

COSCA

Counselling & Psychotherapy
in Scotland

COSCA COUNSELLING SKILLS CERTIFICATE COURSE

**MODULES 1 - 4
(REVISED 2004)**

AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES

AND RANGES



Introduction

The Aims, Learning Outcomes and Range of the COSCA Counselling Skills Certificate Course are drawn together in this information leaflet.

Target Group

This Course is designed for people in helping relationships who need to use listening skills, e.g. those who work in voluntary organisations, caring professions, communities, etc.

Course Content

The four main themes of the Course are knowledge, skills, ethics and self-awareness. The material in the Course is delivered by COSCA validated training providers. The length of the Course is 120 hours with four Modules of 30 hours each. The theme of the Modules are as follows: Module 1 Beginnings; Module 2 Exploration and Expansion; Module 3 Review and Reflection; and Module 4 Integration.

Aims

The Aims provide the key principles of the Course and describe what the trainer is expected to do.

Learning Outcomes

The Learning Outcomes are defined both in terms of underpinning knowledge and competence. They provide the participant with a perspective on what the Course offers and what he/she can reasonably be expected to take achieve from the Course. They also provide the key to assessment.

Range

Range statements expand upon the key aspects of performance in terms of the breadth of competence required or the contexts in which the work is done.

MODULE 1

AIMS

The Aims of this introductory Module are:

1. To introduce participants to the *theoretical concepts* of a counselling approach and to the use of counselling skills.
2. To present basic attending and responding *skills* to the participants.
3. To provide participants with the opportunity to practise these skills in a safe and supportive environment.
4. To set these skills within the essential *ethical framework* of a counselling approach.
5. To introduce participants to the concept and experience of *self-awareness* and *personal growth* in the context of counselling skills training.
6. To provide a suitable foundation for possible further training in the areas of counselling skills and the use of a counselling approach.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Assessed by means of written and oral questions and discussion

On completion of this introductory Module, participants will:

1. Be able to explain the difference between *formal counselling* and using a *counselling approach* which is often used in other helping relationships (e.g. Befriending, Guidance, Information giving).
2. Be able to describe what *attending skills* are and why they are essential in a counselling approach.
3. Be able to describe what *responding skills* are and why they are essential in a counselling approach.
4. Be able to explain what *self-awareness* means and why it is essential in a counselling approach.
5. Be able to discuss what constitutes the basic *ethical and attitudinal framework* that is required for attending and responding skills to become counselling skills or part of a *counselling approach*.
6. Be able to identify some of the complexities in the meaning of *confidentiality* when using a counselling approach.

COMPETENCIES:

Competence 1

Establish an appropriate, safe and supporting relationship

Assessed by observation of skills demonstrated in triads and recorded on video.

Performance Criteria

On completion of this introductory Module, participants will:

1. Be able to draw attention to the setting within which the interaction is occurring and negotiate and agree with the Speaker the confidentiality framework within which the interaction will occur.
2. Be able to encourage the Speaker to feel able to speak at his/her own pace.
3. Be able to listen and communicate listening to the Speaker.
4. Be able to ask a minimal number of (clarifying) questions and allow silence in the interaction.
5. Be able to check out understanding with the Speaker and communicate understanding of the difficulty being expressed.
6. Be able to clarify the views and beliefs of the Speaker in an open and positive manner.
7. Be able to maintain the focus of interaction on what the Speaker is communicating and offer a personal sense of the Speaker's difficulty, appropriate to the context.
8. Be able to reflect back the feelings that are perceived (by tone, volume and pitch of voice, and by physical movements).
9. Be able to invite the Speaker to direct his/her attention to his/her feelings in the present.
10. Be able to give the Speaker the opportunity and support to discuss these feelings.
11. Be able to summarise to the Speaker the understanding of the Speaker's difficulty and relevant beliefs.

Competence 2

Evaluate and monitor self in using a counselling approach

Assessed by observation of group participation and written review of the learning of the Module.

Performance Criteria

On completion of this introductory Module, participants will:

1. Be able to discuss in the written review the learning in the areas of knowledge, skills and self-awareness that has occurred in the Module.

2. Be able to discuss the review with the trainer and other participants and their reactions invited.
3. Be able to summarise the reactions of others and incorporate them into a final version of course review.
4. Be able to verbally present the final review to the trainer within the time agreed between the trainer and the participant.

