Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions

professional standards authority accredited register

ACCREDITATION APPLICATION
ACCREDITED COUNSELLOR

How to fill out your application and prepare for your viva



Guidance Notes
Level 5+ top up route
(SCoPEd B)
2025 version

Contents

Page 3	Introduction and purpose
Page 4	Qualifying criterion for the Level 5+ top up route
Page 8	How to apply
Page 9	Fees
Page 9	Reasonable adjustments
Page 10	Re-submission
Page 10	Achieving accreditation
Page 11	**Stage 1:** Application
Page 11	PART 1: Personal and professional details
Page 11	PART 2: Counselling training
Page 12	PART 3: Counselling experience
Page 14	PART 4: Checklist for good practice
Page 15	PART 5: Supervision
Page 16	PART 6: Evaluation of the Churchill Framework
Page 17	Submission of application: checklist
Page 18	**Stage 2**: Viva

Introduction and purpose

Accreditation is a way in which counsellors can formally evidence additional training and depth/breadth of experience in counselling practice. It is widely recognised by professional organisations as a quality mark and represents a significant achievement on the path of professional development.

Accreditation with ACC is intended as a process where counsellors evidence advanced competence in counselling practice, and demonstrate awareness of the risks, issues, and opportunities associated with being a counsellor who is Christian.

Accreditation with ACC is also intended to be a supportive and developmental process; a time for members to take account of how they have progressed and deepened their practice through experience, continuing professional development (CPD), supervision, peer support, etc., and developed further understanding and appreciation of the ethical and standards frameworks within which UK counselling and psychotherapy practice is regulated.

With ACC's adoption of the SCoPEd Framework (2022/2025), ACC's accreditation processes are designed to explicitly map to SCoPEd B or SCoPEd C competences.

These guidance notes are for those members who meet the criteria for the Level 5+ top up route which this document sets out in detail (see page 4).

Application forms for other routes to accreditation can be accessed on ACC's website members' area or by emailing registrar@acc-uk.org.

Updated: June 2026

Qualifying criterion for the Level 5+ top up route

To apply for accreditation, a counsellor first needs to be a registered counsellor member of ACC and then meet the qualifying criteria outlined below.

In all cases, applicants must be committed to good practice and working within ACC's terms and conditions of membership, code of ethics and practice standards.

Further information on standards and guidelines can be found on the website here and in the members' resource area.

Applicants must be able to evidence they meet the requirements below for:

A) ACC registration
B) Core counselling training (via one of the four paths below)
C) SCoPEd B competency training
D) And supervised counselling practice

Qualifying criteria

A	Registered	Applicants must be a registered counsellor member of ACC
B	Counselling training: via path 1	450 guided learning hours of core counselling training which is formally validated at level 6. Guided learning hours for qualifying training must be a minimum of 70% face to face learning and a maximum of 30% through an online environment which consisted of live, synchronous training.
	Counselling training: via path 2	420 hours guided learning hours of core counselling training which is formally validated at level 6, plus a further 30 hours achieved through undertaking pre/post qualification counselling training and/or some continuing professional development training. Guided learning hours for qualifying training must be a minimum of 70% face to face learning and a maximum of 30% through an online environment which consisted of live, synchronous training.

Qualifying criteria continued

B	Counselling training: via path 3	450 guided learning hours of core counselling training which is formally validated at level 5, plus an additional post qualification certificate or diploma in a specialist area of clinical practice, such as, couples therapy, trauma, working with children and young people, CBT, psychosexual therapy, etc., or an additional qualification in supervision. Validation and levels for **specialist training** vary, but a certificate or diploma level is acceptable, provided the course meets a reasonable expectation of in-depth specialist training. Typically, this will include theoretical knowledge; practical knowledge and skills training; reflective practice and self-care – all within an ethical framework. Validation and levels for **supervision** vary, but a certificate or diploma level is acceptable, provided the course meets a reasonable expectation of supervision training. Typically, this will include theoretical knowledge of one or more models of supervision; practical knowledge and skills training; reflective practice and self-care – all within an ethical framework. Guided learning hours must be a minimum of 70% face to face learning and a maximum of 30% through an online environment which consisted of live, synchronous training.
	Counselling training: via path 4	420 hours guided learning hours of core counselling training which is formally validated at level 5, a further 30 hours achieved through undertaking pre/post qualification counselling training and/or some CPD training, plus an additional post qualification certificate or diploma in a specialist area of clinical practice, such as, couples therapy, trauma, working with children and young people, CBT, psychosexual therapy, etc., or an additional qualification in supervision. ***Details for these additional specialist trainings are as detailed in path 3 above.***

