

Psychotherapists and Counsellors Professional Liaison Group (PLG)  
19 October 2010

Draft standards of proficiency from UKCP

Executive summary and recommendations

### **Introduction**

At the meeting held on 30 September 2010 the UKCP representative on the PLG referred to a paper sent to the HPC Executive about the structure of the Register / standards of proficiency and asked that this be included on the agenda as part of the discussion on differentiation to take place at this meeting. As per that discussion, it is possible that other papers related to the discussions of Psychological Professions Alliance Group (PPAG) might (with the agreement of the chair) be tabled prior the meeting.

The introduction to the document explains that this document has its genesis in the discussions of the PPAG – please see separate paper at this meeting. The standards included in this document have been developed on the basis of a three tier structure of the Register, which proposes differentiating between a counsellor at level 5 on the relevant qualifications frameworks; a counsellor at level 7; and a psychotherapist at level 7.

This paper is included in the agenda for the information of members of the PLG. (Please note that the HPC has made no prior comment on the specific titles and standards articulated in this document. Any final standards of proficiency would need to conform to the HPC's legal context and fit within the structure of the standards set by the HPC Council (i.e. in light of the regulatory function of the standards and the consultation on generic standards of proficiency).)

As noted in the paper 'Differentiation between psychotherapists and counsellors', given the complex issues that need to be resolved in this area it is not anticipated that the PLG will be working directly on the standards of proficiency at this meeting, in the sense of redrafting the standards. However, it is acknowledged that the issue of the structure of the Register does directly engage the standards of proficiency and the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register and therefore these areas may be salient to the group's discussion.

### **Decision**

This paper is for discussion.

## **Background information**

The outstanding areas within the PLG's terms of reference are as follows:

- The question of whether the structure of the Register should differentiate between psychotherapists and counsellors.
- The question of whether the structure of the Register should differentiate between those qualified to work with children and young people and those qualified to work with adults.
- The standards of proficiency for psychotherapists and counsellors.
- The threshold level(s) of qualification for entry to the Register

## **Resource implications**

None

## **Financial implications**

None

## **Appendices**

None

## **Date of paper**

6 October 2010

**DRAFT**

## **Standards of proficiency for Counsellors and Psychotherapists**

**Information note and document on proposed draft standards of proficiency for counsellors and psychotherapists from UKCP**

UKCP have been working on developing draft standards of proficiency as a genuine attempt to help all of us find a way to move towards some resolution of the outstanding areas on titles and differentiation. We offer our progress to date, with the hope that it will make sense and will be received as a work in progress requiring more. We ask you to note that the attached has also been contributed to discussions taking place with other professional bodies represented at the PLG and without. *Please note that this document is likely to be updated and changed as it progresses through the various meetings being held between PLG meetings.*

The draft SOPs document is a direct result of an agreed programme of work that had its genesis in the discussions of the Psychological Professions Alliance Group. The discussions have already led to the general agreement that two levels of counsellor should be recognised by the professions and by the regulator, at level 5 and level 7 and that psychotherapy would be recognised at level 7. It is important that the existence of two levels of counsellor in the *current mapping of the professional field* are being recognised. This recognition requires separate standards of proficiency.

Equally the standards of proficiency proposed are specifically targeted to capture the current mapping of the fields of psychotherapy at level 7 and (advanced) counselling at level 7.

The following titular descriptions have been used:

At level 5 - Counsellor

At level 7 – (advanced) Counsellor

At level 7 - Psychotherapist

**Carmen Joanne Ablack on behalf of UKCP**

**PART ONE - HPC generic standards of proficiency (as per HPC consultation proposed version July 2010)**

*UKCP assumes that all standards of proficiency are as appropriate to professional title and scope of practice.*

**Registrants must**

1. Be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice
2. Be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
3. Be able to maintain fitness to practise
4. Be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement
5. Be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner
6. Be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice
7. Be able to maintain confidentiality
8. Be able to communicate effectively
9. Be able to work appropriately with others
10. Be able to maintain records appropriately
11. Be able to reflect on and review practice
12. Be able to assure the quality of their practice
13. Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice
14. Understand the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge, which are relevant to their profession
15. Be able to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

