

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills June 2017 Series

Introduction

271 scripts were received from 13 Centres. The question paper was designed to test Candidates'

- Understanding of the role of counselling skills in a helping relationship
- Knowledge about initiating a counselling interaction
- Knowledge of how to develop and maintain a counselling interaction
- Ability to conclude a counselling interaction

Comments

Questions were focussed on, though not entirely limited to, the Indicative Content which can be found in the Qualification Specification.

The paper contained a total of 9 questions. The table below provides the criteria covered by each question and a breakdown of the marks available.

| Question | Criteria covered | Marks available |
|----------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 1.2 | 1 |
| 2 | 1.2 | 1 |
| 3 | 1.2 | 1 |
| 4 | 1.2 | 2 |
| 5 | 2.1 | 8 |
| 6 | 1.1 | 6 |
| 7 | 2.2 | 9 |
| 8 | 3.3 | 6 |
| 9 | 4.1 | 6 |

Questions one to three were multiple choice questions. The majority of candidates did very well on these questions. The area that candidates struggled the most was question three where some candidates felt that counsellors must join an accrediting body. It should also be noted that a very small number of candidates struggled with question two, answering that counselling is about giving advice.

Question four was split into two requiring candidates to give two examples of issues that someone might want to talk to a counsellor about rather than another helper. Candidates did very well on this question with almost no candidates dropping a mark here.

Question five was split into six true or false questions and also asked candidates to provide two examples of what should be included in a counselling contract. Candidates scored well on the true or false questions scoring around four or five marks. The most common questions that were wrongly answered were linked to contracting, with candidates believing that contracts could not be changed.

Candidates answered the second half of the question very well, with the most common answers covering confidentiality and information about the time or frequency of session.

Question six was again a two-part question. The first part was multiple-choice questions, the second part asked candidates to prove an example of summarising and why it would be used. Candidates did very well on the first part with a large number of candidates gaining 75%, or above, correct. The second part of this question, which required an example of summarising saw a large number of candidates struggle to give both an example and to state why they would use it. The most common issues, aside from candidates only answering half the question, was that they were evidencing paraphrasing rather than summarising. When a candidate did not note a specific time line the benefit of the doubt was given and it was assumed this was summarising.

Question seven was a scenario situation where candidates were required to state what changes they would make and how they would help towards a good working relationship. Candidates over all scored very well on this question however it should be noted that a number of candidates altered the scenario, or extrapolated from the scenario, to give a change that might not be possible, or might have already happened. It should also be noted that a number of candidates did not focus on the question of how these changes would help towards a good working relationship.

Question eight asked candidates to give to ways to help move the counselling relationship forward, and to explain how they might help. The question states that the counsellor is struggling to move the relationship forwards, however a small number of candidates felt that the client was the issue and the advice offered revolved around working with the client to help them progress in therapy. The premise of the question is focused on the counsellor, so candidates that felt that challenging the client would support the progression of therapy did not obtain marks. However, some candidates scored very well in this section, giving advice such as summarising, focusing, asking question or goal setting, as this supports the client.

Question nine asked candidates to give two actions that could be used to bring the counselling session to a close, and to explain their answer. Most candidates scored very well in this section however some candidates did not focus on the scenario provided, but as with question seven, changed the scenario. An example of this was that candidates suggested the counsellor should state in the first session that the client only has 6 sessions, rather than focussing on the fact that this was the last session as given in the scenario. Marks were awarded if the answer stated work towards an end, or let the client know early that they are having an end, but were not granted if the answer gave a specific time scale before the last session.

Recommendations

Ensure that candidates understand that contracts are there to support both client and counsellor, and can be altered if needed.

Ensure that candidates understand the correct use of a summary, reflecting and paraphrasing.

Encourage candidates to read and understand the question to make sure that they are answering what is being asked.