Qualifying criteria continued

C	ACC SCoPEd B competency ('top up') training	Applicants must be able to evidence attendance at an ACC accredited SCoPEd B competency ('top up') training course (or equivalent). Attending the whole course is a mandatory prerequisite for accreditation via this Level 5+ top up route. If you have missed any of the course due to extenuating and exceptional circumstances, please see further information on page 7 and contact registrar@acc-uk.org before completing this accreditation form.
D	Supervised counselling practice	Applicants are required to evidence 450 hours of supervised counselling practice. (Please note that, as with other accredited registers for counselling and psychotherapy, ACC usually recommends that counsellors apply for accreditation once they have at least 2 years of practice post qualifying placement hours).

Please contact us by emailing registrar@acc-uk.org if you are unsure if your training meets these criteria.

Attendance at ACC SCoPEd B competency ('top up') training

To apply for accreditation via Accreditation – Level 5+ top up route (SCoPEd B), attendance at an ACC SCoPEd B competency ('top up') training course or an equivalent SCoPEd B progression training course is mandatory*. 100% attendance and engagement** is expected, however ACC recognise that there may be occasions due to immediate and exceptional circumstances*** where this is not possible. If you have attended between 75 – 100% of the training and your extenuating circumstances have been agreed by ACC, you may submit this application with an additional pro-forma relevant to the missed training (see Part 2). Please contact registrar@acc-uk.org if you need a pro-forma.

*If in doubt about whether a course is recognised by ACC, please contact us by emailing registrar@acc-uk.org.

**Engagement means being actively involved in the learning process, e.g. by asking questions, taking an active role in discussions, in online sessions giving the training your full attention (normally this would include keeping your camera on).

***Examples of exceptional circumstances may include a family emergency or sudden onset of a debilitating illness. These must be discussed and agreed with your tutor who will formally mark you absent for the competence training missed. Please contact registrar@acc-uk.org if you have missed any of the training.

How to apply

Overview of the Process

For all applicants who meet the criteria on pages 4-7, the application process follows two stages.

Stage 1: Application

Complete parts 1-6 of the online application form and submit the requested documentation:

PART 1: Personal and professional details

PART 2: Counselling training
(Note: In this section you will be prompted to upload qualification certificates and evidence of your CPD and SCoPEd B 'top up' training)

PART 3: Counselling experience

PART 4: Checklist for good practice
(Note: In this section you will be prompted to confirm you've read and adhered to a list of good practice elements and comment, if appropriate, on how this review has impacted your processes and practice)

PART 5: Supervision
(Note: In this section you will be asked to share the link to an online form with your supervisor. This is a compulsory part of your application so please ensure your supervisor completes it promptly)

PART 6: Evaluation of the Churchill Framework

It can be helpful to carefully read through the online form to ensure you know what is required before beginning your application. We recommend that you enlist the support of your counselling supervisor in discussing and reviewing your application. Please note artificial intelligence (AI) cannot be used for any of the application process, except for proofreading.

We hope that the process is clear from the application form, however, please contact us at registrar@acc-uk.org if you have any questions or concerns.

We encourage you to regularly save your form so responses are not lost. The SAVE button can be found at the bottom of each Section.

Your submission will be assessed by an ACC assessor and once the assessment is completed and passed you will then be invited to proceed to stage 2.

Stage 2: Viva

Attend an online 90 minute 'viva' with ACC assessors. A viva is a structured interview in which you will be asked to demonstrate some of the SCoPEd B competences by answering questions related to the competences. Further information is provided within these guidelines to help you prepare for this viva.

Fees

Fees for accreditation assessments are set annually. There is a variable charge for re-submission based on the extent of re-work required. Details about fees can be found on ACC's website, here

Reasonable adjustments

If you need any support in completing your accreditation application because of a disability that puts you at a marked disadvantage, please contact us at registrar@acc-uk.org with details of what would be helpful and why. We may ask for proof of why you require adjustments and if you do not have a formal assessment to evidence your needs, we will have a discussion to understand why you have not pursued one. We will do our best to support you where possible.

