



**Level 3 Counselling  
Counselling Theory  
Marking Scheme  
January 2018 Series**

# AIM Awards Suite of Counselling Qualifications

No	Question	Accepted Responses*	Marks Available	Assessment Criterion
<b>Section A</b>				
<b>Are the following statements true or false?</b>				
1	In the Cognitive-Behavioural approach, blockages to the actualising tendency are seen as the cause of all psychological difficulty.	False	1 mark	1.1
2	Psychodynamic theory holds that with the right emotional conditions, growth motivations increase in strength	False	1 mark	1.1
3	In Humanistic theory, the organismic valuing process is seen as central to the idea of a true and unique self.	True	1 mark	1.1
4	Humanistic counselling takes an information processing approach to the client.	False	1 mark	1.1
5	Negative automatic thoughts are a key idea in Psychodynamic theory.	False	1 mark	1.1
6	Projective identification is an important concept in the Cognitive-Behavioural approach.	False	1 mark	1.1
<b>For each concept, show which approach is most relevant by ticking the appropriate box</b>				
7	Drive Theory	Psychodynamic	1 mark	1.2
8	Gaining insight	Psychodynamic	1 mark	1.2
9	Information processing	Cognitive-Behavioural	1 mark	1.2
10	Organismic self	Humanistic	1 mark	1.2
11	Negative automatic thoughts	Cognitive-Behavioural	1 mark	1.2
<b>For each intervention, show which approach is most likely to use it by ticking the appropriate box</b>				
12	Graded exposure	Cognitive-Behavioural	1 mark	1.3
13	Free association	Psychodynamic	1 mark	1.3
14	Interpretation	Psychodynamic	1 mark	1.3
15	Relaxation techniques	Cognitive-Behavioural	1 mark	1.3
16	Empty chair technique	Humanistic (accept Gestalt)	1 mark	1.3

## Section B

**Read the following scenario and answer the questions which follow.**

*Sheila, a trainee counsellor on a Diploma course, is approached by her friend Susan seeking advice about what sort of counselling she might find helpful. Susan is able to afford to see a private practitioner, and wants to get started soon. CBT is available at the local GP surgery, but there is a long waiting list, so Sheila decides against that option. Sheila knows that both humanistic and psychodynamic counselling is available near where Susan lives.*

*Susan says her main problem is constantly feeling criticized by both her partner and her boss. She tried seeing a counsellor last year and did not like the way the counsellor “only seemed interested in my early childhood”. She says she needs to know the counsellor really understands her as she is today and won’t judge her. She wants to see someone who believes she will find her own solutions with the right kind of support.*

17	Of the two options available, choose and state which approach you consider most likely to suit Susan	Humanistic	1 mark	2.1
18	Explain your choice with reference to the scenario and to key ideas from the approach you have chosen	<p>1 mark per relevant idea linked to scenario, e.g. :</p> <p>The view that the client is the expert encourages clients to search for solutions within themselves and become more self-reliant and self-directing &lt;-&gt; support with ‘finding own solutions’</p> <p>The counsellor is likely to be communicative and to aim for a warm and interactive relationship &lt;-&gt; not “only interested in my early childhood”</p> <p>Emphasis on unconditional positive regard has a powerful impact on clients, enabling them to feel accepted and valued for who they are &lt;-&gt; ‘counsellor really understands and won’t judge her’</p>	Maximum 3 Marks	2.1

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19	Explain, with reference to the scenario and to relevant key ideas, why you think the other approach available would probably be less helpful to Susan	Psychodynamic theory emphasises the need to learn about early childhood. Some practitioners may over-emphasize this at expense of rapport building. Psychodynamic counsellors are generally less directive when working with clients. This can be frustrating for individuals who prefer a more 'engaged' therapist. Neutral stance/facilitating transference means counsellor unlikely to reassure that client is 'really understood' and 'not judged', and to support with 'finding solutions'.	<b>Maximum 3 Marks</b>	2.2
Use professional judgment to give some credit for other responses which show clear understanding, inc. if Psychodynamic chosen for Q 17. <-> no specific limit to number of sessions				
<b>Now read the following statements and descriptions and answer the questions which follow.</b>				
20	Give three examples of possible limitations of humanistic counselling. For each example, explain your answer with reference to key ideas from the humanistic approach.	1 mark per example up to a maximum of 3. Up to 2 marks per example for clear explanation with reference to relevant idea E.g. : The belief in people's ability to change – especially within the context of a non-directive approach – is overly generous. Counsellors, in their efforts to be non-directive, fail to gather sufficient information from the client to truly help them reach their goals	<b>Maximum 9 Marks</b>	2.2

		<p>Unconditional positive regard, while ideal, may be hindered at times by the therapist's own countertransference (e.g. when clients trigger negative feelings in the therapist)</p> <p>Too much empathy on the part of the therapist may interfere with the therapist's ability or willingness to challenge the client when appropriate or necessary.</p> <p>Too much empathy may make the client feel like they are an 'open book'</p> <p>Congruence is difficult to achieve if the therapist isn't sufficiently self-aware – the client may experience the therapist as 'phoney'</p>		
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Use professional judgment to give credit for other responses which show clear understanding.