Range

1. Within the context of this training course.
2. In interactions with individuals, sub-groups and the entire training group, including the trainer.
3. Non-threatening and non-intrusive area of interest.
4. One clear, specific context, relevant to their experience.
5. Various Speaker concerns, influenced by gender, age, physical health, education and maturity.
6. One-to-one interaction.
7. Four strands of the course, knowledge, skills, self-awareness, ethics.

MODULE 2

AIMS

The Aims of Module 2 are:

To consolidate and expand the learning of Module 1 in the areas of *knowledge, skills, self awareness, self-in-context* and *ethics*.

1. To place the practice component within a structure of *beginnings, middles & endings*.
2. To explore the processes and elements of a *beginning* phase in the counselling approach.
3. To introduce participants to some experiences, tasks and skills of a *middle* phase in the counselling approach.
4. To deepen participants' understanding of a *middle* phase in the counselling approach with particular reference to the process of *change*, the process of *negotiating goals* and the skills of *challenging*.
5. To introduce participants to the idea of *endings* as a necessary and important phase in the counselling approach.
6. To encourage participants to become more aware of the influence of their *motives and values* in the context of the *helping process*.
7. To explore the concept and importance of *boundaries as the ethical framework for safe practice*.
8. To enable participants to *integrate the learning* in this Module, *practise* it and *evaluate* their practice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

A Knowledge

On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to discuss the concepts of *beginnings, middles* and *endings* and the differences between them in a counselling approach.
2. Be able to identify *how feelings are communicated and responded to* within a counselling approach.
3. Be able to explain the ways in which the *ethical framework is necessary for safe practice*.
4. Be able to identify the *boundary issues* that arise when using a counselling approach *in their own work context* as well as those which arise in their own life context.

5. Be able to describe at a basic level the concept of *change* in the context of a counselling approach and the factors which *facilitate* and *inhibit* this process.
6. Be able to identify the ways in which *challenging* can be used to help in a counselling approach.
7. Be able to identify the ways in which their *motives and values in themselves* as listeners has increased.
8. Be able to identify the *nature of group/social behaviour* and the need for consistent *reflective practice*.

B COMPETENCIES

Competence 1

Facilitate the exploration of the Speaker's concerns.

Performance Criteria

On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to encourage the Speaker to express self in the way that suits him/her best.
2. Be able to reflect back to the Speaker the full communication that is experienced.
3. Be able to reflect back to the Speaker his/her feelings.
4. Be able to offer the opportunity and support to the Speaker to discuss his/her feelings.
5. Be able to summarise to the Speaker the understanding of the Speaker's issues and relevant beliefs.
6. Be able to maintain the focus of interaction on what the Speaker is saying and offer a personal sense of the Speaker's issues, appropriate to the context.
7. Be able to discuss this perception with the Speaker.
8. Be able to maintain and monitor the agreed boundaries.

Competence 2

Help the Speaker identify personal motivators and inhibitors to change

Performance Criteria

On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to maintain the focus of interaction on what the Speaker is saying and offer a personal sense of the Speaker's issues, appropriate to the context.
2. Be able to respect the Speaker's "ways of being" and to avoid intrusive exploration.
3. Be able to acknowledge the feelings of the Speaker with appropriate empathic support.
4. Be able to acknowledge and accept the views and priorities of the Speaker.
5. Be able to discuss and explore the goals of the Speaker.
6. Be able to help the Speaker to identify personal strengths and motivations to change.
7. Be able to help the Speaker to identify inhibiting factors and resistances to change.
8. Be able to re-evaluate with the Speaker the eventual desired outcome.

Range

1. Within the context of this training course.
2. In interactions with individuals, sub-groups and the training group as a whole, including the trainer.
3. Area of Speaker concern.
4. One-to-one interaction and specified working context.

