



The only awarding body
run *by* counsellors
for counsellors

2026-2027

Specification

Level 5 Diploma in Counselling Children and Young People (CYP-L5)

This RQF qualification is regulated by Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland

Qualification/learning aim number: 603/7503/6

Sector subject area: 1.3 Health and Social Care

Counselling & Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB)

P.O. Box 1768

Glastonbury

Somerset

BA6 8YP

Tel. 01458 850 350

Website: www.cpcab.co.uk

Email: contact@cpcab.co.uk



Contents	Page
1. Qualification Information	3
2. Qualification Summary	6
3. Minimum Assessment Requirements	8
4. Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience	9
5. Candidate Entry Requirements	10
6. Fit for Purpose	11
7. Progression Routes	13

Please note:

This document, along with candidate support materials, can be downloaded from the [CPCAB website](#). If you need help with the accessibility of this document, please email contact@cpcab.co.uk with your request.

Find us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#)

Watch us at [CPCAB Videos](#)

Discover new & interesting things at [CPCAB News](#)

1. Qualification Information

Purpose Statement	This post qualifying qualification is designed to give learners the specialist knowledge, skills and competences to work as counsellors with children and young people aged 11-18. This qualification will enable successful candidates to work as counsellors with this age group in a range of job and career opportunities, which include but are not limited to: • A counsellor employed by a School or College • A counsellor in an agency or organisation which specialise in counselling children and young people • A private counsellor working for an external organisation such as a school, youth club, wellness/mental health setting • An 'adult' counsellor in independent practice wishing to extend their work to cover this age range • A youth worker in the community • An outreach worker with adolescents/teenagers
Funding	The qualification is eligible in England for Advanced Learner Loans (19+) The link to the government website which provides details of funding for this qualification can be found here: DfE: funding rules, rates and formula
Level	5 ¹
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	120
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	435
Credit value	44
Minimum Age	19 years ²
Entry Requirements	CPCAB Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4) or an equivalent level 4 or above qualification of at least 300 GLH, aligned with SCoPEd Column A competences. Plus appropriate pre-TC-L4 training. Please see: • CPCAB Candidate Entry Requirements for criteria considered important in selecting applicants for a programme leading to CYP-L5.

¹ Equivalent to European Qualification Framework (EQF) level 5 and Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 8.

² This age requirement is linked to Ofqual's system for categorising qualifications.

- [CPCAB's Entry Requirements and Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy.](#)

Assessment	Pass (Proficient)/Fail (Not Proficient) Candidates must be Proficient in internal assessment and meet all the qualification requirements including all placement hours to achieve the qualification. Internal assessment: tutor assessment of candidate portfolio evidencing minimum assessment requirements and verified by CPCAB. See CPCAB's Minimum Assessment Requirements.
Additional Qualification Requirements	Personal counselling: a minimum of 20 hours of personal counselling undertaken during the life of the course. Client work: a minimum of 60 hours formally contracted counselling (one-to-one), with children and young people. The hours are to include client assessment and practice work with at least 4 different clients between the ages of 11-18. Clinical Supervision: either group or one-to-one supervision – as per the supervision ratio requirements of the candidate's chosen ethical framework or professional membership association.³
Staffing and Resources	At least two tutor-assessors must be involved in all aspects of internal candidate assessment. Tutors must be qualified CYP practitioners with current knowledge and experience of working with this age group. See Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience for further details of CPCAB requirements. See Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Centres are required to have robust IQA (internal moderation and verification) processes that are verified by CPCAB. See CPCAB IQA Policy
Progression	• Open University Foundation Degree in Counselling.⁴ • CBCAB Level 6 Certificate in Therapeutic Counselling Supervision (TCSU-L6) plus a recommended minimum 450 supervised practice hours.⁵

³ CPCAB recommends that candidates access appropriate clinical supervision to meet the requirements of their chosen ethical framework or professional membership association. For example, [BACP Supervision Guidelines](#) for trainees require a minimum of 1½ hours individual supervision per month (or the equivalent if in group supervision) or 1 hour of supervision for every 8 hours of client work.

⁴ To access the OU Foundation Degree candidates must have completed the CPCAB Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4). CPCAB level 5 qualifications contribute 30 credits towards the achievement of the [Foundation Degree](#).

⁵ This is in line with BACP counsellor individual accreditation requirements.

- Credit transfer to university study such as Open University⁶

See [CPCAB's Progression Route](#) for details.

