2022-2023

Specification
Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills (CSK-L2)

Contents

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Please note:

This document, along with candidate support materials, can be downloaded from the CPCAB website. If you need help with the accessibility of this document, please email contact@cpcab.co.uk with your request.

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1.Qualification Information

Purpose Statement

This qualification is designed to give candidates the underpinning knowledge, skills and competencies to use counselling skills ethically and safely in a variety of contexts and roles.

This qualification is for:

- Those starting the first level of training as a professional counsellor.
- Those who want to learn counselling skills in other professional or helping roles.
- Those who want to improve their professional and personal relationships as part of personal development.
- Those who wish to improve communication and listening skills.

This qualification will not teach candidates how to be counsellors, but it will help them decide whether or not they want to continue to train as a counsellor.

This qualification leads to employment and increases employability for those whose role is to support others in sectors such as health and social care, teaching and learning, advocacy and mediation, support and project work, and other helping roles. It provides additional skills for those already in employment and is likely to lead to increased opportunities for promotion and advancement.

This qualification enables successful candidates to work as helpers within a range of job and career opportunities, which include but are not limited to:

- Advice and advocacy support
- Befriender role
- Care workers
- Childline administrator
- Contact centre advisor
- Customer facing role
- Customer relations advisor
- Customer service representative/ advisor/ officer
- Family support worker
- Healthcare professionals
- Helpline operator
- Home care assistant
- Housing support workers
- Mentoring and support workers
- Promotion in current role
- Public services, including probation, substance misuse agencies and criminal justice sector
- Roles in health and social care

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- Welfare and advice worker
- Youth workers

Please see below for progression opportunities.

Funding	This qualification is eligible for funding in England under the Local Flexibility Scheme (part of the ESFA's adult education budget funding)
	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).
Level	2^1
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	90 (minimum)
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	170
Credit value	17
Minimum Age	18 years[2].
Entry Requirements	No previous training or experience required.
	Please see CPCAB Candidate Entry Requirements for criteria considered important in selecting applicants for a programme leading to CSK-L2.
Assessment	Proficient **(Pass)**/Not Proficient **(Fail)**
	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.
	See CPCAB's Minimum Assessment Requirements.
	External assessment: externally assessed Reflective Review Paper. See CPCAB'S CSK-L2 External Assessment Guide for current External Assessment information.
Additional Qualification Requirements	None required.
Staffing and Resources	At least **one** tutor-assessor must be involved in all aspects of internal candidate assessment.
	See Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience for further details of CPCAB requirements.
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Centres are required to have robust IQA (internal moderation and verification) processes that are verified by CPCAB.
	See Guide to Internal Moderation and Verification for Centres.

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Progression	• CPCAB Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies (CST-L3) or • Level 3 Certificate in Life Coaching Studies (LCS-L3) See CPCAB's Progression Route for details.
Candidate Registration Fee	£174
Centre Application for CPCAB Approval to Offer the Qualification	Centre application fee: £209 (one-off fee).[3] Centres are expected to design their own training programmes.[4] Sample schemes of work are available from CPCAB on request.
Online Delivery Options	This qualification is eligible for fully in-person, blended or online delivery. Please see how to run CPCAB's qualifications online for more information.

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[1] Equivalent to level 3 on the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

[2] This age requirement is linked to Ofqual's system for categorising qualifications.

[3] In order for your application to be processed the application 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 finance@cpcab.co.uk for more information.

[4] All centre-designed courses must be approved by CPCAB 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.

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2. Qualification Summary
Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria (CSK-L2)

Learning outcomes *(skills, knowledge, understanding)* The learner will/will be able to:	Assessment criteria *(to assess learning outcome)* 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.

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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.
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.

See the CSK-L2 Tutor Guide for candidate guidance to criteria and notes for tutors.

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3. Minimum Assessment Requirements

To achieve the qualification, candidates must be internally assessed as **Proficient** in all 7 learning outcomes of the qualification and must be **externally** assessed (by CPCAB) as **Proficient**.

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

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – must include all three methods of assessment		
Course activities	**Assessment method[6]**	**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 ❖ 1 self-review[7] ❖ Learning review (throughout the programme)[8]
❖ Tutor-assessed skills practice	**Tutor observation**	❖ 2 tutor-observed counselling skills practice sessions (one via audio/video recording)[9]
❖ Skills practice, group work, seminars and workshops ❖ Tutorials	**Testimony** [10]	❖ Peer/'helpee' feedback
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT		
Reflective Review Paper completed by the candidate over a period of 1 week. Please see CPCAB'S CSK-L2 External Assessment Guide.		
MARKING SCHEME		
Internal assessment:	Candidates must achieve all seven learning outcomes of the qualification.	
External assessment:	There are 5 questions, separated into part a and part b. Candidates must provide an answer for part a and b of each question, and each part is worth 1 mark. To be assessed as Proficient, candidates must achieve at least 6 out of 10 possible marks (half and quarter marks may be awarded). **Please see** CPCAB'S CSK-L2 External Assessment Guide for more information.	

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6   Proforma and guide sheets for internal assessment can be downloaded from the CPCAB Website.
7   Self-evaluation of learning, progress and completion of learning tasks (criteria).
8   This is an on-going review of learning during the course (also called a "learning journal").
9   All tutor-observed skills sessions can form part of the course and do not need to be formal assessments.
10   Testimony can include tutorial records and direct questioning by tutor-assessor.

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4. Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience

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Tutor	Minimum qualification requirements	Ongoing CPD (Continuing Professional Development)	Minimum practice experience	Minimum experience as a tutor
Tutor	150 hours counselling skills and theory qualification at level 2 and above. e.g. CSK-L2 plus CST-L3	20 hours per year CPD activities.	1 year experience using counselling skills in a workplace setting.	Teaching qualification or be working towards one. Experience of 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 distress. 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	✓ 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.

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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 (LC-L3).

For details of all CPCAB qualifications please see below or click here: Qualifications - CPCAB for further information.

Level 2 Award in Understanding Substance Misuse (USM-L2)

Level 2 Award in Introduction to Counselling Skills (ICSK-L2)
Eligible for centre funding

Level 2 Award in Effective Listening Skills (ELSK-L2)

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills (CSK-L2)
Eligible for centre funding

Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies (CST-L3)
Eligible for centre funding

Level 3 Certificate in Life Coaching Studies (LCS-L3)

Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4)
Eligible for centre funding

Level 4 Diploma in Life Coaching (LC-L4)
Eligible for centre funding

Open University Foundation Degree in Counselling

Level 5 Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling (PC-L5)
Eligible for centre funding

Level 5 Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapeutic Skills and Theory (CBT-L5)
Eligible for centre funding

Level 5 Diploma in Counselling Children and Young People (CYP-L5)
Eligible for centre funding

Level 6 Certificate in Therapeutic Counselling Supervision (TCSU-L6)
Eligible for centre funding

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