

EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT (2) FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2018

Name and Address of Educational Centre:	JHD Counselling Services Ltd
Further Education/Higher Education/University/Independent Centre	Independent Centre
Name of External Examiner	Dr Phillip A. Rees
Name and Position of Representative of Centre present at the meeting with the External Examiner	Carol Harmston-Dean Managing Director, JHD Counselling Services Ltd
Date of Report	11 th July, 2018
Date of Centre Visit (if applicable)	Wednesday June 20th, 2018
Home Institution of External Examiner:	National Counselling Society
Course(s) to be externally examined: June 2018	<p>Level 2 Certificate in Counselling</p> <p>Observation of Counselling Practise (5 Samples)</p> <p>Level 3 Diploma in Counselling</p> <p>Assessment Samples of Peer Observation Sheets (5 Samples). Tutor Feedback Sheets (5 Samples)</p> <p>Level 4 Diploma in Counselling</p> <p>Observation Feedback Sheets (3 Samples)</p> <p>Level 4 – 3 Recordings of Skills Assessment (50 minutes each session)</p> <p>Level 4 Recorded Skills Assessment Feedback Sheets</p>
National Counselling Society Recognition of Courses:	Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills (NCS Quality Checked Course)

	Level 3 Diploma In Counselling (NCS Quality Checked Course)
	Level 4 Diploma in Counselling (NCS Accredited Course)

1. Academic Standards

External Examiner's Comments.

The External Examiner has a wide experience of training organisations – Independent, Further and Higher Education Institutions and can record here that the level of training standards delivered by JHD compares more than favourably with any of the courses examined elsewhere and is superior to many of those encountered by the Examiner. JHD Counselling Services delivers learning programmes in an environment which is conducive to the learning process. Moreover, there is strong management and leadership within the Centre, and the External Examiner recognised the importance of this in maintaining and developing the growing reputation of JHD.

JHD has high quality trainers, who are also practitioners, to teach, guide and mentor the learners, students and trainees through their training. The Centre has already attained accreditation, and Quality Checked status, with the National Counselling Society. This is the result of high quality training courses which meet national training guidelines and prepare the learners, students and trainees to successfully complete a vocationally related qualification.

Successful completion of all levels will enhance the probability of graduates becoming eligible for membership of the Professional Standards Authority Register – a fundamental requirement for contemporary Practitioners.

2. Students' Performance

In the view and experience of the External Examiner, are the academic standards and the achievements of students comparable with those of other training institutions delivering counselling training courses? YES/NO

The training at the different levels comprises the following:

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling. This course is based on 90 hours of guided learning within the classroom. There is an Age Limit to entry of 19 years, and it is expected that participants will have completed the basic Introduction to Counselling Skills in order to gain access to the Level 2 programme of learning. The course is designed with three units; Using basic Counselling Skills; Introduction to Carl Rogers and the Person-Centred

Approach and Developing Self-Awareness. There is a range of assessment methods for this course.

Level 3 Diploma In Counselling. This is a course designed around 150 hours of guided learning/classroom teaching. Age limit for entry is 21 years, and participants on this course must have completed a Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills course. There is a requirement of 10 sessions of personal therapy and this is integral to the course. There are also two compulsory residential components which make up part of the self-development content of the course. There are three Units to this course: Developing Counselling Skills; Counselling Approaches (Theory) – main three counselling approaches; Personal Development. Assessment is covered elsewhere in this Report.

Level 4 Diploma in Counselling. This course is designed around 240 classroom hours of guided learning. Age limit for entry is 21 years, and participants must have completed Levels 2 and 3 to gain entry to Level 4. This course also requires a 100 hour Placement, which cannot be via telephone or Skype. This must also include clinical supervision, throughout the Placement period. There are six units to this course: Developing a core Humanistic Model; Working with Children and Young People; Preparing for working with clients ethically and safely; Working within a Counselling Organisation; Supervision; Self-Awareness. Assessment is covered elsewhere in this Report.

