

Counsellor/Psychotherapist Accreditation Scheme

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

Criterion 9: Practice and Supervision

Reflective Practice, Criterion 9: Practice and the Use of Supervision

Introduction

Following on from Criterion 8 in which you are required to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding in theory; when you look at Criterion 9 you will see that you now need to provide case material in order to demonstrate your way of working in practice. You have a maximum word count of 3000 words to meet the six sub-criteria from 9.1 through to 9.6. You can choose to write about one client, or two separate clients, but no more than this. If you intend to submit two separate shorter pieces of case material, then you should make this clear in your introduction. Please note that the purpose of criterion 9.1 is for you to illustrate your work as a practitioner. Case material is used to provide evidence of this but the client’s story is not the issue.

Format

Up to this point in the application you may have chosen to submit evidence under the headings of the individual criterion and you may have written a paragraph for each. When you come to criterion 9, you will find that writing case material does not lend itself easily to submitting a neat paragraph for each of the sub-criterion. It is likely that a single sentence or paragraph provides evidence for more than one of the sub-criterion. This is perfectly acceptable; however, it is unlikely that one sentence or paragraph will meet all six subcriteria. It is therefore important that you ‘sign-post’ the assessors to where you believe you are meeting the individual criteria below. Please do not provide a transcript of client sessions. You do not have to present the case material as an academic essay- it is not necessary for example to fully reference published works, authors, theories etc. unless you are directly quoting someone else. However, it is your own words that the assessors really want to read.

When selecting a client or clients to write about please choose case material that is typical of your current work. You should use recent case material (i.e. a client that you have worked with in the last six months). The work does not have to be finished; it could be an ongoing case. You do not have to obtain written permission from your client to use the case material for your accreditation; however, you must ensure that the client cannot be identified from what you write. This is to comply with the BACP Ethical Framework and maintaining confidentiality.

We do recognise that you may have written a case study for another purpose in the past, such as a diploma assignment, and occasionally applicants want to use that. It is important to remember that we are concerned with your current practice. It is unlikely that you will be able to meet all the criteria with a case study written for another purpose, especially something which was written whilst you were still a student practitioner. All case material submitted must be verified and commented upon by your supervisor in the supervisor’s report.

Criterion 9: Practice - In your case material account for:

9.1 How your practice is consistent with your described way of working (as described in 8.1)

The interventions you describe in your case material must be entirely consistent with your previously described rationale for your way of working under criterion 8.1. You should not reference criterion 8 in your case material, but whenever you feel that you are demonstrating how you use your rationale and the theories which underpin your practice you should reference this to 9.1. Tell us how you worked, what you did and why you made the interventions described. Remember all approaches used in criterion 9.1 need to be part of the rationale described in 8.1.

9.2 How you use your self-awareness in the therapeutic relationship

You need to illustrate how you used your own reflective awareness of yourself (i.e. your own thoughts, feelings and responses to the case material) in the work undertaken. Remember it is your self-awareness that is being assessed, rather than whether self-awareness was gained by your client. Sometimes applicants erroneously write about awareness (of the counselling process for example) rather than self-awareness, which is what the assessors are looking for.

9.3 How your practice demonstrates your awareness of issues of difference and equality and the impact they have upon your counselling/psychotherapy relationships

Remember, the whole of criterion 9 should be case material and so you need to explain how your awareness of issues of difference and equality impacted upon the work you did with the client or clients you have chosen to write about. How did your awareness of issues of difference and equality between you and your client affect the way you worked? How did your client/clients perceive themselves in relation to others? What about similarities? How did you guard against being seduced into over identification by apparent similarities between yourself and/or other client groups and so on?

9.4 Use of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions

In your case material we ask you to relate some aspects of your case material to the Ethical Framework. It will not be possible within the constraints of the word count permitted to make reference to every section and all the guiding principles of the document, nor would it be likely that you would need to do so with just a single client. However, you should illustrate how you made use of elements of the Ethical Framework within your work. The work may have posed an Ethical Dilemma for example, or you may have found maintaining boundaries challenging etc. The task is to select specific examples which you feel demonstrate your ethical awareness and thinking in order to demonstrate that you meet the standard for accreditation; *'the capacity for independent, competent, ethical practice.'*

Criterion 9: Use of Supervision - and how supervision influences practice by:

9.5 Describing the awareness you have gained through reflection in and on supervision

and

9.6 Showing how you apply that awareness in your practice

Using case material (and preferably the same case you have written about in criteria 9.1 through to 9.4) we ask you to illustrate how reflecting upon the work with your supervisor has facilitated some enhanced awareness about the work as it unfolded. Often applicants make the mistake of writing in general terms about their use of supervision, rather than submitting case material to demonstrate their use of supervision in practice. For criterion 9.5 you need to tell us specifically what awareness was gained through reflection on the case material in supervision. For criterion 9.6 you should then make explicit how that awareness was then applied in practice in a subsequent session or sessions with the same client. All too often applicants tell us that they took the case to supervision, but they do not go on to describe with sufficient clarity how the awareness gained was later applied in practice. To achieve accreditation you must ensure that you have addressed each of the individual criteria in full.

Conclusion

We hope that you now feel clearer about what is needed to meet criterion 9. Now you need to take the next step, choosing which case(s) you are going to describe and starting to think about how you will demonstrate your use of your rationale in your work with your client(s).

We look forward to receiving your application.

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