



**ASSESSOR GUIDE**

**CHCCSL002**

# Apply specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills

## Assessment 1 of 2

### Short Answer Questions



## Assessment Instructions

### Task overview

This assessment task is divided into 28 short answer questions. Read each question carefully before typing your response in the space provided.

### Additional resources and supporting documents

To complete this assessment, you will need:

- Learning resources



## Assessment Information

### Submission

You are entitled to three (3) attempts to complete this assessment satisfactorily. Incomplete assessments will not be marked and will count as one of your three attempts.

All questions must be responded to correctly to be assessed as satisfactory for this assessment.

Answers must be typed into the space provided and submitted electronically via the LMS. Hand-written assessments will not be accepted unless previously arranged with your assessor.



### Reasonable adjustment

Students may request a reasonable adjustment for assessment tasks.

Reasonable adjustment usually involves varying:

- the processes for conducting the assessment (e.g., allowing additional time)
- the evidence gathering techniques (e.g., oral rather than written questioning, use of a scribe, modifications to equipment)

However, the evidence collected must allow the student to demonstrate all requirements of the unit.

Refer to the Student Handbook or contact your Trainer for further information.



Please consider the environment before printing this assessment.

### Question 1

Briefly describe the role of the **source** and the **receiver** within the communication process.

[Approximate word count: 30 – 50 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding that the source and receiver are participants in a communication process.

The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answer.

The source forms the message and attempts to communicate it.  
The receiver receives the message and interprets and then responds to it.  
They take turns forming messages and interpreting messages.

### Question 2

Briefly explain why understanding your client's learning style can help with effective communication within the counselling relationship.

[Approximate word count: 20 – 30 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response should demonstrate and reflect an understanding of the benefit of adapting to the learning style for counselling conversation.

The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answer.

Learning style is essentially how a person communicates and interprets information. Knowing a client's learning style and adapting to this style can enhance the communication process.

### Question 3

List three (3) ways a counsellor can address communication barriers created by a client's disability.

[Approximate word count: 30 – 40 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least three ways a counsellor can address communication barriers relating to the client's disability.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **three** of the following examples.

- Obtaining the services of an interpreter who is fluent in sign language.
- Use attending behaviour and micro skills to mitigate the effect of physical barriers.
- Sit closer to a client with hearing difficulties and speak slowly and clearly.
- Adjust language and speed of delivery to match client and 'check-in' frequently to ensure understanding.

#### Question 4

List three [3] ways in which a counsellor can address environmental barriers.

[Approximate word count: 10 – 20 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least three ways a counsellor can address environmental barriers.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **three** of the following examples.

- Minimise noise by using background music.
- Use a more suitable counselling room.
- Make use of blinds to reduce distraction.
- Ensure privacy by ensuring the room is soundproof.
- Adhere to Workplace Health and Safety procedures.
- Ensure the room is at a comfortable temperature.

#### Question 5

Identify one [1] communication technique a counsellor could use to ensure they understand the client's point of view and are not making assumptions.

[Approximate word count: 2 - 5 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least one communication technique to ensure a counsellor's own perceptions and assumptions do not affect clarity when understanding the client's situation.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of **one** of the following examples.

- Check-ins.
- Active listening skills.

#### Question 6

Briefly outline the main aims of a counselling interview.

[Approximate word count: 40 – 50 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate the key objectives of a counselling interview.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

The main aim of a counselling interview is to provide the client with an opportunity to discuss their problem and build a working alliance with the counsellor. The time may also be used to set goals, provide alternatives and plan action.

### Question 7

Identify and briefly describe the three Vs + B of attending behaviour.

[Approximate word count: 90 – 100 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of attending behaviours of the three Vs + B and reflect the following points.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Visual/eye contact: Looking at those to whom you are talking/respectful eye contact, not staring at the client, not looking them over, maintaining cultural respect.
- Vocal qualities: Tone of voice and rate of speech/change tone of voice, vary the placement of accents and rate of speech.
- Verbal tracking: Remaining focused on therapeutic conversation/not changing the subject to suit own agenda/keeping to the topic the client initiated.
- Body language: Being attentive and genuine. Match between verbal and non-verbal language. Face the client squarely, lean forward, have an expressive face, and use facilitative, encouraging gestures.

