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2024 - 2025

Candidate Guide Level 5 Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling (PC-L5)

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

Qualification/learning aim number: 500/8386/7

Counselling & Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB)

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Please note:

This document, along with candidate support materials, can be downloaded from the <u>CPCAB Website</u>. These provide you with the information needed to enable you to maximise your learning on this course and to complete the qualification successfully. If you need help with the accessibility of this document, please email <u>contact@cpcab.co.uk</u> with your request.

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1. Introduction for Candidates

You are undertaking a course that leads to a nationally regulated qualification awarded by the Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB) – the only nationally regulated awarding body to specialise in the field of counselling and supervision.

This qualification is designed to give candidates the knowledge, skills and competencies to work as selfemployed counsellors in independent practice. It also equips learners to take on a senior counselling role in an organisational context where client assessment, referral and routine evaluation are part of the role.

The qualification includes training on how to:

- » Establish and maintain an appropriate framework for independent autonomous practice.
- » Carry out client assessments (including identifying and referring clients with severe and complex mental health problems).
- » Practice autonomously as a professional counsellor in one or more settings.

Tip:

Know your limits: You will continue to need clinical supervision as an independent practitioner and to work within your personal and professional competence.

2. Qualification Structure

This qualification is made up of seven mandatory learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria. This structure is based on the seven processes of the <u>CPCAB's Model</u>.

Tip:

Think of the assessment criteria as learning tasks which you must complete and then record so that your tutor can see you have achieved the task.

To achieve the qualification, you MUST be internally assessed by your tutor as **Proficient** in all 7 learning outcomes.

This qualification is eligible for fully in-person, blended or online delivery.



3. Internal Assessment

Art students keep a portfolio of their coursework which they use to show other people what they, as artists, have learnt. In a similar way you need to keep a portfolio of your coursework, which you can use to show your tutor what you have learnt. Keeping a portfolio of your coursework will not only provide your tutor with evidence of your learning, but also really help you with the learning process itself.

You also need to complete your (<u>Candidate Learning Record (CLR</u>), which should be placed at the front of your portfolio to signpost the evidence for each assessment criterion. The CLR has brief notes beside each assessment criterion to help you understand what is being asked for and guidelines on how to record your learning.

You must give **two** pieces of evidence for each criterion. In addition, the CLR (when complete) must include references to the following three types of course work.¹:

- Documents You must include a learning review², a self-review (see section below on the tutorassessed self-review), 2 written assignments (3,000-3,500 words), a client record (minimum of 60 one to one hours), a clinical supervision record and a personal counselling record (minimum of 40 hours by the end of the course)³. You must also include a review of a 15-minute transcript of clinical work. You might also include tutorial records (when written by you) notes on your personal development.⁴
- Tutor observation You must include records of tutor feedback on (a) your counselling practice sessions (one via audio or video recording⁵) and (b) a case presentation. You might also include tutorial records (when written by your tutor), and tutor feedback on group discussions (including contributions to seminars, group-work, and group training supervision).
- Testimony You must include records of peer feedback on your counselling practice sessions and at least one supervisor report. You might also include, for example, peer feedback on case presentations and group discussions (including contributions to seminars, group-work and group training supervision), and client evaluation/feedback.
 - See <u>PC-L5 Specification</u> for a summary of minimum assessment requirements.
 - See the CPCAB film on <u>How to build a student portfolio.</u>

⁵ In the case of the audio or video recording, the tutor may choose to listen to (or watch) the recording, rather than observe you directly.

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¹ Please note that if it is appropriate you can reference the same section of your portfolio, or the same piece of work, a number of times.

² This is an ongoing review of learning during the course (also called a "learning journal").

³ This can include hours undertaken prior to the start of the course but at least 10 hours must be undertaken during the course itself.

⁴ Your personal development may result from insights gained from the course, other personal development work, tutorial records or from personal counselling.

Tip:

It is a good idea to outline possible sections in your portfolio, for example:

- Document: learning reviews
- Document: self-reviews
- > Tutor observation: tutor feedbacks on counselling practice
- > Testimony: peer feedbacks on counselling practice
- Testimony: reports from supervisors

An example reference in your CLR might read: *Learning review p 21, para 3, lines 3-6 (document) Peer feedback Sheet No. 6, line 29 (testimony)*

Tip:

Meeting criteria is important, but the experience of learning about being an independent counsellor should be much richer than criteria. Try to keep a balance.

