

Anticipated 2027 Bachelor of Counselling

Course structure 432 points
Full-time 3 years Part-time up to 9 years

Stage 1 (144 points) Diploma in Counselling			
Unit Code	Unit Name	Content	Learning Outcomes
CO1001Z Core	Academic Skills, Integrity and Professional Practice	This unit equips students with a number of academic and professional skills for effective study, communication and practice. Students engage with time management strategies and written and oral academic conventions. This includes using physical and digital resources, referencing and acknowledging sources, locating and analysing credible scholarly and professional texts. It also introduces students to principles and practice of academic and professional integrity, including the appropriate use of AI.	• Develop and apply time management strategies • Use accurate referencing conventions relevant to the discipline • Articulate and demonstrate principles of academic and professional integrity • Source and analyse credible scholarly and professional material
CO1002Z Core	Self and Profession	As counsellors, we are the instrument of our work. Self-knowledge and professional capacity are both vital if we are to care for ourselves while coming alongside clients in an altruistic and compassionate way. Counsellors sit with clients at their most vulnerable, and hear the most intimate details of their lives. This brings significant responsibilities, including the counsellor's need to understand their personal biases and values and potential triggers. This unit introduces core concepts of self-awareness and self-care, alongside questions of professional scope and accountability, virtues which underpin the profession and cultural and religious sensitivity. It also explores and establishes the trauma informed framework principles which underpins the award.	• Identify and reflect on known and hidden aspects of themselves which may impact on counselling practice • Examine possible personal triggers and how to begin or continue to address these • Consider the scope of counselling practice and the virtues of hope, courage and compassion as part of a conceptual framework for counselling • Discuss trauma informed framework principles
CO1011Z Core	New unit currently being developed		

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CO1005Z Core	Introduction to Counselling	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit introduces students to foundational elements of effective counselling practice. It explores the centrality of the therapeutic alliance, the value of simple interventions such as psycho-education and relaxation techniques, and introduces foundational counselling skills including active listening, paraphrasing, validation, and open questioning. The unit also provides an overview of common counselling approaches, including psychodynamic, person-centred, motivational interviewing, interpersonal therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, narrative therapy, and family therapy.	• Discuss foundational elements of effective counselling practice • Describe the distinctive features of a limited set of common counselling approaches • Perform basic case conceptualisation and treatment planning • Apply foundational counselling skills to a small set of common client problems
CO1006Z Core	Engaging Diversity	This unit introduces how various forms of diversity might impact on client's lived experience and influence counselling. Specific topics such as age, class, culture, indigeneity, disability, sexuality/gender, neurodiversity, and giftedness will be considered. Students will have opportunity to reflect on their personal biases and other barriers to effective engagement with clients from diverse communities.	• Identify key issues, understandings and expectations of members of various diverse communities • Identify and reflect on personal barriers to effective engagement with clients from diverse communities • Articulate the potential impact of diversity on the counselling process • Propose methods of practice for diverse clients which are responsive, ethical, empathetic and professional

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CO1007Z Core	Introduction to Psychology	Counselling and psychology are allied, but different, professions within a broader mental health industry. Counselling is more practical whereas psychology is more scientific. Psychology helps provide 'the why' for what is done in a counselling session with a client. Therefore the importance of the multiple valid perspectives brought by psychology cannot be under-estimated. This unit explores how human biology, not just culture, influences counselling practices; basic learning principles and memory processes; various theories of personality and when to apply each in counselling; key aspects of human development across the lifespan; and a number of common mental health disorders and their evidence-based treatment options. The biopsychosocial model will also be extended to include a spiritual element given that many clients hold a religious worldview. By engaging these topics students will develop an awareness for the value of evidence-based counselling practice.	• Explore the contribution of Psychology to the mental health industry, particularly the practice of counselling • Articulate core psychological knowledge • Describe key psychological frameworks through which to view clients
CO1009Z Core	Trauma-Informed Counselling	While some students will one day seek to move into specialised trauma work, this introductory unit presents trauma-informed principles as foundational for all counselling work. Contemporary guidelines for trauma-informed care will be examined including: safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment - voice and choice; and cultural, historical, and gender issues. In this way, students will learn essential elements of relational practice for trauma-informed care. The impacts of developmental trauma will be explored, drawing on attachment theory and the neurobiology of trauma. There will also be a focus on risk assessment and safety planning in general and with respect to the nuances associated with suicidal ideation and non-suicidal self-injury. This unit enables students to become familiar with trauma-informed therapeutic approaches and practice using these in simulated counselling scenarios.	• Examine the impacts of developmental trauma and contemporary guidelines for trauma-informed care • Implement risk assessment and safety planning with respect to suicidal ideation and non-suicidal self-injury • With reference to contemporary trauma-informed principles, select and justify suitable therapeutic modalities for use with a small set of common client problems • Apply and critically reflect on their skills in the context of trauma informed counselling which illustrate safe, ethical and effective practice