The use of artificial intelligence and plagiarism

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is not permitted to help write the application form nor for taking part in a viva if one is required. Plagiarism (copying someone's work, e.g., from a book, or on online source, or asking/paying for someone to write for you) is also not permitted; the application and viva should be all your own work. You may use programmes to help you check your work, such as checking spelling and grammar using the Editor function in Microsoft Word, but you may not use AI to create or write any portions of your application, nor during the viva. ACC reserves the right to require applicants to attend a face-to-face viva. If you use a computer programme to support you with any additional needs and are unsure if the programme is AI, please contact ACC. All of the application process should be all your own work. If you have any questions about the use of AI or plagiarism, please contact ACC.

Re-submission

If your application for accreditation fails to meet the required standard, you will be given feedback and asked to re-submit. There is normally a variable charge for resubmission, which will be notified to you at the time, and is dependent on the amount of re-work to be done.

Failure after resubmission

If your application fails to meet the standard after re-submission, you need to wait for a minimum of twelve months before re-applying.

Achieving accreditation

You will be notified to say that you have achieved accreditation, and your membership status will change to accredited counsellor. This will appear on your register and your 'Find a Counsellor' entries on ACC's website. Your membership certificate will change to reflect your new status, and you can change any other directory listings or websites you have to say that you are an ACC accredited counsellor. Your name will be printed in the next edition of Accord journal to mark your achievement. Please be aware that in line with other professional bodies your membership fees will increase at your next renewal point. You also have an obligation to ensure that you have the right amount of CPD and supervision for this membership category.

APPLICATION FORM: PART 1
Personal and professional details



In part 1 you will be prompted to enter your personal and professional details that will provide context about your work and what has led you to apply for accreditation.

If you have any questions please contact registrar@acc-uk.org

APPLICATION FORM: PART 2
Counselling training



Part 2 asks that you clearly state your core counselling training, any subsequent specialist training and to upload your certificates and CPD logs for the last 2 years. You will also need to provide details of your attendance at SCoPEd B competency ('top up') training recognised by ACC – we recommend you do this under section 2.2: post qualifying and specialist training.

Please include qualification certificates or scans of certificates for all courses listed, clearly naming the files with your name and the course name. If a certificate is not available, include a website link to the specific CPD/course where possible. Avoid including a general link to a training provider.

If any courses explicitly meet SCoPEd B competences, (e.g. assessment training, monitoring and outcome tools, training on out of awareness/unconscious processes etc.) please highlight these. While this is not necessary to pass the accreditation, it may support your application.

If you are unsure whether your core training meets the criteria for this Level 5+ top up accreditation route, contact ACC via registrar@acc-uk.org.

APPLICATION FORM: PART 3
Counselling experience

Part 3.1 is a record of your most recent 450 hours of supervised practice, broken down by year and agency/employment/private practice. See example below.



example : 3.1 Overview of your counselling practice by setting completed

If you need to add another counselling setting, select '**+Add Row**'

Section 3.2 asks you to provide a concise (maximum 600 words), critical, and coherent appraisal of your counselling approach/model and how it brings about positive psychological change.

It allows you an opportunity to evidence that you meet SCoPEd B competence 4.2.B; 'Ability to critically appraise a range of theories underpinning the practice of counselling and psychotherapy'.

It is helpful to note that the competence requires some critical appraisal of your theoretical counselling model, so do offer some brief critique on the strengths and limitations of your approach.

Drawing from counselling theories and literature, critically outline your counselling approach, including, for example, the following:

- **a model of person and mind** – what does it mean to be human (e.g., made for relationship, made up of parts, etc)?
- **a model of gendered and culturally influenced human development** – how do people develop (e.g., attachment, Erikson, early schemas, stages, etc)?
- **a model of human change and ways in which change can be facilitated** – how does change occur in counselling (e.g., through a reparative relationship, through meaning making, integrating parts, etc)?
- **a model of therapeutic relationship** – how do you conceptualise the therapeutic relationship (e.g., attachment, reparative, working alliance, intersubjective, etc)?
- **a set of clinical concepts to relate theory to practice** – how does theory apply to practice (e.g., the theoretical concepts do you draw upon in practice, e.g., CBT, eclecticism, internal family systems, intersubjectivity, transference, etc)?
- Briefly outline some **strengths and limitations** of your counselling approach.