CPCAB recommends that you attach <u>Criteria Assessment Sheet (CAS)</u> to any work you hand in to your tutor for assessment. Your tutor can use the CAS to tell you which criteria you have met and to give you helpful feedback throughout the course. In this way you can gradually collect evidence as you go along and keep track of what evidence you still need to look out for.

Self-review

Towards the end of your course your tutor will support you to complete a self-review of your learning. A template document is available on the <u>CPCAB website</u>. This will allow you to reflect on what you have learnt and show your understanding of independent counselling practice. Your tutor will assess your self-review and provide you with feedback on how you are progressing towards competence in all 7 areas. If you need to undertake any specific activities to address areas for development your tutor's feedback will explain how to do so.

After you have completed your portfolio your tutor will look at the evidence you have referenced in your <u>Candidate Learning Record (CLR)</u> and assess whether or not you have completed the assessment criteria, achieved the learning outcomes and met all the other qualification requirements. They may decide that you are not yet Proficient – and will identify what you still need to complete/achieve and how you might work towards doing this.

Your tutor will give you further guidance on developing your portfolio, the three types of coursework and filling in the Candidate Learning Record.

The final assessment of your work is recorded on the <u>Completion Statement</u> at the end of your Candidate Learning Record.



Tip:

It is important to realise that simply presenting evidence to meet criteria may not be sufficient to meet the overall learning outcomes and/or the qualification requirements. Your tutor may have observed substantive evidence which indicates that a specific assessment criterion or learning outcome has not been met despite evidence you have submitted.

Please note that all the work you include in your portfolio is *assessable material*, so it may be seen not just by your tutor but also by all those involved in your training centre's internal assessment process or any associated appeal or complaint. Such people will include the internal moderator and verifier as part of internal quality assurance (IQA) as well as the CPCAB external verifier.

4. Equal Opportunities and Reasonable Adjustments

In order to make sure that assessment is fair to all candidates, CPCAB requires all recognised centres to have an effective candidate support system in place and to make appropriate arrangements to meet individual assessment needs. You can ensure that your own learning and assessment needs are being met by discussing your own needs/difficulties with your tutor, who can ensure that you receive the appropriate support at your centre. Please talk to your centre prior to your enrolment and about any additional support that you may need regarding learning and assessment.

Please see CPCAB's <u>Reasonable Adjustment Guidance for Centres</u>.

Both CPCAB and centres are required to recognise and comply with both the spirit and the word of equal opportunities legislation. Previous Acts were amalgamated into the <u>Equality Act 2010</u>.

See <u>CPCAB's Equal Opportunities Policy</u>.

5. Appeals and Complaints

CPCAB are committed to maintaining standards across our recognised centres so that the public can have confidence in us and our qualifications. We provide our own complaints and appeals policies for the benefit of centres and candidates.

> Please view our policies on Complaints, Appeals and Whistleblowing on the CPCAB website.

All CPCAB approved centres are required to have a complaints and appeals procedure which is available to candidates. Candidates must address all appeals about internal assessment or complaints about any aspect of their learning experience on the course via the centre's own internal complaints and appeals procedures. It is the centre's responsibility to make these procedures available to candidates. Candidates who contact CPCAB directly on these issues will normally be directed back to their centre.





6. Additional Qualification Requirements

In addition to meeting the assessment criteria and learning outcomes, you need to meet the following additional course requirements:

Client work

You are required to complete 60 hours minimum of one-to-one, formally contracted counselling as an independent practitioner; by independent CPCAB means that the counsellor must exercise autonomy in their role as counsellor. Examples of an independent counsellor include but are not limited to; a senior counsellor in an agency/organisation, a private practitioner working for an external organisation (e.g. Prison Service), a counsellor working for an Employee Assistance Programme, or a counsellor in private practice. As an independent practitioner you would usually be expected to carry responsibility for client assessment.

Candidates can complete placement hours for this qualification in-person, online/telephone, or a mix of both. The maximum amount of online placement hours will depend on the individual's own practice methods, and no CPCAB limit is set. Work with your centre to ensure you only undertake work in a format where you are well prepared, competent and appropriately supported. You should maintain records of the type of session in your client log.

See <u>PC-L5 Guidance to Client Work Experience</u> for more information.

Group training supervision

You are required to take part in group training supervision as part of your course. You will be expected to present your work, receive supervisory support and challenge from tutors and peers, and learn from and challenge other candidates in the group. The emphasis here is on examining professional and therapeutic issues relating to your work as an independent practitioner.

