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cpcab

# CAST-L3

## Level 3 Certificate in Applied Counselling Studies

An Introduction to the Unit 2: Application of counselling skills  
in a range of occupational settings



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# Introduction

## **This qualification unit enables candidates to explore a range of professional roles which are enhanced by the effective use of counselling skills.**

The aim is to equip candidates with broader employability opportunities across a range of health, care and allied sectors in addition to having the ability to progress to further training to qualify as a professional counsellor if they wish.

Through the study of this additional unit candidates will understand the successful application of counselling skills in non-counselling roles and deepen their understanding of professional frameworks and approaches to helping. They will also consider their own professional goals and what qualities they bring to the role.

This recognises the valuable contribution that different roles make to the wider psychological and emotional health of the general population and understands that not all counselling trainees intend to work in a primary counselling role, but often wish to either enhance their skills in an existing allied professional role, or improve their employability options in professions that have a positive impact on an individual's psychological and emotional wellbeing.

“Counselling skills are a combination of values, ethics, knowledge and communication skills that are used to support another person's emotional health and wellbeing. They are not exclusive to counsellors since a wide range of people use them, often to enhance a primary role. Their use is therefore dependent on who is using them and the setting in which they're used.” BACP (2020).

# Delivery Style

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Centres deliver 'Unit 1 - Counselling Studies' as they would usually deliver the standard Certificate in Counselling Studies (CST-L3) qualification, and candidates can sit the External Assessment as expected based on the Unit 1 content.

Centres also deliver the 60 GLH 'Unit 2 - Application of counselling skills in a range of occupational settings' based around an 'Allied Professions/Occupational Contexts - Project'. It is expected that centres will initially deliver some grounding content relating to the Unit 2 Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria. Candidates are then supported to begin to research and make contact with allied professions/organisations where counselling skills are used to enhance a primary role (non-counselling role).

Over a period of several sessions tutor(s) provide support, guidance and feedback on the development of the candidate's project. This will culminate in candidates producing a written report, accompanied with an in-class presentation to the group to demonstrate what they have learned about the use of counselling skills in the profession/organisation which they have researched. Tutors and peers will engage in 'professional discussion' with the candidate about their presentation and provide written feedback.

The report, presentation notes, tutor/peer feedback sheets, and tutorial records and learning reviews which chart their progress, are collated into a Unit 2 section of their portfolio which is assessed by the tutor(s) against the assessment criteria.

This is quality assured through the typical External Verification visit process that CST-L3 centres are already subject to. There is no additional External Assessment for Unit 2.

## CPCAB Support Materials

As usual with CPCAB you can expect to find a Qualification [Specification](#), [Tutor Guide](#) and [Candidate Guide](#) on our website.

We have also provided an example [Scheme of Work](#) for the delivery and assessment of Unit 2. You are free to use this or adapt this for your delivery. Alternatively, you can write your own and submit this with your application.

We have also provided Tutor and Candidate Guidance to the Project. This provides a clear explanation to candidates what is expected of them and gives a suggested structure for the written report part of the project. You can be as creative as you like in supporting candidates to create their presentations and their written report, and in collating their Unit 2 portfolio evidence. It's important that this project be engaging, interactive and really inspire learners to get involved.

## Qualification Mapping to Professional Standards

This qualification has been mapped to the [BACP Counselling Skills Competence Framework](#), and the framework document and the accompanying guide can be used as a teaching resource.

This qualification has also been mapped to a range of Occupational Standards currently published by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE). This evidences how proficient learners have developed competencies across a range of different vocational areas. Copies of this mapping is available to CAST-L3 approved centres if required.



## How to support the project research

We have produced 2 documents to support the process of the project research. These are the [Tutor Guidance to Project Report and Presentation](#), and the [Candidate Guidance to Project Report and Presentation](#). In these we provide suggestions on how best to support your candidates through the collation process of their written project and their class presentation. We have also provided a structure that can be used by candidates to present their information so that it is easy to map this to the assessment criteria. The aim is to make the research, presentation and report an enjoyable, creative, rich learning experience that fosters good communication skills and the ability to engage with a range of professionals in new settings.