Whilst you do not need to include citations and references for every point that you make in section 3.2, you are expected to include a couple of references to show what models/theories underpin your work and acknowledge the sources of your clinical knowledge. For example, 'Drawing heavily from the internal family systems approach (Schwartz & Sweezy, 2019), my approach to counselling…' (This will also help you evidence meeting SCoPEd B competence 4.16.B 'Ability to draw upon and evaluate published research on counselling and psychotherapy and integrate relevant research findings to enhance practice').

APPLICATION FORM: PART 4
Checklist for good practice



This checklist enables you to undertake a professional audit of aspects of your practice to give you assurance that you are practising within ACC's guidelines.

Read the documents and reflect on your own practice in the light of them using the comments boxes provided. Comment briefly on any amendments you have made, your reflections, or evaluation in the light of each of the documents you have read. You may wish to say more about specific documents; for example, in some cases you may wish to adopt/adapt the ACC templates or adopt alternative templates. You may also comment on how your current practice already adheres to ACC policies.

No more than a couple of sentences are required for each task unless you wish to more fully outline a counselling practice decision.

Also, it is helpful to bear in mind that in the viva in the second stage, you will be invited to reflect on a recent ethical dilemma in the light of the documents you have read in this checklist.

You may wish to explore some of the policies, guidelines, and documents as part of your supervision, in terms of how they might relate to your own counselling practice and any amendments you may wish to make as a result of reading them. It may take some time to make any necessary amendments in your clinical practice and supervision can support you in this.

APPLICATION FORM: PART 5
Supervision

Part 5 asks for details of your current supervision arrangements, along with a reflection on supervision that allows you to evidence that you meet SCoPEd B competence 5.6.B – 'The ability to review and evaluate supervision arrangements and take responsibility for adapting supervision to the evolving and changing requirements of ongoing practice'.

This section also includes a reference for your supervisor to complete. The reference should be from your primary supervisor who has supervised the majority of your counselling hours and should be a recent reference written for the purposes of the application, completing all sections of the online Supervisor reference form. Note that ACC require you to have been meeting with your supervisor for at least 6 months such that they feel able to comment on your practice as per this reference. If this will prove to be an issue, please contact us on registrar@acc-uk.org

The link for this form appears within section 5.5 or you can use the link below:

Supervisor reference form

Please be prepared to ask your supervisor to complete this reference form. Accreditation applications will not be processed without a supervision reference being received.

This reference also includes space for your supervisor to comment on your overall competence as well as how you work with specific competences found in column B of the SCoPEd Framework. We would encourage you to discuss the whole application with your supervisor as part of your development as a counsellor.

APPLICATION FORM: PART 6
Evaluation of the Churchill Framework



Because of our faith identity, we expect all counsellors to have knowledge and understanding of the Churchill Framework (2021/2025), to ensure that our work with clients who wish to include and explore their religious faith and/or spirituality in therapy takes due account of both the risks and opportunities of exploring faith in counselling. The Churchill Framework is based on extensive research, as partly evidenced by the references.

This evaluation is an opportunity for you to review and reflect on the value of the framework in general and/or for your own practice setting.

Part 6 asks that you read and reflect on the Churchill Framework, offering brief feedback on the framework itself and how you have or could assimilate this into your practice.

Consider this researched framework as the way of evidencing SCoPEd B competence 4.16.B 'Ability to draw upon and evaluate published research on counselling and psychotherapy, and integrate relevant research findings to enhance practice.'

Applicants must critically appraise the Churchill Framework by completing a questionnaire with four questions. A list of short points are acceptable for each of your answers. The maximum word count for each of the four sections is 400 words.

The assessor will be looking for evidence that you have read and understood the Churchill Framework.

This written work is assessed on a pass/fail basis. You do not need to include references and citations unless you are drawing from the theories, claims, or ideas of other writers.

Please note that the results of your evaluation, together with those of other applicants, may be collated and used (anonymously) to improve the framework.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION
Checklist

Please use the checklist at the end of the form to confirm you have submitted all the answers and documentation required. If there are any sections that are not applicable, please leave unchecked.