Counselling supervision

In addition, you are required to have clinical supervision for all your client work. Placement hours should be appropriately supervised and approved by your tutor. 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 (if applicable) 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 or people present - i.e. five people in a 2½ hour session could claim ½ an hour each.



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Personal therapy for trainees

You need to have completed a minimum of 40 hours of personal counselling by the end of the course. This can include hours undertaken prior to the start of the course but at least 10 hours must be undertaken during the training itself. Beyond this you are expected to take responsibility for ensuring that you undertake sufficient therapy to meet your individual personal and professional needs as well as any professional body requirements. You need to keep a record of your personal therapy.

Personal tutorials

You will be offered tutorials throughout your course to support your learning, develop your practice and help you identify learning goals. Your tutors will also take the opportunity of tutorials to raise any concerns likely to affect the outcome of your internal assessment. You need to keep a record of your tutorials in your portfolio.

7. Candidate Feedback

Your feedback is vital to CPCAB to ensure the ongoing quality of our qualifications. Feedback enables us to meet our requirements as a regulated Awarding Organisation and contributes towards our annual qualification review process. Please ensure that you complete the online feedback survey at the conclusion of your course.

Please click on this link to access the survey - Candidate feedback.



Appendix 1: Candidate Learning Record Level 5 Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling (PC-L5)

Instruction:

Print out (or otherwise detach) this Candidate Learning Record (CLR) and the Completion Statement which follows it. Then insert both documents in the front of your portfolio.

Please confirm that your portfolio contains the following items (which are required in order to complete the qualification) by ticking each box below:

- □ A client record (60 hours minimum)
- □ Clinical supervision record
- □ One supervisor report
- □ A personal counselling record (10 hours minimum during course, 40 hours total)

When you have completed your Candidate Learning Record please tick the following box to confirm that you have provided evidence all three types of coursework (i.e. documents, tutor observation and testimony):

PC-L5		
LEARNING OUTCOME:	1. Work safely, legally and ethically as an independent counsellor	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
1.1 Reflect on issues relating to establishing and managing an independent practice	 Explore issues relating to setting up an independent practice. Consider practical aspects including premises, advertising/marketing, insurance, costs/fees, processes for client contact / appointments, record keeping and related systems. Show that you understand how independent practice differs from agency practice. Reflect on these issues in learning review. Prepare counselling information leaflet and action plan for establishing own independent practice. 	



1.2 Work within an ethical, legal and professional framework for independent counselling work	 Have a thorough knowledge of ethical frameworks for counselling, for example the BACP "Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions", the NCPS "Code of Ethical Practice", the ACC's "Code of Ethics" or another similar framework. Explore ethical/legal/professional issues relating to independent practice. Recognise responsibilities to clients, employers, the counselling profession and wider society. Show that you understand how to protect clients physically and clinically and manage risk in a private practice context. Understand the guidance provided in <u>NICE Guideline NG225</u> and its relevance to independent counselling practice. Show awareness of relevant legislation in all aspects of client work including respect for human rights. Demonstrate ability to develop and make use of referral routes/other sources of help and/or work collaboratively with other professionals for clients as appropriate. Communicate the personal and professional 	
1.3 Respond to and manage ethical dilemmas	 limitations of your practice. Reflect on the use of an ethical framework to resolve ethical dilemmas relevant to independent practice. Demonstrate ability to apply an ethical framework to managing ethical dilemmas in client work. Evidence understanding in learning review, 	
1.4 Research and access appropriate sources of support	 case discussion and assignments. Explore what resources you need in place to support work as independent counsellor. Show how you connect the need to provide a 'holding' environment for your client with your own need for 'being held'. Demonstrate ability to draw on appropriate support in independent counselling work. 	
LEARNING OUTCOME:	2. Work with complex aspects of the counselling relationship	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
2.1 Manage the conflicts and demands of working within relational boundaries in independent practice	 Reflect on the difficulties in managing the boundaries of the counselling relationship in independent practice. Demonstrate your ability to respond appropriately to challenges and conflicts relating to relational boundaries in independent counselling work. Evidence in learning review, case presentations / discussions. 	

