



The only awarding body
run *by* counsellors
for counsellors

2018 -19

Specification

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills (CSK-L2)

This RQF¹ qualification is regulated in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Qualification/learning aim number: 500/7938/4

Sector endorsement: Skills for Health

Sector subject area: 1.3 Health and Social Care

Counselling & Psychotherapy
Central Awarding Body (CPCAB)

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¹ Regulated Qualifications Framework. The regulators are Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland.

CSK-L2 Specification

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1. Qualification information

Purpose statement	<p>This qualification is designed to give learners the underpinning knowledge, skills and competencies to use counselling skills ethically and safely in a variety of contexts and roles.</p> <p>This qualification is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those starting the first level of training as a professional counsellor • Those who want to learn counselling skills in other professional or helping roles² • Those who want to improve their professional and personal relationships as part of personal development. <p>This qualification could lead to employment or increase employability for those whose role is to support others in e.g. health and social care work, teaching and learning, advocacy and mediation, support and project work, other helping roles.</p> <p>It provides an additional skills for those already in employment likely to lead to increased opportunities for promotion and advancement.</p>
Funding	<p>This qualification is eligible for funding in England under the Local Flexibility Scheme (part of the ESFA³'s adult education budget funding)</p> <p>Candidates in England may also be able to access funding according to individual entitlement criteria (e.g. related to age and/or employment status and/or prior qualifications).</p> <p>For more detailed information see the CPCAB website for guides to funding for candidates and centres.</p>
Level	2 ⁴
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	90 (minimum)
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	170
Credit value	17

² In order to make a clear distinction between a professional counsellor and a person who uses counselling skills, the person using counselling skills is referred to as a 'helper' and the person being helped as a 'helped,' rather than 'counsellor' and 'client.'

³ Education and Skills Funding Agency - formed from the merger of EFA and SFA April 2017.

⁴ Equivalent to level 3 on the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

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Minimum age	18 years ⁵
Entry requirements	No previous training or experience required. See section 5 for criteria considered important in selecting applicants for a programme leading to CSK-L2
Assessment	Pass (Proficient)/Fail (Not Proficient) Candidates must be Proficient in both internal and external assessment to achieve the qualification. Internal assessment: tutor assessment of candidate portfolio evidencing minimum assessment requirements and verified by CPCAB. External assessment: externally assessed written paper after watching a CPCAB DVD under exam conditions and assessed by CPCAB.
Additional Qualification requirements	None required.
Staffing and resources	Only one tutor-assessor is needed for internal assessment. See section 4 for details of tutor-assessor qualifications and experience.
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Centres are required to have robust IQA (internal moderation and verification) processes that are verified by CPCAB.
Progression	CPCAB <i>Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies (CST-L3)</i> or <i>Level 3 Certificate in Life Coaching Studies (LCS-L3)</i> - see section 7 for progression route details.
Candidate registration fee	£163
Centre application for CPCAB approval to offer the qualification	Centre application fee: £200 (one-off fee). ⁶ Centres are expected to design their own training programmes. Sample schemes of work are available from CPCAB on request. ⁷ A tutor assessment support DVD with video clips and associated exercises is available to purchase from the CPCAB website: www.cpcab.co.uk/shop

⁵ This age requirement is linked to Ofqual's system for categorising qualifications.

⁶ In order for your application to be processed the approval fee will need to accompany your application. This is non-refundable. Payment can be made by cheque payable to CPCAB or via Bacs payment. Please contact Marina Richards, marina@cpcab.co.uk for more information.

⁷ All centre-designed courses must be submitted to CPCAB for approval before candidates can be registered. Although the delivery of courses may differ from centre to centre, all delivery must enable the candidates to achieve the learning outcomes of the qualification. CSCT may be used as a resource to help develop your materials <http://www.counsellingtraining.com/>

2. Qualification summary

Learning outcomes (<i>skills, knowledge, understanding</i>)	Assessment criteria (<i>to assess learning outcome</i>)
The learner will/will be able to:	The learner can:
1. Use counselling skills ethically and safely	1.1 Use counselling skills within an ethical framework 1.2 Work within personal limits of ability 1.3 Enable the helpee to find additional sources of support where appropriate
2. Establish and sustain the boundaries of the helping role	2.1 Establish boundaries as a helper in a particular setting and within the limits of time available 2.2 Establish the nature and limits of confidentiality for helping work 2.3 Maintain the boundaries of the helping role throughout the session 2.4 End the helping interaction appropriately
3. Work empathically as a helper	3.1 Define empathy 3.2 Identify and explore differences between self and others 3.3 Explore and challenge personal issues, fears and prejudices 3.4 Communicate empathic understanding
4. Focus on the helpee's needs and concerns	4.1 Enable the helpee to identify and focus on their needs and concerns. 4.2 Identify own feelings in order to set them aside and focus on the helpee 4.3 Work with the helpee to meet their objectives
5. Use self awareness in helping work	5.1 Describe how reflecting on own personality increases self awareness 5.2 Describe how reflecting on own personal history increases self awareness 5.3 Describe how reflecting on own patterns of relating increases self awareness 5.4 Use self awareness to inform helping work
6. Use a range of counselling skills to facilitate the helping interaction	6.1 Demonstrate appropriate use of a range of listening and responding skills to facilitate the helping interaction 6.2 Demonstrate appropriate use of questions 6.3 Demonstrate sensitivity in timing responses and staying with silence

