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for counsellors



Aloe counselling training

Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling:
An Integrative Approach

Course Brochure

2026 - 2028

Qualification:	Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (TC-L4)
Guided Learning Hours:	450 hours over 2 years Year 1 - 225 Guided learning hours Year 2 - 225 Guided learning hours
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are expected to do at least 7 hours of course work outside of the course. This will include your placement, personal therapy and supervision time. You are expected to undertake 100 clinical hours in placement, 40 hours of personal therapy and supervision to support the clinical hours. Supervision is 1 hour for every 6 client hours fortnightly or more dependent on client load. This is outside of the course structure. You will only undertake placement at the end of term two in year one to ensure you have enough knowledge and further experience/training to support you as you move into this side of the course. We have also been hard at work at the centre building relationships with counselling agencies in the local community as well as some online centres to help create some placement opportunities for our students. Please note that these placements won't suit everyone, and you are also expected to look for your own placement. However successful students can progress onto these placements with these organisations if you meet their requirements.
Awarding Body:	CPCAB – Counselling & Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body
Lead Tutor:	Shirley Marais
Additional Tutors:	Hope Lambert Fola Reiss Dan Taylor
Fees:	The total cost of the Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling course is £5650 (excluding the CPCAB registration fee) - this fee is payable over two years. Non refundable deposit of £1000 to be paid within 7 days of acceptance. Balance to be paid in 20 equal monthly payments of £232.50 starting on 1st September and ending on 1st June. Late payment fees of £30 apply to each missed payment.
CPCAB yearly registration fee:	This fee is payable both in September 2026 and September 2027. The current fee is (£379 but please note this is subject to change as CPCAB have not yet released their new fees for the year)
Commencing: Session 1: Session 2:	September 2026. Wednesday daytimes from 9am to 3pm. Thursday evenings from 6pm - 9pm with one weekend per month from 9am - 4pm
Location:	4 Bramley Road St Ives Cambridgeshire PE27 3WS
Duration:	Two Academic years, with an additional year for placement hours Year 1 (September 2026- July 2027) Year 2 (September 2027 - July 2028)
Additional req.:	40 Hours personal therapy – to commence at the start of the course. 10 hours must be completed before placement commences. Hours to be split as follows: 20 hours in year 1 & 20 hours year 2. Reading material/textbooks, BACP/NCPs membership Insurance, supervision and personal therapy are all at your own cost.
Requirements:	Applicants must be aged 21 or over. You must hold the CPCAB Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies (or equivalent) and the CPCAB Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills, with a minimum of 180 hours of prior training. You must be able to demonstrate a good standard of written and spoken English, the ability to work with difference and diversity, and a commitment to ongoing self-awareness, demonstrating you are emotionally resilient enough to undertake the demands of client work. Applicants must also demonstrate sufficient emotional resilience to meet the demands of client work. Attendance at an interview is required.

Interviews

Interviews will be taking place between March and August 2026 and will be conducted by both level 4 tutors. Please ensure you prepare for the interview. You will need to demonstrate knowledge of theory learnt in level 3, how to make use of supervision, demonstrate your growing self-awareness and how you have learnt to be more resilient over the duration of the level 2 and 3 course.

Application deadline: There is a limited number of spaces for this course. Applications will close in June 2026.

To be considered for an interview, please complete the enrollment form following the link below:

<https://forms.gle/1rwucFisir7dyjnX9>

Only enrolment forms that are fully completed, with all questions answered in full, will be considered. Following submission of the enrolment form, you must email your Tutor Reference Form and a copy of your photo ID to info@aloecounsellingtraining.co.uk. You will be asked to provide professional references once your enrolment form has been received and an interview date has been offered.

Our Approach

The Aloe Counselling Training Centre gets its name from the Aloe succulent. The Aloe succulent is known for its assorted healing purposes. We at the ACTC believe that if we provide an environment that nurtures and helps students to grow by providing space for them to explore, experience and take personal risks this allows them a healthy environment to start their own self-awareness journey. We encourage our students to be independent in their learning as well as offering exploration into professional areas of interest all with the purpose to heal.

Our Tutors

We are extremely proud of all our tutors at the centre. They are all highly experienced tutors who have a clear understanding of what the level 4 Diploma course consists of and how to support students through these two years. Our aim is to help bring highly competent, resilient counsellors into the profession. All our counsellors are in practice either privately or work for an organisation as well as tutor at the centre. All our tutors are compliant with the Scoped Guidelines and members of either the BACP, NCPS or other recognised ethical bodies. See above information about Shirley and Hope to get a better sense of who they are.

Shirley, Hope and Fola offer a deeply reflective approach to their client work as well as their tutoring and fully support the importance of supervision in the counselling profession ensuring they are always working professionally and safely both in private practice and at the centre. As qualified counsellors and experienced CPCAB tutors both Shirley and Hope know what is expected to support students on their level 4 journey. Both are also qualified supervisors and offer valuable support and insight into supervision and how best to support students from this perspective.

