

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

FdSc Counselling (Person Centred) and FdSc Counselling (Cognitive Behavioural)

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	Warwickshire College
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A
4.	Final award	FdSc
5.	Programme title	FdSc Counselling (Cognitive Behavioural) FdSc Counselling (Person Centred)
6.	Pathways available	Cognitive Behavioural Person Centred
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Face to face delivery of theoretical and practical work with some blended learning via the Learning channel and Blackboard VLEs. All modules delivered at Leamington Centre of Warwickshire College. Substantial work-based learning also required.
8.	Mode of attendance	FT
9.	UCAS Code	Cognitive Behavioural: B940 Person Centred: B941
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	Foundation degree qualification benchmark statement (2010) The QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Counselling (2013)
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Approved on 12 May 2010 Revised July 2013 (updated to new template and with revised course map with new WBPL module) Revised March 2014 (revised course map with WBPL embedded in taught modules) Revised Sept 2015 (revised requirements for progression and professional practice)

12. Educational aims of the programme

Generic Aims

The Foundation degree awards aim to:

- a) develop in each student subject knowledge and understanding appropriate to individual interests and developing vocational needs;
- b) develop each student's intellectual powers, their understanding and judgement, their ability to see relationships within what they have learned and to examine the field of study in a broader perspective;
- c) develop the personal effectiveness and employability of students, in particular their ability to learn, to communicate, to work with others and to solve problems;

- d) develop those skills of professional scholarship required for career management, lifelong learning and innovation;
- e) provide opportunities to learn and apply skills and knowledge in the workplace;
- f) provide a lively, stimulating and challenging educational experience which meets the defining characteristics of foundation degree awards;
- g) apply theory to observe and appraise practice in the work place; and
- h) evaluate safe working practices.

Award Specific Aims

The FdSc Counselling (Cognitive Behavioural) and FdSc Counselling (Person Centred) awards aim to:

- provide an educational foundation for a range of careers in the counselling and therapy profession;
- develop a range of transferable skills and techniques, personal qualities and attitudes essential for successful performance in working life;
- provide support to meet the individual academic and pastoral needs of students with varying abilities;
- equip students for progression to honours degree study and to develop a positive attitude towards lifelong learning and employment;
- provide opportunities to develop, encourage and enhance students' motivation for the counselling and therapy profession so that they are able to make a substantial contribution to their chosen area of employment;
- provide students, through work-based learning, with an appreciation of issues in ethical practice towards the physical, emotional and mental safety of both client and counsellor/therapist in the counselling and therapy profession;
- develop students' abilities in the establishment and maintenance of a productive therapeutic alliance;
- develop through work-based learning, students' abilities to make informed decisions in the counselling and therapy profession.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Generic Outcomes

On successful completion of Foundation degree awards, students should be able to:

- i. communicate clearly, concisely and confidently, using an appropriate format;
- ii. collect, select and evaluate information from a range of sources;

- iii. manipulate and interpret sets of data, assess their reliability and present them in an appropriate format;
- iv. learn independently and display the skills of professional scholarship required for personal development, career management and lifelong learning;
- v. use information and communication technology effectively;
- vi. select and apply knowledge and principles to the solution of identified problems;
- vii. demonstrate the ability to establish effective working relationships with others and observe and evaluate working practices; and
- viii. demonstrate safe working practices and advise others accordingly.

Award-Specific Outcomes – Cognitive Behavioural

On successful completion of the Foundation Degree in Counselling (Cognitive Behavioural) students should be able to:

- ix. demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of Cognitive Behavioural theory;
- x. demonstrate knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the profession of counselling and therapy and the ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to helping clients and applying these in a work context;
- xi. demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the social, cultural, political and legal milieu in which the counselling and therapy profession operates, and in addition an awareness of how such domains have impacted and continue to impact on them personally;
- xii. critically review and apply the principles of safe, ethical and effective working relevant to the counselling and therapy profession, in both theoretical and practical contexts;
- xiii. evidence and own their own personal growth and increased self-awareness in terms of self as an evolving Cognitive Behavioural practitioner (which includes awareness of their impact on others).
- xiv. demonstrate a range of skills illustrating their development as Cognitive Behavioural practitioners.
- xv. demonstrate an understanding that counselling is a managed activity, with emphasis being given to the importance of opening and closing sessions and a series of sessions.
- xvi. demonstrate an understanding of the limits of their competence in the context of the counselling and therapy profession and identify areas for personal and professional development; and
- xvii. practice and promote professional conduct in the context of counselling and therapy including the maintenance of professional integrity.