Be sure to check your answers and uploads before submitting your form. Once you have submitted the form, you will not have the opportunity to make changes to your application.

If you need assistance, or have any further queries concerning this application, please contact registrar@acc-uk.org.

Thank you.

STAGE 2: Viva
Level 5+ top up route (SCoPEd B)

Stage 2 takes the form of a viva assessment. The viva is a 90-minute online assessment in the form of a structured interview with two ACC assessors. It provides you with the opportunity to evidence you meet SCoPEd B competences, by reflecting on and demonstrating aspects of your current therapeutic practice.

Please note that your viva will take place after you have submitted parts 1-6 for stage 1 and these have been assessed, ***after which ACC will contact you to arrange a time for the viva***. The following is provided to give you information about the viva process and help you prepare for the viva.

Preparing for the Viva Assessment

The prospect of a viva assessment may seem daunting for some people, but preparing well can help you on the day. We hope that the work you do for the accreditation process, including preparing for the viva assessment, is formative and encourages you in your counselling practice.

We have set out the following steps to help you prepare.

In advance

The structure of the viva assessment is laid out on the following pages. Please read each of the parts carefully as a starting point. Whilst there are a considerable number of different questions, you will only be asked questions concerning up to a maximum of eight of any of the competences during the structured interview.

Please take your time to carefully consider each part and discuss how you might respond to the associated questions, and you may wish to discuss them in supervision if that is appropriate.

The B competences referenced can be found in the SCoPEd Framework (2022/2025) available here. It is highly recommended that you read the framework in full as it is a significant document that sets out the agreed competences in the profession expected of ACC members.

In preparing for the interview, we recommend that you also take into account the following points:

- **Modality**. The assessors conducting the structured interview will have read your Stage 1 application and will have an understanding of the context of your practice and your counselling modality. Therefore, when preparing, remember to consistently link your counselling modality to your practice so that there is a coherence to your responses across the whole accreditation application.

- **Ethical Practice**. Ethics and practice standards are foundational to safe practice, so please remember to think about the application of and reference as appropriate ethical frameworks and codes as outlined in the checklist in part 1 so that you can demonstrate the application of ethical approaches to your practice – throughout your response.

- **Progression**. Although there is a necessary focus on B competences during the interview, the assessors will be expecting you to demonstrate progression in the breadth and depth of your practice from your initial training as a result of clinical experience and development of your knowledge and understanding.

On the day

The viva will usually last no more than 90 minutes. The assessors will aim to put you at ease. They are wanting to have a professional conversation with you and encourage you to express your thoughts and ideas based on your knowledge and experience for each of the selected competences.

Please remember that when discussing a client, you are required to maintain professional client confidentiality and anonymity. Therefore, do not disclose any potentially identifying details, particularly if it is not necessary to the point you are making. The assessors will understand that you are limited by confidentiality.

You can have any interview or preparatory notes with you as an aide memoir, but please do not read out answers verbatim.

You may also find it helpful to have ready access to any other documents you would like to refer to, some of which are referenced in the interview sections on the following pages, either online, or as printed copies during the interview.

Confidential space

As you will be discussing and reflecting on aspects of confidential client work, you are required to ensure that you attend the viva online in a confidential space in which you will not be interrupted nor overheard and, unless given permission to do otherwise, you are required to attend on your own. Your video camera should be on for the duration of the viva and plans will be made in the event of technical difficulties. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is not permitted for the viva, nor the written application.

Reasonable adjustments

ACC are committed to making the accreditation process both fair and equitable. Therefore, if you would like to request any reasonable adjustments to help you complete your viva, please contact registrar@acc-uk.org in confidence providing details of your request. We understand that the type of reasonable adjustment required is unique to the individual, and we will do our best to listen well and accommodate an applicant's requested adjustment based on difference and disability to achieve fair and balanced processes, in line with the Equality Act (2010) and ACC's statement on equality, diversity and inclusion

Recording

Each viva will be recorded, and a transcript produced. Having a transcript will enable assessors to ensure that assessments are carried out thoroughly and fairly. Under normal circumstances, this transcript will be kept confidential and accessible only by ACC assessors. The transcript will be stored on secure ACC systems for 3 years. The confidentiality of your personal information is of paramount concern to ACC. To this end ACC complies with the General Data Protection Regulations/Data Protection Act 2018 in the collection, processing, holding and transmitting of your personal information. For more information on ACC's privacy policy, see here.