### Question 8

During counselling, clients do not always communicate with words. It is important that you learn to apply observation skills to help identify what your clients' non-verbal behaviours can indicate. The **way** in which a person speaks can provide a counsellor with a wealth of information.

List the three (3) things a counsellor should observe about a client's voice while they are speaking.

[Approximate word count: 10 – 20 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must identify three types of observations relating to a client's voice that a counsellor should observe.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- The tone of voice.
- Regularity/rate of speech.
- The volume of speech.

### Question 9

Explain why counsellors should avoid asking clients compound/double-barrelled questions and what they should use instead.

[Approximate word count: 50 – 60 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding that compound questions create difficulties for clients and that counsellors should use simple questions, one at a time.

The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answer.

It is impossible for the client to give an adequate answer to these types of questions. The counsellor may also confuse the client and prevent them from clarifying or expressing their feelings relating to all parts of the question. Counsellors should use straightforward, simple questions that require one answer at a time.

### Question 10

What is the difference between a paraphrase and a summary? Why might a counsellor use each?

[Approximate word count: 100 – 120 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of the difference between a paraphrase and a summary and why a counsellor might use these.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- The difference between a summary and a paraphrase is that a paraphrase is a short reflection of the client's current statement, whereas a summary usually involves the counsellor bringing together several key points or observations from an ongoing therapeutic conversation (or even from the entire counselling session thus far).
- A paraphrase aims to make the client feel heard and provide an opportunity for the client to correct any misunderstanding, while the aim of a summary is to pull together, clarify and reflect back different key parts of the extended communication, restating them for the client as accurately as possible.
- Both can be used to help the client feel like the counsellor is listening and really understanding them.
- Summaries can also be used as a way of re-centring therapeutic conversation.

### Question 11

When used appropriately, a reflection of feelings is a very useful counselling communication skill that can help enable the client to explore the emotional dimensions of their concerns.

List three (3) potential sources of information that a counsellor could use to help identify the client's emotions.

[Approximate word count: 10 – 30 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least three potential sources of information that a counsellor could use to help identify the client's emotions.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **three** of the following examples.

- The client's expression of feelings.
- The client's verbal content.
- The client's non-verbal behaviour.
- What the counsellor suspects are the client's feelings based upon how they would feel if they were in the same situation.

### Question 12

List three (3) strategies that can be used when giving clients feedback to reduce the likelihood of them responding defensively.

[Approximate word count: 15 – 50 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least three strategies that can be used to help reduce the likelihood of a client responding defensively to feedback.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **three** of the following examples.

- Feedback should only be used once you have established a good client-counsellor relationship with your client.
- The client should be in charge – feedback should only be given when the client is ready for or solicits it.
- Focuses on strengths and the positive qualities of the client.
- Feedback should be concrete and specific.
- Feedback should be empathic, non-judgmental, and interactive.
- Keep feedback brief and precise.
- Check for how the feedback was received – ask questions such as “How do you react to/feel about that?” and “Does that sound close?”

### Question 13

As a counsellor, the effective use of silence can be a valuable communication tool. List three (3) benefits that the use of silence can have for counselling.

[Approximate word count: 30 – 50 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least three potential benefits of silence in counselling.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **three** of the following examples.

- It allows us to hear the client's point of view.
- It gives the space for the client to express themselves.
- It sends the message that their conversation and thoughts are valued.
- In counselling, it provides time to organise your thoughts and emphasise one point or another.

- It provides space in the conversation for a client to share something they had wanted to say but didn't know when or how.

### Question 14

Briefly outline what you should do if there is an extended period of silence during your counselling session with a client.

[Approximate word count: 50 – 60 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of the appropriate use of silence.

The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answer.

You should observe the client. If they are comfortable, stay with them in silence. If they appear very uncomfortable, you might ask them a question/or use a short paraphrase/summary. You should consider why, if a client has initiated silence – are they uncomfortable with the current topic? Are they thinking or processing?

### Question 15

List three (3) things that counsellors should keep in mind when using challenging to help ensure that the client does not respond defensively.

