

Counsellor/Psychotherapist Accreditation Scheme

‘To demonstrate the capacity for independent, competent, ethical practice’

Applying for Accreditation: Criterion 6 and Criterion 7

Reflective Practice: Criterion 6: Continuing Professional Development
Criterion 7: Self-awareness

Introduction

Criterion 6 and criterion 7 are the first two Reflective Practice criteria in the application form, where you start to describe your own approach and way of thinking as a counsellor/ psychotherapist.

Format

For all the Reflective Practice criteria, you need to set out your text clearly, showing the criterion numbers e.g. 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 next to the evidence you are presenting.

The word count for criterion 6 is 900 words and criterion 7 is 900 words. It is your choice how you allocate the proportion of the 900 words to each sub-criterion. It is useful to consider what each of the sub-criterion is asking for as a basis for deciding on how best to allocate your word count.

Criterion 6: Continuing Professional Development

6.1 Describe a CPD activity, relevant to your area of practice that you have undertaken in the 12 months before applying for accreditation.

To meet this criterion, you need to decide on one Continuing Professional Development activity that you have undertaken within the 12 months prior to making your application. The cut-off date is the date that your application reaches BACP’s office. Please don’t put a whole list of activities you have done. We don’t need you to provide a certificate of attendance, though you may do so. Supervision is an essential professional requirement for practitioners, so is not considered CPD. You cannot use the same training submitted for the criterion 4 section i.e. your core training. However you can use post qualifying distance/ on-line learning here. Also, you can use one part of a post qualifying longer training, as long as one part is within the permitted one year time frame for criterion 6.

6.2 Provide the reason(s) for choosing the activity.

For 6.2, you need to provide the reason/s for choosing this activity, with reference to your current practice. You need to explain how the chosen activity is relevant to your practice, for example, learning about brief therapy, or trauma training amongst many possibilities... 'I chose this CPD activity because..'

6.3 Show how the activity has influenced your practice.

To meet 6.3, linked to the reason you chose the activity, you now need to describe how the chosen activity has subsequently influenced your practice... 'as a result of doing this activity. In other words, if you have chosen to learn about brief therapy for example, to enhance your way of working, you can describe how you now bring brief therapy interventions into your overall way of working. If you haven't yet made use of the learning from the activity, you cannot address criterion 6.3.

So you need to be clear that your chosen CPD activity has provided you with new learning which you have already taken into your practice. There needs to be a traceable link between a) the chosen activity b) the reasons for choosing it and c) how you then made use of the related learning.

Criterion 7: Self-awareness

7.1 Describe an experience or activity which has contributed to your own self-awareness.

To meet 7.1, you need identify an experience or activity which has contributed to your own self-awareness. There is no time limit regarding when the chosen experience or activity happened. The focus for criterion 7 is your own on-going reflective awareness, because as a competent and experienced counsellor/ psychotherapist you will constantly reflect upon your thoughts, feelings and responses. So for 7.1, you need to identify one experience or activity that has significantly contributed to your own self-awareness. Your own therapy can be used, as can a wide range of experiences/ activities. For example, life events, life changing experiences, personal development activities, post qualifying training. Supervision training can be used for criterion 7, as long you can clearly focus on the self-awareness component found within it for you, which you have then taken in to your work as a therapist.

7.2 Provide the reason(s) for choosing the experience or activity.

For this criterion, you need to provide the reason/s for choosing the experience or activity in terms of developing your own self-awareness. The reason for choosing the experience or activity can be either a) you decided to go for personal therapy or to attend a personal development group, for example, or b) you have decided to describe a life event that has happened to you, because it has been significant for your practice.

Some applicants describe their training in Mindfulness for example, and how personally rewarding they have found it, which works for criterion 7.2. However, a common pitfall is to go onto say how they then taught Mindfulness techniques to their clients, which does not work for criterion 7.3, because it is a technique or intervention, not the use of your enhanced self-awareness.

7.3 Show how you use the self-awareness in your practice.

For 7.3, you need to describe how you use your greater awareness of self in your practice with your clients. In comparison with evidence for 6.3, which is concerned with what you do/ types of intervention, for 7.3 you need to convey the enhanced thoughts, feelings and responses derived from your experience/activity, and how these inform the quality of your presence with your client.

For example, you may describe a life event such as loss, how from that you became aware of feeling helpless and lost and have reflected on that. Then you need to describe how you now use the awareness that you have acquired about yourself in your work with your clients.

There needs to be a traceable link between a) the chosen experience/ activity, b) the reasons for choosing it and c) how you then made use of the related self-awareness in your practice.

Conclusion

We hope that you now feel clearer about what is needed to meet criteria 6 and criteria 7. Now you need to take the next step, choose which activities and experiences you are going to describe and how you carried through your learning and self-awareness into your practice.

We look forward to receiving your application.

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