MODULE 3

AIMS

The Aims of Module 3 are:

1. To review the content of Module 2 and to encourage each participant to take responsibility for identifying his/her personal learning aims for Module 3.
2. To set the training in a counselling approach within a context of *emotional and cognitive self-reflection*, with a view to identifying what is important in our interaction with others.
3. To introduce participants to different theoretical counselling perspectives in understanding human development, behaviour and relationships.
4. To acquaint participants with the basic tenets of Humanistic, Psychodynamic and Cognitive Behavioural theories by exploring relevant issues in participants' experience.
5. To examine how the Listener's own life events can influence the process of working with others.
6. To explore the nature of power and vulnerability when using counselling skills.
7. To consolidate the skills practice within a structure of *beginnings, middles & endings* by concentrating on the characteristics of middles and endings.
8. To integrate the learning in this Module and bring it to bear on the use of a counselling approach and apply it.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

A KNOWLEDGE

On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to describe at a basic level the existence and form of different theoretical perspectives commonly used in the counselling field.
2. Be able to describe the distinctive characteristics of the Humanistic, Psychodynamic and Cognitive Behavioural perspectives
3. Be able to describe the ways in which past and present life events impact on using a counselling approach.
4. Be able to describe how their understanding of, and use of skills in, the tasks which characterise beginnings, middles and endings phases in the counselling approach has increased.

5. Be able to explain the nature of power and vulnerability in the professional/client relationship, and describe how their understanding of the need for ethical practice has developed.

B COMPETENCIES

This Module consolidates skills practice while increasing underpinning knowledge and self-awareness. This is done to develop the ability to understand and explain the use of certain skills and responses rather than others. This requires the ability to use counselling skills and reflect on one's own inner process.

Here the competency is to present a rationale for the work which is done, thus demonstrating the ability to be a reflective counselling skills practitioner.

Key points for the Reflective Counselling Skills Practitioner:

The development of self-awareness in the use of counselling skills assists the practitioner in his/her ability to offer the most appropriate "use of self" in the interaction. The reflective counselling skills practitioner has the ability to:

SELF

- Monitor one's needs, energies, stresses, interest levels, etc.
- Be aware of one's own reactions and feelings
- Be aware of the influence of external events in own life
- Be aware of own motivations, values, rewards and costs
- Be aware of own understanding of human behaviour and development
- Be aware of the separate dimensions of self and their integration
- Accept his/herself

RELATIONSHIP

- Monitor one's on-going counselling approach
- Be aware of the effects and influence of self on Speakers
- "Hear" the views of others, especially Speakers, peers, supervisor
- Appropriately manage feelings and reactions
- Be aware of limitations to professional competence
- Be aware of operating in a wider context and ethical framework

PROCESS OF CHANGE

- Recognise the need to change
- Be aware of loss and gain in change
- Define one's own autonomy in the process of change

Competence 1

Facilitate exploration of the Speaker's concerns and help the Speaker identify and evaluate various possible courses of action

Performance Criteria

On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to maintain the focus of interaction on what the Speaker is saying and offer a personal understanding of the Speaker's issues, appropriate to the context.
2. Be able to respect the Speaker's "ways of being" to avoid an intrusive exploration.
3. Be able to invite the Speaker to direct his/her attention to his/her feelings in the present.
4. Be able to give the Speaker the opportunity and support to discuss these feelings.
5. Be able to acknowledge and accept the views and priorities of the Speaker.
6. Be able to discuss and explore the goals of the Speaker.
7. Be able to explore the viability of certain intermediate steps towards these goals.
8. Be able to explore the consequences of certain actions with the Speaker.

Competence 2

Monitor self in the interaction with Speaker

Performance Criteria

On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to identify personal reactions and emotions arising from work with the Speaker and demonstrate an ability to explore their own feelings and reactions to the Speaker's issues.
2. Be able to acknowledge tendencies to interpret and/or impose views emerging from their own personal issues and demonstrate the ability to avoid/resist the tendency to impose such views.
3. Be able to explain all interventions (including use of silence) to Observers.
4. Be able to monitor and separate out their own preferences for future action (if any) when assisting the Speaker to identify future courses of action for him/herself.

Range

1. Within the context of this training course.
2. In interactions with individuals, sub-groups and the entire training group, including the trainer.