**PART TWO – Profession-specific standards of proficiency for counsellors and psychotherapists**

(UKCP proposed draft standards of proficiency for counselling and psychotherapy; sections A-E)

**CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT standards of proficiency for counsellor (L5), (advanced) counsellor and psychotherapist (L7), (advanced) counsellor only (L7) and psychotherapist only (L7)**

Standard	Counsellor (L5)	(Advanced) Counsellor and Psychotherapist (L7)	(Advanced) Counsellor only (L7)	Psychotherapist only (L7)
<b>A. Knowledge and Understanding</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Able to demonstrate competency to work professionally from referral to conclusion of work with patients /clients</li> <li>2. Able to demonstrate consideration of how the counselling relationship and process underpin practice.</li> <li>3. Ability to demonstrate on-going development of self-reflection in order to evaluate own competence.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Able to demonstrate competency to work as an independent professional from assessment to termination of work with patients /clients.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Ability to use comparative analysis to enhance practice as appropriate to professional title and scope of practice.</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Able to demonstrate a comprehensive and coherent knowledge base that informs counselling practice.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Ability to independently apply to practice knowledge and understanding, at depth, of their chosen model of counselling.</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Able to demonstrate a comprehensive and coherent knowledge base that informs psychotherapy practice.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Ability to independently apply to practice knowledge and understanding, at depth, of their chosen model of psychotherapy.</b></li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Ability to demonstrate integration of appropriate knowledge and skills in practice.</li> <li>5. Able to demonstrate a knowledge base that informs counselling practice.</li> <li>6. Ability to demonstrate general awareness of different models of counselling practice and counselling theory.</li> <li>7. Ability to demonstrate awareness of research findings relevant to mainstream models of counselling.</li> <li>8. Ability to demonstrate appropriate consideration of the implications of various theoretical concepts within a reasonably wide range of practice settings and/or client groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3. Ability to contribute to the development of professional practice relevant to title and scope of practice, based on learning from knowledge and understanding as a practitioner.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3. Ability to critically appraise own model in relation to other models of practice, and develop own practice as appropriate.</b></li> <li><b>4. Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research methods relevant to major models of counselling, including ability to apply such knowledge and understanding.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3. Ability to demonstrate broad and more specific understanding of other major models of psychotherapy and depth psychology; and develop own practice as appropriate.</b></li> <li><b>4. Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research methods relevant to major models of psychotherapy, including ability to apply such knowledge and understanding</b></li> </ul>
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	<p>9. Ability to apply counselling theory to work with a model of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Core assumptions</li> <li>b. A view of the person</li> <li>c. Human Development and change processes</li> <li>d. Theories of change in counselling</li> <li>e. Awareness of Mental health issues and risk assessment</li> <li>f. Working with Diversity and Equalities</li> </ul>		<p><b>5. Ability to select a model of the following drawing on chosen model of counselling and comparative referencing to other models:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Therapeutic change and theories of change</b></li> <li><b>b. Human Development</b></li> <li><b>c. Mental Health assessment methodologies and tools</b></li> <li><b>d. Mental and / or emotional health</b></li> <li><b>e. The Human mind and / or person</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>5. Ability to formulate a model of the following using chosen model of psychotherapy, with comparative referencing to other major models of psychotherapy and depth psychology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Therapeutic change and theories of change</b></li> <li><b>b. Human Development</b></li> <li><b>c. Mental Health assessment methodologies and tools</b></li> <li><b>d. Theoretical perspectives of</b></li> </ul>
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			<b>f. Working with Diversity and Equalities</b>	<b>mental and emotional health</b> <b>e. Psychology of the Human mind and / or person</b> <b>f. Working with Diversity and Equalities</b>