Our tutors complete regular Continuous Professional Development training to keep up to date with current skills and competencies which they then share with their students. All tutors attend the CPCAB professional Standardisation Training days and bring their real-life experiences of being a counsellor in these challenging times into the room to give all students a solid understanding of what it is like to be a counsellor in the real world.

Shirley, Hope and Fola offer support to all students as they progress into placement and support students to find placements that fit with them.

Shirley Marais - Centre Manager and Course Tutor (Tel: 07488 351411 / Email: info@alocounsellingtraining.co.uk)



Shirley is a qualified supervisor and psychotherapist and is a Registered Member of the NCPS and BACP.

As well as working for (ACTC), Shirley also works as a Relationship Counsellor at her own private practice. Shirley works with her couples in exploring Emotional Focused Therapy. Shirley also works with individuals. She has a broad knowledge and understanding of what students need to complete their Diploma training having taught the CPCAB model for over 6 years. Shirley is experiential in teaching and learning and brings real life experience of being a counsellor into her teaching.

Shirley is the course tutor and centre manager for Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4.

Hope Lambert - Co-Tutor (Tel: 07411 731027 / Email: hope.level4counselling@gmail.com)



Hope has been a qualified counsellor and supervisor since 2019. Before this, she worked as a full-time Deputy Headteacher and Pastoral Care Lead across primary, secondary, and alternative provision settings, as well as a Qualified Learning Disability Nurse. Hope now runs a busy private practice and is CEO of her own counselling and supervision space. Hope works in various settings, including Women's Aid, universities, and schools. She also holds multiple roles with CPCAB, including Internal Verifier, External Verifier, and Tutor. Hope has a fully trained Personal Assistance Dog and Therapy Dog who supports her work in schools and with young adults, couples, and adults. Hope's training is as an Integrative Psychotherapist, combining elements of different approaches such as Psychodynamic, Person-Centred, Transactional Analysis, and Gestalt. In the humanistic spirit of maintaining OK-OK relationships, she encourages us to focus on integrating new experiences into learning rather than labelling competence or lack thereof. As an experienced academic tutoring Levels 1-5 with CPCAB, she believes deeply in the power of lifelong learning. Hope's professional journey is marked by a special interest in Neurodiversity, Neuroscience, and Trauma-Informed practices. This focus underscores her commitment to understanding and addressing the unique needs of her students, clients, and supervisees. "Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand." – Chinese Proverb

Fola Reis - Co-Tutor



Fola Reis is a psychotherapist, counsellor, and educator with over 20 years' experience working across mental health and education. Her professional background spans the NHS, educational settings, and private practice, supporting children, young people, adults, and couples. Alongside her clinical work, she has extensive experience teaching and lecturing, bringing theory to life through reflective, accessible, and practice-based learning. Fola's approach is relational, trauma-informed, and values-led, grounded in both academic knowledge and lived experience.

Our Centre

Being a small centre, we can offer a flexible approach to our delivery, keeping groups to approximately 15 to ensure our classes stay small and personal. We ensure that marking is of a high standard where students are supported from the start of the course to the end of the course and offered insight into areas to develop further or validation in what they are achieving.

Counselling training is not just about theory but creating a space for students to bond which we do at the centre by creating groups to fit around different lessons to ensure all students are able to connect with each other to get a better sense of who their peers are as well as to support further development in peer groups. Our students share experiences and begin to become reflective counsellors aware of their own process as well as their peer's process.

We do not have a facility that offers a library, but the centre has a wide range of books that you can borrow to support your learning. Please ask to see the list if you are interested in this.

We don't have a café on site but do have use of a kitchen so please bring in any food with you. Tea and coffee will be provided by the centre.

CPCAB L4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling

The course requires commitment from its students including expanding personal time, in order to meet many demands of the course that runs over 2 academic years. Assessments will be made on written work and you will be required to compile a portfolio to evidence the theories studied, assessments completed, skills practiced and case studies carried out. At the end of year 1 you will be required to undergo a placement at an agency approved by the centre. You will be required to complete 100 client hours as part of the course. You will undertake regular supervision to support you in your client work. You will be required to undergo 40 hours of personal therapy across the two years of the course.

This is a robust course that offers students the opportunity to learn and develop in the Integrative (not eclectic) model.

Year 1

The course will help students become ready to undergo their placements in year 2. You will be grounded in understanding of ethical practice, legislation, diversity and different theoretical concepts. You will build on your awareness of self in relation to others. You will gain the ability to communicate and express yourself in a group and gain the ability to listen to others and respond appropriately. You will become more reflective as a counsellor. You will develop openness to others' ideas and to learning from others. You will continue to build on your self-awareness and develop a core theoretical model based on the integrative model. You will expand on your personal development and use theory to help you understand your own personal history and relationships. You will be introduced to undertaking your placement hours. Students will be expected to start their placements in the 3rd term of year one. Students will be assessed by the course tutors to ensure their readiness to practice and undertake their placements.