# Frequently Asked Questions

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## **What is the difference between the content of the CST-L3 and the CAST-L3?**

The CAST-L3 has a greater focus on using counselling skills in a variety of occupations, for example helping roles, mental health support, healthcare, advocacy and customer support. This means that learners who have studied this version of the qualification have a broader range of employability skills that can help them working in allied professions, but also be well prepared for progression to practitioner level qualifications and work as a professional counsellor if that is their chosen route.

## **Why is the qualification longer than the CST-L3?**

In the Further Education (FE) landscape the Department for Education (DfE) have moved away from permitting level 3 qualifications shorter than 150 Guided Learning Hours to access funding. CPCAB understand that running fundable qualifications is vital for many centres and therefore we have designed an additional 60 GLH unit to add to the existing 90 GLH of the CST-L3 to create a new qualification that meets eligibility for funding. This has also allowed us to introduce some new and interesting content for candidates wishing to engage in further study at level 3.

## **Why are there 2 units in the CAST-L3 qualification?**

Unit 1 of the CAST-L3 is the original CST-L3 qualification. This can be delivered by centres in the same way as they would deliver the normal CST-L3. The External Assessment even sits in the same place in the qualification and assesses the CST-L3 content only. When integrated into the new qualification the CST-L3 is called '*Unit 1: Counselling Studies*'.

However, the addition of Unit 2 is what makes the CAST-L3 qualification unique. This unit can be taught either at the end of the CST-L3 or alongside it. This unit counts for 60 Guided Learning Hours and is called '*Unit 2: Application of counselling skills in a range of occupational settings*'.

## **How is Unit 2 assessed?**

Unit 2 is Internally Assessed and has no separate External Assessment (exam). This Unit has an exciting new assessment concept for CPCAB, which involves the building of a project throughout the delivery hours, which culminates in a class presentation and submission of a written project report. Alongside this, candidates collect assessment evidence for the Unit 2 section of their portfolio, including a Learning Review (journal), peer and tutor feedback on skills sessions, and also feedback on their project presentation.

CPCAB have provided a detailed project outline to guide candidates to build their presentation and written project report.

## **The project requires learners to make contact with an organisation. Do CPCAB provide these organisations?**

Part of the learning process and acquisition of skills for Unit 2 is about facilitating learners to reach out and make meaningful contact with an organisation that interests them. The research part of this process forms a significant portion of the Guided Learning Hours, and through this research and contact, learners will gather evidence for many of the assessment criteria for the unit.

CPCAB do however provide information on a range of 'allied professions' for tutors to guide learners in their research. You can find a list of organisations that fit within this description at the end of this document.

## **Will learners registered on the current CST-L3 need to change over mid-course to the new qualification if it spans the end of 2023 into the start of 2024?**

No, learners registered before the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 on the CST-L3 will complete that qualification, and any funding they are accessing will continue until the end of that course. Only new starts from the 1<sup>st</sup> January will need to register on the new qualification if they need to access funding.





### **Can centres register blended groups where some learners are registered on the CST-L3 and some on the CAST-L3?**

Centres cannot register blended groups where some are registered on CST-L3 and some on CAST-L3 as these have different qualification numbers and are certificated differently. However, centres can offer both qualifications if they wish, but the groups of candidates must be registered separately and must still meet CPCAB's minimum/maximum group number requirements.

## **Is there a charge to apply to deliver CAST-L3 if a centre already has approval for CST-L3?**

There is no charge to transfer CPCAB centre approval for CST-L3 over to CAST-L3 during the academic year 2023-2024.

## **Do tutors approved to deliver CST-L3 need to submit a new tutor CV to apply to deliver CAST-L3?**

Tutors with approval to deliver CST-L3 will automatically be approved to deliver CAST-L3.