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CO1010Z Core	Human Development, Personality and Identity	Counsellors see clients in every stage of life. Counsellors also see clients with altered developmental trajectories. Therefore, to have a comprehensive and multi-faceted knowledge of human lifespan development is essential for professional practice. Issues of personality development and expression will also be explored in detail leading to an understanding of identity. Students will explore how the practice of counselling provides an environment in which a client's identity may become more integrated leading to an adaptive way of being.	• Identify the features, including but not limited to, cognitive and moral features, of key developmental lifespan stages and how these might influence counselling practice • Discuss the core elements of various theories of personality • Articulate the diagnostic features of personality disorders • Compare and contrast healthy and unhealthy identity formation and expression.

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Unit Code	Unit Name	Content	Learning Outcomes
CO2002Z Core	Working with Children and Adolescents	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit explores common mental health and wellbeing challenges faced by children and adolescents and practices using counselling tools which can be effective with these clients. There will also be a focus on informed consent and confidentiality in general and with respect to the nuances associated with these client groups.	• Discuss common mental health and wellbeing challenges faced by children and adolescents • Examine informed consent and confidentiality practices • With reference to evidence-based counselling theory, select and justify suitable therapeutic modalities and treatment plans for use with children and/or adolescents • Apply and critically reflect on their skills in the context of counselling children and adolescents which illustrate safe, ethical and effective practice.
CO2005Z Core	Working With Couples and Families	While most people think of counselling as a conversation between a counsellor and their client, it is not uncommon to have multiple clients in the room at any one time. Therefore, underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit will engage the nuances of both couples and family counselling by comparing them with the protocols which would apply to a single client. There will also be a focus on establishing effective protocols for therapeutic relationships in general and with respect to the nuances associated with having multiple clients in the room. Students will be given opportunity to make informed judgements about suitable therapeutic modalities to use when counselling couples and families and to practice these skills in simulated counselling scenarios.	• Compare and contrast the ethics and practice of counselling one client with simultaneously counselling multiple clients • Establish effective protocols for therapeutic relationships • With reference to evidence-based counselling theory, select and justify suitable therapeutic modalities and treatment plans for use with couples and/or families • Apply and critically reflect on their skills in the context of counselling couples and families which illustrate safe, ethical and effective practice

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CO2006Z Core	What Is Abnormal?: The Individual, Diagnostics and Society	This unit discusses the question of 'What is abnormal?' and explores human responses to abnormal situations. It engages with the aetiology, presentation, and treatment of various mental health conditions. Such conditions include: mood disorders, arousal-based disorders, psychosis, eating disorders, neurodevelopmental disorders, substance use disorders and personality disorders. Students will analyse their scope as counsellors working effectively with clients who have received a diagnosis from a qualified practitioner.	• Evaluate the value of diagnostic labels • Discuss the aetiology, presentation and evidence-based treatment for common mental health conditions • Analyse the counsellor's scope of practice with respect to both diagnostics and working effectively with clients who have received a diagnosis from a qualified practitioner
CO2007Z Core	Counselling Ethics, The Law and Best-Practice	As members of a profession, counsellors abide by a set of ethical standards which help protect themselves and their clients from harm. Although ethical obligations are set out in the National Standards, Professional Code of Ethics and Practice and various pieces of federal and state legislation, these cannot fully encapsulate all the nuances of day-to-day therapeutic work. While many of the practical units in this award explore relevant ethical practice in the context of the unit focus, this unit takes these conversations a step further into complex cases and situations which require high levels of professional judgement, attention to detail and careful practices. There will also be a focus on note taking in general and in the context of complex cases and situations.	• Recognise counselling situations that may present nuanced ethical, legal or professional risks to clients, counsellors or others • Evaluate effective note-taking practices • Locate, explain and apply relevant ethical codes, legislation and professional obligations within the counsellor's scope of practice and jurisdiction • Analyse complex counselling scenarios and develop safe, ethical, legally informed and professionally defensible responses, including recognising when consultation or supervision is required