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- 7. Use feedback and reflection to enhance counselling skills
 - 7.1 Use reflection and feedback to assess personal progress and identify learning needs
 - 7.2 Use feedback skills to provide constructive feedback to other learners
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For a CSK-L2 tutor guide which includes guidance to criteria and notes for tutors go to the [CPCAB website](#).

3. Assessment – minimum requirements

To achieve the qualification, candidates must be assessed as **Proficient** in all 7 learning outcomes and must be assessed as **Proficient in both internal and external assessment**.

Candidates must give **two** pieces of evidence for each criterion. In addition the Candidate Learning Record, when complete, must include references to all three assessment methods (documents, tutor observation and testimony).

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – must include all three methods of assessment		
Programme activities	Assessment method ⁸	Types of evidence (2 references for each assessment criterion)
Workshops, seminars, personal development workshops and training group work Projects and presentations Review of skills and understanding Review of learning	Documents	❖ 1 written assignment: ⁷ ❖ 1 self review ⁹ ❖ Learning review (throughout the programme) ¹⁰
Tutor-assessed skills practice	Tutor observation	❖ 2 tutor-observed counselling skills practice sessions (1 via audio/video recording) ¹¹
Skills practice, group work, seminars and workshops Tutorials	Testimony ¹²	❖ Peer/‘helpee’ feedback
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT		
Candidates watch an approx. 15-minute CPCAB DVD of a “helping” session and complete a 1 hour Candidate Feedback Paper in relation to the DVD. This is sent to CPCAB for assessment. ¹³		
MARKING SCHEME		
Internal assessment:	Candidates must achieve all 7 learning outcomes of the qualification.	
External assessment:	Candidates must achieve 3 out of 5 marks to be assessed as Proficient.	

⁸ Proforma and guidesheets for internal assessment can be downloaded from the CPCAB website.

⁹ Self-evaluation of learning, progress and completion of learning tasks (criteria).

¹⁰ This is an on-going review of learning during the course (also called a “learning journal”).

¹¹ All tutor-observed skills sessions can form part of the course and do not need to be formal assessments.

¹² Testimony can include tutorial records and direct questioning by tutor-assessor.

¹³ Mock candidate feedback papers and practice DVDs will be made available to centres. External assessment takes place when at least two-thirds of the course has been completed.

4. Tutor-assessor qualifications and experience

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Tutor	Minimum qualification	On-going CPD	Minimum practice experience	Minimum experience as a tutor
Tutor	150 hours counselling skills and theory qualification at level 2 or above. e.g. CSKL2 plus CSTL3	20 hours per year CPD activities.	1 year experience using counselling skills in a workplace setting.	Teaching qualification or be working towards one. Experience teaching and assessing at level 2 or above.

5. Candidate entry requirements

This qualification is not suitable for those who are currently in a state of severe emotional difficulty and/or severe psychological confusion. Centres need to ensure that all potential candidates are made aware of the nature of the course, and in particular that the course involves experiential elements that will involve some personal disclosure and associated personal developmental activities.

Title	Age	Entry requirements / RPL	Criteria considered important for selecting candidates
CSK-L2	18 or over	None required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Able to cope with course content ✓ Ability to translate intra-personal experience into language ✓ Able to benefit from self development ✓ Be motivated towards developing as a helper ✓ Emotional stability ✓ Identify reasons for training beyond just personal development ✓ References (centre option) ✓ Awareness of difference and diversity

6. Fit-for-purpose

This qualification has been designed to take account of the [latest research findings](#) on what makes counselling effective and is underpinned by the [CPCAB model](#) of practitioner development.

The qualification is signposted to the Counselling and Mental Health National Occupational Standards.

The assessment strategy maintains a focus on practical skills and qualities as well as on written evidence. The combination of tutor assessment and separate external assessment by CPCAB values both objective independent assessment and the relational knowledge of the candidate and their work. The qualification is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose

Centres have to meet robust centre approval requirements before they can deliver this qualification. All tutors are approved and standardised by CPCAB and centres are visited twice a year by a CPCAB external verifier.

7. Progression routes

The CSK-L2 qualification is one step in a series of CPCAB qualifications. Once the candidate has completed this qualification they can continue training to become a counsellor by doing CPCAB *Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies (CST-L3)* or move into the area of life coaching by doing the *Level 3 Certificate in Life Coaching Studies (LCS-L3)*.