*Counsellors using this approach tend to adopt a 'neutral', relatively 'anonymous' stance when working with clients. This can be frustrating for individuals who prefer a more engaged, "active" therapist. It's not uncommon for these individuals to drop out of counselling prematurely.*

21	To which of the three main theoretical approaches is this description most relevant?	Psychodynamic	1 mark	2.1, 2.2
22	Explain your choice with reference to the description and to the possible strengths and limitations of the approach you have chosen.	<p>1 mark per relevant idea linked to statement.</p> <p>E.g. :</p> <p>'Neutral', relatively 'anonymous' stance is intended to facilitate exploration of the transference.</p> <p>Client's may feel that the therapist is 'cold'</p> <p>Exploration of unconscious factors e.g. via free association involves a relative lack of structure which can be frustrating for some individuals, particularly those who prefer a</p>	3 marks	2.1, 2.2

		more “step-by-step”, highly structured form of treatment. Some clients find transference interpretations difficult to understand and make use of.		
	Use professional judgment to give credit for other responses which show clear understanding.			
	<i>Some individuals have a difficult time accepting that how they think and what they believe may be erroneous. They may also be uncomfortable with being expected to carry out tasks in between sessions.</i>			
<b>23</b>	To which of the three main theoretical approaches is this description most relevant?	Cognitive-Behavioural	1 mark	<b>2.1, 2.2</b>
<b>24</b>	Explain your choice with reference to the description and to the possible strengths and limitations of the approach you have chosen.	CBT focusses on cognitions/thoughts/beliefs and seeks to show client that some are inaccurate/unhelpful/unrealistic/unjustified. Some people feel this is too narrow a focus and ignores too many important issues like family, personal histories, and wider emotional problems.  'Homework' between sessions is generally considered essential to success.  This may be very difficult for people with more complex mental health issues or for those with learning difficulties.	3 marks	<b>2.1, 2.2</b>
	Use professional judgment to give credit for other responses which show clear understanding.			

Distribution of marks:

Question	Number of Marks	Criteria Covered	Weighting (%)
<b>1</b>	1	1.1	2.5%
<b>2</b>	1	1.1	2.5%
<b>3</b>	1	1.1	2.5%
<b>4</b>	1	1.1	2.5%
<b>5</b>	1	1.1	2.5%
<b>6</b>	1	1.1	2.5%
<b>7</b>	1	1.2	2.5%
<b>8</b>	1	1.2	2.5%
<b>9</b>	1	1.2	2.5%
<b>10</b>	1	1.2	2.5%
<b>11</b>	1	1.2	2.5%
<b>12</b>	1	1.2	2.5%
<b>13</b>	1	1.3	2.5%
<b>14</b>	1	1.3	2.5%
<b>15</b>	1	1.3	2.5%
<b>16</b>	1	1.3	2.5%
<b>17</b>	1	2.1	2.5%
<b>18</b>	3	2.1	7.5%
<b>19</b>	3	2.2	7.5%
<b>20</b>	9	2.2	22.5%
<b>21</b>	1	2.1, 2.2	2.5%
<b>22</b>	3	2.1, 2.2	7.5%
<b>23</b>	1	2.1, 2.2	2.5%
<b>24</b>	3	2.1, 2.2	7.5%
<b>Total</b>	40		

This assessment is designed to assess the indicated assessment criteria indicated in the unit below.

Writers will ensure all assessment criteria are covered in the assessment.

Unit Credit Value:	<b>9</b>
Unit Level:	<b>Three</b>
Unit Guided Learning Hours:	<b>45</b>
Ofqual Unit Reference Number:	<b>F/506/3053</b>
Unit Review Date:	<b>31/07/2019</b>
Unit Sector:	<b>1.3 Health and Social Care</b>

#### Unit Summary

This unit will provide learners with the knowledge and understanding of the three main approaches to counselling and the theorists that underpin most counselling practice. It will enable them to embark on evaluating the strengths and limitations of the main approaches and will also enable them to understand the need for a firm grasp of a coherent theoretical approach to counselling prior to starting work in a supervised placement.