## **Will candidates joining a CST-L3 (started in December 2023) after December 23 be eligible for funding?**

Funding is only available for candidates registered on CST-L3 before 31st December 2023. If a candidate joins a CST-L3 group after 31st December 2023, they will not be eligible for funding.

## **Does CAST-L3 Unit 2 need to be delivered separately as a project?**

Teaching for unit 2 of CAST-L3 can be delivered within or separately to unit 1. Internal assessment of unit 2 must include the candidates project presentation and written report with tutor and peer feedback and a self- review.

## **Do centres applying to deliver CAST-L3 need to submit Unit 1 SOW with Unit 2 SOW?**

Centres already approved to offer the existing CST-L3 who would like to offer CAST-L3 can apply by downloading our transition application form. CPCAB offer an [example scheme of work](#) which centres can use for these purposes, or you can submit your own Unit 2 Scheme of Work. We don't need to see your Scheme of Work for Unit 1 again, unless your plans to deliver CAST-L3 significantly alter your Unit 1 Scheme of Work.

Centres without existing approval to offer CST-L3 may apply on our regulated qualifications page with a scheme of work for units 1 & 2.

## **When will CST-L3 be available until?**

CPCAB have no plans to remove CST-L3 from our progression route. This will remain available as an unfunded, but still regulated, qualification.

However, funding for CST-L3 new starts will cease on the 31st December 2023.

## **Will small independent centres be able to apply for funding for CAST-L3 and other CPCAB regulated qualifications?**

The funding landscape is complex and we have produced a funding information page on our website. Please refer to the funding information page for more information – [Qualification funding - CPCAB](#) if you wish to discuss or ask any further questions after reviewing, please contact [melanie.thompson@cpcab.co.uk](mailto:melanie.thompson@cpcab.co.uk)

## **Can centres deliver just the CAST-L3 Unit 2 at a later date for those learners who already have CST-L3?**

Currently this is not an option.

## **How long should the CAST-L3 presentation be? What is the word count for the presentation?**

Centres can set their own requirements for the CAST-L3 Unit 2 project presentation and written report.

## **How will delivering CAST-L3 affect the current agency assignment?**

Centres delivering CAST-L3 might consider replacing the optional agency assignment with one of the other optional assignments. This is a centre choice, and CPCAB are leaving the agency assignment available for centres who wish to continue to use this.

## **Can CAST-L3 Unit 2 be added onto a Tailormade Qualification e.g. Unit 1 TMQ with 90 GLH + Unit 2 as a bolt on to make up 150GLH to meet funding eligibility?**

Unit 2 of CAST-L3 cannot be added to a Tailormade qualification for funding eligibility as Tailormade qualifications are not regulated, and regulation is required for funding purposes.

## **What are the current funding rates for Level 3 (CST-L3 to 31/12/23 and CAST-L3 from 01/01/24)?**

The Advanced Learner Loan funding rate currently allocated to the CAST-L3 qualification is £811. This information is available on the FALA Website. [Find a learning aim \(submit-learner-data.service.gov.uk\)](https://submit-learner-data.service.gov.uk)

## **Do candidates meet CAST-L3 Unit 2 criteria twice?**

Candidates must provide two pieces of evidence for each criterion. In addition, the CLR (when complete) must include references to all three types of course work. The assessment opportunities in the CAST-L3 qualification design and project work have been created to make it easy for candidates to evidence the criteria twice.

## **How many different professions do candidates need to research for the CAST-L3 Unit 2 project?**

Candidates should choose one allied profession to research and present for the Unit 2 project.

## **Can centres register students in Dec 23 for CST-L3 even if the course starts in January in order to get the funding?**

No – if the actual course delivery does not start until January 2024 you would need to register candidates on the new qualification for funding eligibility and to meet funding rules requirements. If your course delivery DOES start in December, then you would be able to register for the CST-L3 and utilise the existing funding.

## **What about progression from CAST-L3 to level 4? Will anything change?**

The CPCAB progression route stays the same with either CST-L3 or CAST-L3 for progression to TC-L4 or BACP APQ TC-L4.