External Examiner's Comments:

Content of Counselling Training Programme is comprehensive, varied, challenging and demanding. This will lead to competency in skills and preparation for practice, and produce potential practitioners who are safe and fit to practice.

The External Examiner commends the Centre for its continuing learning pathway and for its commitment to standards and quality in the delivery of its training programme in this first year of its association with the National Counselling Society.

3. Assessment

The assessment methods of JHD are to ensure that training is fit for purpose, and JHD assessment methods clearly meet this demand. The overview of Assessment methods for each level is, as follows:

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills

- Reflective Journal – 800 words- one for every weekly session
- Peer Observation – Skills Practice
- Tutor Observation – Skills Practice
- Research – 1500 words
- Homework Assignments
- Skills Assessment – 20 minutes 'role-play' in each role of Helper, Helpee and Observer

- 1-2-1 Tutorials

Level 3 Diploma in Counselling:

- Reflective Journals – 800 word each – for each weekly session
- Presentations
- Case Study Exercise
- Peer Observation – Skills Practice
- Tutor Observation – Skills Practice
- Skills Assessment – 30 minutes ‘role play’ for each role: counsellor, client and observer.
- 1-2-1 Tutorials

Level 4 Diploma In Counselling:

- Reflective Journal - 800 words for each weekly session
- Presentations
- Peer Observation – Skills Practice
- Tutor Observation – Skills Practice
- Recorded Skills Assessment – 50 minute session
- 1-2-1 Tutorial
- Case Study – 7,500 words (externally examined)
- Research Project – 2,500 words
- 100 hours of supervised practice
- Supervisor Reports at 50 and 100 hours
- Placement Manager Reports at 50 and 100 hours

External Examiner’s Comments:

The methods of assessment at all three levels are comprehensive and robust. Level 2 is the equivalent of GCSE level; Level 3 is the equivalent of 2 ‘A’ levels and Level 4 equates to the first year of an undergraduate degree. The assessment processes are modelled upon the Ofqual descriptors for each level, and the Examiner’s scrutiny of assessed samples demonstrates that these are being achieved.

The assessment process at each level ensures that Course(s) participants are engaging in a programme of learning that is fit for purpose, and results in graduating trainees who are fit to practice. The assessment processes ensure that the qualifications are worthy of their recognition by the National Counselling Society.

From this meeting with Carol-Harmston-Dean, the External Examiner scrutinised the following:

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills: (Tutor: Mark Welsh)

5 'Observation of Counselling Practise' documents were seen and scrutinised – involving the three important roles in skills work of Helper, Observer and Client. These were all comprehensive in content and highlighted, where appropriate, developmental needs. It is important to recognise the Level of this Award – as outlined in Ofqual descriptors – as this is the equivalent of a GCSE. No need to be Carl Rogers at this level! However, this should not be read as a criticism; I am sure that the learners have benefited from the Tutor input and guidance.

Level 3 Diploma in Counselling (Peter Frewer)

5 examples of 'Peer Observation Assessment Sheets' and 5 examples of 'Tutor Feedback Sheets' were made available for the Examining process.

These were comprehensive in content and provided helpful guidance. In particular, the Tutor Feedback was very good and highlighted the use of skills and, where appropriate, developmental needs.

Level 4 Diploma in Counselling (Mark Welsh)

3 Skills 'Observation Sheets' were seen by the Examiner. These are based on examples of what skills have been used and observed. Good Tutor feedback.

3 Level 4 Recorded Assignments:

These were emailed to me after the Meeting with Carol Harmston-Dean. They were clear and easy to follow. Each of the recordings was 50 minutes in length. The following comments are the result of listening to the recordings:

1. There was a clear beginning, middle and ending to each of the sessions recorded.
2. Range of skills were used and practised.
3. The approach was clearly person-centred.
4. Core conditions and particularly empathy was evident.
5. Very good talking and listening skills.
6. Good rapport between the 'counsellor' and the 'client' what Rogers would have called 'prizing the client'.