2.2 Use theory and research to work with implicit aspects of the therapeutic relationship		 Document your recognition of implicit aspects of the process of relating – and relate these to theory and research on relationship factors. Show how you applied your understanding (of implicit aspects of the relationship) to enrich and inform work with clients. 		
2.3 Work with challenges and difficulties that arise in the therapeutic relationship		 Give examples to show that you understand the difference between implicit and explicit influences on the boundaries of the relationship. Give examples from case work to illustrate how you managed both implicit and explicit influences on the therapeutic process. Recognise the limits of the counselling 		
		 relationship and give examples of when referral may be necessary. Give examples of (and reflect on) difficulties encountered in maintaining and working within the therapeutic relationship – e.g. resistance, collusion, recurring behavioural patterns, readiness etc. Manage ruptures and unpredictable 		
		problems in the therapeutic relationship. • Evidence in case presentations/case reviews.		
LEA	RNING OUTCOME:	3. Use theory and research to work with client diversity in independent practice		
Asse	ssment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references	
3.1 Reflect on theory and research on diversity issues and apply insights to counselling work		 Investigate research on the impact of client diversity on the therapeutic process. Apply theory to understand issues of client diversity. Apply insights (from understanding of client diversity) to enhance work with individual clients. 		
3.2 Reflect on diverse cultural perceptions of mental health and well-being		 Compare different cultural attitudes to defining mental health/well-being. Reflect on the impact of such perceptions on individual clients – both from the therapist's and the client's perspective. Be aware of psychopharmacological interventions and possible impact on therapeutic process. 		

3.4	Reflect on diversity issues which impact on clients accessing	 Review own independent practice provision in relation to individual client needs. 	
	counselling in independent practice	 Include issues both at explicit and implicit level. 	
		 Explore the work of organisations developed with a vision to improve the accessibility of counselling services, for example <u>BAATN</u>. 	
LEAI	RNING OUTCOME:	 Use a coherent approach to respond to the needs of individual clients 	
Asse	ssment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
4.1	Use a coherent assessment strategy to assess individual clients and their needs	 Reflect on the responsibility (as an independent practitioner) of assessing client needs and risks. 	
		 Consider the nature of risk and explore the range of risks which could affect clients. 	
		 Identify and describe your framework for assessing clients consistent with your theoretical approach. 	
		 Demonstrate ability to use a coherent framework for assessing clients. 	
		 Conduct risk assessment and respond appropriately to the implications. 	
4.2	Critically reflect on different approaches to client assessment	 Reflect on the notions of assessment and 'diagnosis' in counselling work. 	
		 Compare and contrast different attitudes to assessment and the consequent impact on client and counsellor. 	
4.3	Evaluate choice of therapeutic interventions in relation to individual clients and their needs	 Use supervision and your own internal supervisor to critically review the therapeutic process with individual clients. 	
		 Evaluate your ability to keep the client's needs at the heart of the process. 	
		 Show your ability to attune/adapt your responses more closely to the client's needs. 	
4.4	Reflect on and evaluate the counselling work in collaboration with the client	 Discuss the importance of involving the client in reviewing the counselling work. 	
	with the client	 Show how you have effectively involved clients both in reviewing the work and responding appropriately to the review process. 	
4.5	Use research findings on client factors to inform counselling	 Critically review research on how client factors influence therapeutic outcomes. 	
	work	 Relate understanding of role of client factors in therapeutic work to own client work. 	
		 Show how insights from this learning have informed your work with individual clients. 	

LEARNING OUTCOME:		5. Work with self-awareness as an independent practitioner	
Asse	essment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
5.1 Use insights from work on implicit aspects of own self, personal history and patterns of relating to inform counselling work		 Show ongoing and regular commitment to expanding your knowledge of the shadow/hidden aspects of self. Record and reflect on your responses in the group/personal relationship/client work and relate these to aspects of yourself, personal history and patterns of relating. Use insights from this personal work to enhance and deepen your work with clients. 	
5.2 Compare and contrast different theoretical perspectives on the use of self in counselling work		 Discuss how different approaches view use of self in counselling work. Critically reflect how different approaches to use of self-impact on the nature of the therapeutic relationship and the skills/techniques/attitudes of the therapist. Develop a coherent understanding of the use of own self in your own client work. 	
5.3 Use awareness of self to work with the impact of power and authority in the counselling relationship		 Reflect on your responses to your own or your client's expression of power or authority in the therapeutic relationship. Give an example of managing the impact of power or authority as factors in the counselling relationship. Show awareness of how external organisational power dynamics can impact on you and the counselling work. Show in case work that you are aware of the counsellor's role in managing these dynamics. 	
5.4 Use research findings on therapist factors to inform client work		 Research literature on role of therapist factors in therapeutic outcomes. Relate understanding of role of therapist factors in therapeutic outcomes to own client work. Show how insights from this learning have informed your work with individual clients. Use theory, research and skills within a 	
LEARNING OUTCOME:		coherent framework for independent counselling practice	
Asse	essment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
6.1 Use theory to work with implicit aspects of client's self, personal history and patterns of relating		 Show evidence of reading and understanding theory which informs your understanding of implicit processes. Use theory coherently to reflect on and increase your understanding of the client's self, personal history and patterns of relating at the implicit level. Show how this theoretical understanding directly informs your understanding of the client's issues and the therapeutic process. 	