Overview of the viva

The viva involves two main parts. It starts with a brief introduction,

- followed by a structured interview in which the assessors will ask you questions based on up to eight of any of the column B competences in the five themes of the SCoPEd framework (as outlined overleaf)
- and questions based on ACC's Ethics and Practice, exploring a recent ethical dilemma, ending with a brief conclusion

Each of these parts are described in more detail on the following pages.

Brief introduction

This will include:

- General introduction of the applicant and assessors
- Explanation of what is expected.
- Plans in case of technological difficulties
- Verbal consent will be asked for the viva to be recorded
- Opportunity for the applicant to ask questions and share any relevant information related to the viva
- Confirmation that the applicant is ready to begin the viva.

SCoPEd framework: Five themes

There are 25 column B competences in the SCoPEd framework. At least three of the competences are assessed through the written work you have completed in parts 1-6:

- the critical appraisal of your counselling approach (competence 4.2.B),
- the evaluation of the Churchill Framework (competence 4.16.B),
- and the review and evaluation of your supervision (competence 5.6.B).

During the viva, you will be assessed on a maximum of 8 of any of the remaining 22 column B competences using the questions outlined on the following pages. The assessors will adhere to these questions but may ask follow-up questions in response to your reply in order to get further clarification.

Several of the competences are assessed through more than one question and some brief guidance is also provided in the boxes on the following pages. In answering questions on the competences, you may find it helpful to briefly reference specific client work (whilst maintaining confidentially and anonymity) to enhance your answer.

Each of the 22 competences and their associated questions are outlined on pages 21-27:

Each of the 22 competences and their associated questions are outlined below:

Theme 1: Professional Framework

SCoPEd B Competence 1.13.i **Ability to take an active role as a member of a professional community and participate effectively in inter-professional and multi-agency approaches to mental health where appropriate.**
Please describe how you take, have taken or would take an active role as a member of a professional community and participate effectively in inter-professional and multi-agency approaches to mental health where appropriate.

SCoPEd B Competence 1.13.ii **Ability to work in multi-disciplinary teams with other professionals to enhance therapeutic outcomes.**
Please describe how you work, have worked or would work in multi-disciplinary teams with other professionals to enhance therapeutic outcomes

Theme 2: Assessment

SCoPEd B Competence 2.1 **Ability to use an initial and ongoing clinical assessment strategy that is informed by a consistent, coherent and in-depth theoretical approach.**
Describe your clinical assessment strategy and how it is informed by your theoretical approach. As you have reflected on assessment in preparation for this viva, is there anything that you would now change regarding assessment? You may want to share your clinical, initial and/or ongoing assessment forms with the assessors, to illustrate your answer. This could be done either during or by email after the viva.

SCoPEd B Competence 2.5

The ability to conceptualise, evaluate and take account of a range of mental health problems, symptoms of psychological distress, functioning and coping styles (with due understanding of cultural norms), during assessment and throughout therapy.

How do you account for symptoms of psychological distress, functioning and coping styles in light of both your therapeutic modality and the cultural norms or context of your clients during assessment and throughout therapy?

SCoPEd B Competence 2.8

The ability to devise and use a comprehensive risk assessment strategy.

Describe how you assess risk and work with ongoing risk in the counselling relationship. You may want to share with the assessors any tools you find helpful in risk assessment. On reflection are there any particular strengths or weaknesses in your approach?

SCoPEd B Competence 2.11

Ability to identify and respond to the impact of the technologically mediated environment on issues of identity and presence, including fantasies and assumptions about the therapist and client or patient.

With reference to client work which takes place in a technologically mediated environment (e.g. via online video platform, text messaging, emailing or telephone counselling), how have you responded to the impact of this environment on issues of identity and presence? Can you identify any fantasies and assumptions that may have taken place in the client relationship, for both the client and counsellor?

If your therapeutic work does not include any technologically mediated environments (i.e., you only work with clients in face-to-face settings), then for this part of the assessment reflect on what you think might arise or change in relation to your therapeutic work, if you had to move to a technologically mediated environment.