Candidate Registration Fee £398

Centre Application for CPCAB Approval to Offer the Qualification Centre application fee: £422 (one-off fee).⁷
Centres are expected to design their own training programmes.⁸

Online Delivery Options This qualification is eligible for fully in-person, or blended delivery. Up to 50% of the GLH of this qualification can be delivered online. Please see [how to run CPCAB's qualifications online](#) for more information.

⁶ Contact the Open University or your chosen HE institution directly to discuss credit transfer options.

⁷ In order for your application to be processed the approval fee will need to accompany your application. This is non-refundable. Payment can be made by cheque payable to CPCAB or via Bacs payment. Please contact finance@cpcab.co.uk for more information.

⁸ All centre-designed courses must be approved by CPCAB before candidates can be registered. Although the delivery of courses may differ from centre to centre, all delivery must enable the candidates to achieve the learning outcomes of the qualification.

2. Qualification Summary

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria (CYP-L5)

Learning outcomes (skills, knowledge, understanding) The learner will/will be able to:	Assessment criteria (to assess learning outcome) The learner can:
1. Work safely, legally and ethically with children and young people (CYP)	1.1 Work within recognised legal, professional and ethical frameworks when counselling CYP. 1.2 Respond to and manage issues of confidentiality and data protection. 1.3 Conduct initial, emerging and ongoing risk assessments and respond to safeguarding and child protection issues. 1.4 Work within limits of competence and use referral and signposting processes appropriately. 1.5 Engage with inter agency work, including schools.
2. Facilitate a therapeutic relationship with CYP	2.1 Establish and maintain an age appropriate therapeutic relationship. 2.2 Establish and sustain professional and personal boundaries with consideration to the age and developmental stage of the client. 2.3 Use the therapeutic relationship to inform and enhance the counselling work, enabling CYP to access and express emotions. 2.4 Work with conflicts, challenges and difficulties that arise in the therapeutic relationship. 2.5 Evaluate the appropriateness of working in partnership with family members, carers and the client.
3. Understand and work with diversity in relation to CYP	3.1 Apply theory and research on diversity issues to counselling work with CYP. 3.2 Identify and respond to factors that impact on the mental health and wellbeing of CYP. 3.3 Use empathy to communicate understanding and acceptance appropriate to the age of the client. 3.4 Facilitate a time and setting appropriate to the age and stage of development of the CYP. 3.5 Reflect on barriers to CYP engaging with counselling and actively promote easier access.

4. Work collaboratively, creatively and flexibly to engage CYP in counselling work	4.1 Conduct an age appropriate assessment tailored for each client to establish a focus for the work together. 4.2 Negotiate a contract for the work with the client's involvement and consent. 4.3 Evaluate the different ways of offering counselling to CYP, e.g. face-to-face, online, telephone and blended work 4.4 Offer a range of communication methods appropriate to the client's age and developmental stage. 4.5 Reflect on, evaluate and review the counselling work in collaboration with the client's changing needs. 4.6 Work sensitively with CYP to negotiate and plan for endings and transitions.
5. Work with self-awareness as a CYP counsellor	5.1 Reflect on own childhood experiences and how they might enhance or limit own work with CYP. 5.2 Apply child development theories to self and demonstrate how this awareness informs therapeutic work with CYP. 5.3 Use awareness of self to work with the impact of power and authority in the counselling relationship with CYP. 5.4 Practice self-care to promote personal resilience in response to the impact on self when working with CYP.
6. Use theory, research and skills to work effectively with CYP	6.1 Evaluate the benefits and limitations of own core theory, adapting it to work effectively with CYP. 6.2 Apply knowledge of child development and attachment theories to meet the specific needs of CYP. 6.3 Work experientially with play and creativity to enhance the therapeutic process. 6.4 Promote and encourage resilience in CYP. 6.5 Consider the role of psychopathology, pharmacology and neuroscience when working with CYP. 6.6 Use research findings on counselling CYP to inform the work.
7. Monitor and maintain professional practice and effectiveness as a CYP counsellor	7.1 Prepare for and engage with clinical supervision appropriate for counselling work with CYP. 7.2 Demonstrate awareness of the "internal supervisor" and the place of reflexivity, to enhance counselling practice with CYP. 7.3 Use a clinical audit tool appropriate for counselling work with CYP to critically evaluate own practice. 7.4 Identify strengths and weaknesses when working with CYP and plan own Continuing Professional Development programme.