Award-Specific Outcomes – Person Centred

- xviii. On successful completion of the Foundation Degree in Counselling (Person Centred) students should be able to:
 - xix. demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of Person Centred theory;
 - xx. demonstrate knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the field of counselling and therapy and the ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to helping clients and applying these in a work context;
 - xxi. demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of the social, cultural, political and legal milieu in which the counselling and therapy profession operates, and in addition an awareness of how such domains have impacted and continue to impact on them personally;
 - xxii. critically review and apply the principles of safe, ethical and effective working relevant to the counselling and therapy profession, in both theoretical and practical contexts;
 - xxiii. evidence and own their own personal growth and increased self-awareness in terms of self as an evolving Person Centred practitioner (which includes awareness of their impact on others).
 - xxiv. demonstrate a range of skills illustrating their development as Person Centred practitioners.
 - xxv. demonstrate an understanding that counselling is a managed activity, with emphasis being given to the importance of opening and closing sessions and a series of sessions.
 - xxvi. demonstrate an understanding of the limits of their competence in the context of the counselling and therapy sector and identify areas for personal and professional development; and
 - xxvii. practice and promote professional conduct in the context of counselling and therapy including the maintenance of professional integrity.

The aims and outcomes of these awards are in alignment with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (October 2008) at levels four and five.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

A key approach to teaching and learning on the Foundation Degrees in Counselling is to fully utilise staff, student and local agency/employer professional experience to ensure that all teaching and learning is current, vocationally relevant and to a high standard.

Employer/agency engagement is critical for the success of the course. The College will continue to build on its strong links with the counselling sector to ensure meaningful work placements for students not in employment. This will ensure that theoretical teaching is regularly contextualised through employer engagement.

The teaching team will use excellent technology including a virtual learning environment (VLE) and intranet supported by strong technological support. Students will have home access to

the College's VLE (called the Learning Channel) for dynamic resources and supporting materials.

The Foundation Degrees in Counselling will involve a blended learning approach with online resources, directed reading and online discussion fora all used to supplement the taught sessions. Relevant course books and access to the Learning Channel are therefore essential. The course relies heavily on work-based and placement learning (WBPL) and, as would be expected, directed reading is a critical tool for developing students' knowledge while discussion fora can help students to apply that knowledge to their workplaces.

Teaching and learning methods used to deliver this curriculum are designed to provide experience, and, through reflection upon it, develop concepts which can then be explored through practical application. The methods used include a wide diversity from formal lectures to student centred activities including seminars, case studies and self-reflective exercises. The course in-class learning activities will be experiential wherever possible and appropriate. Opportunities will be maximised for both staff and students to share appropriately experiences from the workplace to reinforce the links between theory and practice.

14. Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy is designed to determine if students have achieved the module learning outcomes and assessment criteria and can demonstrate qualities and skills, which reflect the general educational aims of the course. Intended Learning Outcomes have been developed for each pathway. Some Intended Learning Outcomes are common to both pathways. In addition, the programme of assessment will provide ongoing feedback on student progress for both student and module tutors and will provide information for the student's future development and improvement.

A diagnostic written assessment is undertaken at the beginning of the course for all students. This assessment does not count towards final grades but enables students to have early feedback on any apparent areas of strength and weakness.

Formative assessment is undertaken regularly throughout the course in order to support the student's development. Many of the assessments that contribute to final grades are of a formative nature in addition to their summative role. Furthermore, students are expected to participate in a wide range of in-class activities, quizzes and tests using the Virtual Learning Environment, presentations and written work that will not contribute to the final grade but which is vital as part of the learning process and in providing students with feedback on their academic progress. Counselling skills are assessed on an on-going basis as part of Modality in Counselling module in year one and as part of Developing the Skills of Counselling module in year two. The summative assessment of skills is made via several modules and includes a recording of a demonstration of the student practising counselling skills with one of their classmates.

Summative assessments are as detailed in the table in section 4 of the course handbook.