MODULE 4

AIMS

The Aims of Module 4 are:

1. To establish learning which has taken place by participants in Modules 1-3 and encourage each participant to identify their personal learning aims for Module 4.
2. To introduce some basic concepts of the Gestalt approach and experience as an example of the humanistic/existential perspective.
3. To continue the exploration of power and vulnerability within the helping relationship and identify contributing factors, to and consequences of, boundary violations from Speaker and Listener perspectives.
4. To explore current definitions of the concepts of *belonging, social inclusion and social exclusion*.
5. To introduce some basic concepts of the Transactional Analysis approach and experience as an example of a model which draws on both humanistic and psychodynamic perspectives.
6. To explore positive and negative effects of stress on the individual.
7. To explore and clarify the nature and importance of professional responsibilities such as supervision for the counselling relationship.
8. To consolidate counselling skills practice within the structure of *Beginnings, Middles & Endings*.
9. To reflect upon the ending of working with this group and to explore the participants' experience of self and others in the group setting.
10. To review the personal development of each participant in relation to the content of this Module, specifically in the areas of: *knowledge; counselling skills; self-awareness; self-in-context; and attitudes appropriate to the counselling relationship*.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

A KNOWLEDGE

On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to describe the distinctive characteristics of the humanistic and existential perspectives.

2. Be able to describe and appropriately apply some of the Gestalt principles in their counselling skills work.
3. Be able to describe the concepts of freedom and responsibility in personal and professional decision-making.
4. Be able to discuss the concepts of *belonging, social inclusion and social exclusion*.
5. Be able to discuss the positive and negative effects of stress on the individual.
6. Be able to explain the use and abuse of power in the Listener/Speaker relationship and be able to identify contributing factors to and consequences of boundary violations from both Speaker and Listener perspectives.
7. Be able to discuss the COSCA definition of supervision and clarify their responsibility for receiving supervision appropriate to their work.
8. Be able to discuss the processes, skills and attitudes characteristic of *Beginnings, Middles* and *Endings* in a counselling approach.
9. Be able to identify their own experiences in working with the group on this course, exploring feelings, insights and understanding, and be able to identify the relevance of the learning over the 4 Modules in relation to work/life circumstances.

B COMPETENCE

The competence for this Module will require to be assessed over more than one session since it integrates and summarises much of what has occurred in earlier training. However, at this level the participant is required to demonstrate the combination of skills integrated in a smooth and comprehensive manner.

Competence

Establish, maintain and bring to an end a supportive interaction

Performance Criteria

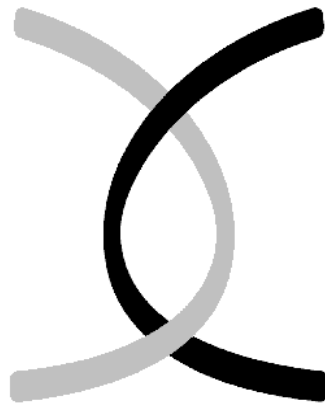
On completion of this Module, participants will:

1. Be able to negotiate and agree with the Speaker the confidentiality framework within which the interaction will occur.
2. Be able to maintain and monitor the agreed boundaries.
3. Be able to encourage the Speaker to feel able to speak at his/her own pace.
4. Be able to listen and communicate listening to the Speaker.

5. Be able to clarify the views and beliefs of the Speaker in an open and positive manner.
6. Be able to reflect back to the Speaker the full communication experienced.
7. Be able to acknowledge the feelings of the Speaker with appropriate empathic support.
8. Be able to summarise to the Speaker their understanding of the Speaker's issues and relevant beliefs.
9. Be able to maintain the focus of interaction on what the Speaker is communicating and be able to offer a personal sense of the Speaker's issues, appropriate to the context.
10. Be able to respect the Speaker's *ways of being* to avoid intrusive exploration.
11. Be able to discuss and explore the goals of the Speaker.
12. Be able to help the Speaker to identify personal strengths and motivations to change.
13. Be able to help the Speaker to identify inhibiting factors and resistance to change.
14. Be able to re-evaluate with the Speaker the eventual desired outcome.
15. Be able to discuss the ending and to explore connected feelings.
16. Be able to evaluate the work done with the Speaker.
17. Be able to explore future action with the Speaker.
18. Be able to bring the interaction to an end in a clear and definite manner.
19. Be able to explain to Observers all interventions (including use of silence).

Range

1. One-to-one interactions and specified working context.
2. In interactions with individuals, sub-groups and the entire training group, including the trainer.
3. In the context of the activities of this course.
4. In the area of the Speaker's concern.



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Scottish Charity No. SCO 18887

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Who may have benefited from counselling or who wish to
Support the development of counselling in Scotland.

COSCA acknowledges the financial assistance received from the
Scottish Executive.