



## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

**Unit code:** J3HH 38

**Superclass:** PS

**Publication date:** November 2019

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

The aim of this unit is to enable learners to consolidate the knowledge, skills and competences gained in the unit *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Principles* into their practice when working with young people in a counselling setting.

This unit embeds a minimum of 50 hours of face-to-face supervised practice with 10–18 year olds in services for children and young people where counselling/psychotherapy is routinely offered such as in a school counselling service and/or a voluntary/community setting.

The content of this unit is underpinned by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions* and aligned with the BACP *Curriculum Framework for Counselling Young People (11–18 years)*.

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of underpinning theory prior to working therapeutically with children and young people.
- 2 Demonstrate an advanced understanding of competent and safe practice while working therapeutically with children and young people.
- 3 Critically evaluate own learning and practice in supporting the mental health of young people in counselling settings.

## Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Credit points and level

3 Higher National Unit credits at SCQF level 11: (24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 11)

### Recommended entry to the unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre, however learners must have previously achieved a core counselling/psychotherapy qualification at a minimum of SCQF level 8; to include 400 contact hours with a tutor and a minimum of 100 hours supervised counselling/psychotherapy practice in line with recognised practitioner training.

Prospective learners should be a registered member of BACP or alternatively a member of equivalent professional body who adheres to an ethical framework and must hold an enhanced PVG disclosure for working with children and young people.

In addition, learners' must have successfully completed the unit *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards at SCQF level 10* or be able to evidence equivalent knowledge and understanding from their previous learning and/or work experience.

### Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

### Context for delivery

If this unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

The content incorporates elements 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 of the generic therapeutic competences, elements 1–11 of the core competences for work with young people, elements 1, 2, 3 of the basic competences for humanistic counselling with young people, elements 1 and 2 of the assessment competences, elements 1 and 3 of working in an organisational context, the meta-competences for humanistic counselling with young people (all), and the specific competences for humanistic counselling with young people (all).

### Equality and inclusion

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Where evidence for outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### Outcome 1

Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of underpinning theory prior to working therapeutically with children and young people.

#### Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The theory and principles of the counselling approach
- ◆ Therapeutic relationships with children and young people
- ◆ Working with the emotions of children and young people
- ◆ Ending the therapeutic relationship with children and young people

### Outcome 2

Demonstrate an advanced understanding of competent and safe practice while working therapeutically with children and young people.

#### Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Ethical and professional practice
- ◆ Child protection and safeguarding concerns
- ◆ Child and adolescent development and transitions
- ◆ Range of communication methods dependent upon age and developmental stage
- ◆ The necessary requirement of risk assessment
- ◆ Collaborative assessments
- ◆ Using measures and monitoring outcomes
- ◆ Working with cultural diversity
- ◆ Mental health, health, pharmacology and young people
- ◆ Supervision
- ◆ Engagement with children and young people, parents and carers
- ◆ Working within and across agencies
- ◆ Working in a school setting
- ◆ Working within a voluntary/community setting
- ◆ Holding the overall perspective

## Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Outcome 3

Critically evaluate own learning and practice in supporting the mental health of young people in counselling settings.

#### Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Essential knowledge and competencies required to support the mental health of young people
- ◆ Importance of reflection, critical self-evaluation and feedback to informing own practice
- ◆ Areas of competence in own practice and areas requiring further development

#### Evidence requirements for this unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills across all outcomes by showing that they can:

#### Outcome 1

- ◆ explain the theory and principles that underpin counselling children and young people in the context of the counselling approach
- ◆ evidence own knowledge of, and competence to work in therapeutic relationships to practice with children and young people
- ◆ demonstrate competence of how to enable children and young people to process, manage, articulate, and reflect upon their emotions
- ◆ demonstrate competence in how to conclude the therapeutic relationship with children and young people and assessing need for onward referral

#### Outcome 2

- ◆ demonstrate a working knowledge of ethical, professional and legal frameworks required to practice competently with issues of confidentiality, consent and capacity relevant to children and young people
- ◆ demonstrate competency in recognising and responding to concerns about child protection relevant to work with children and young people and families
- ◆ demonstrate a working knowledge of child and adolescent development and transitions and the impact on the client, their presentation in counselling and any implications for therapeutic work
- ◆ demonstrate ability to engage and communicate with children and young people of differing age, developmental levels and backgrounds
- ◆ develop competence in conducting risk assessments and development of risk management plans when working with children and young people
- ◆ demonstrate competence in conducting collaborative assessments with children and young people

## Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards (cont)

### Unit title: Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ demonstrate confident administration and application of commonly used assessment measures when working with children and young people
- ◆ demonstrate capacity to value and understand diversity in relation to specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles of children and young people, and families/carers while demonstrating an awareness of stigmatising or discriminatory attitudes or behaviours
- ◆ demonstrate awareness of risks and benefits of pharmacology within the interaction between the child and young person's mental health and their environment
- ◆ demonstrate awareness of the requirement for regular supervision to support developing practice with children and young people
- ◆ demonstrate own awareness of the importance of appropriate communication through dialogue and information with children and young people, their parents and/or carers prior to appointment
- ◆ demonstrate ability to work effectively across agencies with particular regard to responding to safeguarding issues, confidentiality and consent
- ◆ demonstrate an in-depth understanding of school systems to ensure effective working partnership in order to provide a non-stigmatising and accessible form of early intervention for psychological difficulties
- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of organisational structure, operational context and scope of work to work effectively with a voluntary and community ('third) sector counselling setting
- ◆ demonstrate competence in working relationally with children and young people, highlighting the importance of holding an overall perspective whilst concentrating on working with finer details of the child or young person's situation and experience

### Outcome 3

- ◆ critically evaluate how own practice embedded the range of knowledge and competencies required when supporting the mental health of young people
- ◆ reflect on own areas of strength in practice and areas that require further development
- ◆ critically evaluate the way in which neglect and abuse present, including the signs of, and parental behaviours associated with neglect and abuse
- ◆ identify child protection concerns and evaluate responses where a need for child protection has been identified
- ◆ critically appraise different types of risk and risk assessment tools
- ◆ critically evaluate the social and cultural factors that may impact on access to the counselling service
- ◆ critically evaluate the effects of the practitioner's own background on the ability to identify and challenge inequality
- ◆ recognise, critically appraise, and manage appropriately, the challenges of interagency working



## Higher National Unit Support Notes

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 120 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this unit

The aim of this unit is to ensure learners have the advanced knowledge and relevant experience of working with children and young people (CYP) in order to prepare them for safe, independent practice. Building upon the essential underpinning knowledge gained from the unit *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards*, this unit will ensure that learners are supported and enabled to engage professionally and successfully with CYP clients in placement.

Upon successful completion of this unit learners will attain the necessary professional qualification to work therapeutically with CYP.

#### Outcome 1

Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of underpinning theory prior to working therapeutically with children and young people.

#### The philosophy and principles that inform the counselling approach

- ◆ The establishment of the therapeutic relationship
- ◆ Assumptions regarding client self-determination, self-direction, self-maintenance, psychological growth, development and the ability to realise own potential
- ◆ The therapeutic change process
- ◆ Assumptions relating to the diversity of human experience
- ◆ Multiple perspectives from which human experience can be viewed and the way in which these perspectives impact on the human experience

#### Theories of human growth and development underpinning the counselling approach

- ◆ What healthy functioning involves within the counselling approach
- ◆ Social and cultural contexts influencing psychological growth, eg family, school, community
- ◆ Assumptions relating to human capacity for sensing what actions contribute to their growth, eg through own emotional experience and subjective reality
- ◆ Assumptions relating to the human potential to develop a reflexive stance allowing young people to expand their self-awareness, reconstruct their experiences and make changes to their ways of functioning

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### **The conditions for, and goals of, counselling change informing the counselling approach**

A coherent framework for understanding the conditions for, and goals for, counselling change, for example, within the humanistic approach:

- ◆ Responding empathically to young people to increase their understanding and reduce their sense of isolation and alienation
- ◆ Offer a warm, accepting and non-judgemental attitude to young people to reduce defensiveness and increase their self-awareness
- ◆ Being genuine and open with clients to model psychological health and to increase levels of trust
- ◆ Create good communication and mutual understanding between counsellor and client to enable good relating
- ◆ Collaborate with the client to decide the course and content of the counselling

### **Counselling processes toward greater psychological wellbeing informing the counselling approach**

A coherent framework for understanding counselling processes toward greater psychological wellbeing, for example within the humanistic approach:

- ◆ Helping the young person explore their experiences, emotions and problems within an empathic, accepting and trusting relationship
- ◆ Helping the young person to find more effective ways of dealing with their problems, have greater self-acceptance and self-confidence, experience the world in a more holistic and integrated manner, develop better relationships through greater understanding of their own feelings and experiences
- ◆ **Develop and apply existing knowledge of, and competence in working in therapeutic relationships to practice with children and young people**

### **Initiating therapeutic relationships: rationale for the underpinning approach**

- ◆ The concept of the therapeutic alliance
- ◆ Therapist factors associated with the alliance
- ◆ Within the confines of, and appropriate to, the young person's developmental age, social and cultural context, communicating the central belief in the capacity for growth and problem resolution
- ◆ Conveying to the young person through a genuine, open and accepting attitude, the ability to develop a collaborative relationship with them as an active partner in the therapeutic work
- ◆ Describing what is hoped will emerge from the process of therapy and ways to help the young person discuss their expectations of the therapy

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Clarifying the responsibilities of the counsellor and of the young person in the therapeutic relationship
- ◆ Helping the young person to understand that therapy may increase contact with emotions, which may at times be experienced as upsetting

### **Initiating therapeutic relationships: Establishing and agreeing the therapeutic focus/goals**

- ◆ Drawing on the assessment process to develop and agree with the young person the focus/goals for the therapeutic process and develop a plan for the way in which the therapeutic work will proceed
- ◆ Balancing the changing needs of the young person throughout the therapeutic process while retaining the need for a clear focus, if this is helpful and possible for the young person
- ◆ Evaluating whether or not the young person's identified goals are being met by review dates and at the end of counselling
- ◆ Renegotiating goals as the therapy progresses
- ◆ Promoting informed choice by providing the young person with options for counselling and their effectiveness, by discussing possible negative effect of counselling, and by asking for their views on counselling
- ◆ Gauging the motivation and intervention preferences of the young person and discussing possible difficulties in engaging with counselling, including their attendance
- ◆ Agreeing an appropriate plan for the counselling, the length of the initial period of counselling and a review date
- ◆ Explaining to the young person if and when counselling is not required, and recognising whether the young person and/or their family/carer's needs might be better met by other services

### **Initiating therapeutic relationships: Developing a contract**

- ◆ Agreeing the boundaries for the therapeutic work with the young person
- ◆ Explaining confidentiality and its limits to the young person
- ◆ Explaining and agreeing how records will be kept
- ◆ Explaining the complaints procedure
- ◆ Agreeing the timing and number of counselling sessions
- ◆ Explaining what happens if the young person does not attend sessions
- ◆ Agreeing payment and procedures involved for payment (where appropriate)

### **Maintaining and developing therapeutic relationships: Experiencing and communicating empathy**

- ◆ Being sensitive to the young person's emotions and the degree to which they are in psychological contact with the counsellor
- ◆ Through the use of age appropriate empathic responses, helping the young person to articulate aspects of their subjective experience

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Maintaining a consistent empathetic attitude with the young person by being responsive to their verbal and non-verbal communication
- ◆ Sensing the young person's emotions and perceptions as if they were the counsellor's own whilst maintaining an awareness of own experiences
- ◆ Sensing and understanding the feelings and experiences within the young person's awareness, and those which have not yet entered their awareness
- ◆ The significance of the young person's body language and paralanguage to their subjective experience
- ◆ Identifying inconsistencies between the young person's verbal and non-verbal behaviour and empathising equally with it all, despite any inconsistencies
- ◆ Using empathetic communication to convey an accurate understanding of the young person's emotions and perceptions through summarising and paraphrasing, reflecting back their feelings, responding in a constructive way and using metaphor where appropriate
- ◆ Obtaining feedback from the young person to check the counsellor's perceptions are the same as those of the young person, and revise if necessary
- ◆ Grasping the clients perspective and 'world view'

### **Maintaining and developing therapeutic relationships: Communicating acceptance**

- ◆ Regardless of the young person's behaviour, attitudes and beliefs, communicating a fundamentally accepting attitude towards them
- ◆ Through verbal and non-verbal communication, offering genuine warmth and acceptance of the young person, and a welcoming and non-judgemental attitude
- ◆ Through self-reflection and supervision, exploring reasons for not being able to offer unconditional positive regard to the young person, regardless of their behaviour
- ◆ Reflecting on own values and the ways in which these might influence work with young people

### **Maintaining and developing therapeutic relationships: Maintaining authenticity**

- ◆ Remaining aware of own experiences in an accepting and non-evaluative manner whilst building a relationship with the young person
- ◆ Maintaining consistency between own experiences and the ways in which this is portrayed in the counselling relationship, and demonstrate consistency between verbal and non-verbal communication
- ◆ Fully engaging in the counselling relationship and relating to the young person in a non-defensive and open manner, and without developing an incongruent professional façade
- ◆ The capacity to tolerate and work with strong emotions and be aware of emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions and to use these therapeutically
- ◆ Relating in a spontaneous way to the young person, where appropriate
- ◆ Appropriate self-disclosure; when facilitative and relevant to the young person's concerns; not when likely to impede the young person's counselling process

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### **Maintaining the therapeutic alliance: Recognising and addressing threats and ruptures to the therapeutic alliance**

- ◆ Identifying and responding to strains in the alliance
- ◆ Deploying interventions in response to disagreements and strains in the alliance
- ◆ **Demonstrate competence in enabling children and young people to process, manage, articulate, and reflect upon their emotions**

### **Accessing and expressing emotions**

- ◆ Ways in which young people manage and process their emotions, including when they are finding it difficult to access emotions
- ◆ Helping young people to experience feelings which may be out of current awareness
- ◆ Helping young people find ways to describe emotions which seem difficult to access, attend to their physiological sensations and enabling them to focus their attention inwardly
- ◆ Helping the young person differentiate between feelings that are appropriate to dealing with a current situation and those that are less helpful

### **Articulating and reflecting on emotions and developing new understandings**

- ◆ Helping the young person find appropriate words to describe their emotions
- ◆ Helping the young person verbalise their concerns, meanings and memories which emerge out of emotional arousal
- ◆ Helping the young person identify and verbalise the wishes, needs, behaviours and goals associated with feelings and emotions
- ◆ Using imagery and metaphor to aid the young person's awareness and articulation of their experiences
- ◆ Helping young people to explore and evaluate new perspectives, and reflect on any new meanings that emerge
- ◆ Helping young people to evaluate new perspectives in relation to their social context, personal values and life goals
- ◆ Helping young people to make sense of confusing and distressing experiences
- ◆ Helping young people to develop new ways of understanding their situation and their responses to it

### **Emotions that interfere with effective change**

- ◆ Containing strong emotions that may overwhelm the young person whilst helping them reach an optimal level of emotional arousal
- ◆ Helping the young person to get in touch with emotions that are being avoided
- ◆ Helping the young person process emotional issues, such as excessive anger, that may interfere with effective change

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Using techniques to help the young person manage and contain strong emotions and their associated behaviours (eg naming emotions, expressing appropriateness of behaviours, use of time out procedures)
- ◆ Providing support for the parents/carers to enable them to help the young person with the expression of appropriate emotions and behaviours

### Emotions that facilitate change

- ◆ Helping the young person to access, express and experience their emotions so as to facilitate change
- ◆ Exploring the young person's emotions using developmentally appropriate techniques

### Reflecting on the young person's emotional expression

- ◆ Reflecting on the young person's emotional expression as a form of communication
- ◆ Reflecting on the young person's current and past context in relation to the meaning of the behavioural and/or emotional expression
- ◆ Describing and exploring with the young person the meaning of the emotion and/or behaviour
- ◆ Reflecting on own reaction to the clients emotional and/or behavioural expression through exploration in supervision

### Developing new understandings

- ◆ Helping the young person to explore and evaluate new perspectives
- ◆ Helping the young person to reflect on any new meanings that emerge, check the accuracy of the meaning against the experience, assess the implications, examine their behaviour and consider alternative forms of action
- ◆ Helping the young person to adapt central assumptions about self, others and relationships in the light of experience

### Creative methods and resources

- ◆ Using creative methods and resources to help young people express, reflect upon, and make sense of their experiences
- ◆ Recognising and making judgements about when the use of creative and symbolic methods may help the young person
- ◆ Using different creative methods and resources appropriate to working with young people, such as art, play material, sand tray, life story, therapeutic games
- ◆ The advantages of using creative methods
- ◆ The ways in which the use of creative methods can provide opportunities for young people to project their inner experience into the perceptual field they share with the counsellor
- ◆ The ways in which creative methods can help young people access and explore their feelings, thoughts and beliefs
- ◆ Using creative methods to help the client externalise internal conflict between aspects of self

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Using creative methods to help the client explore the relationships between the young person and significant others
- ◆ Exploring the young person's problematic situations in the past, present and future through the use of creative methods and further explore alternative scenarios
- ◆ Collaborating with the young person to select appropriate creative methods consistent with their needs and abilities
- ◆ Helping young people describe and explore their experience when engaging with creative/symbolic methods
- ◆ Adopting a non-intrusive and noninterpretive stance when helping the young person explore the personal meanings which emerge in creative work
- ◆ Helping the young person make sense of the meanings and experiences that emerge when using creative methods and resources

### Use of Life Story

- ◆ The purposes of using Life Story
- ◆ When Life Story is not recommended for young people (eg post-traumatic stress disorder)
- ◆ The benefits of using Life Story
- ◆ Using creative methods to help the young person represent their life story and difficult events within it
- ◆ Helping the young person to integrate difficult experiences/events into their Life Story and describe and reflect upon these, as well as helping with accompanying emotional reactions
- ◆ Helping the young person to project their Life Story into the future in order to review hopes and aspirations
- ◆ **Demonstrate competence in enabling children and young people to process, manage, articulate, and reflect upon their emotions**

### Concluding therapeutic relationships

- ◆ Working collaboratively with the young person to identify when they may be ready to end counselling, for example, if they have achieved their goals, where counselling is no longer helping, where an alternative intervention is considered more appropriate, or where counselling attendance is being used for avoiding other things
- ◆ Initiating the conclusion of the counselling relationship
- ◆ Negotiating the ending of counselling with the young person and what information will need to be communicated to other parties
- ◆ Reviewing the young person's progress
- ◆ Helping the young person to make effective use of the end phase, such as helping the young person to express feelings connected to endings
- ◆ Helping the young person to express their thoughts and emotions not previously addressed in counselling

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Developing strategies with the young person for the end of counselling, discussing their future in the context of their current social relationships
- ◆ When it is not the choice of the young person to end, discussing ways that will best support their progress, with options for future counselling and support should the need arise
- ◆ Identifying when it may be appropriate to offer the young person a follow up session to provide ongoing support for them and to maintain positive change, and communicate the purpose, nature and context of this follow-up session to them, including timings, venue and ways in which reminders may be sent to the young person

### Working with planned and unplanned endings

- ◆ Preparing for endings with reference to the time-limited nature of the counselling, at the beginning and throughout the process, if appropriate
- ◆ Assessing risk to the young person that may be apparent following discharge from the service, and contact with and/or referral on to relevant agencies/professionals
- ◆ Working with feelings of loss and/or separation and with feelings of anxiety about ending
- ◆ Reflecting on the learning gained from counselling and preparation to transition to another service, if appropriate
- ◆ Exploring reasons for early termination of the counselling contract with the young person if Gillick competent, and the parents/carers if appropriate
- ◆ Exploring concerns with the young person about the counselling service
- ◆ Implementing procedures in response to 'failure to attend' appointments

### Outcome 2

Demonstrate an advanced understanding of competent and safe practice while working therapeutically with children and young people.

### Professional and ethical principles

- ◆ Key principles that inform ethical practice and appropriate standards of conduct (with reference to BACP's current Ethical Framework and any revisions thereafter)
- ◆ Identifying and dealing with potential ethical conflicts
- ◆ Making the best use of professional support networks and clinical supervision
- ◆ Understanding own limits of competence
- ◆ Identifying and carrying out onward referrals when necessary
- ◆ Identifying and minimising the potential for harm
- ◆ Working in collaboration with other professionals
- ◆ Working with issues of capacity and informed consent, including assessing the young person's capacity to consent
- ◆ Gaining consent from service users for counselling interventions
- ◆ Using age and developmentally appropriate communication
- ◆ Maintaining confidentiality and managing disclosures and requests for information by third parties
- ◆ Boundaries of the work and maintaining appropriate standards of conduct

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Storing and sharing data in line with data protection legislation
- ◆ Keeping and maintaining appropriate records
- ◆ Appropriate communication with service users, other practitioners and services
- ◆ Informing young people and their families about issues of confidentiality and information sharing
- ◆ Advocating for service users, including how to respond to a young person's complaint about their care
- ◆ Anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice

### Legal frameworks relating to work with young people

- ◆ Variations in legislation across the four home nations of the UK
- ◆ Legal frameworks which determine the criteria for capacity and informed consent, eg: Age of Legal Capacity Act (Scotland) 1991; Mental Capacity Act in England and Wales (2005); Gillick Competency, etc
- ◆ The principles of the relevant legislation relating to parent/carer rights and responsibilities, eg: Children Scotland Act 1995; The Parental Responsibilities and Parental Rights Agreement (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2009
- ◆ Taking young people's needs into account when making welfare decisions that pertain to them, eg: Children Scotland Act 1995; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ◆ Data protection and disclosure of information legislation, eg: Data Protection Act 1998; Human Rights Act 1998
- ◆ Contractual obligations, legislation and guidance which relate to the protection and physical punishment of young people, eg: Children Acts (1989 England and 1995 Scotland); Children Act 2004 in England and Wales; Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003
- ◆ Mental health legislation, eg: Mental Health Act for England and Wales (1983, 1995 and 2007); The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003; The Mental Capacity Act (England/Wales) (2005)
- ◆ Legislation that addresses the educational needs of young people who may face barriers to their learning and need additional support, eg: Education Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004; Education Act (England) (1996, 2002); Special educational needs changes to the law (England) (2007)
- ◆ Equality legislation to protect people from discrimination, eg: The Equality Act 2010
- ◆ **Demonstrate competency in recognising and responding to concerns about child protection relevant to work with children and young people and families**

### Contributing to holistic assessments

- ◆ Assessment of risk
- ◆ Consideration of the young person's individual context, their developmental needs and the parents'/caregivers' capacity to respond to these needs
- ◆ Strengths and challenges within the young person, their family and the context in which they live
- ◆ Using young person and family development and wellbeing indicators to inform judgements about areas of concern, including those of parental neglect and/or failure to thrive

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Presentation of neglect and abuse

- ◆ Concepts of significant harm
- ◆ Desensitisation to neglect in areas of high prevalence of poverty and deprivation
- ◆ Criteria for significant harm
- ◆ The ways that abuse and neglect are manifested
- ◆ Prevalence of abuse and neglect, short and long term effects of abuse, including cumulative effects

### Recognising signs of abuse and neglect

- ◆ Indicators, signs and symptoms of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, verbal and bullying) and neglect
- ◆ The effects of abuse, bullying and neglect on a young person
- ◆ Behaviours of parents associated with abuse and/or neglect
- ◆ Parental, social and young person risk factors
- ◆ Protective factors
- ◆ The application of child protection principles
- ◆ Maintaining a young person-centred approach to ensure a consistent focus on the welfare of the young person and on their feelings and viewpoints
- ◆ Statutory responsibilities of adults (eg parents/carers, school staff) to keep young people safe from harm

### Responding to and reporting child protection concerns

- ◆ The application of relevant legislation and local policies and procedures
- ◆ Reporting suspicions of risk to appropriate internal and external partners/agencies, sharing information with relevant parties, using information from other relevant agencies such as health visitors, GPs, specialist CAMHS
- ◆ Recording information including recording reasons for decisions not to report concerns
- ◆ Good communication with all those at risk and following appropriate procedures

### Child protection plans and implementation of protective interventions

- ◆ Contributing information relevant to multiagency child protection meetings
- ◆ Participating in the development of multiagency child protection plans
- ◆ Implementing protective interventions
- ◆ Providing ongoing support for the young person and/or their family/carers when compulsory measures are necessary, and/or during an ongoing protection investigation

### Recording and reporting interventions

- ◆ Documenting decisions and actions taken
- ◆ Recording and reporting interventions for which the counsellor is responsible

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Interagency working

- ◆ Roles and responsibilities of other services
- ◆ Collaborating with relevant agencies
- ◆ Communication with relevant agencies
- ◆ Escalating concerns within own agency, or between agencies

