

Appendix A:

Characteristics for Counselling Training at Spurgeon's College

The following paragraphs outline the characteristics we wish to observe and develop in a student on a Counselling degree at Spurgeon's College. Whilst our students will work in different sectors within the profession, we consider these competencies and characteristics to be universal across different counselling contexts. As they grow and develop to reach their potential, we would wish to see students continue to demonstrate these characteristics and competencies in their professional development upon leaving the college.

Professionalism

- The ability to operate within a professional and ethical framework.
- The ability to incorporate awareness of difference and diversity in academic and professional practice as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The ability to use team-working skills in learning environments and in a professional context.
- To understand the importance of confidentiality and its limitations in client work.
- The ability to recognise the need for personal and professional support and to know when to consult supervisors.

Assessment

- The ability to make an assessment of the client's problems and suitability for therapy across a variety of mediums in short and long term work.
- The ability to draw upon knowledge and symptomology of mental health issues in concert with counselling theory.
- The ability to understand the role of psychiatric drugs in managing mental health problems.
- The ability to assess risk alongside duty of care and legalisation to work ethically and safely in client work.

Relationship

- To maintain appropriate professional and personal boundaries.
- The ability to form a therapeutic alliance with clients.
- The ability to reflect upon a client's cultural identity and understand how this may inform the work.
- The ability to recognise and understand the power dynamic between the counsellor and client and how this influences the therapeutic work.
- The ability to end a session well as well as the therapy as a whole.

Knowledge and skills

- The ability to articulate the rationale and philosophy of their own therapeutic integration.
- The ability to cope with the intellectual and academic requirements of ongoing counselling practice.
- The ability to be able to make use of and reflect upon life experiences and how they help or hinder the therapeutic process.
- To develop competency in, or the aptitude to develop generic professional skills, including: literacy, numeracy, information technology, administrative skills, self-management skills, communication and interpersonal skills.

Self-Awareness and Reflection

- The requirement for self-awareness, maturity and emotional stability in both academic practice and counselling work.
- The ability to respond to constructive feedback openly and without defensiveness.
- The ability to make use of and reflect upon life experiences.