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2024-2025

Guidance to Client Work Experience

Level 5 Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapeutic Skills and Theory (CBT-L5)

This RQF qualification is regulated by Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland.



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1. Introduction

This qualification is intended for candidates who want to develop CBT skills and theory as an integral part of their professional counselling work. It is designed to enhance the employability of counsellors in organisational settings and as independent practitioners by giving them a solid grounding in CBT skills and theory. CBT is one of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommended psychological therapies and counsellors with CBT skills are often favoured above those without them in multidisciplinary psychological therapy teams, especially the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) teams – now known as NHS Talking Therapies.

2. CPCAB Requirements for CBT-L5

(a) Client hours

Candidates need to complete a minimum of 30 hours of *formally contracted* one to one counselling with clients using CBT skills and theory. Candidates will usually be working in an agency setting, and it is likely they will be moving towards more autonomous practice. The setting must give candidates the opportunity to work as an autonomous/independent practitioner at the appropriate depth for level 5, including being able to make initial assessments of client needs and risks. The maximum percentage of placement hours which can be done online will depend upon the individual's own practice methods and preference. CPCAB do not set a limit for CBT-L5.

(b) Reports

Candidates need formal feedback or reports from their supervisor and agency manager to help evidence their capability. This takes the form of:

- Supervisor report and feedback (minimum of one).
- We would also request that supervisors check the candidate's log of client and supervision hours¹. Supervisors need to sign each page to validate the hours claimed.

Candidates need to keep careful records of their client work and supervision to meet CPCAB requirements and for possible future accreditation purposes. Tutors should monitor these during tutorials and reviews.

(c) Cause for concern reports/meetings

There may be occasions when the tutors have concerns about a candidate, they may ask for or send a report about their concerns to the workplace setting (if applicable) and/or the candidate's supervisor. A 'cause for concern' meeting with the candidate and tutors may be called to explore the best ways of helping this candidate move forward or to take other appropriate action.

¹ You should aim to meet the supervision ratio requirements of your chosen professional membership association/ethical framework. This varies depending on the amount of client work undertaken and you should seek guidance from your professional membership association, placement agency and centre as to how these ratios are ethically achieved. For example, the BACP requirements for trainee counsellors in individual supervision is a minimum of 1.5 hours per calendar month. Ratio of 8 hours counselling to 1-hour supervision, with supervision every two weeks. The BACP formula for counting time gained through group supervision is that if a candidate is in a group of four or less, half the time of the session can be claimed. So, if there are four people in a session of 1½ hours, then each person can claim 45 minutes each. If there are five or more in a session, then divide the length of the session by the number of people present - i.e. five people in a 2½ hour session could claim ½ an hour each.

(d) Incomplete hours

CPCAB recognises that some candidates will not have completed all the course requirements by the end of the duration of the course. CPCAB allows a MAXIMUM of one year (beyond the course end date) for completing client hours. Other work, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be finished within 3 months of the end of the course. Centres must make absolutely clear what the requirements are for late completion of hours and course work, at the beginning of the course. See *'Support for the Not Proficient candidates'* document.

The 30 hours of client work for CBT-L5 offers candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the integration of CBT skills and theory into their counselling work.

3. What is a Suitable Setting for Client Work at Level 5?

The focus for client work in this level 5 qualification is to apply and integrate CBT skills and theory into counselling work. CPCAB therefore means any agency or setting in which candidates can work within a formal counselling contract. Some candidates with appropriate training and experience may be working independently.

The setting must give candidates the opportunity to:

- work at the appropriate depth for level 5
- work with at least 3 different clients
- be able to make initial assessments of clients, their needs and risk
- assess clients for suitability for the medium of counselling offered e.g in-person, online or telephone
- integrate their theory and practice coherently at level 5
- integrate concepts of psychopathology
- implement a clinical audit tool

Candidates may draw on one or more appropriate settings to complete their 30 hours of one-to-one client work.

4. Defining Responsibilities

Although lines of responsibility will vary according to the particular context, it is an important ethical responsibility to define these responsibilities explicitly.

These responsibilities can be considered under the following headings:

- Centre responsibilities
- Tutor responsibilities
- Employer/external organisation responsibilities (if applicable)
- Trainee responsibilities
- Supervisor(s) responsibilities

5. Proforma 1 - CBT-L5 Trainee's Record of Client Work Setting

Tutors are asked to (a) ensure that each trainee completes this form; and (b) makes a copy for centre records. Candidates drawing on more than one setting to complete their 30 hours of client work will need to complete more than one of these records.

Name of counselling trainee:

Address of trainee:

.....

Description of client work setting:

.....

.....

Name and address of organisation/setting:

.....

..... Tel No.

BACP membership no.

(If a member of a different counselling professional body, please give name of body concerned in addition to membership no.)

Insurance certificate no.

Name of supervisor:

I confirm that I have checked both of the above numbers:

Signed (course tutor): Date:

6. Proforma 2: CBT-L5 Record of Client and Supervision Hours

The Client Log (30 hours +)

To provide evidence that the CPCAB requirements have been met, it is necessary to keep a running record of the amount of counselling work being carried out. This record may also provide evidence of supervised counselling hours for future professional personal accreditation (e.g. with the BACP).

Example:

DATE	CLIENT*	SESSION NUMBER	TOTAL COUNSELLING HOURS In-person	TOTAL COUNSELLING HOURS Online/ Telephone	FOCUS OF THE SESSION
3.10.23	WM	15	23		
4.10.23	AS	2		7	
5.10.23	TP	6	24		
8.10.23	PQ	5		8	

The Supervision Log

A record of supervision is needed to evidence the CPCAB (and ethical) requirement that all counselling work must be appropriately supervised². Your *supervision log* should map to your client log.

Example:

Date	Type of supervision Group/ individual In- person/online/ telephone	Sup. hrs claimed	Client/issues brought	Focus of session and outcome
10.10.23	Individual In-person	1 hr	WM	
			Working with case formulation	
24.11.23	Group In-person	½ hr	PQ	
03.01.24	Individual Online	1½ hr	TP and AS	
			Endings	

² You should aim to meet the supervision ratio requirements of your chosen professional membership association/ethical framework. This varies depending on the amount of client work undertaken and you should seek guidance from your professional membership association, placement agency and centre as to how these ratios are ethically achieved. For example, the BACP requirements for trainee counsellors in individual supervision is a minimum of 1.5 hours per calendar month. Ratio of 8 hours counselling to 1-hour supervision, with supervision every two weeks. The BACP formula for counting time gained through group supervision is that if a candidate is in a group of four or less, half the time of the session can be claimed. So, if there are four people in a session of 1½ hours, then each person can claim 45 minutes each. If there are five or more in a session, then divide the length of the session by the number of people present - i.e. five people in a 2½ hour session could claim ½ an hour each.