### Seeking advice and supervision

- ◆ Making use of supervision and support when dealing with child protection concerns
- ◆ Recognising limits of own competence
  
- ◆ **Demonstrate a working knowledge of child and adolescent development and transitions and the impact on the client, their presentation in counselling and any implications for therapeutic work**

### Child and adolescent development

- ◆ Age/developmentally appropriate and problematic behaviours
- ◆ Theories of child and adolescent physical development
- ◆ Theories of cognitive development
- ◆ Theories of social and emotional development
- ◆ Age-appropriate and problematic behaviours
- ◆ Concepts of developmental stages, including physical, affective and interpersonal, cognitive, language, social and psychosexual milestones
- ◆ The effects of developmental transitions (eg onset of puberty)
- ◆ The interaction between aspects of a young person's development and contextual factors
- ◆ The implications of developmental stages for therapeutic work

### Interaction between the care environment and child and adolescent development:

#### Attachment

- ◆ Attachment theory and its implications for child and adolescent cognitive, emotional and social development
- ◆ Attachment theory and its relationship:
  - in the development of parent/carer and child, siblings, and peer relationships
  - to the development of emotional wellbeing, self-regulation, mental health, and mental health problems
  - to the development of resilience to stressful and adverse experiences and difficult interpersonal experiences
  - to children and young people who are adopted or looked after
- ◆ The implications of attachment for the therapeutic relationship

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### **Interaction between the care environment and child and adolescent development: Influence of parent/carer**

- ◆ Impact of the pre- and peri-natal environment on child and adolescent development
- ◆ Parenting styles and impact on child and adolescent development
- ◆ Ways in which the parent's/carer's communication, interaction and stimulation of their child interacts with the child's development, attainment and developing mental health
- ◆ Ways in which effective forms of parent/carer engagement change as children and young people develop
- ◆ Ways in which the balance of influence from parents/carers, peers, authority figures and others alter as the child or young person develops
- ◆ Ways in which emotional and cognitive immaturity, mental health difficulties such as substance misuse, loss, abuse, social disadvantage, and adversity or negative experiences for parents in their own lives make it more difficult for them to offer consistent or positive parenting
- ◆ The positive effects of parent/carer support on attachment relationships and child and adolescent development

### **Interaction between the care environment and child and adolescent development:**

#### **Play activities**

- ◆ The importance of play for all aspects of social, cognitive and emotional development
- ◆ Assessing whether a child or adolescent's level and type of play is broadly normative for their age group, and effective ways of stimulating play activity in young people by offering appropriate materials and descriptive commenting
- ◆ The value of young-person-led rather than adult-led play activity
- ◆ The positive and negative impact of electronic media on child and adolescent development

#### **Family development**

- ◆ Viewing the young person's needs within the context of family, other significant relationships, their social and community setting, the professional networks involved with them, their cultural setting, and the socio-political environment
- ◆ Different family structures and compositions
- ◆ The family lifecycle and differences across social contexts and cultures
- ◆ The impact of significant family transitions on the family and the young person, such as birth of a new family member, starting school, bereavement
- ◆ The impact of social adversity such as loss, abuse, social change, socio-economic disadvantage, health inequality

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Interaction between the external environment and child and adolescent development

- ◆ The challenges and positive opportunities the external environment can present for young people
- ◆ The statutory requirement to attend school or college and the impact of institutional demands on the young person (eg wearing a uniform, enforced attendance in particular curriculum areas)
- ◆ The impact of summative and continuous assessment procedures on the young person's emotional wellbeing
- ◆ The sense of achievement for the young person in acquiring new knowledge and skills
- ◆ The challenges to the young person in becoming a working-age adult
- ◆ The impact of peer relationships (eg peer support, a growing sense of individual identity, inclusion or exclusion of various groups, involvement in risk-taking behaviours such as smoking, glue/paint sniffing, inhaling aerosol vapours, alcohol, drugs, promiscuity and involvement in anti-social behaviours)
  
- ◆ **Demonstrate ability to engage and communicate with children and young people of differing age, developmental levels and backgrounds**

### Development

- ◆ Attachment theory and its implications for engagement
- ◆ Developmental stages and differences across childhood and adolescence and their implications for therapeutic work
- ◆ Differences across ages of the young person's understanding of their own and others' mental states and of interpersonal situations
- ◆ Communication from young people with regard to counselling work and their ability to articulate emotions and thoughts, and communication through behaviours
- ◆ Offering developmentally appropriate information about counselling and the interventions used
- ◆ Adjusting language to the young person's developmental level
- ◆ Avoiding the use of leading, multiple and double questions

### Engaging with the young person's perspective

- ◆ The importance of patience and persistence in helping the young person to express themselves
- ◆ Using language, attitudes, behaviours and interests of others of comparable age to that of the young person
- ◆ Showing interest in the young person, as a person
- ◆ Showing neutrality in relation to problematic behaviour
- ◆ Staying close to the young person's language, emotional state and developmental capacities
- ◆ Using play materials and other creative resources as appropriate

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Activities to aid engagement

- ◆ Using alternative, or adjustments to, settings if the young person is finding engagement difficult
- ◆ Using appropriate observation and comment upon play and behaviour with a variety of toys and creative activities
- ◆ Helping the young person to engage through the use of play materials, pictures, art, and drama activities

### Expression of the young person

- ◆ Using scaffolding communication and initiating contact
- ◆ Using scales to aid communication
- ◆ Encouraging thinking aloud for the young person, normalising their experience, helping them to offer their opinion
- ◆ Moving between session subject content with ease, and between play materials and verbal discussion

### Engagement when parent and/or carer is present

- ◆ Enabling understanding of the parameters of the session
- ◆ Enabling opportunities for all parties' points of view to be heard
- ◆ Enabling understanding of the session to those present, including the young person
- ◆ **Develop competence in conducting risk assessments and development of risk management plans when working with children and young people**

### Knowledge of policies and legislation

- ◆ Local and national strategy standards, policies and procedures regarding clinical assessment and risk management
- ◆ National and local child protection standards, policies and procedures
- ◆ The principles of relevant Mental Health Acts
- ◆ Local policies of confidentiality and information sharing
- ◆ Statutory responsibilities of adults to keep young people safe

### Knowledge of risks, risk assessments and the management process

- ◆ Different forms of clinical risk routinely assessed in clinical practice
- ◆ The main risk factors for self-harm, self-neglect, harm to others and harm from others
- ◆ Aims of risk assessment
- ◆ The different types of risk assessment and their limitations
- ◆ Different types of risk factors
- ◆ The benefits and limitations of risk assessment tools as part of the risk assessment
- ◆ Different stages of risk assessment and by whom these might be conducted
- ◆ Identifying and carrying out onward referral where necessary

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Advice and supervision

- ◆ Awareness of the limitations of own expertise and gaining advice from appropriate individuals (eg supervisor, other clinical team members, forensic teams, Caldicott Guardian, social workers, etc)

### Assessment of risk

- ◆ Conducting comprehensive assessments, including in-depth structured risk assessments, combining information from clinical interviews, measures, observations and other agencies within the context of a strong working alliance with young people
- ◆ Carrying out systematic assessments of the demographics, psychological, social and historical factors known to be risk factors for self-harm, self-neglect, harm to and from others, the likelihood of a harmful event occurring, the type of event, the frequency of the event, the severity of the event, the timing of the event and any impact of protective factors
- ◆ Identifying young people's views of their own experiences, possible trigger factors and harmful events, and ideas about interventions that might reduce risk for the client, including helping the client to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ Considering young people's developmental age and ways in which this affects perception and understanding of behaviours and risk
- ◆ Identifying the extent to which adults involved in a young person's care are able to assess and manage risk and the extent to which they need to be involved in building a risk assessment

### Developing a risk management plan

- ◆ Factors likely to increase and/or decrease risk
- ◆ Collaborating with the young person, identifying actions to be taken by the young person and relevant services when there is an acute increase in risk factors and/or the family perceives they are in crisis
- ◆ The potential benefits and harms of choosing one intervention over another
- ◆ Identifying the appropriateness of employing an intervention that involves an element of risk
- ◆ Communicating the risk management plan to the young person, the parents/carers and to other professionals, including information about the potential benefits and risks of a decision and the reasons for a particular plan
- ◆ Considering assumptions and stereotypes about specific demographic groups that lead to under-estimation or over-estimation of actual risk
- ◆ Collaborating with all relevant agencies, maintaining records of assessments and decisions for managing risk, escalating concerns within own and other agencies, referral to more specialist agencies when required