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CO2008Z Core	From Student to Counsellor: Safe, Reflective and Sustainable Practice	This unit begins the transition from student to practitioner and serves as a significant means of establishing whether a student is safe to practice and therefore proceed to the placement unit. Throughout the unit, students will have the opportunity to increasingly hone their existing clinical and reflective skills, and demonstrate that they are safe and competent at each stage of the therapeutic process. Furthermore, to support sustainable professional functioning, students will examine their own coping styles and learn adaptive self-care practices. Finally, students will be introduced to the professional landscape in a variety of ways, in preparation for the supervised counselling placement of their award, including the theory and practice of engaging with a professional supervisor. Successful completion of this unit is one part of the process for determining that a student is ready to be entrusted with clients during their placement. As such, a final grade or portfolio grade below a credit in this unit will prompt further discussion regarding whether the student has attained sufficient skills to commence placement at this stage.	• Critique personal counselling practice, with emphasis on safe, ethical and competent practice • Select appropriate therapeutic modalities and skills for use at key stages of the therapeutic process • Create and maintain accurate, ethical documentation for professional practice • Design an effective self-care plan that addresses personal maladaptive coping strategies
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CO2027Z Core	Professional judgment and evidence informed counselling practice	This unit sits in the intersection between academic and professional counselling skills. It assists students to refine their information gathering and problem-solving skills in order to apply them in academic and professional counselling contexts. Students will engage in the processes of searching, synthesizing, evaluating and making sense of clinical data, leading to appropriate analysis strategies, ethical use of evidence, and wise clinical judgment and academic work. They will also consider how to use AI as a supportive tool while maintaining human judgement, client privacy and confidentiality, academic integrity and professional responsibility.	• Identify key aspects of problems and the information required to propose solutions • Distinguish relevant and reliable data for ethical counselling practice • Engage critically with counselling research • Evaluate how a clinician's values, biases, and ethical frameworks shape professional judgment.
CO2028Z Core	Working therapeutically with Grief and Loss	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit acknowledges that loss and grief are normal human experiences. It explores the challenges of ambiguous loss and anticipatory, disenfranchised, collective and complicated grief. Students will be introduced to various models for understanding grief and how to hold space for their client's experiences through the effective implementation of counselling skills which will be practiced in class.	• Compare and contrast various grief models • Examine effective intake processes • With reference to evidence-based counselling theory, justify suitable therapeutic modalities and treatment plans for use with clients who have experienced loss • Apply foundational counselling skills for clients experiencing loss.

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Micro units

6 x 3 point micro units (18 points) Each unit will typically include a one day intensive.

CO2020Z Core	Core Counselling Approaches: Psychodynamic Therapy	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit is one of six compulsory 3-point mini units which explicitly focus on therapeutic approaches. CO2020Z introduces students to Psychodynamic Therapy. Students will develop a foundational understanding of Psychodynamic theory including its focus on unconscious processes and relational patterns, and practise core therapeutic skills through experiential learning and skills based assessment.	• Discuss the underlying assumptions, key principles, techniques and change mechanisms of psychodynamic therapy • Apply psychodynamic therapy skills and critically evaluate the safety and effectiveness of their practice
CO2021Z Core	Core Counselling Approaches: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit is one of six compulsory 3-point mini units which explicitly focus on therapeutic approaches. CO2021Z introduces students to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). Students will develop a foundational understanding of CBT theory, including its focus on the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviours and practise core therapeutic skills through experiential learning and skills-based assessment.	• Discuss the underlying assumptions, key principles, techniques and change mechanisms of cognitive behaviour therapy. • Apply cognitive behaviour therapy skills and critically evaluate the safety and effectiveness of their practice.

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CO2022Z Core	Core Counselling Approaches: Narrative Therapy	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit is one of six compulsory 3-point mini units which explicitly focus on therapeutic approaches. CO2022Z introduces students to Narrative Therapy. Students will develop a foundational understanding of Narrative theory, including the principle that client stories are constructed, shaped by language and experience and hence can be examined and rewritten.	• Discuss the underlying assumptions, key principles, techniques and change mechanisms of narrative therapy • Apply narrative therapy skills and critically evaluate the safety and effectiveness of their practice.
CO2023Z Core	Core Counselling Approaches: Brief Therapies	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit is one of six compulsory 3-point mini units which explicitly focus on therapeutic approaches. CO2023Z introduces students to Brief Therapies as an approach aimed at achieving rapid, practical, and measurable change by targeting specific present-day problems rather than exploring deep-seated historical roots. Students will develop a foundational understanding of key Brief Therapy theories and practise core therapeutic skills through experiential learning and skills-based assessment.	• Discuss the underlying assumptions, key principles, techniques and change mechanisms of brief therapies • Apply brief therapy skills and critically evaluate the safety and effectiveness of their practice