[Approximate word count: 60 – 80 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least three things that counsellors should do/keep in mind when using challenging to help ensure that the client does not respond defensively.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **three** of the following examples.

- Ensure that rapport and trust have been established before challenging a client.
- Challenges should be given at times when they are likely to be used by or useful to the client – this includes giving the client time to react to and discuss the challenge.
- Take care of the strength and frequency of challenges. It is important to ensure that the counselling environment remains a safe, supportive, and therapeutic space.
- Be aware of an individual's cultural beliefs and potential reactions in regard to being challenged.
- Be aware of the limits of challenging – while the client may gain new insight, the challenge itself may not bring a resolution.
- Allow the client to decide whether the message in the challenge is helpful and needs to be explored further.

### Question 16



Briefly explain what each of the following types of focusing is.

[Approximate word count: 10 - 30 words per explanation]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answers.

Types of Focusing	Explanation
Focusing clients on themselves	The student's response must demonstrate an understanding that this type of focusing refers to assisting clients in focusing on themselves by encouraging them to send "I" messages.
Focused exploration	The student's response must demonstrate an understanding that this type of focusing refers to asking clients to prioritise areas for exploration.
Focused responding	The student's response must demonstrate an understanding that this type of focusing refers to the counsellor choosing a part of the client's statements to focus on.

### Question 17

Briefly outline three (3) ways in which self-reflection can help counsellors improve their practice.

[Approximate word count: 80 - 100 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least three ways self-reflection can help counsellors improve their practice.

The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answer.

- Self-reflection can help counsellors to develop self-awareness by offering an opportunity to consciously reflect on their own values and personal factors that may have impacted the communication process. For example, helping counsellors examine the assumptions they bring to their practice.
- Self-reflection can help counsellors to evaluate their performance to identify opportunities for professional development as well as self-development. For example, taking a cultural competency course to better understand clients' cultural contexts.
- Self-reflection can help counsellors to examine their motivations and rationale for their counselling choices and decisions. For example, deciding which communication techniques are appropriate during the counselling session.

### Question 18

Briefly outline the 5 (five) steps of the reflective practice cycle and how counsellors can use them to reflect on and evaluate their own communication with clients.

[Approximate word count: 150 - 200 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of the reflective practice cycle and how it can be used to evaluate and improve their communication with clients.

The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answer.

Responses should make some reference to the following five steps:

- Step 1: Select
- Step 2: Describe
- Step 3: Analyse
- Step 4: Appraise
- Step 5: Transform

Sample answer:

"The first step is to identify and select the issue or situation requiring reflection.

The second step is to describe the circumstance, situation, concern, or issue related to the topic that has been selected in step one. Who, what, when, and where questions are then asked here [for example, who was involved (the client)? What was the context, circumstance, concern, or issue requiring reflection? When and where did the event occur?].

The third step in the process of reflection involves analysing and assessing the situation and exploring how and why a decision/action was made.

The fourth step requires the counsellor to appraise or evaluate their behaviour by interpreting the situation and evaluating its appropriateness and impact. This is where self-assessment actually occurs.

The fifth step is transformation. This step requires counsellors to shift from analysis and reflection into action. What changes can be made to your approach to practice? Has this made any shifts in your practice framework? What differences do you expect to see in the way you approach clients?"

### Question 19

Identify the set of guidelines that you should consult to ensure your practice is in line with ethical principles in the following scenarios.

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must correctly identify the code of practice for counsellors.

The correct answer is:

The Australian Association of Counselling's Code of Ethics and Practice

## Question 20

Counsellors must be aware of their own values to ensure that these values do not interfere with their work with clients.

To help you start developing a deeper awareness of your own values, complete the following Values Questionnaire. [Adapted from Corey, G., Corey, M., Corey C & Callanan, P. (2015). Issues and ethics in the helping professions (7th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.]

Note: Your personal responses to the questionnaire will not be assessed; however, evidence that you have completed the activity is required.

### Values questionnaire

For each of the following, indicate the response about your values that best fits you – there are no right or wrong answers.