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ **Demonstrate competence in conducting collaborative assessments with children and young people**

### Knowledge of assessment process

- ◆ The fundamental principles that guide counselling assessments with young people
- ◆ Local and national assessment procedures, including those that can be completed by different agencies working together

### Engaging the young person and matching capacities of the assessment with them

- ◆ Using knowledge of human development to appraise the young person's functioning and level of understanding and adapting communication accordingly
- ◆ Use of interpreters when necessary and appropriate
- ◆ Explaining the nature of the assessment to the young person and understanding their world view
- ◆ Discussion of confidentiality and its limits
- ◆ Working collaboratively with the young person in assessments
- ◆ Working with the 'whole person'
- ◆ Identifying potential risk areas and suitable interventions

### Undertaking a generic assessment

- ◆ Putting the young person at ease
- ◆ Agreeing goals and aiding articulation of these by the young person, and of any concerns they may have
- ◆ Discussing the benefits of counselling with the young person and intervention options
- ◆ Gaining an overview of the young person's current life situation, psychological difficulties and motivation for psychological intervention
- ◆ Assessing the young person's coping mechanisms
- ◆ Working in accordance with the young person's developmental level

### Assessing the young person's difficulties, current functioning, strengths and abilities

- ◆ Identifying and exploring any difficulties of concern to the young person, and helping them to identify and articulate these
- ◆ Discussing ways in which the young person sees their difficulties developing
- ◆ Identifying, with the young person, areas of good and poor management of their situation and ways in which this impacts on their everyday lives
- ◆ Specific mental health presentations and any drug and alcohol use
- ◆ Discussing current/past contact with legal services if appropriate and the significance of these
- ◆ Tracking emotionally significant themes throughout the process of counselling assessment
- ◆ Assessment of the young person's current levels of personal, interpersonal, social and academic functioning
- ◆ Exploring with the young person their strengths, abilities, resilience and future hopes

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### **Collaborative understanding of the young person's life story, social and cultural context**

- ◆ Integration of information from family, school and other relevant sources
- ◆ Discussing, with the young person, their understanding of their own development and that of the family
- ◆ Areas of familial support and stressors
- ◆ Areas of strengths, difficulties and interests in school
- ◆ Mental health concerns across different cultures, ethnicities and social classes and of social support in these areas within their community
- ◆ Discussing with the young person, their peer groups, drawing on knowledge of the young person's cultural, racial and religious background

### **Use of tools and measures**

- ◆ Identifying suitable outcome and process measures and understand their function and benefits
- ◆ Identifying frequency of data collection
- ◆ Use of 'containers' for using assessment tools
- ◆ Aims and focus of assessment tools
- ◆ Interpretation of assessment tools and discussing this with the young person
- ◆ Engaging the young person in the assessment process and helping them to complete measures as appropriate
- ◆ Discussion of re-focus and goals as a result of process and outcome measure
- ◆ **Demonstrate confident administration and application of commonly used assessment measures when working with children and young people**

### **Commonly used measures and their purpose and application**

- ◆ Measures of the young person's functioning
- ◆ Goal-based measures
- ◆ Symptom-specific measures
- ◆ Service satisfaction questionnaires
- ◆ Purpose of the measures and their respective sensitivities
- ◆ Relevant application of measures and their scoring and interpretation procedures

### **Selection and administration of outcome measures**

- ◆ Assisting a young person completing the measure and taking into account a young person's behaviour and attitude when completing measures
- ◆ Using appropriate guidelines to score and interpret the measure
- ◆ Limitations of measures in capturing the complexities of the young person
- ◆ Appropriate selection and use of different measures designed for different purposes and domains of the young person's functioning
- ◆ The purpose and administration of pre- and post-intervention measures

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Diary use

- ◆ Using systematic recordings for analysing the antecedents and consequences of a specific behaviour
- ◆ Integrating systematic 'diary recordings' into assessment and intervention, including frequency charts, behavioural diaries, structured charts
- ◆ Introducing the use of simple measures, graduating to more complex ones as the young person and/or parents/carers familiarise themselves with different processes
- ◆ Following up sessions with the young person and parent/carer to understand their interpretation of the data, the ease with which they used the measure, and their motivation to do so
- ◆ The theory and use of 'star charts' and how to introduce these to the parent/carer
- ◆ **Demonstrate capacity to value and understand diversity in relation to specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles of children and young people, and families/carers while demonstrating an awareness of stigmatising or discriminatory attitudes or behaviours**

### Significance for practice of specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles

- ◆ The critical nature of background, lifestyle, beliefs and religious practices and the way these impact on potential disadvantage and/or discrimination
- ◆ Service users belonging to multiple 'groups' (eg being a gay adolescent from a minority ethnic community), and the lifestyle factors involved
- ◆ Potential significance of social and cultural variation across a range of domains, including ethnicity, culture, gender and gender identity, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, socio-economic deprivation, class, age, disability, family configuration and the way these may impact on accessibility, effectiveness and acceptability of assessment or therapeutic intervention

### Service access and communication

- ◆ Restriction or reduction of access to interventions because of certain social and cultural factors (eg language, marginalisation, mistrust of statutory services, lack of knowledge about access to services, attitudes and stigma or shame toward wellbeing, mental health, help-seeking and counselling)
- ◆ Impact of socio-economic status on access to resources, and ways in which social inequalities impact on development of mental health in young people, parents/carers
- ◆ Impact of factors such as socio-economic disadvantage and/or disability on practical arrangements that may affect attendance and engagement
- ◆ Communication of respect by taking a willing and active interest in the social and cultural background of the young person and their families/carers
- ◆ Use of strategies and/or use of interpreter/advocate when language between the young person and family/carer differs
- ◆ Adaptation of communication with young people and parents/carers when necessary to help them discuss and reflect on their experiences

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### The experience of specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles

- ◆ Working collaboratively with the young person and their family/carer in a sensitive way to understand their culture and world view
- ◆ The implications of culturally specific customs and expectations
- ◆ Whether the clients experience has shaped the presenting problems and working with the young person and their family/carer to identify how they locate themselves if they 'straddle' cultures
- ◆ Relationships and representations of self, individuality and personal/collective responsibility for the young person and their family/carer in their culture and how these might impact on delivery of an intervention

### Practitioner's awareness

- ◆ Ways in which the practitioner's background and own group membership, values and beliefs might influence their perceptions of the client, the client's problem and the therapeutic relationship
- ◆ Reflection on power differences between themselves and the young person and their parents/carers
- ◆ Empowerment of the young person and their families/carers through engagement
- ◆ Identification of inequalities in access to services; challenge facilitation, such as home visiting, flexible working, links to community resources
- ◆ Identifying client groups whose needs are not being met by current services, the reasons why and potential solutions

### Assessment measures and interventions

- ◆ Ways in which standardised assessments/measures are used and interpreted to take account of the demographic membership of the young person
- ◆ Making appropriate adjustments to interventions in order to maximise potential benefit to the client if evidence exists that accessibility and effectiveness of the intervention may be impaired because of beliefs and lifestyle
- ◆ Adapting treatments if evidence exists that a clinical problem is influenced by membership of a particular community or that clients from a specific community respond poorly to certain evidenced-based approaches
- ◆ **Demonstrate awareness of risks and benefits of pharmacology within the interaction between the child and young person's mental health and their environment**

### Knowledge and understanding of mental health problems in young people

- ◆ Factors such as good physical health, high self-esteem, secure attachments and higher levels of social support promote wellbeing and emotional resilience
- ◆ Ways in which the range of mental health and neuro-developmental conditions emerge and present in young people and adults

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Influence of normal child development and developmental psychopathology on the ways in which mental health difficulties present (eg younger individuals may somatise or act out, rather than verbalise their emotional difficulties)
- ◆ Social, psychological, family and biological factors associated with the development and maintenance of mental health problems and the problems which commonly occur with the mental health presentation
- ◆ Ways in which mental health problems can impact on family functioning, maintaining intimate family and social relationships, and/or the capacity to maintain employment and study
- ◆ Diagnostic criteria for child and adolescent mental health conditions specified in the main classifications systems (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual [DSM V] and the International Classification of Diseases [ICD 10])
- ◆ Incidence and prevalence of mental health presentations across different cultures, ethnicities and social classes

### Knowledge of pharmacology in work with young people

- ◆ Medications commonly prescribed in young peoples' psychopharmacology, and the conditions for which they are used
- ◆ Role of medication in the treatment of young people with mental health problems, the risks and benefits of the medication and how to discuss this with health professionals and families
- ◆ Evidence for the benefits of medication alone and medication offered in combination with psychological interventions
- ◆ National guidance, such as the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and/or the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) guidelines, regarding the role of medication for young people with mental health problems
- ◆ **Demonstrate awareness of the requirement for regular supervision to support developing practice with children and young people**

### Working collaboratively with supervisor

- ◆ Working with the supervisor to generate an explicit agreement about the parameters of supervision and communicating current state of competence and training needs
- ◆ Being honest and open about the therapeutic work being undertaken in an active and engaging way
- ◆ Presenting material in supervision in a focused and relevant manner

### Self-appraisal and reflection

- ◆ Reflecting on the supervisor's feedback and applying new learning/awareness in future client work and evaluating the impact and effectiveness of this
- ◆ Being open and realistic about own capabilities and self-appraising competence in supervision
- ◆ Using the supervisor's feedback to further develop self-appraisal and reflection
- ◆ Using supervision to expand self-awareness in relation to own responses to clients, their material and perceptions

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Active learning

- ◆ Working with the supervisor regarding relevant reading and understand what impact this has on the counselling work
- ◆ Initiating activity in relevant learning areas and sharing with the supervisor the purpose of these and impact on the counselling work

### Developing personal and professional roles

- ◆ Using supervision to discuss the personal impact of the work
- ◆ Using supervision to discuss professional development in relation to the counselling work
- ◆ Reflecting on the quality of supervision
- ◆ Reflecting on the quality of supervision (in accordance with national and professional guidelines)
- ◆ Seeking advice from others if necessary and/or appropriate to do so

### Self-awareness

- ◆ Using supervision to develop self-awareness
- ◆ Self-awareness in relation to own contribution to the supervisory relationship and the supervision process
- ◆ **Explain the importance of appropriate communication through dialogue and information with children and young people, their parents and/or carers prior to appointment**

### Family member engagement

- ◆ Ways to engage all present parties by showing empathy and respect and provide everyone with the opportunity to communicate, participate and be listened to
- ◆ Showing interest in all communications, including behaviour, drawings and play when appropriate
- ◆ Paying attention to the perspectives of each individual on the functioning of the family

### Communication

- ◆ Tailoring language, session pace and content appropriately
- ◆ Recognising if and when an interpreter is necessary for clients whose first language differs from those with whom they are working
- ◆ Working with an interpreter and what this entails for the practitioner
- ◆ Checking the clients understanding and inviting and responding to questions

### Positive alliance

- ◆ Therapeutic factors that help develop a positive alliance

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Humour and play

- ◆ Using humour at a developmentally appropriate level
- ◆ The benefits and risks of using humour
- ◆ Using humour in a way that is congruent with intent

### Promoting understanding of the service and intervention

- ◆ Exploring the clients expectations and concerns about the service
- ◆ Generating hope for positive change
- ◆ Making sure clients understand how the service works, how it manages confidentiality and the ways in which information is communicated to others

### Working in partnership with young people and other family members

- ◆ Ways to work collaboratively in order to empower the young person and family members (eg not using jargon, helping them to identify their goals, collaboratively problem solving, etc)
- ◆ Reinforcing and validating insights offered

### Challenges to engagement

- ◆ Identifying threats to engagement (eg strong emotions within sessions, practical issues outside sessions, social stigma/discriminative issues)
- ◆ Exploring previous history with psychological services/counselling
- ◆ Using supervision to explore ways in which own behaviours might impact on engagement with the client

### Client engagement in routine service user participation

- ◆ Collaborating in decisions about service user's care
- ◆ Involving client in the evaluation of interventions and/or service
- ◆ Involving client in the planning of service developments, where appropriate
- ◆ **Demonstrate ability to work effectively across agencies with particular regard to responding to safeguarding issues, confidentiality and consent**

### Inter-agency working

- ◆ The indicators that make interagency working beneficial to the young person
- ◆ The benefits of early collaboration with other agencies whose involvement is important or critical to the welfare of the young person and their family/carers
- ◆ The range of agencies and community resources, and their roles, culture and responsibilities
- ◆ Where own, service and other agency areas of responsibility lie in relation to assessment, planning, intervention and review
- ◆ Local policies on confidentiality and information sharing, both within own organisation and between different agencies
- ◆ National and local child protection standards, policies and procedures, including those of assessment, risk management and failure to attend appointments

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Inter-agency procedures

- ◆ Procedures for raising concerns when a young person is at risk and/or not achieving their educational and/or emotional potential
- ◆ Procedures for making referrals and/or sharing concerns with other services and professionals, including with the Designated Child Protection Officer/Lead
- ◆ Common holistic assessment procedures for the young person, such as the Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF) and Common Assessment Form (CAF)
- ◆ Common recording procedures across agencies, such as shared IT systems and databases

### Information sharing, communication and coordinating work

- ◆ Information sharing on a case by case basis, including risks of sharing, and of not sharing information
- ◆ Information sharing which is necessary, proportionate, relevant, timely and secure
- ◆ Issues of confidentiality and consent when interagency working
- ◆ Communication within and across agencies
- ◆ Potential barriers to effective communication within and across agencies
- ◆ Coordinating work with other agencies
- ◆ Challenges to inter-agency working
- ◆ **Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of school systems to ensure effective working partnership in order to provide a non-stigmatising and accessible form of early intervention for psychological difficulties**

### Partnership working

- ◆ The impact of the ethos, culture and core business of a school on a counselling service
- ◆ Governing and organisational structures of schools and roles and responsibilities of teaching and support staff
- ◆ Assessment systems used by schools
- ◆ Ways that young people are grouped in terms of tutor and year groups
- ◆ Critical transition periods during young people's school careers
- ◆ Frameworks for external inspection and the impact on the school community
- ◆ School policies and procedures
- ◆ The impact of the school context on the counselling service, eg access and referral — management of client confidentiality — scheduling appointments — location of counselling service and the privacy this allows
- ◆ Benefits/pitfalls of teachers having awareness of a young person's attendance at counselling
- ◆ Promotion of the school counselling service and how this may affect young people's perception and understanding of counselling, and their autonomy over it
- ◆ Ways in which the counselling service may impact on the school system
- ◆ Responsibilities for good communication with school managers, particularly where issues of risk and safeguarding arise
- ◆ National, local authority and school policies, procedures and initiatives relevant to school-based counselling
- ◆ Contributing to meetings and writing reports

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Communication across the school context

- ◆ Effective communication, verbally and in writing, with different stakeholder groups to: clarify the role of school-based counselling services — publicise the service — describing the potential benefits of counselling — explaining how the service operates, how to access it and what the codes of practice are that apply to counselling
- ◆ Managing the tension between the need to share information and the need for client confidentiality, drawing on relevant knowledge of consent
- ◆ Communicating general trends in behaviour causing concern to school management
- ◆ Managing and negotiating out-of-session contact with clients around the school site, balancing the need for client privacy with a visible presence within the school

### Working collaboratively across the school context

- ◆ Working collaboratively with school management to establish the role and purpose of counselling and its codes of practice
- ◆ Establishing a link teacher with the counselling service and liaising regularly with them
- ◆ Managing an appointment system that has due regard to the demands of the school curriculum and managing missed appointments
- ◆ Negotiating service delivery in an appropriate setting within the school and accessibility of the service outside school hours and to those not attending school but on the school roll
- ◆ Evaluating a school counselling service and providing reports on service usage
- ◆ Developing procedures for managing missed appointments
- ◆ **Demonstrate an understanding of organisational structure, operational context and scope of work to work effectively with a voluntary and community ('third) sector counselling setting**

### The organisational structure, operational context and scope of work

- ◆ Organisational governance, organisational and management structures
- ◆ Organisational principles, mission and purpose, principal funders, and strategic business plans
- ◆ Legal and financial responsibilities of trustees
- ◆ Organisation operational context, including referral routes into the service, cross-referral protocols with other agencies, etc
- ◆ Limits to the counselling relationship or scope of the work in relation to operational context
- ◆ Alternative, appropriate services and interventions that may be relevant to the young person's identified needs

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Implementation of policies and procedures

