**AIM Awards Level 5 Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling**

**Synoptic Assessment**

**Marking Scheme**

**Using this mark scheme**

A generic marking grid which is applied to each of the questions is provided for examiners. This should be used alongside the content table’s guidance for each question.

The marking grid scheme must be used consistently across all questions to apply marks for academic skills and application of content. The content tables indicate a variety of material that a candidate is likely to use. It is not, however, prescriptive. Alternative responses are possible and should be credited if appropriate. Examiners will need to use their own experience as practitioners to assist them in this process.

It will be found that when applying the generic mark scheme, many responses will display features of different levels. In locating the appropriate descriptor, examiners must look to the best-fit or **dominant descriptors**. The marks awarded to the candidate should take account of the following criteria:

* understanding of theoretical concepts
* accuracy and detail of arguments
* clarity and relevance of examples given
* convincing application of theory to own practice

Candidates’ answers for each question are allocated a mark using the marking grid. The combined score from both questions is used to determine whether or not the candidate passes the assessment. In the marking descriptors bands are provided for:

* Good pass (23-30 marks)
* Pass (15-22 marks)
* Borderline (13-14 marks)
* Did not achieve (0-12 marks)

Although the content tables are not prescriptive, examiners must familiarise themselves with their content. Examiners must recognise creditworthy material and the subject-specific guidance is an important tool for achieving this.

Material should first be placed in the appropriate band according to the descriptors. However, not all the criteria need to be satisfied for an answer to be placed in a particular band. Weak performance in one area may be compensated for by strong performance in others. In order to access the top band, issues, debates and/or approaches need to be addressed effectively.

**Generic Marking Grid**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Academic Skills** | **Application of Content** |
| **Good Pass**  ***(23-30 marks)*** | * Evaluation demonstrates sound analysis, understanding and interpretation. * The answer is well focused and shows coherent elaboration and/or a well formed argument. Issues/debates/approaches are used effectively. * Ideas are well structured and expressed clearly and fluently. Consistently effective use of counselling terminology. | Content is evaluated in relation to own practice.  *(See content table below in relation to question being marked)* |
| **Pass**  ***(15-22 marks)*** | * Evaluation demonstrates reasonable analysis and understanding. * The answer is generally focused and shows reasonable elaboration and/or clear line of argument is evident. * Issues/debates/approaches are used in a reasonably effective manner. * Most ideas appropriately structured and expressed clearly. Appropriate use of counselling terminology. | Content is analysed with some reference to own practice  *(See content table below in relation to question being marked)* |
| **Borderline**  ***(13-14 marks)*** | * Evaluation demonstrates basic, superficial understanding. * The answer is sometimes focused and shows some evidence of elaboration. * Superficial reference may be made to issues/debates/approaches. * Expression of ideas lacks clarity. Limited use of counselling terminology | Content is mentioned and discussed.  *(See content table below in relation to question being marked)* |
| **Did not achieve**  ***(0-12 marks)*** | * Evaluation is rudimentary, demonstrating a very limited understanding. * The answer is weak, muddled and incomplete. Material is not used effectively and may be mainly irrelevant. * If reference is made to issues/debates/approaches, it is muddled and inaccurate. * Deficiency in expression of ideas results in confusion and ambiguity. The answer lacks structure, often merely a series of unconnected assertions. | Content is not mentioned or referenced incorrectly  *(See content table below in relation to question being marked)* |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content Table**  **Section A**  **Question 1 – Option 1**  *Michael Carroll has said : “….the supervisor has to integrate the developmental role of educator with that of being the provider of support to the worker and, in most cases, ensure the quality of the supervisee's work with their clients. These three functions do not always sit comfortably together”*  Give an account of your understanding of this statement and its implications for your practice as a counsellor. Describe how relevant this has been for you within your own experience of using supervision. | |
|  | **Related unit content** |
| Responses of a Pass standard are likely to include some of :  **Understanding of statement and implications for practice**  Tasks, roles and purposes of supervision  Supervision as a working alliance  Responsibilities of supervisor and supervisee  Supervision in a training context  Arrangements and structure for supervision  Supervisor as **educator :**   * Teaches by example through effective modelling of clinical competencies * Evaluates clinical interactions * Identifies and reinforces effective actions by the supervisee * Teaches and demonstrates counselling techniques * Explains rationale of strategies and interventions * Interprets significant events in the counselling process * Challenges the supervisee in constructive manner.   Supervisor as **provider of support** facilitates supervisee’s growth by, for example :   * Assisting the supervisee in recognising personal limitations in order to protect welfare of both client and supervisee * Interacting with supervisee in a manner that facilitates their self-exploration, problem solving ability and confidence. * Supporting supervisee’s wellbeing through being aware of and helping the supervisee deal with such things as stressful events, role ambiguity, career development and skill use.   Supervisor in **ensuring quality :**   * Assesses the supervisee’s skills & approach towards therapeutic process with client * Clarifies performance standards to be met * Negotiates objectives for learning * Uses appropriate strategies to address performance and skills deficits in supervisee’s approach with clients.   **Own experience of using supervision**  Compatibility of supervision received with:   * Own stage of development as practitioner * Own theory and philosophy of counselling   Examples of:   * Most and least useful supervision sessions * Results of supervision in client work * Parallel process * Supervisor intervention (helpful or unhelpful) that was educative/supportive or designed to address quality   Blocks to receiving supervision including:   * Influence of previous experiences of supervision * Personal inhibition and defensive routines * Difficulties with authority * Conflicts of roles * Assessment * Practical blocks * Difficulty in receiving support * Organisational blocks | Counselling Supervision, Ethical and Legal Issues LO.1, LO.2 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content Table**  **Section A**  **Question 1 – Option 2**  *Lee is a 20-year-old architecture student who comes to counselling because of his tendency toward procrastination. Lee is of Chinese ancestry, and his father is a scientist. As the counselling session progresses, Lee’s problem becomes clearer. He procrastinates because he has little interest in architecture. He loves sculpture and has taken several optional courses in art. It seems overwhelmingly clear to his counsellor that sculpture is Lee’s true interest, but he resists the suggestion that he may want to consider changing to studying another subject. Instead of talking about his own interests, he discusses the long line of scientists in his family and his need to choose a profession with at least some relation to science. He asks the counsellor to focus on the procrastination problem because he cannot really consider changing course.*  Explain the potential ethical issues you would face in the above scenario if you were Lee’s counsellor. In your answer, show your understanding of relevant ethical principles. | |
|  | **Related unit content** |
| Responses of a Pass standard must include :   * Understanding of ethical principles of Autonomy and Beneficence * Ability to apply them to Lee’s situation * Ability to assess pros and cons of prioritising Lee’s autonomy over counsellor’s obligation re beneficence and vice versa   and are likely to include some of :   * Allowing Lee to be free from interferences by counsellor and to act intentionally, with understanding, and without controlling influences as a result of counselling * Promoting Lee’s well-being and potential to be free from family expectations (individualism vs collectivism) * Issues of culture and difference * Influence of counsellor’s own theory and philosophy of counselling, e.g. re being ‘non-directive’ * Influence of own counsellor’s values/personal history on the ‘preferred solution’ for Lee * Dilemma re respecting/challenging Lee’s request to focus on procrastination * Counsellor competence at dealing with more practical presentations like procrastination * Counsellor competence at designing/negotiating action-oriented interventions | Counselling Supervision, Ethical and Legal Issues LO.3 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content Table**  **Section A**  **Question 1 – Option 3**  *Rosemary is a counsellor who works for a voluntary agency supporting adult survivors of sexual abuse. Her client, Sylvie, discloses abuse perpetrated by a family friend when she was nine years old. She has recently discovered that the alleged abuser has moved in with her cousin who has a child – a girl aged 12. Sylvie has never disclosed her abuse to her family and insists that does she not want to do so now. The agency policy is to provide total confidentiality to clients, apart from when legally obliged not to do so. Sylvie is convinced that there is no current risk and says that she only told Rosemary because of the agency policy to protect her confidentiality.*  Explain the potential ethical and legal issues Rosemary faces in the above scenario. In your answer, show your understanding of relevant ethical principles and legislation. | |
|  | **Related unit content** |
| Responses of a Pass standard must include :   * Understanding that there is no mandatory legal requirement for Rosemary to report the apparent possibility of abuse of the 12 year old * Understanding that there may be a moral/ethical case for so doing * Understanding that this must be balanced against Sylvie’s stated wish for total confidentiality and the agency policy in this regard * Awareness of the relevance of ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence and autonomy   Considerations of Sylvie’s goals/reasons for coming to counselling and keeping these at the centre of the work  and are likely to include some of :   * Awareness of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and specifically : * mandatory reporting requirement re co-operating with an investigation by Social Services into suspected Child Abuse * the Act’s statement that “the welfare of the child is paramount” * expectation of other professionals for information sharing – Working Together to Safeguard Children (Statutory guidance March 2015) and therefore tension with agency policy re confidentiality * Awareness of relevance of Sylvie being an adult and that the agency is non- statutory * tensions between ethical principles in deciding a course of action e.g beneficence and non-maleficence * PMQs integrity/sincerity and courage | Supervision, Ethical and Legal Issues LO.3 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content Table**  **Section B**  **Question 2**  *Explain the key ethical issues to be addressed during the process of counselling research.* | |
|  | **Related unit content** |
| Responses of a Pass standard may include :  Understanding of :   * need for risk assessment of any harm to participants * need to ensure that participants are adequately protected from harm * importance of obtaining participants’ consent prior to involvement in research * importance of anticipating any conflicts between confidentiality and other ethical obligations * taking adequate account of any vulnerabilities of participants * ensuring that all participants are treated respectfully and with adequate cultural sensitivity * ensuring fairness and honesty in the collection and analysis of research data   and are likely to include some of :  Understanding of :   * need for risk assessment of any harm to the integrity of the research, including the competence of the researcher to undertake the work * importance of participants understanding the research – capacity to give informed consent * importance of protecting participants’ rights to modify, consent or withdraw throughout research process and * importance of ensuring that a refusal to participate does not adversely affect services to that person * importance of ensuring that the research is consistent with the requirements of trustworthiness in the practice of counselling and psychotherapy * making provision for prompt and adequate responses to any complaints | Research in Counselling  L.O. 4 |

Distribution of marks:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Question | Marks | Unit content covered | Weighting |
| 1 | 30 | Counselling Supervision, Ethical and Legal Issues LO.1, LO.2  Counselling Practicum LO.1, LO.2, LO.3 | 50% |
| 2 | 30 | Research in Counselling LO.1, LO.3, LO.4 | 50% |
| **Total** | **60** |

Agreed pass mark of 26

This assessment is designed to assess aspects of the units covered by the this synoptic assessment listed.

Writers will ensure elements from all units are included from across the exam paper.

Unit specifications can be found through the following links

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Unit Reference Number** | **Unit Title** |
| D/506/3058 | [Counselling Practicum](http://aimawards.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/units/aim_units/Counselling-Practicum-L4-CV20-V1.pdf) |
| T/506/3129 | [Counselling Supervision, Ethical and Legal Issues](http://aimawards.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/units/aim_units/Counselling-Supervision--Ethical-and-Legal-Issues-L5-CV9-V1.pdf) |
| K/506/3130 | [Research in Counselling](http://aimawards.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/units/aim_units/Research-in-Counselling-L5-CV15-V2.pdf) |

The [qualification specification](http://aimawards.org.uk/aim-awards-qualifications-units/?p=qual&fid=8&sid=128) contains full information on the qualification.