A proportion of assessments on the Foundation Degrees in Counselling are designed to be completed through work-based learning. The nature of assessments contributes towards student' preparation for entering the counselling sector by assessing acquisition of knowledge, and also students' ability to apply that knowledge to practice. Students will note that module descriptors for the course include Learning Outcomes which are reflected in the assessments for those modules. These Learning Outcomes and the associated assessments often make reference to evidencing something being achieved in the

workplace or in a work environment. Application of theory within the workplace is an essential aspect of the Foundation degree and the assessment that takes place may be of direct benefit to the employer or work placement provider as well as meeting course Learning Outcomes. Supervisors, employers or work placement providers may be asked to make judgements on the students' abilities in certain areas as part of the course assessment. Where this happens, the supervisor, employer or work placement will be asked to complete a narrative feedback statement but not allocate a mark.

Regulation of Assessment

The assessment strategy is aligned with the [University's Assessment Policy](#).

The course operates under the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#) which sets out the full regulations for passing modules, grading of modules, retrieving failed modules, progression from one academic level to the next, requirements for awards, and how the degree is classified.

The course is fully compliant with UW regulations for assessment, mitigation, appeals and complaints. For further details on any of these areas please follow this link to the [Registry Services website](#) or see the [UW Student Handbook](#)

15. Programme structures and requirements

Title: Foundation Degree in Counselling (Cognitive Behavioural) and
Foundation Degree in Counselling (Person Centred)

LEVEL 4				
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status	Prerequisites
CNSL1101	Modality in Counselling: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	15	Mandatory for CB pathway	None
CNSL1102	Modality in Counselling: Person Centred	15	Mandatory for PC pathway	None
CNSL1103	Personal and Professional Development 1	15	Mandatory	None
CNSL1104	Comparative Theoretical Modalities	15	Mandatory	None
CNSL1105	Human Growth and the Development of Mental Health	15	Mandatory	None
CNSL1106	Social, Political and Cultural Context of Counselling	15	Mandatory	None
CNSL1107	Introduction to Counselling Ethics and the Law Relating to Counselling	15	Mandatory	None
CNSL1199	Academic Study Skills and Entrepreneurial Thinking	30	Mandatory	None

Requirements at level 4

Students must take the mandatory modules, as shown above, as relevant for their chosen pathway. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 4. Students must also achieve 50 work-based and placement learning (WBPL) hours at level 4 as described below.

LEVEL 5				
Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status	Prerequisites
CNSL2101	Introduction to Counselling Research	30	Mandatory	None
CNSL2102	Personal and Professional Development 2	15	Mandatory	CNSL1103
CNSL2103	Advanced Skills of Counselling: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	15	Mandatory for CB pathway	CNSL1101
CNSL2104	Advanced Skills of Counselling: Person Centred	15	Mandatory for PC pathway	CNSL1102
CNSL2105	Counselling Children & Young People	15	Mandatory	None
CNSL2106	Counselling for Loss and Grief	15	Mandatory	None
CNSL2107	Independent Work-Based Learning	30	Mandatory	None

Requirements at level 5

Students must take the mandatory modules, as shown above, as relevant for their chosen pathway. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at level 5. Students must also achieve 150 work-based and placement learning (WBPL) hours at level 4 as described below. To ensure that student progress is not held back, once students have passed the required 50 hours of WBPL at level 4 they may count any subsequent WBPL hours towards the level 5 requirements.

In total, to complete the Foundation degrees in Counselling, students must:

1. Gain at least a PASS in each module
2. Complete 200 hours of work-based and placement learning (WBPL) throughout the course comprising:
 - a. a minimum of 100 hours of face-to-face supervised counselling practice;
 - b. 100 hours of 'other' WBPL activity to include:
 - i. a minimum of 20 hours of counselling supervision;
 - ii. a minimum of 15 hours of personal therapy.
3. These 200 WBPL hours are explicitly embedded into taught modules such that:
 - a. 50 of the total 200 WBPL hours must be completed as part of the successful achievement of *CNSL1199 Academic Study Skills and Entrepreneurial Thinking*;
 - b. 150 of the total 200 WBPL hours must be completed as part of the successful achievement of *CNSL2107 Independent Work-Based Learning*. To ensure that student progress is not held back, once students have passed the required 50 hours of WBPL at level 4 they may count any subsequent WBPL hours towards the level 5 requirements.