- ◆ Staff policies
- ◆ Policies governing the delivery of the counselling service, eg confidentiality, personal data management, child protection and safeguarding
- ◆ Policies for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating services
- ◆ Completing statistical and other records as part of an organisations audit and governance structure
- ◆ Collecting and responding to service user feedback
- ◆ Line management and clinical supervision

### Collaborative working

- ◆ Roles, responsibilities and expertise of other staff members
- ◆ Contributing to meetings, training events and professional development
- ◆ **Demonstrate competence in working relationally with children and young people, highlighting the importance of holding an overall perspective whilst concentrating on working with finer details of the child or young person's situation and experience**

### Working with the whole person

- ◆ Maintaining a holistic perspective when working with clients
- ◆ Considering the client's cultural and social context in order to empathise with their frame of reference
- ◆ Considering developmental issues when appraising a client's capacity to tolerate emotion

### Balancing therapeutic tasks

- ◆ Balancing an understanding of the client's individual experiences and characteristics with knowledge of normative development
- ◆ Balancing the use of standardised therapeutic methods with practices that are tailored to the client's individual preferences and needs
- ◆ Balancing tensions between the therapeutic relationship and achievement of therapeutic tasks
- ◆ Balancing client autonomy with the need to attend to issues of client safety and risk
- ◆ Holding responsibility for the therapeutic frame whilst sharing power appropriately with the client
- ◆ Adopting an accepting and non-judgemental attitude toward the client whilst acknowledging own feelings and reactions to the client
- ◆ Maintaining a balance between supporting the client's experience, and challenging, and not condoning, problematic behaviours
- ◆ Attending to both the content and process in the therapeutic relationship
- ◆ Balancing the client's emotional arousal with the need for understanding and meaning in the therapeutic relationship

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Judging the appropriateness of using creative methods and resources to encourage active emotional expression
- ◆ Maintaining a client-centred relational stance when implementing therapeutic interventions
- ◆ Balancing hope for positive outcomes with realistic appraisal
- ◆ Monitoring the client's emotional needs and capacities when engaging in therapeutic tasks

### **Integrating the counsellor's experience into the therapeutic relationship**

- ◆ Reflecting on the ways in which client and counsellor communicate with each other
- ◆ Using 'meta-communication' to help the client understand relational difficulties and misunderstandings and explaining the intention of the counsellor's communication
- ◆ Exploring the impact of the counsellor's communication on the client
- ◆ Recognising own contribution to the construction of meaning in the therapeutic relationship

### **Working with complex relational issues**

- ◆ Maintaining a sense of own separate reality and experience while maintaining awareness of the ways in which clients may draw the counsellor into particular patterns of relating
- ◆ Relating to the client in the 'real' relationship, constructed through the meeting of two individuals
- ◆ Relating to the client in the therapeutic alliance where counselling practitioner and client work collaboratively
- ◆ Using the 'transference' relationship to help the young person understand how they relate to others

### **Working in the organisational context**

- ◆ Balancing the interests of different parties within the organisational context when making professional judgements about therapeutic work, whilst keeping the interests of the client central

### **Outcome 3**

Critically evaluate own learning and practice in supporting the mental health of young people in counselling settings.

- ◆ Reflect on own areas of strength in practice and areas that require further development
- ◆ Critically evaluate the way in which neglect and abuse present, including the signs of, and parental behaviours associated with neglect and abuse
- ◆ Identify child protection concerns and evaluate responses where a need for child protection has been identified
- ◆ Critically appraise different types of risk and risk assessment tools

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

- ◆ Critically evaluate the social and cultural factors that may impact on access to the counselling service
- ◆ Critically evaluate the effects of the practitioner's own background on the ability to identify and challenge inequality
- ◆ Recognise, critically appraise, and manage appropriately, the challenges of interagency working

### Reflections on own experience of the assessment process

- ◆ Reflecting on professional judgements, personal emotions and limitations on the assessment process
- ◆ The ways in which own emotions and prejudices may interfere with working with the young person

### Practitioner's awareness

- ◆ Ways in which the practitioner's background and own group membership, values and beliefs might influence their perceptions of the client, the client's problem and the therapeutic relationship
- ◆ Reflection on power differences between themselves and the young person and their parents/carers
- ◆ Empowerment of the young person and their families/carers through engagement
- ◆ Identification of inequalities in access to services; challenge facilitation, such as home visiting, flexible working, links to community resources
- ◆ Identifying client groups whose needs are not being met by current services, the reasons why and potential solutions

### Self-appraisal and reflection

- ◆ Reflecting on the supervisor's feedback and applying new learning/awareness in future client work and evaluating the impact and effectiveness of this
- ◆ Being open and realistic about own capabilities and self-appraising competence in supervision
- ◆ Using the supervisor's feedback to further develop self-appraisal and reflection
- ◆ Using supervision to expand self-awareness in relation to own responses to clients, their material and perceptions

## Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

Centre staff involved in the delivery and assessment of this unit will be qualified and registered counselling practitioners with current or past experience of working therapeutically with children and young people and will be experienced and competent with this mode of delivery. To work beyond competence is to work unethically.

While specific issues, such as working with difference, working ethically and working safely have specific references within the subject areas, it is expected that they will also permeate the curriculum since they are connected to values which underpin the whole course.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

It is strongly advised that trainers refer to the competences before embarking on each subject area.

MindEd sessions can be used to supplement didactic teaching sessions (see [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk))

Whilst flexible in terms of structural delivery, there is little flexibility in terms of the learning outcomes as these are mapped onto, and underpinned by BACP's evidenced informed *Competences for Humanistic Counselling with Young People (11–18 years)*.

All learners should be encouraged to be reflective practitioners. This can be helped by the use of reflective journals or portfolios, which should include for example, any visual material created during sessions. Assessment should include an element of personal reflection.

All learners should be encouraged to be active researchers. This could involve action research and lead to students becoming more interested in themselves as reflexive and research active practitioners. Learners should be encouraged to engage with the research literature about counselling young people and it is advised that trainees engage with current research about ACES (adverse childhood experiences) in order to maintain the currency of practice.

It is expected that appropriate therapeutic resources and tools will be available to students so that experiential learning is enabled during their training. This might include online materials, eg the MindEd curriculum, relevant literature and research pertaining to evidence informed practice, age appropriate creative, symbolic, and psycho-educational tools, access to specialised teaching and the use of self in reflection and in accessing the inner adolescent.

It should be noted that qualified counselling practitioners should already possess the necessary boundaries to know what material to use safely in this way, and recognise their responsibility to keep themselves safe, using their own resources (eg personal therapy) to explore any newly surfacing or unprocessed personal material which will include appropriate use of individual clinical supervision. **While engaging in the clinical placement with children and young people, learners should seek 1 hour of clinical supervision to every 8 hours of client work and should seek clinical supervision no less than 1 hour per fortnight.** The unit will offer the opportunity to engage in tutor led group supervision sessions, however these are meant to supplement learning and should not be used as a substitute for individual supervision requirements. Learners must hold appropriate indemnity insurance and a full PVG disclosure for working with children and young people.

As learners engaging in the unit will be qualified counselling practitioners, class group supervision hours can be counted towards supervision requirements of the supervised clinical placement. It is advised that a supervision group consisting of four members can claim 50% of the allocated time each (eg 90 minutes between four members is equal to 45 minutes of required supervision hours), and groups consisting of five or more members **must** divide the allocated time by the number of group members present (eg 90 minutes between five members is equal to 18 minutes of required supervision hours).

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

For further guidance, course trainers should refer to the *Good practice* sections of the *BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (2018)*, in particular Supervision, points 50–61, and Training and education, points 62–67. Detailed information can also be found at <https://www.bacp.co.uk/membership/supervision/>

Although this curriculum follows humanistic/relational principles there should be an emphasis throughout the delivery of this training on applying or adapting participants' own therapeutic approaches. There is no intention within the training to favour any theoretical perspective.

The notional design length for the supervised practice element of the unit is 50 hours. It is suggested that provision should be made to extend this time for learners who have not completed the supervised practice element in the allocated time. Any extensions are offered at the discretion of the centre.

Course participants must ensure a minimum of 80% attendance; 100% of the subject areas and course assessments **must** be successfully completed. Therefore, any sessions missed must be completed by the learner accordingly.

### Outcome 1

Included is a suggested 12-week session overview for delivery of outcome 1 content. To ensure mandatory content is covered, delivery of sessions could include the use of formative assessments such as case study analysis, group research tasks, skills practise/triad work or other relevant activities.

