

Access to HE Diploma Specification & Assessment Framework

Diploma Title: Counselling

Learning Aim:	4001017X
Approved:	04 June 2019
Validation dates:	01 August 2019 - 31 July 2024
Date of next review:	September 2023

Purpose and aim of the Access to HE Diploma

The Access to HE Diploma is intended to prepare people without traditional entry qualifications for degree level study at university. It may also be used by people wishing to make a career change or who have been out of formal education for a significant time in order to gain the skills and confidence required for direct progression to employment or further study. The Access to HE Diploma is regulated by QAA and widely recognised as a progression route by universities across the UK.

Target Group

The Access Diploma is open to all learners but is designed to be accessible for individuals who, as a result of their socio-economic or personal circumstances, may not have been able to consider progression to degree level study. The Access Diploma therefore provides a second chance for individuals who, for whatever reason, were not able to take full advantage of their formal secondary education.

About the qualification

The Diploma Specification for Counselling enables centres to choose from a range of units within counselling and psychology with additional choices of suitable complementary subjects.

¹The progression routes from this Diploma could include, but are not limited to, degrees in counselling, person-centred counselling, psychology and counselling, coaching and mentoring, speech and language therapy, etc.

Specification Rules²

All LASER Diplomas are made up of 45 graded credits (sections A, B, C below) and 15 ungraded credits (section D).



¹ Suggested progression routes have been taken from provider feedback and HE consultation, they may be subject to change and further review and do not indicate any guarantee of progression in these fields. LASER would always recommend students ensure the diploma they wish to enrol on is appropriate for their future progression.

² the policy for the LASER Access to HE Diploma Specification & Assessment Framework is available via <https://www.laser-awards.org.uk/access-to-higher-education/for-centres/laser-access-framework/> or by contacting the Access Office

Unit Choices: SUBJECT GROUP A

30 graded credits to be selected from the modules listed below, these units are chosen as specific to the subject of the named Diploma and are all at level 3. Minimum credits to be achieved indicated below.

Counselling (minimum 21 credits)	
Credits	Title
6	Advanced Counselling Skills
6	Approaches to Counselling
6	Difference and Diversity in Counselling
6	Introduction to Cognitive Behaviour Theory
6	Introduction to Person Centred Theory
6	Introduction to Psychodynamic Counselling Theory
3	Listening Skills in the Helping Professions
6	Loss and Bereavement Counselling
6	Professional and Reflective Practice in a Counselling Setting
6	Professional Practice and Ethics in Counselling
6	Self-Awareness and Personal Development in Counselling
3	Specialist Areas in Counselling
Psychology	
Credits	Title
3	Introduction to Psychology
3	Psychology and Mental Health ³
3	Applied Stress Management
3	Child Development
3	Cognitive Psychology
3	Criminological Psychology
3	Psychology of Early Socialisation
3	Psychology of Education
3	Psychology of Health
3	Psychology and Therapy
3	Research Methods in Psychology
3	Social Psychology
3	The Effects of Stress
3	Cyberpsychology

³ Formerly titled Abnormal Psychology

Unit Choices: SUBJECT GROUP B

9 or 15 graded credits (depending on choice of graded or ungraded IAS unit from Group C) to be selected from either the modules listed in Group A and/or from the additional modules offered in below, these units are related to the subject of the named Diploma or will complement learning. These units are all at level 3.

Law	
Credits	Title
3	Family Law
3	Health and Social Care Legislation within the UK
3	Tort Law
Professional Studies	
Credits	Title
3	Developing Professional Practice in Healthcare
3	Understanding Ethics in Healthcare
3	Understanding Epidemiology
3	Understanding Health Promotion and Health Education
3	Understanding Adolescent Health
3	Understanding Mental Health
3	Understanding Quality Improvement in Healthcare
3	Understanding Sexual Health
Social Work	
Credits	Title
3	Anti-discriminatory Practice
3	Development of Social Welfare
3	Safeguarding Children from Possible Abuse
3	Social Welfare in the 21 st Century
3	Safeguarding Adults from Possible Abuse
Sociology	
Credits	Title
3	Introduction to Sociology
3	Social Divisions
3	Social Research Methods
3	Social Stratification
3	The Sociology of Crime and Deviance
3	The Sociology of Family
3	The Sociology of Health
3	The Sociology of Poverty
3	The Sociology of Religion

Independent Academic Study: IAS GROUP C

6 credits are achieved from the appropriate Independent Academic Study unit (IAS) for the Diploma title. This unit is at level 3 and can be offered as graded or ungraded (but not both) within a centre's Rules of Combination.

