



Group Award Specification for:

**Professional Development Award in
Counselling: Children and Young People (10 to 18)
at SCQF level 11**

Group Award Code: GR0G 51

Validation date: November 2019

Date of original publication: November 2019

Version: 01

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1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the arrangements document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification.
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

Background and scoping

The Scottish Governments' 2018/19 Programme for Government included commitments to provide schools with better support to deal with wellbeing concerns and to direct children to counselling services. This commitment, which will be delivered in close partnership with local government, will ensure every secondary school in Scotland has access to a fully qualified school counsellor. It is intended that these counsellors will also provide support in primary and special schools as appropriate in the context of young people transitioning from primary school to secondary school. In addition there is a further commitment to ensure that counsellors will also be available in further and higher education. One of the Scottish Governments' key principles is that only fully trained and registered counsellors can work in schools. These commitments have been designed to align to and support the work of the Children and Young People's Mental Health Taskforce.

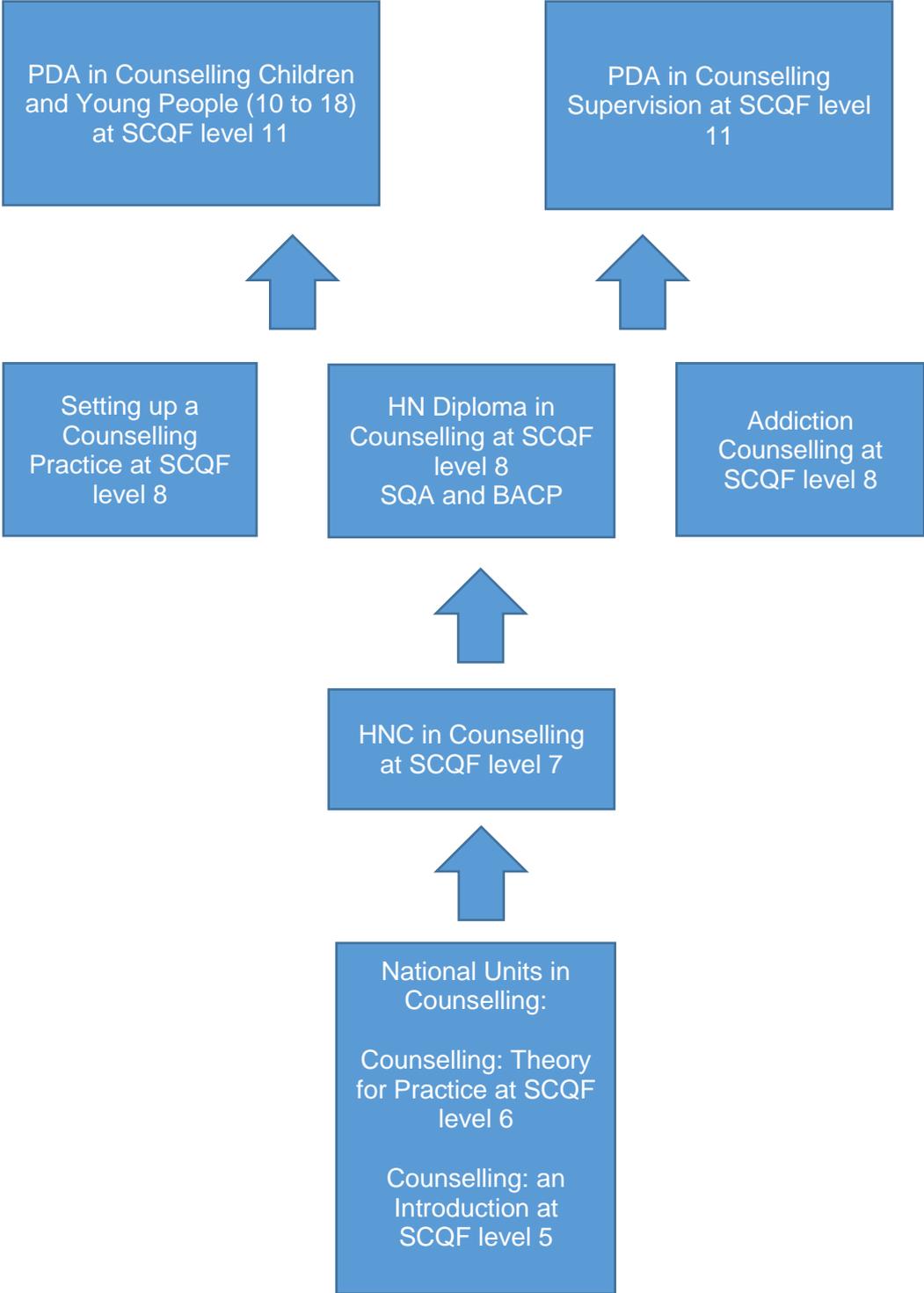
The British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) carried out a Scottish Workforce Survey which highlighted the need for additional trained and registered counsellors to help achieve the government's commitment.