<b>Session 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ The philosophy and principles that inform the counselling approach</li><li>◆ Theories of human growth and development underpinning the counselling approach</li></ul>
<b>Session 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ The conditions for, and goals of, counselling change informing the counselling approach</li><li>◆ Counselling processes toward greater psychological wellbeing informing the counselling approach</li></ul>
<b>Session 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Initiating therapeutic relationships: rationale for the underpinning approach</li><li>◆ Initiating therapeutic relationships: Establishing and agreeing the therapeutic focus/goals</li></ul>
<b>Session 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Initiating therapeutic relationships: Developing a contract</li><li>◆ Maintaining and developing therapeutic relationships: Experiencing and communicating empathy</li></ul>

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

<b>Session 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Maintaining and developing therapeutic relationships: Communicating acceptance</li> <li>◆ Maintaining and developing therapeutic relationships: Maintaining authenticity</li> </ul>
<b>Session 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Maintaining the therapeutic alliance: Recognising and addressing threats and ruptures to the therapeutic alliance</li> </ul>
<b>Session 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Accessing and expressing emotions</li> <li>◆ Articulating and reflecting on emotions and developing new understandings</li> </ul>
<b>Session 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Emotions that interfere with effective change</li> <li>◆ Emotions that facilitate change</li> </ul>
<b>Session 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Reflecting on the young person's emotional expression</li> <li>◆ Developing new understandings</li> </ul>
<b>Session 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Creative methods and resources</li> <li>◆ Use of Life Story</li> </ul>
<b>Session 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Concluding therapeutic relationships</li> <li>◆ Working with planned and unplanned endings</li> </ul>
<b>Session 12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Readiness to Practice assessments</li> </ul>

### Outcome 2

Included is a suggested 12-week session overview for delivery of outcome 2 content which is designed to supplement and support learning while students engage in the supervised practise element of the course and completion of the placement logbook.

To ensure mandatory content is covered, delivery of sessions should be structured to alternate between group facilitated discussions (which could include the use of case study analysis, group research tasks, skills practise/triad work or other relevant activities) and group supervision sessions which will allow tutors to monitor and assess understanding of course competencies, use and experiences of individual clinical supervision and commitment to safe and ethical practise with children and young clients.

Any group supervision offered as part of the suggested timetable should be facilitated by an experienced counsellor with relevant experience of working with children and young clients.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

<b>Session 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ethical and professional practise in relation to working with children and young clients; working knowledge of ethical, professional and legal frameworks required to practice competently with issues of confidentiality, consent and capacity, relevant to children and young people</li> <li>◆ Child protection and safeguarding concerns; competency in recognising and responding to concerns about child protection relevant to work with children, young people and families</li> </ul>
<b>Session 2</b>	Group Supervision
<b>Session 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Child and adolescent development and transitions; working knowledge of child and adolescent development and transitions and the impact on the client, their presentation in counselling and any implications for therapeutic work</li> <li>◆ Range of communication methods dependent upon age and developmental stage; ability to engage and communicate with children and young people of differing age, developmental levels and backgrounds</li> </ul>
<b>Session 4</b>	Group Supervision
<b>Session 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The necessary requirement of risk assessment; competence in conducting risk assessments and development of risk management plans when working with children and young people</li> <li>◆ Collaborative assessments; competence in conducting collaborative assessments with children and young people</li> <li>◆ Using measures and monitoring outcomes; confident administration and application of commonly used assessment measures when working with children and young people</li> </ul>
<b>Session 6</b>	Group Supervision

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

<b>Session 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Working with cultural diversity; capacity to value and understand diversity in relation to specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles of children and young people, and families/carers while demonstrating an awareness of stigmatising or discriminatory attitudes or behaviours</li> <li>◆ Engagement with children and young people, parents and carers; importance of appropriate communication through dialogue and information with children and young people, their parents and/or carers prior to appointment</li> <li>◆ Holding the overall perspective; competence in working relationally with children and young people, highlighting the importance of holding an overall perspective whilst concentrating on working with finer details of the child or young person's situation and experience</li> </ul>
<b>Session 8</b>	Group Supervision
<b>Session 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Mental health, health, pharmacology and young people; risks and benefits of pharmacology within the interaction between the child and young person's mental health and their environment.</li> <li>◆ Supervision; the requirement for regular supervision to support developing practice with children and young people</li> </ul>
<b>Session 10</b>	Group Supervision
<b>Session 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Working within and across agencies; ability to work effectively across agencies with particular regard to responding to safeguarding issues, confidentiality and consent</li> <li>◆ Working in a school setting; understanding of school systems to ensure effective working partnership in order to provide a non-stigmatising and accessible form of early intervention for psychological difficulties</li> <li>◆ Working within a voluntary/community setting; understanding of organisational structure, operational context and scope of work to work effectively with a voluntary and community ('third') sector counselling setting</li> </ul>
<b>Session 12</b>	Group Supervision

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence for outcome 1 will be generated through a summative readiness to practice presentation. Learners will be required to demonstrate to tutor and peers they possess the appropriate knowledge and competence to engage in safe and ethical practise with children and young people. **This must be successfully completed before learners can engage in therapeutic practise with children and young clients.**

It is suggested that content within outcome 1 is formatively assessed with the use of case study analysis, group research tasks and other appropriate assessment tools such as triad/skills practise, to provide supplementary evidence of a successful completion of the readiness to practise. A pro forma for the readiness to practice assessment can be accessed online at *(to be added once unit is verified)*.

Evidence for outcome 2 is generated whilst the learner is on placement. A comprehensive logbook is provided to gather all necessary formative evidence to demonstrate the safety and competency of the learner which will be reviewed and assessed by the course tutor. The placement mentor and clinical supervisor must complete end of placement reports to support the completion of the placement logbook. Guidance on the appropriate use of the logbook and specific supervisor and mentor requirements can be found within the provided placement logbook. Pro formas for mentor/supervisors reports and placement log book can be accessed online at *(to be added once unit is verified)*.

Evidence for outcome 3 is generated by a summative reflective account and a 15-minute audio recorded session and full transcription. All previously formatively assessed criteria from outcome 2 will be included in this summative assessment. Learners should provide evidence that session audio recording has been previously considered and explored with their clinical supervisor.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

- 1 Readiness to Practice assessment.
- 2 Logbook to be completed in placement supported by a report from placement mentor and clinical supervisor.
- 3 Reflective account, session audio recording and full transcription.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (SCQF level 11)

### Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* (Oral and Written Communication), *Problem Solving*, *Numeracy*, *Working with Others*, and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

## History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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## General information for learners

### Unit title: **Children and Young People: Safe and Competent Practice**

This section will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This 120 hour unit is designed to support and enable you to consolidate the knowledge, skills and competences gained in the unit *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards* into your practice.

The unit is mandatory in the Professional Development Award (PDA) in Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18) at SCQF 11.

This unit is suitable for you if you are a registered\* counsellor perhaps already practicing in the adult counselling context who wishes to work towards a qualification that will also enable you to work with children and young people (CYP) in the age range of 10–18 years.

The unit covers the essential underpinning theory required prior to working in placement with CYP, embeds the mandatory 50 hours of supervised practice and requires you to then critically evaluate that practice.

The content of the unit is underpinned by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions* and is underpinned by BACP's *Competences for Humanistic Counselling with Young People (11–18 years)*.

\*Entry to this unit is always at the discretion of the delivering centre who will provide further information on entry requirements to you upon request.

Course participants must ensure a minimum of 80% attendance.

There are three outcomes to complete in this unit:

- ◆ Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of underpinning theory prior to working therapeutically with children and young people.
- ◆ Demonstrate an advanced understanding of competent and safe practice while working therapeutically with children and young clients.
- ◆ Critically evaluate own learning and practice in supporting the mental health of young people in counselling settings.

You will take part in group work and skills practice sessions with your peers and supported by centre staff, receiving constructive feedback on your contributions.

Formative assessment will be ongoing throughout the delivery of the unit with summative assessment taking place at the end of the course, all carried out by the course tutor. You will be asked to evidence your readiness to practice prior to entering a placement with CYP clients, complete a detailed portfolio of evidence formed around a log-book and supported by reports from your placement mentor and clinical supervisor and critically evaluate your own practice, producing a reflective account, session audio recording and full transcription notes.