

Principal Examiner's Report

For centre staff



Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills July 2018 Series

Introduction

289 scripts were received from 14 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

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Understand the role of counselling skills in a helping relationship	1.1. Define what is meant by counselling skills 1.2. Identify the place of counselling on a helping continuum
2. Know about initiating a counselling interaction	2.1. Identify key elements in a counselling contract 2.2. Identify key skills for rapport building
3. Know how to develop and maintain a counselling interaction	3.1. Identify the skills needed to develop and maintain the counselling relationship 3.2. Demonstrate the skills needed to develop and maintain the counselling relationship 3.3. Identify positive ways of moving the counselling relationship forward 3.4. Identify negative ways of moving the counselling relationship forward
4. Be able to conclude a counselling interaction	4.1. Describe the importance of endings in a counselling interaction 4.2. Conclude a counselling interaction

Distribution of marks against questions

Question	Number of marks	Criteria Covered
1	5	1.2
2	8	2.1
3	6	1.1
4	9	2.2
5	6	3.3
6	6	4.1
Total	40	

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Comments

Question one was split into three multiple choice questions, requiring the true statement to be selected. As with previous years this section scored highly, however a number of candidates felt that there was only one accrediting body for counselling, and thus lost marks in this section. Question one also had a question exploring the topics that someone might want to speak to a counsellor about. This is an area that candidates scored exceptionally well in.

Question two was split into six true/false questions and a question requiring candidates to give two examples of what should be included in a counselling contract. As a whole candidate scored very well in both of these sections, particularly when giving two examples of what should be included in the counselling contract. Candidates dropped marks in this area by stating that all risks need to be reported. Candidates scored well in this section, however a number of marks were dropped on the true/false question.

Question three was again a two-part question. The first part was multiple-choice questions, the second part asked candidates to provide an example of immediacy and why it would be used. The multiple-choice section was answered well with most candidates gaining either three or four marks. The second part of question three, to give an example of immediacy and to state why you would use it, seems to be an area of challenge for most candidates. A large number of candidates were not able to give an example of immediacy, and for the ones that were able to not all of them went on to explain why they would use it. The result of this means that a significant proportion of candidates missed out on two marks.

Question four was a scenario situation where candidates were required to state what changes they would make and how these changes would help towards a good working relationship. As with previous years candidates scored well in this section. Also, in line with previous years a number of candidates altered the scenario, or extrapolated from the scenario, or give a change that might not be possible or might have already happened. It should also be highlighted that candidates did not always answer the question that had been asked of them, which is to explain why they would make these changes and how they would work towards a good working relationship. In not fully answering the question a number of candidates missed out on marks, this has not however altered the fact that candidates did score very well in this section.

Question five states that the counsellor is struggling to move the relationship forwards and asks candidates to give two actions they could use to move the relationship forwards, and to explain how this might help. Generally, candidates scored very well in this section, but as with question four a number of candidates dropped marks by not answering the question directly i.e. challenging the client rather than looking at how they could support the relationship.

Question six described a situation where a therapist and client are on the last session and asked candidates to give two actions that could be used to bring the counselling session to a close, and to explain their answer. As highlighted in question four, a number of candidates sought to alter the scenario, or extrapolate from the scenario in giving a change that might not be possible or might have already happened.

Recommendations

Ensure that candidates understand that they are required to answer the question and not alter the scenarios.

Ensure that candidates understand the correct use of immediacy, and the reason to use this technique.

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