Theme 3: Therapeutic relationship

SCoPEd B Competence 3.10

Ability to work with issues of power and authority experienced in the 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' processes of the client or patient as part of the therapeutic process.

Please discuss how you work with issues of power and authority experienced in the 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' processes of the client or patient as part of the therapeutic process. How have issues of power and authority that were out of the client's awareness impacted the therapeutic relationship?
You may find it helpful to reference specific client work (whilst maintaining confidentially and anonymity) to enhance your answer.

SCoPEd B Competence 3.13.i

Ability to critically reflect on the client's or patient's process to enhance the client's or patient's self-awareness and understanding of themself in relationship.

How have you been able to critically reflect on a client's process in a way which has helped to enhance the client's self-awareness and led to a greater understanding of themself in relationship? How has this aspect of your client work developed over time?

SCoPEd B Competence 3.13.ii

Ability to be aware of, and respond to, emotional shifts occurring in each session, with the aim of maintaining a level of emotional engagement appropriate for each circumstance.

Describe a session when you were particularly aware of emotional shifts occurring and how you responded to these shifts. How did your intervention (or otherwise) help the client to maintain an appropriate level of emotional engagement in the session?

SCoPEd B Competence 3.16

The ability to actively use your own responses to the client or patient in a way that is therapeutic and consistent with the theoretical model or approach that underpins your therapeutic practice.

Critically reflect on your ability to use your own responses to the client in a way that is therapeutic and consistent with your therapeutic model. How has reflecting on your own responses enhanced the therapeutic relationship or encouraged you to mediate your responses in the future?

SCoPEd B Competence 3.21

The ability to make use of ruptures or impasses in the therapy as opportunities for expanding the understanding of the client's or patient's subjective experience of their difficulties.

Considering the importance of ruptures or impasses as part of the therapeutic process, discuss how you have worked with these over your practice, and how it has impacted the client's understanding of their own difficulties.

SCoPEd B Competence 3.23

Ability to analyse and address difficulties in the immediacy of the therapeutic encounter to find ways to overcome such difficulties.

As your practice has developed, how have you worked with immediacy in the therapeutic encounter? What potential difficulties or opportunities has using immediacy provided and how have you addressed these to benefit or enhance the counsellor/client relationship?

SCoPEd B Competence 3.24

The ability to consider and manage complex issues arising when ending therapy in the light of the client's or patient's previous experience of endings.

How do you work with a client's experience of endings to manage complex issues that can arise when ending therapy? How have you worked reflectively and reflexively on your management of complex issues when ending therapy? You may wish to consider your own experience of endings.

Theme 4: Knowledge and skills

SCoPEd B Competence 4.3

The ability to work with suicidal risk and the often-complex nature of suicidal ideation and (or) other self-harming behaviours and associated 'unconscious', or 'out of awareness' processes and perceptions.

With reference to assessment, management and preventing reoccurrence, please reflect on your therapeutic practice in working with a client at risk of suicide or dealing, suicidal ideation or other self-harming behaviours.

You will be required to demonstrate your understanding and application of the 2025 NHS England Staying safe from suicide best practice guidelines.

SCoPEd B Competence 4.4

Ability to use the therapeutic relationship to work with the client's or patient's 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' perceptions, experiences and distortions of the therapist and the therapeutic relationship to enhance therapeutic change.

How do you use the therapeutic relationship to work with the client's 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' perceptions, experiences and distortions of the therapist and the therapeutic relationship to enhance therapeutic change?

Consider how the awareness and learning from supervision has impacted your counselling relationships and therapeutic process. You may find it helpful to reference specific client work to enhance your answer.

SCoPEd B Competence 4.7

The ability to demonstrate the capacity, knowledge and understanding of how to select and adapt interventions and (or) approaches to respond to the needs of the client or patient.

Considering your counselling modality(ies), how do you select and adapt interventions to reflexively respond to the needs of the client? How do you ensure that your interventions and adaptions are consistent with the underpinning theory of your theoretical modality/modalities?

You may wish to reflect on any constraints in your counselling approach which limit your ability to select and adapt interventions.

