



The only awarding body
run *by* counsellors
for counsellors

2019 -20

Specification

Level 2 Award in

Introduction to Counselling Skills (ICSK-L2)

This RQF¹ qualification is regulated in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Qualification/learning aim number: 500/7762/4

Sector endorsement: Skills for Health

Sector subject area: 1.3 Health and Social Care

Counselling & Psychotherapy
Central Awarding Body (CPCAB)

P.O. Box 1768
Glastonbury
Somerset
BA6 8YP

Tel. 01458 850 350

Website: www.cpcab.co.uk

Email: admin@cpcab.co.uk

¹ Regulated Qualifications Framework. The regulators are Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland.

ICSK-L2 Specification

Contents	Page
1. Qualification information	3
2. Qualification summary	5
3. Assessment – minimum requirements	6
4. Tutor-assessor qualifications and experience	7
5. Candidate entry requirements	7
6. Fit-for-purpose	7
7. Progression routes	8

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/cpcab.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/cpcab

Watch us at: www.counsellingchannel.tv

Discover new & interesting things: www.newvisionformentalhealth.com

1. Qualification information

Purpose statement	<p>This qualification is intended for candidates who want to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn basic counselling skills (listening and responding skills) in helping roles² • Find out more about counselling (this qualification won't teach them to be a counsellor, but may help them decide whether or not they want to train as one); • Improve professional and personal relationships <p>This qualification does not lead directly to an employed role. However, it could enhance an existing voluntary or paid role or increase the general employability of those seeking to enter the job market. See below for progression opportunities.</p>
Funding	<p>This qualification is eligible for funding in England under the Local Flexibility Scheme (part of the ESFA³'s adult education budget funding)</p> <p>Candidates in England may also be able to access funding according to individual entitlement criteria (e.g. related to age and/or employment status and/or prior qualifications).</p> <p>For more detailed information see the CPCAB website for guides to funding for candidates and centres.</p>
Level	2 ⁴
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	30 (minimum)
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	51
Credit value	5
Minimum age	16 years ⁵
Entry requirements	No previous training or experience required. See section 5

² In order to make a clear distinction between a professional counsellor and a person who uses counselling skills, the person using counselling skills is referred to as a 'helper' and the person being helped as a 'helpee,' rather than 'counsellor' and 'client.'

³ Education and Skills Funding Agency - formed from the merger of EFA and SFA April 2017.

⁴ Equivalent to level 3 on the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

⁵ This age requirement is linked to Ofqual's system for categorising qualifications.

ICSK-L2 Specification

Assessment	Pass (Proficient)/Fail (Not Proficient) Tutor assessment of candidate portfolio evidencing minimum assessment requirements. See section 3. External verification by CPCAB.
Additional qualification requirements	None required.
Staffing and resources	Only one tutor-assessor is needed for internal assessment. See section 4 for details of required tutor-assessor qualifications and experience.
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Centres are required to have robust IQA (internal moderation and verification) processes that are verified by CPCAB. See CPCAB website for guidance.
Progression	This qualification is not designed as part of a progression route. However, candidates aged 18+ can progress to CPCAB <i>Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills</i> (CSK-L2) or aged 19+ to CPCAB <i>Level 3 Certificate in Life Coaching Skills</i> (LSC-L3) – see section 7 for details.
Candidate registration fee	£53
Centre application for CPCAB approval to offer the qualification	Centre application fee: £153 (one-off fee). ⁶ Centres are expected to design their own training programmes. Sample schemes of work are available from CPCAB on request. ⁷ A tutor support pack DVD - including a DVD with video clips and associated exercises/printed materials - is available to purchase from the CPCAB website: www.cpcab.co.uk/shop

⁶ In order for your application to be processed the approval fee will need to accompany your application. This is non-refundable. Payment can be made by cheque payable to CPCAB or via Bacs payment. Please contact Marina Richards, marina@cpcab.co.uk for more information.

