



The only awarding body
run *by* counsellors
for counsellors

2023-2024

Specification

Level 5 Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapeutic Skills & Theory (CBT-L5)

This RQF qualification is regulated by Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland.

Qualification/learning aim number: 500/8460/4

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: contact@cpcab.co.uk



Contents

Page

1. Qualification Information	3
2. Qualification Summary	5
3. Minimum Assessment Requirements	8
4. Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience	9
5. Candidate Entry Requirements	10
6. Fit for Purpose	10
7. Progression Routes	11

Please note:

This document, along with candidate support materials, can be downloaded from the CPCAB website. If you need help with the accessibility of this document, please email contact@cpcab.co.uk with your request.

Find us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#)

Watch us at [CPCAB Videos](#)

Discover new & interesting things at [a New Vision for Mental Health](#)

1. Qualification Information

Purpose Statement

This qualification is for candidates who are already working as counselling practitioners and who want to develop their skills in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and use these skills as an integral part of their work. Candidates are expected to be working with clients within a professional framework in order to apply their learning on this course and to meet the assessment requirements.

It is designed to enhance the employability of counsellors in organisational settings and as independent practitioners by giving them a solid grounding in CBT skills and theory. CBT is one of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommended psychological therapies and counsellors with CBT skills are often sought after in multidisciplinary psychological therapy teams especially within NHS Talking Therapies (formerly known as IAPT – Improving Access to Psychological Therapies).

Career progression opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- An autonomous counsellor in private practice or agency settings.
- Work as a senior counsellor in a counselling agency.
- A private counsellor working for an organisation, for example in a wellness/ mental health setting.
- Employment in NHS and private health care settings.

See below for progression opportunities.

Funding

The qualification is eligible in England for Advanced Learner Loans (19+)

The link to the government website which provides details of funding for this qualification can be found here: [ESFA: funding rules, rates and formula](#)

Level

5¹

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

120 (minimum)

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

388

¹ Equivalent to European Qualification Framework (EQF) level 5 and Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 8.

Credit value	39
Minimum Age	19 years ² . Please see CPCAB Candidate Entry Requirements .
Entry Requirements	<p>CPCAB Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4) or the Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) equivalent.</p> <p>Please see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPCAB Candidate Entry Requirements for criteria considered important in selecting applicants for a programme leading to CBT-L5. • CPCAB's RPL Guidance.
Assessment	<p>Proficient (Pass)/Not Proficient (Fail)</p> <p>Candidates must be Proficient in both internal and external assessment and meet all the qualification requirements including all placement hours to achieve the qualification.</p> <p>Internal assessment: tutor assessment of candidate portfolio evidencing minimum assessment requirements and verified by CPCAB.</p> <p>See CPCAB's Minimum Assessment Requirements.</p> <p>External assessment: externally assessed case review (3,000-3,500 words).</p>
Additional Qualification Requirements	<p>Client work: a minimum of 30 hours one-to-one client work with at least three different clients using the CBT model.</p> <p>Clinical Supervision: either group or one-to-one supervision – as per the supervision ratio requirements of the candidate's chosen ethical framework or professional membership association.³</p>
Staffing and Resources	<p>One tutor-assessor is required for the internal assessment of CBT-L5 candidates.</p> <p>Tutors must be qualified CBT practitioners with current knowledge and experience.</p> <p>See Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience for further details of CPCAB requirements.</p>
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	<p>Centres are required to have robust IQA (internal moderation and verification) processes that are verified by CPCAB.</p> <p>See Guide to Internal Moderation and Verification for Centres.</p>

² This age requirement is linked to Ofqual's system for categorising qualifications.

³ CPCAB recommends that candidates access appropriate clinical supervision to meet the requirements of their chosen ethical framework or professional membership association. For example, [BACP Supervision Guidelines](#) for trainees require a minimum of 1½ hours individual supervision per month (or the equivalent if in group supervision) or 1 hour of supervision for every 8 hours of client work.

Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open University Foundation Degree in Counselling⁴ • CPCAB Level 6 Certificate in Therapeutic Counselling Supervision (TCSU-L6) plus a recommended minimum 450 supervised practice hours.⁵ • See CPCAB's Progression Route for details.
Candidate Registration Fee	£369
Centre Application for CPCAB Approval to Offer the Qualification	<p>Centre application fee: £389 (one-off fee).⁶</p> <p>Centres are expected to design their own training programmes.⁷ Sample schemes of work are available from CPCAB on request.</p>
Online Delivery Options	<p>This qualification is eligible for fully in-person, blended or online delivery. Please see how to run CPCAB's qualifications online for more information.</p>

2. Qualification Summary

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria (CBT-L5)

⁴ To access the OU Foundation Degree candidates must have completed the CPCAB Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4). CPCAB level 5 qualifications contribute 30 credits towards the achievement of the [Foundation Degree](#).

⁵ This is in line with BACP counsellor individual accreditation requirements.

⁶ In order for your application to be processed the application 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 finance@cpcab.co.uk for more information.

⁷ All centre designed courses must be approved by CPCAB 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.

Learning outcomes (<i>skills, knowledge, understanding</i>)	Assessment criteria (<i>to assess learning outcome</i>)
The learner will/will be able to:	The learner can:
1. Work safely, legally and ethically as a counsellor using the CBT approach	1.1 Work within an ethical, legal and professional framework for CBT work. 1.2 Prepare the client to work within a CBT framework. 1.3 Use CBT strategies to identify and manage risk. 1.4 Research and access appropriate personal and professional support.
2. Use the CBT framework to structure the therapeutic relationship	2.1 Critically reflect on the nature of the CBT therapeutic relationship. 2.2 Use CBT concepts and the case formulation to establish and maintain the therapeutic relationship. 2.3 Use the CBT framework to maintain and end the therapeutic relationship. 2.4 Use research findings on relationship factors to inform CBT work.
3. Integrate understanding of diversity in CBT work	3.1 Use theory and research on diversity to inform client assessment and treatment. 3.2 Reflect on diversity issues that contribute to clients' patterns and schemas. 3.3 Apply CBT theory to work with the idiosyncratic nature of clients' core beliefs, rules and assumptions. 3.4 Use research findings on client factors to inform CBT work. 3.5 Reflect on diversity issues which impact on clients accessing CBT.
4. Use a coherent CBT approach to work with individual clients and their needs	4.1 Use empirical evidence and assessment data to produce a problem list and initial case formulation. 4.2 Share the initial case formulation with the client and agree a treatment plan. 4.3 Use the case formulation to guide the work and facilitate the client's process of change. 4.4 Use ongoing assessment to monitor client progress.
5. Work with self-awareness as a counsellor using the CBT approach	5.1 Use CBT theory, tools and techniques to develop own self-awareness. 5.2 Use self-awareness in CBT work. 5.3 Produce a personal case formulation to develop understanding of self. 5.4 Use personal case formulation to work on personal patterns and schema that might impact on CBT work. 5.5 Use research findings on therapist factors to inform CBT work.

<p>6. Use CBT theory, research and techniques coherently within counselling work</p>	<p>6.1 Critically reflect on the CBT model of emotional disorders and mental health problems.</p> <p>6.2 Use CBT theory, tools and techniques to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structure therapeutic work • work with client beliefs, behaviours and schemas • work with client's patterns of relating • work therapeutically with common life problems and common mental health problems. <p>6.3 Develop and evaluate homework tasks.</p> <p>6.4 Use research findings on the effectiveness of treatments to inform CBT work.</p> <p>6.5 Integrate concepts of psychopathology when assessing and referring clients.</p>
<p>7. Monitor and maintain professional effectiveness as a counsellor using the CBT approach</p>	<p>7.1 Use CBT supervision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the continuing validity of individual client case formulation. • support implementation of the treatment plan. • support the therapeutic relationship and the therapeutic process. • identify clients with severe or complex mental health problems and support the referral process. • monitor personal well-being, competence and efficacy. <p>7.2 Implement a clinical audit tool.</p> <p>7.3 Research and plan own programme for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)</p>

See the [CBT-L5 Tutor Guide](#) for candidate guidance to criteria and notes for tutors.

3. Minimum Assessment Requirements

To achieve the qualification, candidates must be internally assessed as **Proficient** in all 7 learning outcomes of the qualification and must be **externally** assessed (by CPCAB) as **Proficient**.