See the [CYP-L5 Tutor Guide](#) for candidate guidance to criteria and notes for tutors.

3. Assessment – Minimum Requirements

To achieve the qualification, candidates must be internally assessed as **Proficient** in all seven learning outcomes of the qualification.

Candidates must give **two** pieces of evidence for each criterion. In addition, the Candidate Learning Record, when complete, must include references to all three assessment methods (documents, tutor observation and testimony) across the whole CLR.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – must include all three methods of assessment		
Course activities	Assessment method ⁹	Types of evidence (2 references for each assessment criterion)
- Professional discussion and workshops - Seminars, personal development workshops and group work - Projects and presentations - Review of knowledge, skills, self-awareness and clinical work - Tutorials	Documents	- Learning review ¹⁰ 2 written assignments (3,000 - 3,500 words) a) Applying your core theoretical framework to counselling work with children and young people b) The personal and professional challenges and opportunities in working therapeutically with children and young people. - Client record (60 hours) and Clinical supervision record ¹¹ - Review of 15-minute transcript of client work which can be part of tutor observed counselling practice session* 1 Self-review ¹² - Personal Therapy record (20 hours)¹³ - Tutorial records (when written by the candidate)
- Assessed skills practice - Assessed case presentations - Simulated counselling practice sessions - Group training supervision - Tutorials - Group work - Seminars and workshops	Tutor observation	1 tutor-observed counselling practice session* 1 case presentation - Tutorial records (when written by the tutor)

⁹ Proforma and guide sheets for internal assessment can be downloaded from the [CPCAB website](#).

¹⁰ This is an on-going review of learning during the course (also called a “learning journal”).

¹¹ CPCAB recommends that clinical supervision meets the requirements of their chosen ethical framework or professional membership association. For example, BACP supervision guidelines for trainees require a minimum of 1½ hours individual supervision per month (or the equivalent if in group supervision) or 1 hour of supervision for every 8 hrs of client work.

¹² Self-review of learning, progress, and completion of the learning tasks (criteria). Template available on the [CPCAB website](#)

¹³ This can include hours undertaken prior to the start of the course, but at least 10 hours must be during the course.

• Workplace experience (60 client hours) • Skills practice • Group work • Case presentations • Group training supervision • Seminars and workshops	Testimony	• 2 supervisor reports (after 30 hours and 60 hours of client work) • Peer feedback
MARKING SCHEME		
Internal assessment:	Candidates must achieve all 7 learning outcomes and meet all the qualification requirements including all placement hours to be assessed as Proficient.	

4. Tutor-Assessor Qualifications and Experience

Level 5 Diploma in Counselling Children and Young People (CYP-L5)					
	Minimum qualification	Personal therapy + professional association membership	On-going CPD	Minimum practice experience	Minimum experience as tutor
Core tutor	420 hours therapeutic counselling qualification at level 4 or above e.g. TC-L4 And Relevant training specific to working with CYP* <i>*This could have been met within your therapeutic qualification or a subsequent CPD training.</i>	10 hours of personal therapy AND Member of a professional association for counselling or psychotherapy.	30 hours per year CPD activities.	2 years post-qualifying practice and current CYP practitioner And Experienced in providing supervision to counsellors working with CYP.	Teaching qualification And 2 years teaching and assessing counselling qualifications at level 4 or above
Additional tutor(s)	420 hours therapeutic counselling qualification at level 4 or above e.g. TC-L4	Member of a relevant professional association	30 hours per year CPD activities.	Current CYP practitioner Or Experience of providing supervision to counsellors	Teaching qualification or be working towards one And 1 year teaching and assessing counselling qualifications at level 4 or above.

5. CYP- L5 - Candidate Entry Requirements

This qualification is not suitable for those who are currently in a state of severe emotional difficulty and/or severe psychological confusion. Centres need to ensure that all potential candidates are made aware of the nature of the course, and in particular that the course involves experiential elements that will involve considerable personal disclosure and associated personal developmental activities.

