

A centre's guide to Level 4 Higher Professional Diploma in Counselling

City & 
Guilds

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At times of crisis people look to counsellors for help. These highly skilled professionals, many of whom do not start counselling until later in their professional life, play a vital role in modern society; working to help people deal with wide ranging problems. It is not a job undertaken lightly.

City & Guilds new Higher Professional Diploma in Counselling is designed to provide the training that those skilled professionals will need to meet the many and varied challenges which lie ahead. The course enables candidates to gain an overview of the key counselling theories and principles and also provides an opportunity for them to work within one specific counselling approach eg Person-Centred or alternatively adopt an Integrative perspective to their counselling work. There are also optional units that allow candidates to explore a range of techniques and focus upon specific problems with which they may have to deal in their professional life.

What is a Higher Professional Diploma?

HPDs are new qualifications at level four in the National Qualifications Framework. They are taught courses with a clear vocational focus, which seek to provide access to vocational qualifications for those wishing to continue their professional development beyond level three. HPDs are geared to the needs of each industry and can thus provide the knowledge and understanding that will enable individuals to reach the very top of their profession.

What does the HPD in Counselling involve?

The qualification is composed of the following mandatory units:

- Counselling Theory (counts as two units)
- Counselling Skills
- Personal Development
- Professional Development
- Supervision
- Client Work

Candidates must then choose three units from **block B**:

- Psychodynamic Counselling
- Person-Centred Counselling
- Existential Counselling
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Gestalt Therapy
- Integrative Counselling
- Transactional Analysis

And finally, two units from **block C**:

- Counselling and Mental Health Issues
- Working with Children and Adolescents
- Counselling for Stress
- Working with Drugs and Alcohol

- Counselling for Eating Problems
- Working with Couples
- Transpersonal Counselling
- Working with Life-limiting Illness
- Counselling for Loss and Grief
- Counselling Research

Candidates may also take these units individually.

Assessment is via assignment rather than written examinations, so candidates can easily continue working whilst they study. The syllabus is designed to be compatible with part-time, evening or day-release modes of study, but it is also suitable for full-time study if required. Normal guided learning hours would be six and a half hours per week over two years.

Does this qualification form part of a recognised framework?

This qualification is accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority at level 4 and is therefore available for funding. HPDs can also form the first year of a Foundation Degree.

What's the next step?

If you are an existing City & Guilds approved centre, you will need to complete a scheme approval form. If you are not an existing centre, you should contact your nearest City & Guilds office, who will guide you through the process.

How can I find out more?

You can find out more by contacting your nearest City & Guilds office. Log on to our website to find the location of your nearest one, or contact our Customer Relations team at:

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Key points

- Nationally recognised qualification at level 4 in the NQF
- Takes account of the BACP requirements for individual and course accreditation
- Candidates can adopt an integrative approach or focus on one counselling approach
- Can form the first year of a Foundation Degree