Year 2

Will be made up of expanding your knowledge of the integrative approach and incorporating guest speakers, creative therapy and introducing Nature therapy to the course. Year 2 will focus on case studies and application of skills and theory. Year 2 will also focus on placements undertaken by students.

Placement:

We have a robust Moving into Placement framework that supports students to feel comfortable and confident when moving into placement. Our aim is to ensure all the skills you have learnt are demonstrated and strengthened as you the student undertake your first placement. Students complete a fishbowl activity to demonstrate readiness to working with clients as well as a placement assignment where they get to demonstrate their competencies and practical considerations that are needed when moving into placement.

Candidates need to complete a minimum of 100 hours of formally contracted one to one counselling with at least five different clients in an agency setting during the 2 years. Up to 49% of client placement hours can be online/telephone and the remaining 51% client placement hours should be conducted in-person.

The centre will need to consider if you are competent to work with clients in order to manage client safety and individual competence.

Candidates must complete 10 hours of personal therapy before being able to undertake their placement. This can only start once the course commences.

CPCAB recognises that some candidates will not have completed all the course requirements by the end of the second year. CPCAB allows a MAXIMUM of one year (beyond the course end date) for completing client hours.

In year 2 we dig deep into Transactional Analysis and link this to client work.

We introduce CBT and some Solution Focused Therapy as well as Emotional Focused Therapy and look at this from a new perspective.

Existential philosophy provides a framework for you to explore your own existential anxieties, longing, and purpose. We introduce you to some guest speakers and encourage free speech when we explore sensitive topics in the group. This further cements our understanding of how to work ethically and safely and have a deeper awareness of difference and diversity in the counselling profession.

Supervision is a huge part of your counselling training, and we ensure that all our supervisors are competent and have a good understanding of the importance of supervision on level 4. All our supervisors work in the field of counselling and psychotherapy, who will accompany you through your journey on this integrative training.

Expect to spend **at least 6/7 hours a week outside of class time**, reading, writing journal entries, and homework. You are also expected to work in groups outside of the class to complete assignments/presentations. Please make sure you make this time available to allow all students to be able to participate as teamwork is a big part of the course.

- 100% attendance is expected. 80% is the minimum attendance to pass the course.
- Progression routes will be discussed over the coming months.
- Different Ethical Bodies will be explored over the duration of the course. We follow the BACP Ethical Framework but encourage our students to choose an Ethical Framework that fits them best.
- Classes start promptly – please arrive and be seated 5 **minutes** before the start time.
- Each week, you will need a notebook and pen for making notes.

Course outline:

This is a CPCAB course. The British Association for Counsellors Psychotherapists (BACP), Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions underpins this training. There are seven learning outcomes that will be taught in a variety of ways. Including small group activities, lectures, individual reflective writing, whole group discussions and small group skills practice.

- Working ethically, safely and professionally as a counsellor
- Working within a counselling relationship
- Working with client diversity in counselling work
- Working within a user-centred approach to counselling
- Working with self-awareness in the counselling process
- Working within a coherent framework of counselling theory and skills
- Working self-reflectively as a counsellor

Your tutors will build up a picture of your progress via a range of ‘formative assessments’, which take place throughout Years 1 and 2. Your tutors meet regularly to monitor student progress. Such monitoring may include discussion of a student’s participation in all areas of the curriculum and their sense of progress in activities away from the course day, such as personal therapy and client work. Supervisor’s Reports, completed by your counselling placement supervisor, help provide tutors with a picture of your counselling practice as it develops. Your tutors will become familiar with your counselling style and will help you identify strengths, weaknesses and learning needs, supporting and challenging you as appropriate. Reflective practice is a cornerstone of the training and tutors gauge a great deal about your progress from your ability to form a realistic and flexible view of yourself and others. This includes the ability to give feedback non-judgementally and to receive feedback from others non-defensively.

Working self-reflectively as a counsellor

You need to be aware that the course involves experiential elements which will involve personal disclosure and associated personal development activities.

Assessment

Internal assessment.

You will need to produce a written e-portfolio of work, which will document evidence of your learning, a record of your personal development and a collection of evidence to support CPCAB criteria. Successful passing of this course is dependent upon the completion of this portfolio.

All seven learning processes are individually assessed throughout the course using the following methods:

- Reflective Learning journals
- Tutor and peer feedback
- Self-assessment
- Written Assignments
- Case Presentations – including written process report.
- Research Projects
- Presentations
- Group Discussions and group work
- Group Supervision
- Placement and Placement Supervision Report
- Self-Review
- External Assessment
- Personal Therapy
- Skills Practice Sessions