Mode of Attendance

The Counselling Foundation Degree courses are normally delivered over two years. Students are timetabled to attend College one day a week. Students are also required to undertake a work placement equivalent to one day a week during term time for the duration of the course. The course is a full time course and so students should expect to undertake around 35 hours of study each week, including time in College and time spent completing assessments

16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

The FdA is designed with reference to the Academic Infrastructure, a means of describing academic standards in terms of the academic level you are expected to achieve. This includes the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), which provides details of the academic level expected within each year of the programme.

The programme is designed in compliance with the University of Worcester Taught Courses Regulatory Framework and the QAA Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (2010). In addition, the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: Counselling and Psychotherapy (2013) was instrumental in shaping the Learning Outcomes for this programme.

The BACP Gold Book (2009) standards have been integrated throughout.

17. Support for students

Warwickshire College has a Library available for students to use as well as a virtual learning environment known as the Learning Channel accessed via the Internet. Students will be allocated a personal academic tutor who will offer support throughout their studies and the college's Student Services department will also provide a range of support and guidance services for students.

Students enrolled on an FdSc Counselling course have the opportunity to access the services offered by UW Student Services. Student Services is the central department that provides non-academic support of students. The department includes Careers, Counselling and Mental Health Support, Disability and Dyslexia Service, Student Wellbeing Centre, and Welfare and Financial Advice. Further details are listed in the Programme Handbook.

18. Admissions

Admissions Policy

- The Foundation Degree course aims to attract interest from a wide range of applicants including experienced in the counselling and psychotherapy profession, mature entrants and applicants wishing to change their career paths. This diversity of interest means that the entry requirements reflect varying qualifications of the applicants.

Entry requirements

- Each applicant will be assessed at interview to establish that the course is of benefit to them and to emphasise the requirement for work-based learning. The interview process will include questions to assess candidates' personal readiness for undertaking a course such as this: self-awareness, insight into motives for taking the course, robustness to meet the emotional demands of the course. The specific qualification of Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills is normally required.
- 4 GCSE's (Grade C or above) including English, and qualifications to the value of 80 UCAS tariff points from a minimum of 1 A Level (or equivalent level 3 qualification) and a maximum of 3.5 A levels. Applicants not meeting the academic entry requirements will be individually assessed for other appropriate qualifications and/or experience, and will be required to demonstrate the ability to study at this level.

Additionally, all applicants must provide:

- **a personal statement** on application
- **references:** an offer of a place is dependent upon the receipt of two supportive references
- **enhanced DBS Certificate.** The DBS was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and merges the functions previously carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). We require students who do not hold a current certificate to apply for one via the University as soon as a place on the course has been accepted.
- **proof of identification**

Admission to the programme via APL/APEL (Accreditation of Prior Learning)

The programme is integrative and it is recommended that students progress through the programme in its entirety. For students who wish to enter via APL/ APEL: these are thorough, in-depth processes of assessment, requiring clear evidence of prior achievement of the Learning Outcomes for each module at the required level of study. Students wishing to apply in this way must first contact the Programme Leader at Warwickshire College, and will be assessed via the Institute of Health and Society at the University of Worcester.

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University web pages. Information on eligibility for accreditation of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the University web pages or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Admissions procedures

An offer of a place on the course will depend upon the entry criteria described above and a successful interview at Warwickshire College.

Application for full-time students (to study the two year course) is through UCAS:

Institution Code W25 – Warwickshire College
 Course Code B940 – FdSc Counselling (Cognitive Behavioural)
 Course Code B941 – FdSc Counselling (Person Centred)

Admissions/selection criteria

Warwickshire College interviews all applicants.

See Section 22 of the Programme Specification for information regarding the admissions arrangements for progression to the linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s).

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Course evaluation is an ongoing process. It involves staff, students, the external examiner and the Programme Management Committee.

We invite feedback using the following methods:

- Student module evaluation forms for each taught module
- Reports and evaluations from placement providers and supervisors
- External examiner and moderator reports and visits
- Discussion arising spontaneously during check in/out. Time allocated as necessary for staff and students to meet as a learning community, with regular feedback from the whole group
- Suggestions for programme changes.

- Staff meetings.
- Two student representatives involved in ongoing discussions within the Staff/student Liaison and Programme Management Committees.
- End of course evaluation that involves discussion between the external examiner with staff and feedback from the Programme Management Committee.
- Annual course evaluation process.