Use the following code:

- A= I **could** work with this person.
- B= I **would have difficulty** working with this person.
- C= I **could not** work with this person.

**Assessor instructions:** Students' personal responses are not assessed for this question; however, their responses must demonstrate that they have reflected on their values and given a response for each of the following points.

Scenario	Guidelines
1. A person with fundamentalist religious beliefs	
2. A man who wants to leave his wife and children to have sex with other women	
3. A woman who is seriously considering an abortion	
4. A teenager who is having unsafe sex and sees no problem with this behaviour	
5. A high school student who is sent to you by his parents as he is abusing drugs	
6. A person who is convinced that one's feelings should be kept to oneself	

Scenario	Guidelines
7. A man who believes in physically punishing his children	
8. A high school student in conflict with her adopted parent from a different culture	
9. A high school student who thinks she may be lesbian	
10. A gay or lesbian couple wanting to adopt a child	
11. A man who cheats the system and gets more than his legal share of public assistance	
12. An interracial couple wanting to adopt a child	
13. A client from another culture who has values very different from your own	
14. A mother who blames the school for her son's behaviour problems and constantly makes excuses for the child	

### Question 21

Choose one of the clients from Question 20 that you think might be challenging to work with, given your values and beliefs.

[If you have answered 'A' to all of the examples above, think of a client that might be problematic for you to work with personally].

Identify which client you have chosen and describe how your own values might impact the counselling relationship between you and this client.

[Approximate word count: 90 – 100 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an ability to reflect on their own values and recognise how this could impact the counselling relationship/ability to communicate effectively with such a client.

The student's response must reflect the content in the following sample answer.

I would find it difficult to work effectively with a man who wants to leave his wife and children to have sex with other women. Family is very important to me, and I would find it difficult to counsel a client who does not have these same values. My disapproval could be subtly conveyed to the client through verbal and non-verbal communication. I might inadvertently influence his decision through leading questions, e.g. 'Don't you think you might regret that?' As a result, the client may feel judged, and this will affect the effectiveness of the counselling relationship.

## Question 22

Briefly outline two [2] benefits of taking client session notes.

[Approximate word count: 30 – 60 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of at least two benefits of taking client session notes.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **two** of the following examples.

- The self-reflection process and supervision can be more effective if the counsellor refers to the client's case notes. The counsellor can see what strategies have been tried already.
- Taking client session notes acts as a memory aid.
- It enhances the counselling relationship when you remember key aspects of their lives.
- Enhances the effectiveness of the counselling process. If you read the client's record before meeting with them again, you can 'tune in' with the client right from the start of the session and not waste time on unnecessary repetition.
- Provides continuity for the client's counselling process. If you are unable to carry on counselling a client, having a record allows another counsellor to continue working with a client without starting from scratch.

## Question 23

List five [5] key elements that a counsellor's session notes should typically include.

[Approximate word count: 30 – 45 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of key elements that session notes should include.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **five** of the following examples.

- Date of session and session number.
- Factual information was given by the client.
- Details of the client's problems/issues/dilemmas.
- Notes on the outcome of the counselling session.
- Notes on any interventions used by the counsellor.
- Notes on any goals identified.

- Notes on any contract between counsellor and client.
- Notes on matters to be considered at subsequent sessions.
- Counsellor initials or signature.
- Providing continuity for the client's counselling process. If you cannot carry on counselling a client, having a record allows another counsellor to continue working with a client without starting from scratch.

### Question 24

How can a counsellor ensure that notetaking does not negatively affect the counselling communication process?

[Approximate word count: 50 – 60 words]

**Assessor instructions:** The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of how to take counselling notes in a manner that does not negatively affect the counselling communication process.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Ask permission first and explain where and how the notes will be kept securely.
- Take minimal notes during ongoing client sessions. Jot down keywords while maintaining attending behaviour and complete the detail of the notes after the session has ended.
- Identify when it is not appropriate to take notes, for example, when a client is experiencing strong emotional reactions.

### Question 25

**Scenario:** You are counselling a client who is in a stressed and traumatised state. They are not able to concentrate on what you are saying, have ceased to make eye contact and are withdrawing from communication.