	Critically evaluate own use of clinical supervision Implement a clinical audit tool	 Reflect on role/importance of supervision to you as an independent practitioner. Show how you have integrated learning and insights from supervision to develop practice. Show how you have evaluated your use of supervision in order to meet your developing needs as an independent practitioner. Research tools for monitoring client outcomes – e.g. Clinical Outcomes for Routine Evaluation: <u>www.coreims.co.uk</u> . Reflect on role and importance of audit tools in monitoring client outcomes. Make use of a clinical audit tool as part of your practice evaluation and development. 	
7.1		Reflect on role/importance of supervision to	
Acco	essment criteria	independent practice Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
LEARNING OUTCOME:		7. Monitor and maintain professional effectiveness as a counsellor in	
6.5 Integrate concepts of psychopathology when assessing and referring clients		 Reflect on the different understandings of psychopathology. Present your understanding of psychopathology in relation to your own approach/practice. Show how your understanding of psychopathology informs your judgement as an independent practitioner (supported by supervision) in making decisions about assessment and referral. 	
 inform work with common life problems and common mental health problems Show critical awareness of defining and differentiating above terms. Show how your understate findings on common life problems health problems headth problems		 Show critical awareness of the challenges of defining and differentiating between the 	
within a coherent theoretical results framework by • Cri		 Show how your therapeutic interventions / responses are embedded and underpinned by your theoretical approach. Critically evaluate your choice of intervention /response in your work with individual clients. 	
6.2 Use research findings to critically evaluate and develop own theoretical understanding		 Demonstrate knowledge of research methods relevant to psychotherapeutic counselling Show evidence of reviewing research findings to question and deepen your understanding of counselling theory. Apply this understanding to critically evaluate your own work. Include critical awareness of other therapeutic approaches. 	

7.3 Research and plan own programme for Continuing Professional Development	 Reflect on the role/importance of CPD in professional development. Identify own development needs with reference to your specific experience as an autonomous practitioner. Develop a plan for meeting your CPD needs. 	
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Appendix 2: Completion Statement for PC-L5

Completion statement for Candidate Learning Record Level 5 Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling (PC-L5)			
Learning outcome		Contra- indications present Y/N	Tutor signature if learning outcome has been achieved
1	Work safely, legally and ethically as an independent counsellor		
2	Work with complex aspects of the counselling relationship		
3	Use theory and research to work with client diversity in independent practice		
4	Use a coherent approach to respond to the needs of individual clients		
5	Work with self-awareness as an independent practitioner		
6	Use theory, research and skills within a coherent framework for independent counselling practice		
7	Monitor and maintain professional effectiveness as a counsellor in independent practice		

To be completed by core tutor:

Where the learning outcome has <u>not</u> been achieved please:

(a) State clearly which learning outcome this relates to.

(b) Give specific and relevant reasons why the learning outcome has not been achieved.

(c) Record proposed course of action agreed between tutor and candidate to address/remedy concerns.

Learning outcome	Details of relevant contra-indications	Proposed course of action

I declare this Candidate Learning Record to be a true and authentic record of evidence submitted in my portfolio:

Candidate name: Date: Date:

I declare that this Completion Statement is a true record of the candidate's achievement: I declare that this candidate has achieved all the above qualification requirements for PC-L5:

Tutor name: Date: Date:



Appendix 3: Criteria Assessment Sheet (CAS)

Candidate:	Group:
Qualification:	Coursework:

Candidates: In the table below, identify the criteria evidenced in the assignment concerned and cross-reference these in the relevant page margin of your assignment.				
Assessors: Grade	e the robustn		lence identifi	ed by the candidate against the Assessment Criteria:
For completi	on by the can	didate:		For completion by the tutor:
Candidate refe	erence to cou	rsework		Tutor assessment
	riteria Pa _i umber	ge number	YES/NO	Tutor feedback
General comment:				

General comments:

Tutor name:

Date: