriate empathy.
- Show unconditional positive regard and respect.
- Maintain a high level of congruence.
- Identify effective strategies for beginning and ending relationships.
- Develop the skill of challenging in a helping relationship.
- Identify when referral is appropriate and employ suitable strategies for referring.

## Course Content:

- Developing the ability to offer the core conditions of empathic understanding, unconditional acceptance and congruence, within a helping relationship.
- Building confidence in responding to a wide variety of people in different situations.
- Extending students ability to relate to others in depth.

## Coursework and Assessment

To complete the award, students must:

1. Attend at least 80% of the course
2. Successfully complete all the required assignments

There will be three formative assignments during the first third of the course, each of 1250 words. A detailed experiential learning journal will also be required.

These assignments will focus on students' personal development and understanding of reflexivity, encouraging them to explore their life experiences and develop greater self awareness.

## Assessment

All three areas (Personal Development, Theory and Professional Issues and Counselling Skills) will be assessed throughout the course using written and practical assignments, which will involve self, peer and tutor assessment. Students are

required to actively participate in the process of peer and self-assessment throughout the course and will receive guidance from the tutors to enable this.

## **Personal Development**

Students are required to demonstrate they have met the learning outcomes for this aspect of the course by:

- Maintaining a detailed experiential learning journal. This is a personal record, written at least weekly, of the material covered during each meeting, its relevance to the student's life and experience and what they have learnt from it. It will provide a record of the student's learning on the course and be an invaluable resource for the written assignments.
- Active participation in the large group and reflection in tutorials. (See 'The Use of a Large Group in Person Centred Training')
- Completing three **formative** written assignments each of approximately 1,250 words (plus or minus 10%). This written work will inevitably contain personal material and **is not formally assessed**, but its completion is nevertheless a requirement for successful completion of the course. The External Examiner will not see the assignments.

Tutors will provide evidence that learning outcomes have been met and give an overall assessment of students' learning in this area.

## **Theory and Professional Issues**

- Active participation in the large group and reflection in tutorials. (See 'The Use of the Large Group in Person Centred Training')
- An essay critically evaluating the theory and practical application of the person centred approach (3,000 words not including quotations, plus or minus 10%) Evidence of further reading and a bibliography is required.

## **Counselling Skills**

- Active participation in the large group and reflection in tutorials (See 'The Use of the Large Group in Person Centred Training')
- An audio recorded practical demonstration of counselling skills, peer and tutor observed, followed by discussion and verbal feedback. Strong emphasis is given to peer and self-assessment.
- A written critical analysis of the recorded skills session with a transcription of key sections, including reflection on verbal feedback given by peers and tutor (3,000 words not including the transcription and quotations, plus or minus 10%).

## **Research project and self-assessment**

- Your research project will engage you in an assessment of your own learning and your practice of person centred counselling skills. This will

be focussed on a specific research question which enables you to investigate the development of your understanding and skills in the context of your use of counselling skills in your professional work. This will involve discussion with tutors, fellow trainees and possibly friends, family and work colleagues. Evidence of further reading and a bibliography is required (3,500 words, not including quotations, plus or minus 10%). Artwork, poetry and audio or videotapes can be included if desired.

Key areas that you will need to address include:

- Counselling theory and professional issues
- Acquisition of skills and attitudes of a person centred listener
- Personal development
- Practical experience
- Reflection on peer, tutor and other feedback received
- Areas of strengths and weaknesses
- Future development

## Teaching and Learning

The course will be taught by two tutors where the group has more than 10 students. A variety of approaches will be used including: structured and unstructured group work; use of audio recording with peer-group and tutor feedback; skills practice; role play; and written analysis and reflection.

Through keeping a learning journal and the experience of operating within a group context, participants can create a safe environment making possible self-disclosure and feedback and facilitating a high level of inter-personal and intra-personal learning. (See 'The Use of the Large Group in Person Centred Training' and 'Confidentiality')

Directed reading is an important aspect of the learning strategy of this course and a key method of maximising the effective use of the time which students can devote to their studies. It also helps to develop the confidence of students, many of whom may have little prior experience of structured study in the subject area.

## The Use of the Large Group in Person-centred Training

Participants often find the use of the unstructured full group meetings the most challenging part of any person centred training. For those who have not experienced this way of working it can seem confusing and frustrating: for others it is exciting and stimulating. It may help to bear in mind some of the thinking behind the use of the large group in person centred training:

### **Your own personal development:**

The opportunity for becoming more aware of your own feelings and reactions is probably the greatest in the large group. You interact with the largest number of people and have opportunities that working one to one does not provide. You choose whether you actively participate or not but the learning is of great value in either case.

### **Learning theory in practice:**

As you are practicing your responding skills you are also learning, in practice, what it means to use and experience the core conditions, the essence of person centred theory.

### **Learning to use counselling skills:**

Learning to respond in the large group offers you the opportunity to use your developing skills in a very real way. You may get feedback and reactions that you did not expect but it is a valuable way to practice what you are learning and there is always something happening - even in silences. Those who actively participate are offering rich material to the group.

There are no rules about what happens in the large group and what does happen may vary greatly, the group can be used to make decisions that affect everyone, to discuss problems, for people to share what is going on for them in their lives, for support, for challenge, for exploration. Hopefully we will all learn about communicating with each other better and being more open with ourselves.

## **Confidentiality**

This is a significant issue for practitioners of counselling skills. Information that you learn about others must remain within the group boundary. This does not mean that you cannot explore your own issues/reactions, but that you must at all times protect your colleagues. We will spend some time at the beginning of the course drawing up our own confidentiality agreement.

## **Presenting Written Work**

**Two copies of each piece of written work should be submitted.** One will be returned to you, the other will be retained by Continuing Education.

All work should ideally be typed or word processed. As a registered University student you are eligible to use the facilities of the Computing Centre at UEA, including the Help Desk service. Students who submit work in hand-written form will not be penalised.

Completed work should have numbered pages with text on one side of the page only.

### **Pagination**

Completed work should have numbered pages with text on one side only. Page numbers should be placed at the bottom of each page. Illustrations, tables, graphs etc. should be properly integrated within the sequence of pagination if this is possible.

### **Title page**

Each piece of coursework should carry the following information:

- Your student number
- The exact title of the essay/project
- The title of the award for which you are studying (Certificate in CBT Skills)

- The name of the Course Director
- The date submitted (day, month and year)

## Assignment front sheet

You must print out a coversheet for each piece of work that you submit. Coversheets can be found in the 'Assessments and Awards' container on eVision. For further information please see your Student Handbook.

## Academic Referencing Conventions

The purpose of the academic conventions set out below is to facilitate communication between you and your readers. Properly documented work makes it possible for your reader to follow your exposition and to verify your arguments and conclusions. There is no right or wrong way to employ academic conventions, though some methods are more widely used and recognised than others. We recommend you use the Harvard method.

### ***The Harvard Method***

There is no right or wrong way to do references, though some methods are more widely used and recognised than others. We recommend you use the Harvard method.

### **This is what a paragraph would look like in your essay or report:**

Research has shown that empathy leads to deeper exploration by the client (Mearns and Thorne 1999:51). Carl Rogers wrote extensively about empathy and claimed it was the most trainable of the three core conditions. (Thorne 1992:38)

### **Bibliography:**

This is organised alphabetically by surname of author(s):

Mearns D & Thorne B (1999) *Person Centred Counselling in Action*, (second edition) Sage.

Thorne B (1992) *Carl Rogers* Sage

### **Where you have used an article from a journal:**

Bonner Schwarz S and Schwarz J 'Person Centred Sandtray Therapy' *Person Centred Practice* Volume 8 Number 2 Autumn 2000

### **Where you have used a website:**

When citing information in a Website you should include the following information:

Citation order:

- 3 Title (underline or use italics)
- 4 Full URL: http: // internet address
- 5 Date visited [in square brackets]

For example:

*Ethical Framework for Good Practice: British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy*  
URL: [http://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical\\_framework/](http://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical_framework/) [accessed June 2010]

## **Study Skills and Academic Writing Guides**

- Sanders P (1998) *Step in to Study Counselling A student's guide to learning counselling and tackling course assignments* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) PCCS Books
- Buzan T (1974, revised 1982 and later),  
*Use Your Head*, BBC Publications, Aerial Books
- Cottrell S (1999),  
Northedge A (1990),  
Peck J & Coyle M (1999),  
Rose J (2001),  
*The Study Skills Handbook*, Macmillan Study Guides  
*The Good Study Guide*, OUP  
*The Student's Guide to Writing*, Macmillan  
*The Mature Student's Guide to Writing*, Palgrave