## **Would suitable candidates be able to miss level 2 training if they already work in a different field?**

The CPCAB progression route requires learners to hold a level 2 qualification e.g., CPCAB Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills or equivalent. See CPCAB [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#).

## **Will the CPCAB Counselling Skills and Studies book be updated for CAST-L3?**

The author team for the Counselling Skills and Studies book have already completed a new edition which is due to go to public release shortly. This does not include the addition of the CAST-L3 Unit 2 elements as the edits were completed prior to the CAST-L3 design. However, further editions are likely to take this into account.

## **Our current L3 is delivered over more than the minimum 90GLH (closer to 150), would we have to extend the course even further to allow for the new unit?**

As the CST-L3 qualification only requires a 90GLH it would be the centre's choice whether to add even more additional GLH to their existing delivery, or to absorb the Unit 2 content into their existing additional GLH. The key part is that the centre offers a minimum of 150GLH for the CAST-L3 and covers the additional Learning Outcomes and assessment requirements.

# Glossary of Terms



**Allied Professions** - Professionals in a range of settings may use some level of counselling skills to help the people they care for or work with. Allied professions are typically those where the core focus of the work is on helping or supporting an individual. Examples of allied professions are available at the end of this document.

**Professional Framework** – This is the term for any structured framework attached to a profession which guides or supports the practice, behaviours and values of someone undertaking that role. Examples of relevant professional frameworks include, but are not limited to:

[The Code](#) - Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates. Nursing and Midwifery Council.

[Professional Capabilities Framework \(PCF\)](#). Professional Association for Social Work and Social Workers.

[Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers](#). Education and Training Foundation.

**Primary Professional Role** – This is the term used to describe the core role that someone is employed in, where it is not a counselling role, but where counselling/helping skills are often used to enhance the work. For example, where a GP uses empathy to understand a patient’s presenting health concerns.

**Responsiveness/Responsivity** - Timely and helpful responses that acknowledge and meet someone’s wants and needs. The quality of responding quickly and positively.



**Working alliance/contract** - The relationship formed when working with or supporting someone. It is important to develop an effective bond and to set out the boundaries and limits of the relationship as well as establishing the tasks and goals of the work.

**Framework/approach to helping work** – Just like there are theoretical approaches to counselling, there are also approaches and frameworks which describe the purpose and effective practice of helping skills in helping work across a range of contexts. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

Egan's Skilled Helper Model (Gerard Egan, 1998)

Carkhuff's Helping and Human Relations training  
(Robert R. Carkuff, 1969)

Hill's Three Stage Helping Model (Clara Hill, 2009)

Person-Centred Care, see [Health Education England](#) and [the Health Foundation](#) resources.

# Allied Professions and National Organisations



**The following are examples of allied professions and national organisations where counselling skills are being used to enhance roles:**

**Advice and advocacy support**

[Citizens Advice](#)

**Befriender role**

[Age UK](#)

**Care workers**

[Carers UK](#)

**Childline administrator**

[NSPCC](#)

**Contact centre advisor**

Local Councils. E.g., [Somerset Council](#)

**Customer facing roles**

Hospitality, Retail, Field Service technicians, IT support, administrative personnel etc. [Find out more here](#)

**Family support worker**

[Barnardo's](#)

**Healthcare professionals**

[NHS England](#)

## **Helpline operator**

[Samaritans](#)

## **Home care assistant**

[City & Country Healthcare Group](#)

## **Housing support workers**

[National Homelessness Advice Service \(NHAS\)](#)

## **Mental Health**

[Mind](#)

## **Mentoring and support workers**

[The Princes Trust](#)

## **Public services, including probation, substance misuse agencies and criminal justice sector**

[HM Prison & Probation Service](#)

## **Roles in health and social care**

[National Care Association](#)

## **Welfare and advice worker**

[Turn2us](#)

## **Youth workers**

[The National Youth Advocacy Service \(NYAS\)](#)