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<p><b>B. Analysis</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to analyse client presentation, identify and use appropriate interventions consistent with counselling model and scope of practice.</li> <li>2. Ability to recognise their limits as a counsellor and of the counselling relationship including when referral may be necessary.</li> <li>3. Ability to apply relevant research findings to inform practice.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Ability to analyse complex, incomplete and contradictory areas of clinical understanding in order to conceptualise a range of therapeutic interventions within the context of theoretical model and scope of practice.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Ability to identify the need for intervention from other professionals and to refer on when appropriate.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Ability to comparatively analyse research findings and customise model of practice appropriately.</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Ability to use a high level theoretical knowledge in developing hypotheses and generating advanced counselling responses of depth to clinical issues, presentations and problems.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Ability to independently reformulate and develop theory to meet practice needs.</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Ability to use a high level theoretical knowledge in developing hypotheses and generating psychotherapeutic and depth psychological responses to clinical processes.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Ability to independently develop new psychotherapeutic procedures and/or approaches in their work with clients and patients.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Ability to independently identify and work appropriately beyond the limitations of the SOPs as needed for the client.</b></li> </ol>
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<p><b>Communication and Presentation</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to manage and respond appropriately to conflict within the counselling relationship consistent with underpinning model.</li> <li>2. Ability to work co-operatively with other professionals, service users and wider groups and communities.</li> <li>3. Ability to communicate effectively with other professionals and to seek guidance as appropriate.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Ability to independently negotiate and handle conflict competently within the context of the model of practice.</b></li> <li><b>2. Ability to work independently in co-operation and in collaboration with other professionals, service users and wider groups and communities.</b></li> <li><b>3. Ability to engage confidently and independently in professional communication with others.</b></li> <li><b>4. Ability to foster effective interaction with professional groups and organisations, including ability to negotiate within different settings.</b></li> </ol>		
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<p><b>C. Diversity, Equalities and Ethics</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to demonstrate an appreciation of the impact of social, cultural issues and difference/diversity on counselling practice.</li> <li>2. Ability to work with difference and diversity in counselling practice.</li> <li>3. Awareness of and ability to manage implications of ethical dilemmas in line with counselling practice model and scope of practice.</li> <li>4. Able to use supervision and professional support to explore and respond appropriately to ethical challenges/issues.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Ability to work effectively across differences.</b></li> <li><b>2. Ability to work with implicit and explicit issues of diversity and with differences in the therapeutic relationship.</b></li> <li><b>3. Ability to customise model of practice to meet socio-cultural and context needs of clients and patients, including contribution of diversity and difference in and to the therapeutic relationship.</b></li> <li><b>4. Ability to formulate and manage independently conceptualisations of complex ethical dilemmas within a coherent framework.</b></li> <li><b>5. Ability to formulate, understand and</b></li> </ol>		
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		<b>communicate complex conceptual understanding and critical analysis of practice within an ethical framework and context.</b>		
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<p><b>D. Planning and Management</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to prepare for and make effective use of supervision.</li> <li>2. Ability to reflect on and identify own development needs.</li> <li>3. Ability to make choices about and use resources for continued professional development.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Ability to reflect consistently on therapeutic processes and on own functioning in order to improve practice.</b></li> <li><b>2. Ability to independently make choices about and use resources for continued professional development.</b></li> <li><b>3. Ability to make independent contributions to continued professional development learning and developmental discourse in supervision.</b></li> </ol>		
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<b>E. Evaluation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to use self-reflection in order to evaluate own competence and apply appropriate knowledge and skills in practice.</li> <li>2. Able to undertake exploration of how audit and / or evaluation may contribute to the practitioners understanding and development of practice.</li> <li>3. Ability to reflect on how consideration of how the practitioner may provide evidence to contribute to evaluation in the practice setting.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Ability to assess and report on own and others work with clients and patients, accurately and with comprehensive supporting evidence.</b></li> <li><b>2. Ability to critique chosen model of psychotherapy and / or chosen model of counselling and critically compare with alternative approaches relevant to title and scope of practice.</b></li> <li><b>3. Able to effectively contribute to audit and/or evaluation in the practice setting and in the wider professional field.</b></li> </ol>		
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