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# **NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills**



**Part B**

SAMPLE



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**These learning resources and assessment questions have been approved and endorsed by NCFE as meeting the requirements of the Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills.**



**Disclaimer:**

This resource uses real life case studies where specifically stated and referenced. All other references to individuals, groups and companies contained within these resources are fictitious.

## Certificate in Counselling Skills

### Welcome to this Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills.

We hope you find all of the information contained in this resource pack interesting and informative. This learning resource and the assessment questions have been approved by NCFE as a great way to meet the learning outcomes for this qualification. (A complete list of the learning outcomes can be found on the last page of this resource.)

The course is made up of **two** parts (A and B). This is **Part B** which contains **two** units:

**UNIT 3: Diversity and ethics in the use of counselling skills**

**UNIT 4: Counselling skills and personal development**



As you start to read through each page, you will be able to make notes and comments on things you have learnt or may want to revisit at a later stage. At the end of each section, you will be asked to answer the relevant assessment questions.

Once you have answered the questions, go to the next section and continue studying until all of the assessment questions have been completed.

Please make sure that you set aside enough time to read each section carefully, making notes and completing all of the activities. This will allow you to gain a better understanding of the subject content, and will help you to answer all of the assessment questions accurately.

**Good luck with your study. Now let's begin!**

## Unit 3: Diversity and ethics in the use of counselling skills

Welcome to unit three.

This unit is split into **three** sections. These are:

**Section 1: Using an ethical framework for counselling skills**

**Section 2: The meaning of discrimination**

**Section 3: Anti-discriminatory practice**

### Section 1: Using an ethical framework for counselling skills

This section will explore the following:

- Identifying an ethical framework
- Key aspects of the ethical framework
- How the ethical framework informs your use of counselling skills.





## Identifying an ethical framework

**Q. What is an ethical framework?**

**A. An ethical framework is a set of moral principles that provide guidelines for carrying out work with other people – in this context, the counselling relationship with clients.**



The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) provides an ethical framework for counsellors, trainers and supervisors of counsellors.

This framework is intended to guide the good practice of counselling and psychotherapy by all members of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and inform the practice of closely related roles that are delivered in association with counselling and psychotherapy.

The new ethical framework is set out in the document, Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, BACP, 2015 and will be formally adopted in 2016.



### **Key Fact**

**'Being ethically mindful and willing to be accountable for the ethical basis of practice are essential requirements for counsellors.'**

**Source: BACP**

## Key aspects of the ethical framework

The key aspects of this ethical framework are:

- Values
- Ethical principles
- Personal moral qualities.

Explore this now in more detail.

### Values of counselling and psychotherapy

The fundamental values of counselling and psychotherapy include a commitment to:

- Respecting human rights and dignity
- Alleviating symptoms of personal distress and suffering
- Enhancing people's wellbeing and capabilities
- Improving the quality of relationships between people
- Increasing personal resilience and effectiveness
- Facilitating a sense of self that is meaningful to the person concerned within their personal and cultural context
- Appreciating the variety of human experience and culture
- Protecting the safety of clients
- Ensuring the integrity of practitioner-client relationships
- Enhancing the quality of professional knowledge and its application
- Striving for the fair and adequate provision of services.

These values provide the basis for the following set of ethical principles.

## Ethical principles of counselling and psychotherapy

The ethical principles of counselling and psychotherapy are:

- **Being trustworthy:** honouring the trust placed in the practitioner.

Being trustworthy is regarded as fundamental to understanding and resolving ethical issues. Practitioners who adopt this principle:

- act in accordance with the trust placed in them
- strive to ensure that clients' expectations are ones that have reasonable prospects of being met
- honour their agreements and promises
- regard confidentiality as an obligation arising from the client's trust
- restrict any disclosure of confidential information about clients to furthering the purposes for which it was originally disclosed.

- **Autonomy:** respect for the client's right to be self-governing.

This principle emphasises the importance of developing a client's ability to be self-directing within therapy and all aspects of life. Practitioners who respect their clients' autonomy:

- ensure accuracy in any advertising or information given in advance of services offered
- seek freely given and adequately informed consent
- emphasise the value of voluntary participation in the services being offered
- engage in explicit contracting in advance of any commitment by the client
- protect privacy
- protect confidentiality
- normally make any disclosures of confidential information conditional on the consent of the person concerned
- inform the client in advance of foreseeable conflicts of interest, or as soon as possible after such conflicts become apparent.

- **Beneficence:** a commitment to promoting the client's well-being.

The principle of beneficence means acting in the best interests of the client based on professional assessment. It means working strictly within one's limits of competence and providing services on the basis of adequate training or experience. Ensuring that the client's best interests are achieved means that there is an obligation to use regular and on-going supervision and to update practice by continuing professional development.

- **Non-maleficence:** a commitment to avoiding harm to the client.