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CO2024Z Core	Core Counselling Approaches: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit is one of six compulsory 3-point mini units which explicitly focus on therapeutic approaches. CO2024Z introduces students to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). Students will develop a foundational understanding of ACT theory and its focus on the client changing their relationship with painful emotions, and practise core therapeutic skills through experiential learning and skills-based assessment.	• Discuss the underlying assumptions, key principles, techniques and change mechanisms of acceptance and commitment Therapy • Apply acceptance and commitment Therapy skills and critically evaluate the safety and effectiveness of their practice.
CO2025Z Core	Core Counselling Approaches: Emotion-focused therapy	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit is one of six compulsory 3-point mini units which explicitly focus on therapeutic approaches. CO2025Z introduces students to Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT), which focuses on understanding of the role of emotion in psychotherapeutic change. Students will develop a foundational understanding of EFT theory and practise core therapeutic skills through experiential learning and skills-based assessment.	• Discuss the underlying assumptions, key principles, techniques and change mechanisms of Emotion-focused therapy • Apply Emotion-focused therapy skills and critically evaluate the safety and effectiveness of their practice.

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Unit Code	Unit Name	Content	Learning Outcomes
CO3002Z Core	Complex Clients: Neurodiversity, Addictions and Personality Disorders	Underpinned by a trauma informed framework including principles of safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment, this unit is devoted to three cohorts: (1) the neurodivergent (2) those with addictions and (3) people suffering with personality disorders. It assists students to gain knowledge about these presentations and therapeutic skills to work effectively with these client cohorts.	• Critically analyse biopsychosocial factors which contribute to neurodiversity, addiction, and personality disorders • Recognise various presentations of neurodiversity, addiction, and personally disorders • With reference to evidence-based counselling theory evaluate suitable therapeutic modalities and treatment plans for use with complex clients • Apply and critically reflect on their skills in the context of counselling complex clients which illustrate safe, ethical and effective practice.
CO3003Z Core	Virtues-Based Counselling: Working with Hope, Courage and Compassion	At the very least, mental health work should reduce a client's distress. At best, it represents a life-changing collaboration between counsellor and client in which both grow as people. When this occurs, one's identity is transformed to become more courageous, wise, just, and compassionate. One's identity also becomes more resilient to stressors as hope now presents itself. This unit will take the position that some virtues are evolutionarily, and thus neurologically encoded. As an "operating system" they represent a strong foundation for excellence in the art of living. Considering a range of virtues, students will be taught how to assess virtue strengths/weaknesses, use a range of virtue-related skills, and evaluate applicable counselling outcomes.	• Critically analyse the biopsychosocial basis of virtue and link this to identity • Discuss how to detect virtue strengths/weaknesses in clients, oneself, and master practitioners • Critically reflect on their virtue-informed counselling techniques which illustrate safe, ethical and effective practice • Evaluate change from a virtue perspective

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CO3004Z Elective	Intimacy, Sex(ualities) and Gender	Using the bio-psycho-social model, this unit will introduce students to areas of practice such as assisting clients to navigate romantic attraction and sexual intimacy throughout life's stages, same-sex attraction, asexuality, sex and disability, as well as gender identity. Some students may find this material confronting and the unit should be chosen with care.	- Analyse the biopsychosocial basis of sex and gender - Conduct psycho-education pertaining to matters of sex, sexuality and gender - With reference to evidence-based counselling theory, evaluate suitable therapeutic modalities and treatment plans for use with clients with sex(uality) or gender concerns - Apply and critically reflect on their skills in the context of clients with sex(uality) or gender concerns which illustrate safe, ethical and effective practice
CO3005Z Elective	Working with groups and teams	This unit extends beyond common counselling modalities to consider the value of therapeutic group counselling and other approaches to working with groups and teams. Being able to recognise the similarities and differences between counselling, coaching and mentoring - and to integrate aspects of each - enhances employability and work as a professional helper. The unit also considers the various factors that drive human behaviour and influence individuals' willingness to achieve goals. It explores the principles of positive psychology principles and the application of motivational interviewing techniques to assist clients in exploring and resolving ambivalence and ultimately facilitating transformative behavioural change within the context of working with groups.	- Discuss key considerations in forming and managing a therapeutic group - Analyse core characteristics of attachment-based therapeutic change groups. - Apply positive psychology principles in the context of groups and teams - Discuss effective coaching and mentoring relationships.