This Professional Development Award (PDA) in Counselling: Children and Young People (10 to 18) at SCQF level 11 has been produced to help meet this demand.

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

Successful achievement of the PDA will result in a certificate awarded by SQA and BACP.

The following table sets out the Counselling Qualifications awarded by SQA



2 Qualification structure

SQA's Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are flexible qualifications for industry, training and education and can be used to either extend or broaden professional and vocational skills.

Professional Development Awards:

- ◆ at SCQF levels 7–12 will be made up of a minimum credit value of 16 SCQF credit points
- ◆ will be made up of at least two units
- ◆ will have at least half the SCQF credit points at the level of the group award
- ◆ will be made up of mandatory and/or optional units which reflect the title of the group award
- ◆ will be aligned to National Occupational Standards, or other professional body standards, as appropriate to the group award area
- ◆ PDAs can comprise HN, NQ and workplace-assessed units
- ◆ All units will be validated and credit rated by SQA

This advanced level PDA is comprised of two mandatory HN units providing 4 SQA credit points (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 10 and 24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 11), thereby meeting the design principles.

The PDA has been aligned to the BACP Counselling Young People (11–18 years) training curriculum and validated at SCQF level 11.

Level 11 recognises the additional responsibility, skills and competences required of those working therapeutically with children and young people.

The assigned level reflects the SCQF level 11 characteristics that successful learners will achieve:

- ◆ Knowledge that covers and integrates most, if not all, of the main areas of a subject discipline — including their features, boundaries, terminology and conventions.
- ◆ A critical understanding of a range of specialised theories, principles and concepts.
- ◆ Use of a range of specialised skills, techniques, practices and/or materials which are at the forefront of, or informed by, forefront developments.
- ◆ Practice in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional level contexts.
- ◆ Apply a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry.
- ◆ Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to issues which are at the forefront of, or informed by, developments at the forefront of a subject/discipline.
- ◆ Critically review, consolidate and extend knowledge, skills practices and thinking in a subject discipline.
- ◆ Deal with complex issues and make informed judgements in situations in the absence of complete or consistent data/information.

2.1 Structure

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J2RG	37	Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards	1	8	10
J3HH	38	Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice	3	24	11

3 Aims of the qualification

The principal aim of this qualification is develop learners' ability to embed and consolidate their critical understanding of theories, principles and concepts into safe and competent therapeutic practice with Children and Young People (CYP) clients.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are aimed at developing the skills of those already in professional employment. They are principally designed for those already in a career or vocation who wish to extend or broaden their skills base.

All PDAs aim to support learners to:

- 1 Develop transferable skills, including Core Skills
- 2 Demonstrate interpersonal skills and the ability to work with others
- 3 Develop personal effectiveness
- 4 Develop critical thinking and skills
- 5 Progress within the SCQF framework and where possible into further or higher education
- 6 Provide opportunities for career progression

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

The PDA in Counselling: Children and Young People (10 to 18) aims to facilitate learners to develop their knowledge and skills in the following:

- 1 Development of knowledge of the professional standards essential for working safely with children and young people in different counselling settings
- 2 Development of skills in communicating and engaging appropriately and effectively when supporting young people of different ages and developmental stages
- 3 Development of skills in recognising how mental health issues can emerge and present in children and young people
- 4 Critical evaluation of own Readiness to Practice with Children and Young People assessment and support the mental health of young people
- 5 Development of a comprehensive understanding of underpinning theory prior to working therapeutically with children and young people
- 6 Skills in consolidating an advanced understanding of competent and safe practice into therapeutic work with children and young people
- 7 Critical evaluation of their own practice in supporting the mental health of young people in counselling settings

3.3 Mapping of qualification specific aims to units

Code	Unit title	Specific aims						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J2RG 37	Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards	X	X	X	X	X		
J3HH 38	Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team.

