

WELF 7009 FOUNDATIONS OF PSYCHOTHERAPY AND COUNSELLING 1

Credit Points 20

Legacy Code 102353

Coordinator Penny Gardner ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Penny Gardner/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Penny%20Gardner/))

Description Foundations of Psychotherapy and Counselling 1 is a foundational subject for postgraduate counselling and therapeutic studies. It forms the first part of a 40 credit point sequence undertaken during the first year. Foundations of Psychotherapy and Counselling 1 presents the foundational skills necessary for the successful inception of a productive therapeutic relationship. The sequenced, progressive presentation of these skills via experiential learning is framed by the simultaneous presentation of key theoretical concepts relevant to the skills in question. Students will be required to analyse the features of their own personalities, and to reflect on feedback that they receive from others in the role of psychotherapist/counsellor, in order to develop the self-awareness and sensitivity necessary for this professional role.

School Social Sciences

Discipline Counselling

Student Contribution Band HECS Band 4 20cp

Check your fees via the Fees (https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/fees/) page.

Level Postgraduate Coursework Level 7 subject

Equivalent Subjects WELF 7004 - Counselling 1

Restrictions

Students must be enrolled in 1647 Graduate Diploma in Counselling, 1648 Graduate Certificate in Counselling, 1817 Master of Psychotherapy and Counselling, 4595 Master of Art Therapy or 1770 Master of Social Science.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students should be able to:

1. Articulate the basic counselling skills of 'holding', 'exploring' and 'immediacy'.
2. Demonstrate how (genetic) temperament and attachment style interact in the formation of a 'core personality' and the role of attachment as the foundation of 'transference'.
3. Recognise ethical issues fundamental to the counselling relationship: power/expertise, inequality, boundaries.
4. Demonstrate a capacity for self-reflection, and understanding of how their preferred interpersonal style in the role of counsellor may affect others in the role of client.
5. Develop observational ability in recognising intrapersonal and interpersonal processes in group, with focus on how groups may function as a 'social microcosm'.
6. Demonstrate the ability to critically analyse the similarities and differences in the experience of both client and counsellor in individual counselling and group counselling.

Subject Content

- Introduction to the nature of counselling/psychotherapy as a relational, rather than an instrumental, process.
- The therapeutic contract or 'frame': The promotion of safety, consistency and clear boundaries.
- The nature of psychoeducational and experiential groups as a facet of counselling.
- introduction to the counselling skills appropriate for group facilitation.
- The skills of 'holding', which facilitate this type of relationship: empathic reflection of content and feeling; purposeful use of silence; open questioning.
- The skills of 'exploring', which open up particular areas of the client's experience for conscious reflection: open questioning, targeted (assessment) questioning, stating themes, stating conflicts.
- The implications of 'exploration' interventions: who chooses which areas to explore? How particular questions can direct client awareness. How might this shift the power balance between counsellor and client.
- The skill of 'immediacy' (addressing the 'here and now') as a basic tool for addressing 'resistance' and for unblocking a 'stuck' counsellor-client relationship
- Human development and neuroscience: temperament and attachment in infancy. How nature and nurture interact to create particular personal 'styles' and particular expectations of relationship.
- The evolution of the self in early childhood: major cognitive and psychosocial developments in the preschool years. How awareness of self and awareness of others co-evolve.
- Middle childhood: the attainment of 'concrete operations', rules, and limited empathy.

Assessment

The following table summarises the standard assessment tasks for this subject. Please note this is a guide only. Assessment tasks are regularly updated, where there is a difference your Learning Guide takes precedence.

Type	Length	Percent	Threshold	Individual/ Group Task	Mandatory
Critical Review	1,000 words analysis + 2 x 20 minute audio recordings (2000 word equivalent)	30	N	Individual	Y
Report	1,000 words	30	N	Individual	Y
Essay	2,000 words	40	N	Individual	Y

Prescribed Texts

- Crago, H. & Gardner, P. (2019). A safe place for change: Skills and capacities for counselling and therapy. Revised 2nd ed. Brisbane: Interactive Publications

- Riso, D.R. and Hudson, R. (2003). Discovering your personality type: The essential introduction to the Enneagram. (Rev ed.). New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Teaching Periods

Autumn (2025)

Parramatta - Victoria Rd

On-site

Subject Contact Penny Gardner ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Penny Gardner/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Penny%20Gardner/))

View timetable (https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=WELF7009_25-AUT_PS_1#subjects)