Non-maleficence involves:

- avoiding sexual, financial, emotional or any other form of client exploitation
- avoiding incompetence or malpractice
- not providing services when unfit to do so due to illness, personal circumstances or intoxication.

Practitioners have personal and professional responsibility to challenge, where appropriate, the incompetence or malpractice of others, and to contribute to any investigation concerning professional practice which falls below that of a reasonably competent practitioner.

- **Justice:** the fair and impartial treatment of all clients and the provision of adequate services.

The principle of justice requires being just and fair to all clients, and respecting their human rights and dignity. A commitment to fairness requires the appreciation of differences between people and a commitment to equality of opportunity, and avoiding discrimination against people or groups.

- **Self-respect:** fostering the practitioner's self-knowledge and care for self.

The principle of self-respect means that there is an ethical responsibility for the practitioner to use supervision for personal and professional support and development, and to seek training and other opportunities for continuing professional development. The principle of self-respect encourages active engagement in life-enhancing activities separate from counselling.



## Personal moral qualities

The practitioner's personal moral qualities are of great importance to clients because they form the basis for the helping relationship. Personal qualities to which counsellors and psychotherapists are strongly encouraged to aspire to include:

**Care:** benevolent, responsible and competent attentiveness to someone's needs, wellbeing and personal agency.

**Diligence:** the conscientious deployment of the skills and knowledge needed to achieve a beneficial outcome.

**Courage:** the capacity to act in spite of known fears, risks and uncertainty.

**Empathy:** the ability to communicate understanding of another person's experience from that person's perspective.

**Identity:** sense of self in relationship to others that forms the basis of responsibility, resilience and motivation.

**Humility:** the ability to assess accurately and acknowledge one's own strengths and weaknesses.

**Integrity:** commitment to being moral in dealings with others, including personal straightforwardness, honesty and coherence.

**Resilience:** the capacity to work with the client's concerns without being personally diminished.

**Respect:** showing appropriate esteem for people and their understanding of themselves.

**Sincerity:** a personal commitment to consistency between what is professed and what is done.

**Wisdom:** possession of sound judgement that informs practice.



Check your understanding of this ethical framework by completing the following activity.

**A** **Activity 1: Ethical or unethical?**

Look at the following actions by a counsellor. Tick any that you think would be unethical.

1. Disclosing confidential information without the client's consent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Seeking freely given and adequately informed consent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Providing misleading information about the services offered.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Avoiding sexual, financial, emotional or any other form of client exploitation	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Turning a blind eye to malpractice by other counsellors.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check your answer at the end of this workbook.

**A** **Activity 2: The ethical framework**

Use your learning notebook to jot down any thoughts or observations that you may have about what you have just learned regarding an ethical framework for counselling.

**R** **Further Research**

Use the link below to download the document, **Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions**. If you need help in using the internet seek advice from your tutor or your local library.

[www.bacp.co.uk/admin/structure/files/pdf/14237\\_ethical-framework-jun15-final.pdf](http://www.bacp.co.uk/admin/structure/files/pdf/14237_ethical-framework-jun15-final.pdf)



### Key Fact

An ethical framework is a set of guidelines and principles that are used to promote good practice in counselling and psychotherapy.

## How the ethical framework informs your use of counselling skills

The ethical framework should influence or inform your own use of counselling skills.



### STOP AND THINK!

How would an ethical framework inform or influence your own use of counselling skills? Jot down your thoughts below. There is one idea already provided to help you.

- *By making you aware of the need for the client's privacy and confidentiality*

Did you think about any of the following ways that ethics should inform the use of counselling skills?

The ethical framework should inform your use of counselling skills by requiring you to:

- Observe clients' privacy and confidentiality
- Show an interest in and care for the well-being of your clients through active listening and other core counselling skills
- Avoid excluding someone from receiving a service or lowering the quality of that service solely on the grounds of a client's learning difficulty or physical disability
- Be properly supported in order to provide good quality care for their clients
- Work within the limits of your training and experience
- Keep appropriate, secure, accurate and respectful records, unless there are good reasons for not keeping records
- Be aware of your legal responsibilities and the client's rights under data protection legislation
- Receive ongoing supervision, support and professional development to maintain your competence
- Gain and honour the client's trust
- Attend to your own well-being to sustain good practice
- Have a responsibility to carry out your work in a safe way, to ensure that it does not become detrimental to your own health.



### Key Fact

**An ethical framework informs the use of good practice in counselling.**

### Let's Summarise!

Take a few moments to answer the following questions to help you summarise what you have learnt in this section. This will help you answer the upcoming assessments.

1. What is an ethical framework?

ANSWER

2. Identify one key aspect of the ethical framework outlined in this section.

ANSWER

3. Identify one way in which it informs your use of counselling skills.

ANSWER

Check your answers by looking back over this section.

**CONGRATULATIONS, YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED SECTION 1.  
PLEASE NOW GO TO YOUR ASSESSMENTS AND ANSWER  
QUESTIONS Q1 TO Q3.**