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CO3007Z Core	Emerging Technologies, AI and the Business of Counselling	This unit has a dual focus. It provides a basic introduction to some of the business elements to be considered in the process of establishing a small private counselling practice. These include establishing the demand, purpose and vision, business plan and marketing strategy. It also engages students in questions relating to the use of technology in counselling. Issues of the appropriate use of AI, cyber security, and the value and risks associated with the use of apps designed to support health professionals are examined, along with new developments in the rapid expansion of the use of technology in the field of counselling.	• Critically analyse the impact of technology, for example questions relating to privacy, cyber security, uses of AI and human flourishing, on well-being and counselling practice • Critically evaluate a variety of counselling technologies • Critically reflect on their personal and counselling skill sets and how these might inform the establishment of a small business • Make and defend decisions relating to small business planning and marketing
CO3009Z Elective	The Role of Faith, Religion and Spirituality in Wellbeing	More than 85% of the world's population has a faith position. Recent evidence suggests that spiritual/religious interventions may be more effective than traditional psychological interventions. Therefore, counsellors should not ignore the potential positive effect of faith, religion and/or spirituality on human flourishing, but they must be aware of how psycho-spiritual practices have been abused, or may be harmful to some clients. This unit will assist students to integrate basic psycho-spiritual and religious interventions into their professional work in a safe and efficacious way.	• Critically reflect on their personal position on the role of religion, faith, and spirituality in counselling • Identify and analyse evidence-based spiritual/religious interventions appropriate to counselling • Articulate professional, ethical, and legal boundaries relating to the use of spiritual/religious interventions in counselling • Discuss how they might integrate spiritual/religious interventions into their counselling practice

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CO2010Z Elective	Counselling Survivors and Perpetrators of Domestic Violence	The aetiology and presentation of domestic violence (DV) are complex and varied. This unit will first explore the emerging evidence-based literature surrounding DV alongside community responses to DV. However, the focus of the unit is about working with clients who may be victim-survivors or perpetrators. The unit will discuss how to work effectively with victim-survivors to implement risk assessment and safety planning to promote their safety, and also consider unexpected types of victim-survivors (e.g., men, members of the LGBT+ community, and people with a disability). When working with perpetrators a 'Gottman lens' will be taken. Again, knowing how to work safely and effectively is key, but students must also consider treatment resistance and the counselling scope of practice.	• Discuss the ethical and legal obligations associated with working in the context of domestic violence • Implement risk assessment and safety planning with regards to survivors of domestic violence • With reference to evidence-based counselling theory, select and justify suitable therapeutic modalities and treatment plans for use with survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence • Apply and critically reflect on their skills in the context of counselling survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence which illustrate safe, ethical and effective practice
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CO3011Z Core	Professional Placement: Counselling	This year-long unit represents the culmination of students' studies as they implement their counselling knowledge and skills in an external voluntary workplace context. Students will take responsibility for their studies and the requirements of their workplace, also completing essential professional tasks outlined by the Australian Counselling Association, leading to registration as professionals in the field. Students will be expected to: - be proactive in completing the requirements of their placement(s) both before and during the placement - attend their workplace reliably and stay on track to complete the required face to face hours within the timeframe of the unit - provide ethical, safe counselling for assigned clients - understand the role of and engage with regular supervision as provided by their line manager and/or the University - operate in a professional manner with regards to client care, workplace policies and procedures, placement scope, responding to feedback and acting collegially. - attend professional development activities as may be appropriate - Maintain their logbook accurately and plan and implement strategies to ensure they have completed the required number of logged hours within the timeframe of the unit	• Implement effective counselling using a variety of modalities and skills as appropriate to a range of client types/issues. • Use ethical practices in line with the Australian Counselling Association policies and documentation • Incorporate and evaluate good self-care practices • Operate professionally in the workplace
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XZ3002Z Core	Bachelor of Counselling Capstone	The capstone unit provides students with the opportunity to further develop and showcase the knowledge and skills they have gained throughout their Bachelor of Counselling. Discipline specific knowledge, scholarship, skills and reflective practices will be integrated and applied to address contemporary challenges.	• Integrate the learning obtained throughout the Bachelor of Counselling into a coherent and critical synthesis to inform research or praxis • Apply critical reflection on counselling theory and practice to suitable contemporary challenges or issues • Critique scholarship, practices, and methodologies to produce contextually nuanced, creative solutions to authentic problems • Communicate the learning from the award effectively in verbal and non-verbal ways
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