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

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – must include all three methods of assessment		
Course activities	Assessment method ⁸	Types of evidence (2 references for each assessment criterion)
Professional discussion and workshops Seminars and group work Projects and presentations Review of knowledge, skills and clinical work Tutorials	Documents	Learning review Client record (at least 30 hours counselling, one-to-one with at least 3 different clients, using CBT) Supervision record ⁹ 2 written assignments (3,000 - 3,500 words) Tutorials (when written by the candidate)
Assessed skills practice Assessed case presentation Simulated counselling practice sessions Group work Group training supervision Seminars and workshops Tutorials	Tutor observation	1 written assessment (by tutor) of tutor-observed counselling practice session using CBT skills 1 case presentation Tutorials (when written by the tutor)
Workplace experience (a minimum of 30 hours one-to-one counselling) using CBT skills with at least three different clients Skills practice Group work Case presentations Group training supervision Seminars and workshops	Testimony	1 supervisor's report Peer feedback
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT		
Candidates complete a structured case review (3,000-3,500 words). This is sent to CPCAB for assessment. ¹⁰		
MARKING SCHEME		
Internal assessment:	Candidates must achieve all 7 learning outcomes and meet all the qualification requirements including all placement hours to be assessed as Proficient.	

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

⁹ Supervision must meet the supervision ratio requirements of their chosen ethical framework or professional membership association.

¹⁰ Guidance and exemplar material are available for download from the [CPCAB Website](#).

External assessment:	Candidates must achieve at least ONE mark in each section of the case review and an overall mark of 11 out of 21 to be assessed as Proficient.
-----------------------------	--

4. Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience

Level 5 Diploma in Cognitive Therapeutic Skills and Theory (CBT-L5)					
	Minimum qualification	Personal therapy + professional association membership	On-going Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	Minimum practice experience	Minimum experience as tutor
Tutor	<p>CBT qualification or training at level 5 or above</p> <p>e.g. CBT-L5</p> <p>And</p> <p>420 hours therapeutic counselling qualification at level 4 or above</p> <p>e.g. TC-L4</p>	<p>Minimum 10 hours personal therapeutic counselling</p> <p>And</p> <p>Member of a professional association for counselling or psychotherapy</p>	30 hours per year CPD activities	<p>100 hours post-qualifying supervised CBT counselling practice</p> <p>And</p> <p>Supervision qualification or experience of providing supervision to groups and individuals in a counselling setting</p>	<p>Teaching qualification</p> <p>And</p> <p>1 year teaching and assessing at level 3 and 4 or above</p>

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 distress. 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.

Title	Age	Entry requirements/ RPL	Criteria considered important for selecting candidates
CBT-L5	19 or over	TC-L4 or equivalent/RPL (minimum 420 GLH) Plus appropriate pre-TC-L4 training (or equivalent).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide references ✓ Academically and emotionally able to cope with this level of training ✓ Ability to work with difference and diversity ✓ Possess personal qualities: imagination, intuition, openness and ability to benefit from self-development ✓ Ability to form a therapeutic relationship ✓ Have self-awareness, insight, honesty and integrity ✓ Emotional stability and the absence of personality disturbance ✓ Able to challenge and be challenged

We recommend that tutors carry out a face-to-face individual interview to ascertain a candidate's suitability for this level of training.

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:

Counselling and Mental Health National Occupational Standards
The Cognitive Therapy Scale (CTS-R)

The assessment strategy maintains a focus on practitioner skills and qualities as well as on written evidence. The combination of tutor assessment and separate external assessment by CPCAB values both objective independent assessment and the relational knowledge of the candidate and their work. 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 and centres are visited twice a year by a CPCAB external verifier.

7. Progression Routes

CBT-L5 is part of a suite of CPCAB qualifications. Once the candidate has completed this qualification and acquired sufficient client work experience, they may wish to progress to the Open University's Foundation Degree in Counselling. Following sufficient client work experience they can also progress to CPCAB Level 6 Certificate in Therapeutic Counselling Supervision (TCSU-L6).

For details of all CPCAB qualifications please see below or click here: [Qualifications - CPCAB](#) for further information.