Centres should develop a process and checklist encompassing their own entry requirements and the standards set out by BACP to assist them in evidencing their decisions.

Centre selection procedures for applicants should be consistent with the course rationale.

Applicants must be provided with detailed and accurate information about the course, including its structure, aims, staffing, content, assessment process, fees (where applicable) and expected timescales.

To undertake *Counselling Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards* learners must have successfully completed or be working towards a professional counselling qualification at SCQF level 8 or above, eg the HN Diploma in Counselling at SCQF level 8.

As *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice* embeds 50 hours of CYP client work, the following entry requirements are **mandatory**: Learners must have already achieved a counselling/psychotherapy qualification at a minimum of SCQF level 8; to include 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 an equivalent professional body who adheres to an ethical framework and must hold an enhanced PVG disclosure for working with children and young people.

It is strongly recommended that learners achieve the unit *Counselling: Young People: Ethics and Professional Standards (10 to 18)* prior to commencing *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice*. However some centres may utilise Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards* only.

Where RPL is accepted for *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards*, centres must retain evidence of this for external verification purposes. Please refer to SQA's guidance on RPL for further information.

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information would be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	6	High level of oral/written communication techniques throughout
Numeracy	6	Planning/scheduling/monitoring timescales in relation to client work and course submission
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	6	Research, producing coursework, creating and delivering presentation/s
Problem Solving	6	Client work, signposting and resolving issues
Working with Others	6	Peer group-work, presentations and self-evaluation activities

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in national occupational standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skills, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of trade body standards

The content of the PDA in Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18) at SCQF level 11 has been designed to align with the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) Counselling Young People (11–18 years) Training Curriculum.

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/2326/bacp-counselling-young-people-training-curriculum.pdf>

The content of the units has been also signposted to the BACP’s evidence informed competences for humanistic counselling with children and young people (4–18 years).

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/5864/bacp-counsellors-guide-cyp-competence-framework.pdf>

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)*.

5.2 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Unit code	Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
J2RG 37	Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J3HH 38	Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

5.3 Assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards	Analytical essay Skills practice	Case study formulation and presentation Skills practice	Reflective account Skills practice	Readiness to practice with children and young people assessment with CYP peer and tutor feedback and personal justification (Checklist and presentation to peers)
Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice (Group work and skills practice to be delivered across all topics concurrently with placement)	Readiness to practice with children and young people assessment, peer and tutor feedback and personal justification (Checklist and presentation to peers)	Portfolio/logbook of practice	Reflective account Critical self-evaluation Audio recording of one session with transcription notes	

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards does not contain practice with CYP clients therefore may be delivered as a stand-alone unit or as part of a core professional qualification.

Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice embeds the mandatory 50 hours of supervised practice with CYP clients therefore may only be delivered as part of the PDA in *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18)*.

Detailed delivery and assessment guidance is provided in the unit specifications and must be adhered to.

- ◆ Course participants must ensure a minimum of 80% attendance (or the minimum attendance requirement for a student's funding body if above 80%).
- ◆ 100% of the subject area and course assessments (including 50 hours of supervised placement) must be successfully completed, any sessions missed by the learner must be completed accordingly.
- ◆ Centres are advised to request learners complete a reflective account following any classes or input missed.
- ◆ Centres should have a strategy in place for facilitating the learner to complete missed sessions and activities when applying for approval to deliver the award.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

The units should be delivered in the order presented.

- 1 Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards
- 2 Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice

To ensure the safety of all involved in the process it is mandatory that *Counselling Children and Young People: Ethics and Professional Standards (10 to 18)* or equivalent, plus Outcome 1 from *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice* plus the Readiness to Practice with Children and Young People assessment must be completed successfully **prior** to the learner undertaking work with CYP clients.

6.2 Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy

More information and guidance on the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA unit(s) may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1 Professional recognition

This Professional Development Award is jointly certificated by SQA and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners. There should be ongoing assessment of students' progress to evaluate their competence in integrating ethical practice into their way of working in relation to the ethical framework/code of practice to which the student is affiliated.

The use of MindEd modules and assessments will be beneficial to this. Information on MindEd can be accessed on the following link:
<https://www.minded.org.uk/#More-About-Us>

6.4 Support materials

A pro forma 'Readiness to Practice with Children and Young People Assessment has been produced to support assessment of Outcome 4 of *Counselling Children and Young People: Ethics and Professional Standards* **and/or** Outcome 1 of *Counselling Children and Young People: Safe and Competent Practice*.

