

BACP Course Accreditation Scheme

Delivery Guidance - B6

B6. STUDENT ASSESSMENT

This section requires the course to demonstrate how it assesses students against clear and specific published learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Once again, each criterion and sub-criterion must be addressed and evidenced individually and clearly labelled/cross-referenced.

Common pitfalls arise when applications do not respond specifically to the criterion/sub-criterion and/or there is a lack of information about how and when the course assesses students in relation to the criteria. In addition, misunderstanding might arise concerning the kind of evidence that assessors might be looking for. Examples of pitfalls are provided in relation to the following criteria:

B6.5, B6.7, B6.8 I and B6.10 i-iv

Learning/reflective journals may be used as evidence for criteria relating to the way courses encourage students to develop reflective skills and self-awareness. However, they may not be used as evidence relating to the way courses assess the development of self-awareness in their students.

The personal nature of student reflective learning journals means that formal assessment of the content is inappropriate. Where students draw upon their journals as a source for assignments reflecting on their own personal learning and development, assignments may be formally assessed and used as evidence for these criteria. This is because the student has control over the material selected for use in the assignment.

B6.4

To ensure public safety, the course must assess students at appropriate key stages throughout the training for:

- i. readiness/competence to practise counselling/psychotherapy and;**
- ii. the ability to monitor and manage the therapeutic process.**

Sending a general response which is not specifically addressing the criterion will not provide the required evidence. Clear information is required about how and when the course assesses students throughout the training (i.e. at various stages on the course) for readiness/competence to practice counselling and psychotherapy and the ability to monitor and manage the therapeutic process. This may be evidenced in a number of ways, including for example, schemes of work; course time-tables, relevant section within student handbooks (clearly cross-referenced to the appropriate page/paragraph); session plans; specific assessment criteria in the form of an assessment grid; skills/therapeutic monitoring feedback form; etc. In addition, evidence of how the course formatively assesses students may also be included, for example experiential groups, personal development groups and in-house group supervision. This is not an exhaustive list of evidence as courses may assess students in a number of different ways.

B6.6

Formal procedures must be in place to terminate the training of incompetent, incapable or ethically unsound trainees.

Providing a vague statement about what the course might do in this situation is a common pitfall. This would not meet the criterion as we expect courses to have a clear procedure in place which should be evidenced in the application. This procedure may be part of a wider institutional policy which may apply to other professional training courses delivered by the provider, or it may be individual to the course. In either case, a formal procedure will need to be provided as evidence for this criterion. The procedure must outline specifically the steps that the course will take in the case of incompetence or ethically unsound behaviour/practice to the point of termination of studies.

B6.9

The course should provide evidence that students are assessed against clear and specific criteria as being competent to practise with real clients.

Successful applications provide evidence of assessment against clear and specific criteria. This is a requirement in order to meet this criterion (see examples of evidence above). A problem may arise if the same evidence previously submitted for B6.4 is provided to meet this criterion. However, this criterion is distinctive from B6.4 as the former requires the course to show how and when it assesses students throughout the training for readiness/competence to practice counselling and psychotherapy and the ability to monitor and manage the therapeutic process (see guidance above).. B6.9 however, requires that the course demonstrates that students are assessed against clear and specific criteria as being competent to practice with real clients. The course needs to provide *specific evidence* of the criteria used for assessment of student competence to practice with real clients.

B6.10

The course must provide clear evidence of the development of the following attributes in students: - criteria i. to x.

Once again, it is important to ensure that each sub-criterion is addressed. Therefore applications providing specific evidence which is clearly cross-referenced to each sub-criterion, demonstrating how the course develops each of these attributes in students are more likely lead to a successful assessment outcome here. In cases where a course does not address and evidence each sub-criterion individually the assessor will be unable to ascertain whether or not the course develops these attributes in its students.