High standards of counselling were maintained throughout.

Recorded Skills Assessment Tutor Feedback Sheets – 8 (Tutor – Peter Frewer)

These were completed by Peter Frewer and were comprehensive in content, with excellent feedback to students including both formative and summative comments. They covered all aspects of the Recorded Skills work – included beginning, middle and ending. They incorporated Contract work, Theory and orientation and use of skills. I am quite confident that the trainees would have found these very helpful.

The quality assurance demands of the National Counselling Society are clearly being addressed in course content, teaching and assessment.

4. External Examiner's Report on evidence of Good Practice.

1. Excellent training venue and facilities, conducive to the training and development of counselling learners, students and trainees.
2. Highly qualified trainers who are also practitioners.
3. Quality training programmes.
4. Very sound internal assessment procedures to ensure appropriate pathway of development from the initial Introduction to Counselling, followed by the recognised courses at Levels 2, 3 and 4.
5. Commitment to delivering training programmes to a high standard which guides learners, students and trainees towards practitioner status.
6. Maintaining a holistic ethos.
7. Robust assessment processes.
8. Excellent management of courses.
9. Strong IV process and procedure.
10. Recognition as a quality training centre.
11. Commitment to developing and extending course portfolio in the future.

5. Any Centre issues to be communicated to the National Counselling Society?

None – other than to record that this is an impressive training centre and worthy of its academic recognition and status for Levels 2, 3 and 4 with the National Counselling Society.

6. External Examiner's Recommendations for improving the delivery of the training programmes.

On this occasion, there are no recommendations for changes or improvements. Action requirements from previous Report have been addressed and implemented.

7. Response to previous report

Did you receive a response to your previous report from the course team?

YES/NO/Not applicable

Actions from the last Report:

Standardisation of Tutor Marking – this has been addressed

Summer School for new and potential learners/students/trainees joining from other training bodies has been arranged. This will include written submissions and skills practical assessments to help bridge the gap between training bodies and ensure mapping of previous learning to JHD courses and requirements.

Journal as “Reflective and Learning’ document – this has been addressed.

Categories of Levels 2,3,4 participants as Learners, Students and Trainees has been addressed.

8. Overview of the External Examiner’s visit to JHD Counselling Services Ltd.

As an Independent Centre, JHD Counselling Services Ltd has already achieved recognition and accreditation status, in addition to Quality Checked recognition, with the National Counselling Society, and the External Examiner’s view is that it is worthy of this status. At the meeting with Carol Harmston-Dean, MD of JHD Counselling Services 18 samples of ‘Observation of Counselling Practice’, ‘Peer Assessment Sheets’, ‘Tutor Feedback Sheets’ were scrutinised. Subsequently, three taped 50 minutes skills assessment recordings were received for the Examining process, in addition to Skills Assessment Tutor Feedback Sheets..

The courses delivered by JHD Counselling Services are all fit for purpose, with high quality teaching and assessment and, through supportive and affirming teaching guidance, learners, students and trainees are being guided towards the successful completion of their course(s) and striving onwards to become counselling practitioners who will be safe and fit to practice.

9. Any further issues for consideration?

As an Independent Counselling Training Centre, there is recognition of the competitive arena in which JHD offer and deliver training courses. There is, therefore, a commitment not just to maintaining standards and quality of training but to a constant reviewing of how these can be enhanced. This involves the consolidation of training courses already being delivered and a commitment to developmental considerations for the future.

JHD Counselling Services is committed to uphold and enhance the standards and quality of training required and demanded for ongoing recognition by the National Counselling Society, for both academic and practice purposes. As this is the first year of delivering training programmes recognised by the NCS, JHD are again commended for their outstanding standards and quality of teaching and assessment.

10. Any plans for future visits to the Centre?

It is anticipated that there will be a continuation of a minimum of two visits per academic year from the External Verifier/Examiner.



Signed:
External Examiner.

Date: 11th July, 2018

External Examiner's Rating of this Centre:

Not Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Outstanding
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