

## Covid-19 - Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling – Update 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Having worked closely with other awarding organisations and reviewing updated guidance issued by the BACP November 16th 2020 Skills and Education Group Awards can confirm that we have **removed** the cap on the maximum permitted amount of remote hours that can be accrued and counted towards the required 100 hours of supervised practice. During the pandemic we are **not** putting any limit on the number of remote sessions allowed, provided you can return to face to face work as soon as is reasonable, practical and safe to do so.

The current 100 hours supervised practice requirement is a national standard for entry to the profession. We are encouraging our approved providers to be as flexible as possible to enable trainee counsellors to complete these hours.

Your remote placement hours must still be:

- carried out with genuine clients, rather than peers from your course for example
- in an appropriate setting with appropriate clients
- assessed (or marked) as an integral part of your training
- supervised

### **Assessment of competence to work face to face with clients**

As the pandemic continues, you may get to the end of your training with only online or phone placement hours. In this case your training provider **must** ensure that your qualification includes assessment of your competence to work face to face. They may do this by extending the training period or adding an additional level of assessment for face to face working. **It is the responsibility of the approved provider to ensure that all trainee counsellors will be competent and qualified to work face to face with clients on completion of their course.**

Additional BACP guidance on accessing competence for face to face work with clients can be viewed here:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-training/assessing-competence-for-face-to-face-work/>

It is important to state that the health of trainee practitioners and that of their clients is of the utmost importance and government advice should be followed at all times.

It is the responsibility of the training centre and the placement agencies to determine if it is possible for client work to continue. Ethical consideration should be given to continuing or suspending client work, or transferring the client to a qualified practitioner.

Skills and Education Group Awards accept submission of the placement portfolio, which includes the minimum 100 client hours, beyond the course end date and would strongly recommend that centres support the trainees for as long as it is necessary, due to any breaks in client work due to COVID-19 risks.

Alternatively, it may be discussed with trainees whether client work can continue via telephone or other online methods such as Skype, Zoom, etc.

It is the responsibility of the training centre, placement agency and independent supervisors to decide whether individual trainees are trained, competent and experienced enough to continue work via telephone or online methods. In the event that this is permitted, tutors and supervisors should provide any additional support that may be necessary.

Any hours which are conducted by trainees via remote methods should be logged as such and monitored by the centre, placement agency and supervisor to ensure the required support is in place. This additional support will need to be evidenced and signed by all parties when the trainee submits these hours as part of their external assessment. (An additional form is now [available here](#) for this purpose). This form **DOES NOT** replace the current combined client/supervision logs.

If a trainee is deemed competent by the above criteria, Skills and Education Group Awards will permit placement hours to be accrued through telephone or online methods only if:

- The centre, placement agency and supervisor, have deemed the trainee proficient to do so.
- The hours are logged as such and monitored by the centre and placement agency to ensure the proper support is in place.

Skills and Education Group Awards would also suggest viewing BACP resources for counsellors and psychotherapists offering telephone counselling or working online via the following link:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/working-online-resources>

Guidance for BACP members relating to the delivery of online counselling is available at:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-training/>

BACP also provide their own guidance to the profession during the COVID- 19 situation at:

[www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/contact-us/faqs-about-coronavirus](http://www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/contact-us/faqs-about-coronavirus)

<b>For Skills and Education Awards Use Only</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details of change</b>	<b>Section/page</b>
1	12/05/2020	Original document	n/a
2	14/05/2020	Amendment made to permissible remote client hours following monthly review	2
2	14/05/2020	Removal of restrictions on new clients following monthly review	2
3	12/06/2020	Amendment made to permissible remote client hours following monthly review. This has now been increased to 54 hours.	1 & 2
5	14/08/2020	Amendment made to permissible remote client hours following monthly review. This has now been increased to 66 hours.	1 & 2
6	17/08/2020	BACP updated guidance link added to page 2.  <a href="https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-training/">https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-training/</a>	2
7	23/09/2020	Monthly updated guidance issued.	1 & 2
8	25/11/2020	Removal of maximum permitted remote supervised client hours	1, 2 & 3