Age	Entry requirements	Criteria considered important for selecting candidates
19 or over	TCL4 or an equivalent level 4 or above qualification of at least 300 GLH, aligned with SCoPEd Column A competences. Plus appropriate pre-TC-L4 training.	✓ Ability to identify reasons for training beyond just personal development ✓ Provide references ✓ Academically and emotionally able to cope with this level of training ✓ Ability to work with difference and diversity ✓ Possess personal qualities of imagination, intuition, openness and ability to benefit from self-development ✓ Ability to form a therapeutic relationship with a child or young person ✓ Have self-awareness, insight, honesty and the ability to make links ✓ Emotional stability and the absence of personality disturbance ✓ Ability to challenge and be challenged ✓ Ability to respond sensitively and empathically to children and young people ✓ Ability to work professionally as part of a team

We recommend that tutors carry out a face to face individual interview to ascertain a candidate's suitability for this level of training.

This qualification has been designed to take account of the [latest research findings](#) on what makes counselling effective and is underpinned by the [CPCAB model](#) of practitioner development.

6. Fit-for-purpose

This qualification leads to being a qualified counsellor for children and young people and fulfils the requirements of a range of professional association registers. It also maps to a range of competency frameworks, and occupational standards. This section is intended to help learners make informed choices about the qualifications they wish to study and how they will enable them to reach their personal and professional goals.

As a learner continues their journey with the **CPCAB Level 5 Diploma in Counselling Children and Young People**, they are progressing into post-practitioner training which enables them to develop further skills, and knowledge when working with children and young people between the ages of 11 and 18. This improves employment opportunities working in services which offer counselling to children and young people, for example schools, colleges, specialist agencies and also in independent practice.

CPCAB qualifications are designed to build upon each other, ensuring that the required skills and knowledge are developed alongside the personal growth of the learner. This qualification is based on current research and adheres to the [CPCAB's model](#) for practitioner development, ensuring that training meets the highest professional standards.

Learners will receive live teaching either in-person or in an online classroom, which will include real-time interaction with peers and tutor(s). They will practice what they are learning, receive feedback on their use of counselling skills, and gain insights about themselves through their engagement with others. This live human connection is considered essential when training in an area such as counselling.

Counselling and Psychotherapy Career Progression

The CYP-L5 enables learners to register with the following counselling professional association registers, which are accredited by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA):

- ✓ BACP – British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
- ✓ NCPS – National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society
- ✓ COSCA – Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland
- ✓ ACC – Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions

You may also join specific divisions of membership focused on work in this area, such as the BACP Children, Young People and Families Division.

This qualification maps to competencies from the following frameworks:

- ✓ BACP: Competence framework for work with children and young people (4-18 years)
- ✓ NCPS: Competency framework for working with children and young people

This qualification, in combination with the CPCAB Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4) maps to the essential competencies for:

- ✓ UKCP SETs for Child Psychotherapeutic Counselling (see separate mapping for more information on additional centre requirements).

Occupational Mapping

This qualification is mapped to a range of the competencies within the following suite of National Occupational Standards (NOS), developed and maintained by the Sector Skills Council – Skills for Health:

- ✓ General Health Care
- ✓ Health and Social Care
- ✓ Mental Health - Adults

This qualification builds on the competencies within the approved occupational standard ‘Counsellor’ in the [Skills England occupational maps](#) which is recognised as a Higher Technical Occupation within the Health & Science Pathway.

This qualification also provides a range of competencies for allied and linked professions for those who are completing this training to improve employability and progression in a range of other occupations. The skills and knowledge gained in this qualification contribute towards employability in a range of occupational standards represented in the Skills England occupational maps.

This alignment ensures that this qualification is not only comprehensive but also up-to-date with the latest practices in counselling, psychotherapy and other linked professions.

The assessment strategy maintains a focus on practitioner skills and qualities as well as on written evidence. The combination of tutor assessment and separate external verification by CPCAB values both objective independent scrutiny and the relational knowledge of the candidate and their work. The qualification is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose.

Centres have to meet robust centre approval requirements before they can deliver this qualification. All tutors are approved and standardised by CPCAB and centres are visited twice a year by a CPCAB external verifier.

7. Progression Routes

CYP-L5 is part of a suite of CPCAB qualifications. Once the candidate has completed this qualification and acquired sufficient client work experience, they may wish to progress to the Open University's Foundation Degree in Counselling. Following sufficient client work experience they can also progress to CPCAB Level 6 Certificate in Therapeutic Counselling Supervision (TCSU-L6). This qualification is also accepted for credit transfer at HE institutions such as the Open University.

For details of all CPCAB qualifications please see below or click here: [Qualifications - CPCAB](#) for further information.