⁷ All centre-designed courses must be submitted to CPCAB for approval before candidates can be registered. Although the delivery of courses may differ from centre to centre, all delivery must enable the candidates to achieve the learning outcomes of the qualification. CSCT may be used as a resource to help develop your materials <http://www.counsellingtraining.com/>

2. Qualification summary

Learning outcomes (*skills, knowledge, understanding*)

Assessment criteria (*to assess learning outcome*)

The learner will/will be able to:

The learner can:

1. Work within the limitations of the helping role	1.1 Explain the nature of helping work and how it differs from other support e.g. counselling, coaching, friendship 1.2 Communicate limits of ability as a helper
2. Establish boundaries for helping work	2.1 Set the boundaries of the helping interaction including the limits of confidentiality and time available 2.2 End the helping interaction appropriately
3. Communicate empathic understanding	3.1 Differentiate between empathy and sympathy 3.2 Apply initial counselling skills to communicate empathic understanding 3.3 Demonstrate sensitivity to individual needs
4. Focus on the helpee's agenda	4.1 Identify the helpee's needs 4.2 Describe why it is important to identify and stay focused on what is most important to the helpee
5. Understand the importance of self-awareness in helping work	5.1 Explain the importance of developing self-awareness in helping work 5.2 Describe how own personality impacts on helping work
6. Use listening and responding skills	6.1 Describe the significance of non verbal communication 6.2 Describe and demonstrate open and attentive posture in helping work 6.3 Describe and demonstrate the listening and responding skills of paraphrasing, reflecting and summarising 6.4 Describe the difference between open and closed questions and use these appropriately in helping work
7. Use review and feedback to develop initial counselling skills	7.1 Use reflection and feedback to identify personal progress and learning needs 7.2 Provide feedback to other learners

For an ICSK-L2 Tutor Guide which includes guidance to criteria and notes for tutors go to: [CPCAB website](#).

3. Assessment – minimum requirements

To achieve the qualification, candidates must be assessed as **Proficient** in all 7 learning outcomes. Candidate portfolios are externally verified by CPCAB.

Candidates must give **one** piece of evidence for each criterion. In addition the Candidate Learning Record, when complete, must include references to all three assessment methods (documents, tutor observation and testimony).

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – must include all three methods of assessment		
Programme activities	Assessment method ⁸	Types of evidence (1 reference for each assessment criterion)
Seminars and workshops Review of skills work Review of learning	Documents	❖ Learning review (throughout programme) ⁹ ❖ Self review
Tutor assessed skills practice	Tutor observation	❖ 1 written tutor-assessment of initial helping session ¹⁰
Skills practice Seminars and workshops Tutorials	Testimony ¹¹	❖ Peer/‘helpee’ feedback
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT		
Not applicable		
MARKING SCHEME		
Internal assessment:	Candidate portfolio externally verified by CPCAB.	

⁸ Proforma and guidesheets for internal assessment can be downloaded from the CPCAB website.

⁹ This is an on-going review of learning during the course (also called a “learning journal”).

¹⁰ All tutor-observed skills sessions can form part of the course and do not need to be formal assessments.

¹¹ Testimony can include tutorial records and direct questioning by tutor-assessor.

4. Tutor-assessor qualifications and experience

Level 2 Award in Introduction to Counselling Skills (ICSK-L2)				
Tutor	Minimum qualification	On-going CPD	Minimum practice experience	Minimum experience as a tutor
Core tutor	90 hours counselling skills training at level 2 or above. e.g. CSK-L2	10 hours per year CPD activities.	1 year experience using counselling skills in a workplace setting.	Teaching qualification or be working towards one. Experience of delivering group training

5. Candidate entry requirements

This qualification is not suitable for those who are currently in a state of severe emotional difficulty and/or severe psychological confusion. Centres need to ensure that all potential candidates are made aware of the nature of the course, and in particular that the course involves experiential elements that will involve some personal disclosure and associated personal developmental activities.

6. Fit-for-purpose

This qualification has been designed to take account of the [latest research findings](#) on what makes counselling effective and is underpinned by the [CPCAB model](#) of practitioner development.

The qualification is mapped to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) Counselling and Mental Health.

The assessment strategy maintains a focus on practical skills and qualities as well as on written evidence. The tutor assessment is externally verified by CPCAB. A separate external assessment was not considered appropriate for the level and length of this qualification. The qualification is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose.

Centres have to meet robust centre approval requirements before they can deliver this qualification. All tutors are approved and standardised by CPCAB.

7. Progression routes

The ICSK-L2 qualification is part of a suite of CPCAB qualifications. Once the candidate has completed this qualification, they may wish to progress (if aged 18+) to CPCAB [Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills](#) (CSK-L2) or (if aged 19+) move into the area of life coaching by doing the [Level 3 Certificate in Life Coaching Studies](#) (LCS-L3).