20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- All modules have attendance requirements
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#)

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to re-sit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

Requirements for Professional Practice

- Students must complete the required number of professional practice hours and all associated requirements of the Professional Practice module in order to be eligible for the FdA award.
- Subject to the confirmation of the Exam Board, a student may extend the period of study to complete the professional practice hours after all other modules have been successfully completed
- Students are not eligible to progress to a ‘top-up’ award until all requirements are met
- The Exam Board will monitor progress in relation to completion of the practice hours

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
CertHE	120 credits at Level 4 or higher
Foundation Degree – FdSc	120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5

These awards are not classified.

In total, to complete the Foundation degrees in Counselling, students must:

1. Gain at least a PASS in each module
2. Complete 200 hours of work-based and placement learning (WBPL) throughout the course comprising:
 - a. a minimum of 100 hours of face-to-face supervised counselling practice;
 - b. 100 hours of ‘other’ WBPL activity to include:
 - i. a minimum of 20 hours of counselling supervision;
 - ii. a minimum of 15 hours of personal therapy.
3. These 200 WBPL hours are explicitly embedded into taught modules such that:
 - a. 50 of the total 200 WBPL hours must be completed as part of the successful achievement of *CNSL1199 Academic Study Skills and Entrepreneurial Thinking*;
 - b. 150 of the total 200 WBPL hours must be completed as part of the successful achievement of *CNSL2107 Independent Work-Based Learning*.
To ensure that student progress is not held back, once students have passed the required 50 hours of WBPL at level 4 they may count any subsequent WBPL hours towards the level 5 requirements.

Institute-level Assessment Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Board of Examiners considers students’ mark profiles to make decisions about progression, awards and degree classifications as appropriate.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

Warwickshire College’s National Student Survey results in 2011/12 placed it as the number one higher education provider in Coventry and Warwickshire for Academic Support and for Assessment and Feedback.

Other indicators of quality and standards include:

- positive External Examiners’ reports;

- the University of Worcester has the Investors in People kite mark which was renewed in 2008;
- Warwickshire College has the Investors in People kite mark, renewed in 2011.

Warwickshire College underwent the QAA's Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER) process during 2009, 2010 and 2011 with a focus on Assessment (in 2009) and Work-Based and Placement Learning (in 2010). The results from each review were very positive and significant areas of good practice were recognised across a wide range of activities.

The University underwent a QAA Institutional Audit in March 2011. The audit confirmed that confidence can be placed in the soundness of the institution's current and likely future management of the academic standards of its awards and the quality of the learning opportunities available to students. The audit team highlighted several aspects of good practice, including the student academic representative (StARs) initiative, the proactive approach which supports the student experience for disabled students, the comprehensiveness of the student online environment (SOLE), the wide range of opportunities afforded to students to enhance their employability, the institution's commitment to enhancement, and the inclusive approach to working with its collaborative partners.

22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

The Foundation degrees in Counselling lead to career opportunities in commerce and profession, the public sector and education as well as scope for further studies leading to postgraduate qualifications. Possible career opportunities include:

- NHS initiatives e.g. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies
- Educational institutions
- Employee Assistance Programmes
- Local Authority employee services programmes
- Charitable agencies

Progression to Linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s)

Upon successful completion of the Foundation Degree you are eligible for entry to the final year of the University of Worcester's BSc (Hons) Counselling and should apply to the university via UCAS for this progression route. Successful completion of the Foundation Degree also provides eligibility for entry to the one year BA (Hons) Counselling level six course at Warwickshire College, validated by the University of Gloucestershire.

Student employability

If students are not already employed in the counselling and psychotherapy profession, the course provides links with employers through the work-based learning component. Those already employed within the counselling and psychotherapy profession may find that they are provided with new responsibilities and management opportunities as a result of their studies.

The Foundation degrees in Counselling have a range of links with local agencies offering placements facilitating work-based learning. In addition, local practitioners provide enhancements for the Foundation degree where appropriate by providing input to workshops on contemporary issues in the counselling and psychotherapy

profession. Students on the Foundation degrees in Counselling are also encouraged to attend profession conferences where available. All of these activities – with their crucial employer involvement – help to ensure the profession relevance and currency of the course.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and the course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#).