## **Reading List**

### **KEY READING**

- MEARNS, D. & THORNE, B. (2007) *Person Centred Counselling in Action*. London: Sage
- MERRY, T. (2002) *Learning and Being in Person-Centred Counselling*. Ross on Wye: PCCS Books
- SANDERS, P. (2006) *The Person-Centred Counselling Primer*. Ross on Wye: PCCS Books
- SANDERS, P. (2009) *Next Steps in Counselling*. Ross on Wye: PCCS Books
- THORNE, B. (2003) *Carl Rogers*. London: Sage
- TOLAN J (2003) *Skills in Person Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage

### **GENERAL BACKGROUND READING:**

- AXLINE, V. (1990) *Dibs: in Search of Self*. London: Penguin
- BOZARTH, J. (1998) *Person Centred Therapy: a Revolutionary Paradigm*. Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books
- COOPER, M. (2008) *Essential Research Findings in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage
- D'ARDENNE, P. (1999) *Transcultural Counselling in Action*. London: Sage

- FAIRHURST, J. (ed) (1999) *Women Writing in the Person Centred Approach* Ross-on-Wye PCCS Books
- HILL, J. (1994) *Person Centred Approaches in Schools*. Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books
- HOWE, D. (1993) *On Being a Client: Understanding The Process of Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage.
- KEARNEY, A. (1996) *Counselling, Class and Politics*. Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books
- KIRSCHENBAUM, H. & HENDERSON, V.L. (eds.) (1990) *The Carl Rogers Reader*. London: Constable.
- NATIELLO, P. (2001) *The person-centred Approach : A Passionate Presence : Ross-on-Wye : PCCS Books*
- ROGERS, C.R. (1992) *On Becoming a Person*. London: Constable.
- SANDERS P (1998) *Step in to Study Counselling: A student's guide to learning counselling and tackling course assignments*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books
- SANDERS, P. (1998) *Incomplete Guide to Using Counselling Skills on the Telephone*. Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books
- WILKINS, P. (2002) *Person-centred Therapy in Focus*. London: Sage

## Useful Websites

Continuing Education at UEA (Cont Ed)  
[www.uea.ac.uk/contedu](http://www.uea.ac.uk/contedu) [June 2010]

British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP).  
<http://www.bacp.co.uk> [June 2010]

British Association for the Person Centred Approach (BAPCA).  
<http://www.bapca.org.uk> [June 2010]

PCCS Books.  
<http://www.pccs-books.co.uk> [June 2010]

Centre for the Study of the Person (La Jolla Programme).  
<http://www.centerforthepeople.org> [June 2010]

The Norwich Centre for Personal & Professional Development.  
<http://www.norwichcentre.org> [June 2010]

The Association for the Development of the Person Centered Approach:  
<http://www.adpca.org> [June 2010]

The website for the University counselling Service. All Continuing Education Students are eligible to use this service.

<http://www1.uea.ac.uk/cm/home/services/students/ucs/about> [June 2010]

Voluntary Norfolk (for voluntary work experience)

[www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](http://www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk) [June 2010]

## Some Useful Reminders

### Do

- Hand in TWO copies of your coursework!
- Ensure that your student number (not your name) is clearly printed on coursework.
- Submit all written coursework with an Assignment Front sheet attached.
- Contact your Course Director in advance if you think you may need an extension for submission of coursework.
- Ensure that you adhere to the word limits for each assignment.
- Inform us of any change of address, e mail address or telephone number. Telephone **01603 591614** or email: [cce\\_efb.hub@uea.ac.uk](mailto:cce_efb.hub@uea.ac.uk)
- Call the Continuing Education Office if you would like to discuss a matter that cannot be resolved by your tutor or Course Director. The Centre's Helpline is **01603 591614**

### Don't

- Hand in coursework in bulky folders, lever arch files, plastic wallets or in comb bound form. Simply staple each piece of coursework in the top left corner.
- Let problems or concerns build up – discuss them with your tutors
- Forget to submit TWO copies of coursework!

## Progression

Students who have completed the Postgraduate Certificate in CPD: Counselling Skills have explored a number of progression routes. Some have progressed onto other Continuing Education courses such as the Post-graduate Certificate in CPD: CBT Skills. Some students have gone on to complete the *Postgraduate Diploma/MA in Counselling*, also based at UEA. Your Course Director should be able to advise you about progression opportunities.

More information about the UEA Diploma/MA in Counselling can be found at [www.uea.ac.uk/edu/counselling](http://www.uea.ac.uk/edu/counselling)

Additional guidance and advice can be sought from Martin Langsdon, Academic Director for Counselling Skills and Continuing Professional Development in Continuing Education. Telephone **01603 593011** or email [m.langsdon@uea.ac.uk](mailto:m.langsdon@uea.ac.uk)

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