

An Introduction to the Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling

– BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification

CPCAB and BACP are engaged in a qualification partnership between the two organisations designed to support qualification standards and enhance the pathway to becoming a registered BACP counsellor.

BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification

The 'Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling – BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification' maps the current CPCAB Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4) to the requirements for BACP Qualification Approval and fully incorporates BACP's Online and Phone Therapy Competence Framework.

Context

The [BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification \(APQ\) scheme](#) differs from BACP's existing Accredited Course scheme in that the agreement is at qualification level with the awarding organisation, not with the individual course provider. For BACP, this scheme represents a way of working with qualification providers, rather than placing the onus upon individual training providers to apply for BACP course accreditation at centre level.

To this end CPCAB have worked with BACP to map the current CPCAB Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4) to the requirements for BACP Qualification Approval. This ensures that it meets the high standards of both organisations in terms of content, curriculum, delivery, assessment and practice requirements. The qualification has also been mapped to the relevant BACP professional standards and competencies including the [BACP Online and Phone Therapy Competence Framework](#) and the [BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions](#).

Overview of the Approved Practitioner Qualification Offer

Candidates who successfully complete an approved TC-L4 diploma will have the [Certificate of Proficiency](#) facilitated directly for them by their training provider and will be able to apply directly for [Individual Registration with BACP](#). Candidates can also be reassured that their qualification has already been approved by BACP.

The TC-L4 qualification, including guidance for online and telephone counselling, is unchanged and candidates can expect to receive the same robust TC-L4 qualification they always have, with additional BACP resources available and a smooth transition to registration with BACP. They will also receive certification that includes both a CPCAB and BACP logo together with confirmation that they have completed a qualification that meets the standards of the BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification scheme.

The BACP approved qualification is offered to all centres who have TC-L4 approval. Centres who do not wish to participate or who have aligned their course delivery with an alternative professional association or register can continue to deliver the standard TC-L4 as normal.

Centres wishing to adopt the BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification can do so by fulfilling some conditional requirements that ensure they are delivering the qualification in a way that fully endorses the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, the BACP Online and Phone Therapy Competence Framework and models best practice for BACP student members. These requirements are detailed below, and further information can be found in the centre application form for APQ status.

We hope that this is adopted as a valuable opportunity for centres who wish to provide their students with a straightforward route to BACP registration.

All centres offering the TC-L4 with BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification status must:

- Hold CPCAB online delivery recognition. [Full information about applying for online delivery is available on our 'running qualifications online' webpage.](#)
- Offer a blended course delivery and support candidates to engage with a blended placement to meet the BACP APQ requirements. Blended delivery includes an aspect of online delivery in the course programme (up to 25% of the GLH).
- Support candidates to experience both in-person and online/telephone work during their 100 placement hours (up to a maximum of 49% online/telephone work is permitted).
- Be delivered by tutors who hold an active BACP membership themselves, follow the BACP ethical framework and are subject to the BACP complaints procedure.
- Hold a [BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification Centre Agreement.](#)
- New centres wishing to adopt the BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification must apply using the centre application and [BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification Centre Agreement.](#)

Why a Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling – BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification?

As part of our commitment to developing competent counsellors and engaging in the development of the counselling profession, we actively engage with other organisations, institutions, and individuals in our field. We continue to work with The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), which is a professional association for members of the counselling professions in the UK which is recognised by the [Professional Standards Authority \(PSA\)](#). Our continued qualification partnership with BACP is designed to support qualification standards and enhance the pathway to becoming a registered BACP counsellor.

What are the benefits?

The Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling – BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification offers many benefits for both centres and candidates.

Benefits for centres:

- Join a growing number of centres offering the Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling – BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification and promote this opportunity to potential candidates.
- The same robust TC-L4 qualification.
- The qualification is updated annually to ensure it responds to the changing landscape in counselling and psychotherapy training standards and employment.
- Tutor BACP membership provides additional BACP resources for teaching and assessment.
- Offer BACP Certificate of Proficiency from your own centre.
- BACP offer centre support for facilitation of the BACP Certificate of Proficiency.
- A straightforward application and approval process from CPCAB.
- CPCAB staff and External Verifier support.

Benefits for candidates:

- A straightforward route to BACP registration.
- The same robust TC-L4 qualification.
- The qualification is updated annually to ensure it responds to the changing landscape in counselling and psychotherapy training standards and employment.
- Certification that includes both a CPCAB and BACP logo which confirms that the qualification meets the standards of the BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification.
- Student BACP membership provides additional BACP resources for learning. (Please note the BACP student membership fee is not included in the course fee).

If you're a learner and would like to find out more about this qualification, please contact a centre directly for further information. You can [find your nearest centre approved to offer the BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification using our centre finder.](#)

How is the BACP Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) facilitated?

BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification centres will facilitate the BACP Certificate of Proficiency in the 2nd year of the qualification.

Please see the [BACP Certificate of Proficiency - A guide for approved centres.](#)

The guide will support you with planning and facilitating the BACP CoP in year 2 and claiming certificates with CPCAB:

- Establishing contact with BACP
- Appointing an Invigilator
- Identifying candidates for the CoP assessment
- CoP assessment booking process
- Candidate preparation for the CoP assessment
- Centre preparation for the CoP assessment

Contingencies for the CoP assessment

- Results of the CoP assessment
- Certification
- Further CoP assessment dates / sessions

You'll need to liaise with BACP when making arrangements for candidates to take the CoP.

You must ensure that only candidates who've attended 2 years of a BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification at your centre and have completed a minimum of 70 client hours are put forward for the CoP.

If you have any questions, please contact BACP at apq@bacp.co.uk, or you may wish to [contact CPCAB](#).

Registration and Certification

All candidates successfully completing the Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling – BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification will receive certificates including the BACP logo. Please see the [CPCAB BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification - Registration and Certification Centre User Guide](#) for further information. Please ensure that all centre staff including managers, exams officers, tutors and invigilators are provided with a copy.

The guide supports centres in understanding how to register candidates for the qualification and how to access, receive and record assessment results for results for the BACP CoP. It contains vital information so that centres can ensure they log accurate results and avoid maladministration in certification:

- Additional requirements for registration
- Identifying candidates for the BACP CoP assessment
- Submitting CoP results
- Claiming Certificates

For queries relating directly to the BACP CoP, please contact BACP at apq@bacp.co.uk.

For queries relating to claiming certificates online via the CPCAB Portal, please contact CPCAB at contact@cpcab.co.uk.

[BACP student membership application template letter](#)

[BACP individual membership upgrade template](#)

For any other queries, please [contact CPCAB](#).

Further questions?

Please read our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) relating to the BACP Approved Practitioner Qualification.