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#### Unit Information

It is expected that before the unit is delivered, the tutor will have read the Qualification Specification to ensure all conditions regarding Rules of Combination, delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance are fulfilled. Additional guidance is available below as Assessment Guidance for Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria in **bold**.

#### This unit has 3 learning outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
<b>The learner will:</b>	<b>The learner can:</b>
Understand the key concepts in the <b>main approaches to counselling</b>	Explain the view taken of the development and perpetuation of psychological problems as seen by each of the approaches Distinguish between the nature and process of therapeutic change as seen by each of the approaches Summarise the key therapeutic interventions typical of each of the approaches
Understand the <b>strengths and limitations of the main approaches to counselling</b>	Explain the key strengths for each of the approaches Explain the key limitations for each of the approaches
Understand the <b>strengths and limitations of an integrative approach</b> to counselling	Describe an integrative approach to counselling Discuss the potential advantages for practice of an integrative approach to counselling Discuss the potential disadvantages for practice of an integrative approach to counselling

## Assessment

This unit is assessed by:

- an examination which is externally set and marked by AIM Awards.
- an essay of 2000 – 2500 words which is internally set and assessed.

## Indicative Content

### Learning Outcome 1

**Main approaches to counselling:** cognitive-behavioural, humanistic, psychodynamic.

**Humanistic approaches** include: Existential therapy, Gestalt, Person-centred therapy, Transactional analysis and Psychosynthesis.

	Humanistic	Psychodynamic	Cognitive – Behavioural
Development and perpetuation of psychological problems	Philosophy of Humanistic Practice Carl Rogers Core Conditions The Therapeutic Relationship Conditions of Worth Actualising Tendency Presence Effective Listening Non-verbal and Para-verbal Communication Paraphrase and Reflection Questions Introduction to Transference Practice of Skills Development of Self-Awareness Resistance and Reluctance Immediacy Defence Mechanisms Challenges and Confrontation Johari Window	Conflict Anxiety Trauma Resistance Neurosis Defence mechanisms Repression Regression Projection Introjection Reaction Formation Phantasies Splitting Transference Counter Transference	Learned behaviour Conditioning Cognitive distortion Dysfunctional thinking Unhealthy schemas Irrational beliefs

	Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs		
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Nature and process of therapeutic change	6 necessary and sufficient conditions	Consciousness Strengthening of Ego Transference Insight Re-experiencing Relational Experience Grieving	Problem solving Behaviour modification Rational thinking
Typical therapeutic interventions	Non-directive  Provision of relationship  Experiments	Assessment  Neutral stance  Free association Interpretation of transference and dreams  Use of countertransference	Case conceptualization  Teaching  Use of goals and targets Homework/tasks

## Learning Outcome 2

**Strengths and limitations of the main approaches to counselling:**

Humanistic	Psychodynamic	Cognitive – Behavioural
Counsellor's own varying limitations, e.g. lack of congruence. Potential neglect of client's past Might be ineffective for some issues, e.g. OCD, phobias, clients seeking a cure.	Lengthy, expensive, uncertain outcomes. Neglect of social and cultural context	Reliant on client's motivation to change, and to do homework tasks. Benefits may be short-lived

## Learning Outcome 3

**Strengths and limitations of an integrative approach:** One model of integration e.g.

- Egan Skilled Helper
- Schema Therapy
- Clarkson

The difference between eclecticism and integration should be discussed.

**Potential advantages and disadvantages include:**

An integrative approach may be more flexible in response to a variety of clients and issues.  
Counselling may need to move on from 'schoolism' and become pluralistic.

It is arguably better to become practiced in one model before attempting to integrate others. A confused or incoherent model of integration readily becomes wild eclecticism.

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## Reading List

### Required Reading

Feltham, C and Horton, **The SAGE Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy**  
London: Sage. Editions 1-3 (2000, 2006, 2012)

Colledge, R. (2002) **Mastering Counselling Theory**. Basingstoke:Palgrave  
Macmillan. Parts 1,2 and 4

Palmer, S. and Woolfe, R. (Eds) (2000) **Integrative and Eclectic Counselling and Psychotherapy** . London, Sage.

### Recommended Reading

Dryden, W. and Mytton, J. (1999) **Four Approaches to Counselling and Psychotherapy**. London: Routledge.

Mcleod, J. (2013) **An Introduction to Counselling** (5th Ed). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Palmer, S. (2000) (Ed) **Introduction to Counselling and Psychotherapy**. London: Sage.

The [qualification specification](#) contains full information on the qualification.