A pro forma portfolio/logbook has been produced to support delivery and assessment of Outcomes 2 of *Counselling Children and Young People: Safe and Competent Practice*.

As these materials have been prior verified by SQA and mapped to the BACP curriculum requirements it is strongly recommended that centres utilise them in the delivery and assessment of the PDA. They can be downloaded from the Counselling Children and Young People webpage on the SQA website.

6.5 Resource requirements

Tutors/trainers on this course must be registered counselling practitioners with current or past experience in working with children and young people who are experienced and competent with this mode of delivery. Training staff should be familiar with and agree to work within the current BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (2016). Centres must present relevant evidence of the teaching staff qualifications and experience as part of the qualification approval process.

50 hours of mandatory placement is embedded in this PDA therefore appropriate arrangements for clinical supervision and placement mentoring must be in place.

Monitoring of the supervisory relationship will be centre-devised based on the following requirement: *'Supervisors will be registered and practising for a minimum of two years plus a minimum of two years of supervisory experience in addition to experience-based competence working with the age group with which the supervisee is engaged.'*

It is mandatory that learners successfully achieve 50 supervised, face to face counselling hours in placement. If a learner fails to achieve this within the allotted time for the placement unit there is opportunity to grant an extension under the following circumstances:

- (i) The learner can evidence that they have made every effort to secure the required hours.
- (ii) The circumstances surrounding the short fall are beyond the learner's control.
- (iii) The learner's clinical supervisor supports the extension.
- (iv) Any extension granted should be negotiated within the delivery centre although it is recommended that this is for a period of no longer than 12 months from the time the unit should have been completed.
- (v) During any extension period, learners will be supported by their placement mentor and clinical supervisor.

In the event of the programme being withdrawn or of departmental failure, learners may apply to other SQA approved centres to complete their course. Entry, however is at the discretion of the centre.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will 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.

Internal and external verification

All assessments used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in SQA's *Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the group award
- ◆ the group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the group award
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Unit: Subject units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: Refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a unit is revised by another unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter learners for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version number	Description	Date

Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and Clyde College (Anniesland) have made to the development of this qualification.

9 General information for learners

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

This advanced level Professional Development Award in Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18) at SCQF level 11 is suitable for registered counsellors already practicing in the adult counselling context who wish work towards a qualification that will also enable them to work with children and young people.

It may also be appropriate for current counselling students on adult-focused counselling/psychotherapy training courses, eg the HN Diploma in Counselling who wish to learn more about working therapeutically with children and young people.

The content of the PDA is underpinned by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and aligned with the BACP Counselling Young People (11–18 years) Training Curriculum.

There are two units in the PDA.

- ◆ *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards* at SCQF level 10
- ◆ *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice* at SCQF level 11

The PDA has been validated at SCQF level 11. This level recognises the additional responsibility and professionalism required of those working therapeutically with children and young people, (who may already be post qualified, experienced adult counselling practitioners) and reflects the principal aim of the qualification — the consolidation of essential underpinning knowledge of ethics and standards into safe and competent practice with Children and Young People (CYP) clients.

Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards provides the essential underpinning knowledge of the ethics, skills and competences required to work with children and young people and offers the opportunity for skills practice in a classroom setting.

Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice allows you to further consolidate your learning from *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards* into practice as it embeds a mandatory 50 hours of placement working with children and young people clients and to continue to reflect upon and develop your skills through group work in the classroom setting.

To ensure the safety of both you and the clients, it is mandatory that the whole of *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Ethics and Professional Standards* and Outcome 1 from *Counselling Children and Young People (10 to 18): Safe and Competent Practice* are successfully completed along with the Readiness to Practice with Children and Young People assessment, prior to commencing work with clients.

You must ensure a minimum of 80% attendance (or the minimum attendance requirement for a student's funding body if above 80%). 100% of the subject area and course assessments (including 50 hours of supervised placement) must be successfully completed, any sessions missed by you must be completed accordingly.

Monitoring of the supervisory relationship will be centre-devised based on the following requirement: *'Supervisors will be registered and practising for a minimum of two years plus a minimum of two years of supervisory experience in addition to experience-based competence working with the age group with which the supervisee is engaged.'*