- a) Should the behaviour change strategy, **challenging**, be utilised in this session?

[Approximate word count: 10 – 20 words]

**Assessor instructions:** Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

Using the behaviour change strategy, challenging, is inappropriate in this situation and should be avoided while a client is in a stressed or traumatised state.

- b) Provide a reason for your answer to Question 25a), specifically stating one (1) example of how the client's **communication** in this scenario impacts the effectiveness of challenging.

[Approximate word count: 10 – 20 words]

**Assessor instructions:** Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Being in a stressed or traumatised state has a significant impact on a client's ability to both express themselves and take in the counsellor's feedback; therefore, challenging will be ineffective at this stage in the counselling.
- The client will not be able to absorb information in the same way as when they are in a non-stressed state; therefore, challenging will be ineffective at this stage in the counselling.

### Question 26

Provide three (3) appropriate examples of work health and safety measures that could be taken to prevent communication barriers in your counselling space.

[Approximate word count: 10 – 20 words]

**Assessor instructions:** Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of any **three** of the following examples.

- The counsellor should ensure they use a room in which to conduct counselling that is private and soundproof.
- Ensure disability access is provided – a client is not to be hindered by lack of access as they may potentially feel discriminated against, and this is likely to create defensive communication.
- Chairs are to be secure – if the client feels unsafe, they will not be cognitively present.
- Lighting – if too stark, the client may feel interrogated and not willing to talk.
- The counsellor should not have a light behind them shining onto the client – as this may create a communication barrier due to the client potentially feeling interrogated.
- Temperature – if too cold – the client may not be focussed on the conversation.

### Question 27

As a counsellor, you may encounter a range of communication barriers with clients at different times.

Provide one (1) **resolution** you could implement as a counsellor for each of the communication barriers listed in the following table.

**Assessor instructions:** Students are to provide any **one** (1) of the suggested resolutions for **each** of the communication barriers suggested. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

[Approximate word count: 5 – 60 words per cell]

Communication barrier	Resolution
a) Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that your notetaking is not distracting.</li> <li>• Make changes to the counselling environment to accommodate the client's needs and eradicate or minimise the barrier.</li> </ul>
b) Individual perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not assume the client thinks in the same way as the counsellor.</li> <li>• Ensure you ask open questions to gather the client's perspective.</li> </ul>

Communication barrier	Resolution
c) Cultural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider that two people could receive the same message but interpret it differently simply because their frames of reference, language and cultural perspective differ.</li> </ul>
d) Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where speech or comprehension represent communication barriers, counsellors should adjust their language and speed of delivery to match individual clients and 'check in' frequently to ensure understanding.</li> <li>If you are unable to speak the client's language, you will need to consult your organisational guidelines about actions to take to reduce the language barrier. This may involve obtaining the services of a translator or referring the client to a service with available translators or counsellors that speak the client's language.</li> </ul>
e) Age issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop empathy and ensure you work from the client's frame of reference.</li> <li>In the case of age, barriers may sometimes be overcome through discussion with the client.</li> <li>However, in cases when they cannot be, counsellors may need to refer their clients to another more appropriate counsellor or service. It is also important for the counsellor to understand that sometimes, despite their best efforts, a connection cannot be made between them and the client. In these cases, the counsellor may need to refer the client to another counsellor.</li> </ul>

### Question 28

Self-evaluation is a critical part of effective counselling practice. Journaling is a common practice that counsellors use to reflect on and evaluate their work with clients.

Provide three (3) questions you could ask yourself in your journal or during self-reflection to identify any possible biases that you may hold.

(Approximate word count: 50 – 60 words)

**Assessor instructions:** Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Whose frame of reference was I working from during the session? My own or my clients?
- What techniques did I use that allowed the client to fully express their perspective?
- What thoughts come up for me as I think about the client's culture? What bias might these indicate?
- What can I ask in clinical supervision that will help me to recognise potential bias I may hold?
- How did I ensure I worked in a non-discriminatory manner with this client?



**Assessment checklist:**

Students must have completed all questions within this assessment before submitting. This includes:

1	28 short answer questions to be completed in the spaces provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Congratulations, you have reached the end of your Assessment !**

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