Independent Academic Study	
Credits	Title
6	Independent Academic Study (Professional Studies)

Ungraded Units: GROUP D

15 or 9 ungraded credits (depending on choice of graded or ungraded IAS unit from Group C) are selected from the modules listed in Group D which include study skills, English language and maths and/or ungraded versions of units available in Group A or Group B can be selected in this section. These units are generally at level 3 but selected units may be available at level 2.

Study Skills		
Level	Credits	Title
3	6	Academic Study Skills
3	3	Critical Thinking
3	3	Note Taking and Note Making
3	3	Personal Organisation and Time Management
3	3	Giving a Presentation to an Audience <i>(online e-learning course available for this unit)</i>
3	3	Reviewing and Planning for the Future
2 or 3	3	Skills for Study: Essay Writing <i>(online e-learning course available for this unit)</i>
2 or 3	3	Skills for Study: Research <i>(online e-learning course available for this unit)</i>
2 or 3	3	Skills for Study: Writing <i>(online e-learning course available for this unit)</i>
2 or 3	3	Using ICT for Study
3	3	Preparing for Written Exams <i>(online e-learning course available for this unit)</i>
English		
Level	Credits	Title
2	3	English Language Skills
3	3	Studying Literature
3	3	Communication – Reading and Writing
3	3	Communication – Speaking and Listening
Maths		
Level	Credits	Title
2	3	Understanding Maths <i>(online e-learning course available for this unit)</i>
3	3	Application of Number - Calculation
3	3	Application of Number – Data Interpretation
3	6	Introductory Mathematics for HE
Ungraded Units selected from Subject Groups A & B⁴		

⁴ Units cannot be included within a Centre's Rules of Combination as both graded and ungraded but centres can choose to offer some subject units as ungraded versions. These would be identified as part of the course approval.

Diploma Assessment Framework⁵

All LASER validated Access to HE programmes must include a **Diploma Assessment Schedule** as a part of their validation/revalidation process and the schedules will be required to be updated and available for review as part of the yearly ‘External Verification/Moderation’ cycle.

Required Assessment Models:

Assessment Model ⁶	Suggested Weighted Frequency of Use	Comments
Examination ⁷	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Required by LASER Examination Policy and identified as commonly used assessment model within HE.</i>
Essay (Include as necessary)	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Together with Examinations this constitutes one of the most predominant assessment methodologies for HE</i>
Presentation	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Very high frequency of use in HE but not always as a summative assessment tool. Students should have moderate but not substantive experience of this form of assessment.</i>

⁵ the policy for the LASER Access to HE Diploma Specification & Assessment Framework is available via <https://www.laser-awards.org.uk/access-to-higher-education/for-centres/laser-access-framework/> or by contacting the Access Office

⁶ Definitions of the meanings of given **Assessment Models** are contained within Annex One.

⁷ The LASER Examination Policy requires all LASER validated Diploma Titles to include **4** examinations. Two maybe employed as **formative assessment models** and **two MUST** be employed as **summative assessment models** although not necessarily in terms of graded units.

Recommended Assessment Models:

Recommended Assessment Model	Possible Weighting	Comments
Project	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>May be used as a means of assessing independent learning in a given subject area.</i>
Extended Essay	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>Although not the norm this assessment tool is used with moderate frequency in HE and therefore students should have some experience of it.</i>
Case Study	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>May be appropriate to units where there is a requirement for application of knowledge... E.g. Law or Psychology</i>
Report ⁸	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>A less frequently used model of assessment but required as many progression reports will employ this model and students should have some experience of it.</i>
Workbook	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>May be used in relation to any unit</i>

⁸ This could be evidenced by the submission of the graded IAS or could be evidenced via a graded alternative unit of assessment.