SCoPEd B Competence 4.9

Ability to reflect upon the complex and sometimes contradictory information gained from clients or patients and to coherently describe their present difficulties and the potential origins using a clear theoretical model or approach.

With reference to recent client work, please detail a situation where complex and contradictory information was gained from a client and how your theoretical approach gave you language and a framework to describe and understand their presenting difficulties and point to their potential origins.

SCoPEd B Competence 4.11

Ability to recognise and explore with the client or patient the assumptions that underpin understanding of identity, culture, values and worldview.

Describe how you have effectively used your own knowledge and skills to explore with a client the assumptions that underpin their understanding of identity, culture, values and worldview.

Please use a specific example to illustrate your response and reflect on if there is anything you would do differently now due to further knowledge or experience gained.

SCoPEd B Competence 4.15

The ability to utilise audit and evaluation tools to monitor and maintain standards within practice settings.

Do you currently or have you in the past used any audit and evaluation tools to monitor and maintain standards in your practice? How useful have you found these tools? What are the limits of audit and evaluation tools?

If you don't currently use audit and evaluation tools, please give a rationale for this decision and reflect on whether you are considering using them in the future.

Theme 5: Self-awareness and reflection

SCoPEd B Competence 5.1.i

Ability to be emotionally prepared for intense and complex work, which requires sustained reflexivity.

How do you understand the concept of reflexivity and how does this prepare you for emotionally intense and complex work?

With specific reference to ACC Ethics and Practice, consider how your self-care practices have sustained you emotionally to be prepared for intense and complex work. What does self-care look like in your context and how has this changed as your counselling practice has developed?

SCoPEd B Competence 5.1.ii

Ability to work with 'unconscious' and 'out of awareness' processes.

With reference to specific client work, please reference a time when, through the use of supervision or another reflective activity you become aware of something impacting your client work that may have previously been out of your awareness or part of an unconscious process for you or/and your client.

SCoPEd B Competence 5.4

Ability to critically challenge own identity, culture, values and worldview.

Drawing on examples from your own professional experience or training, please reflect on your awareness of power, difference and diversity in relation to the counselling and supervision relationships. How has this awareness enabled you to challenge your own identity, culture, values and worldview?

ACC Ethics and Practice

The second part of the viva involves discussing a recent ethical dilemma. Reflect on a recent (within the past 6 months) aspect of your work in which you experienced an ethical conflict or dilemma.

You will be asked to provide a brief outline of the ethical dilemma and critically discuss how you managed the complexities of the dilemma as well as the outcome. The assessors will ask you questions about the process of managing the ethical dilemma in the light of the criteria outlined below.

Your reflection and discussion should be in response to the documents you have read in **Part 4: Checklist for good practice**.

If your counselling practice includes working with young people and/or children, or you are conducting any research (e.g., as part of any counselling course or workplace research), you are also required to read the following documents:

- BACP Competence Framework for Working with Children and Young People (if you are or are planning to work with children and young people)
- ACC Research Ethics Policy and Procedures (if conducting any qualitative or quantitative research)

During the viva the assessors will assess your responses based on the following criteria:

- A real-life example which shows a working knowledge of the relevant ACC ethics, policies, and guidelines, including identifying the specific ethical values and principles relevant to the situation
- That your counselling work is grounded in ethical practice
- That you can and do reflect on your awareness of power, difference, and diversity when considering ethics
- That you were able to draw upon appropriate resources to aid your decision making, e.g., supervision
- That you were able to consider different possible courses of action and justify, with regard to ACC ethics, policies, and guidelines, why you chose your next steps
- That you were able to reflect upon the outcome, including any difference between your intended outcome and the actual outcome
- That you can reflect on whether there is anything that you would do differently should a similar situation arise again

Some examples of ethical dilemmas that you might use include, but are not limited to:

- Being encouraged to work outside of your limits of proficiency
- Having knowledge about unsafe practice which meant you considered the Duty of Candour
- Reading the Churchill Framework and considering how you work with clients' religious/spiritual issues
- Balancing your health issues with a desire to keep working
- The advertising of your counselling practice
- Dual or multiple relationships
- Balancing working under more than one ethical code

Conclusion

- You will be invited to briefly reflect on the viva interview and note if there is anything that you would like to add or amend.

Any questions not covered by these Guidance Notes please contact registrar@acc-uk.org