Diploma of Counselling

Course Information Handbook
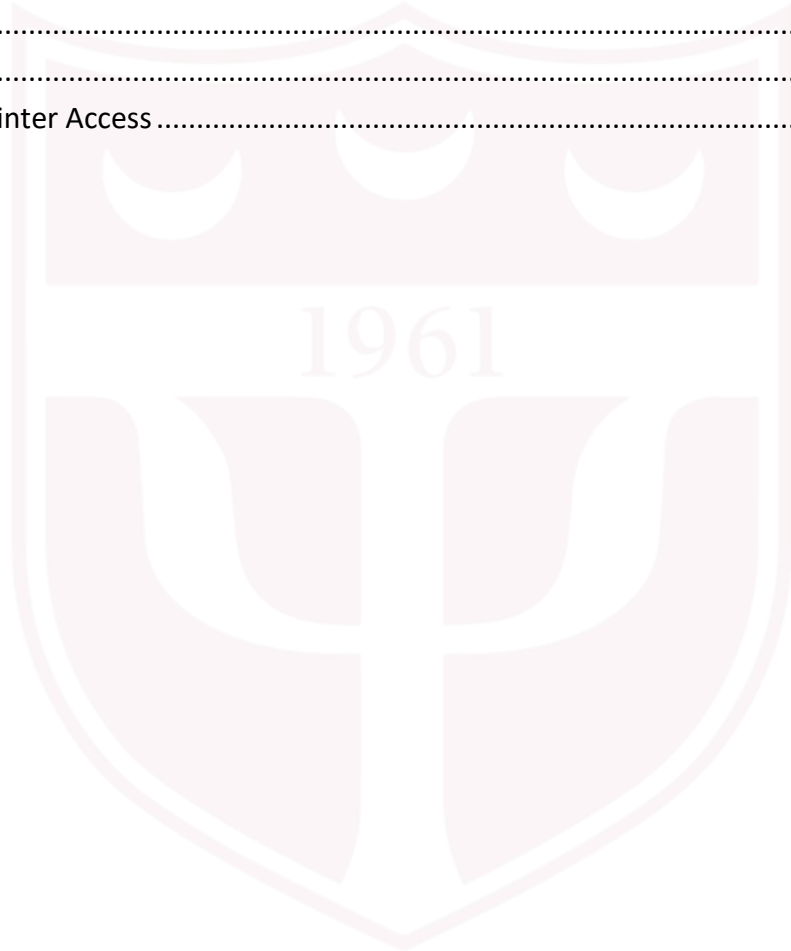
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Welcome to The Cairnmillar Institute

Congratulations on your success in obtaining a place in the Diploma of Counselling. This course information handbook addresses many aspects and requirements of the course. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

VET Student Handbook

Policies and Procedures

These resources provide all the information you need to successfully navigate your way through the different components of the course. If you find anything missing from these handbooks, please let us know.

The Cairnmillar Institute and staff wish you an enjoyable and rewarding professional experience.

Professor Kathryn von Treuer
CEO and Provost

The Cairnmillar Institute

The vision of the Cairnmillar Institute is to be globally recognised as a centre for psychological treatment, higher education, community education and research in the fields of Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy. The Institute is an Australian Health Promotion Charity and non-profit body, as well as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that provides Nationally Recognised Training (NRT). This means you can be assured that our training will provide you with a qualification that is recognised and respected across Australia.

 As one of our VET students you will receive all the benefits of our higher education and professional training history. You will be taught practical skills by practicing psychologists and professionals, and have access to specially designed and selected learning materials created by experienced learning designers and academics.

Our aim is to offer relevant programs and services tailored to our professional and client community needs. The service growth and regional reach of Cairnmillar is underpinned by our values of respect, integrity and professionalism and a focus on quality and standards. Connection with business partners and community, and a focus on quality is critical to our business development and will directly enhance our client and student experience. We also aim to strengthen our contribution to the body of research that informs community in practice, and education.

Diploma of Counselling

This qualification reflects the role of counsellors, who work with clients on personal and psychological issues using established counselling modalities. They use communication, micro-counselling and interviewing skills and draw on varied counselling therapies to assist clients. At this level, the counsellor will be working in defined and supported counselling roles in established agencies rather than in independent practice.

Entry Requirements

Entrants will normally be 18 years of age or older, with a minimum education level of 10 or Certificate III, have work experience and have access to a workplace. Applicants must be proficient in English and be technologically literate, with sound ability using computers and online tools, as well as access to a laptop or home computer for research tasks.

Those applying who do not have a degree, may enter into a process in which they may be granted entry in recognition of previous experience where an equivalence of earlier learning or knowledge and skills gained through work or life experience, which can be assessed. Entrants will however be required to complete a language and numeracy test prior to the commencement of the course.

It is also recommended that all learners have confidence using computers and online tools, as well as access to a laptop or home computer for research tasks.

Enrolment Dates

Applications for enrolment will normally close two weeks before the start of teaching, or when the course is full, whichever is sooner. Applications for enrolment are processed through our Online Application Portal.

Once you have submitted the form to enrol in the course, your eligibility for entry will be assessed and you will be sent a formal enrolment acceptance notice, this notice will confirm that you are enrolled in all units and terms as detailed in this Course Information Handbook. You will have 10 working days to respond to your enrolment acceptance notice and can withdraw from the course without penalty during that time or any time prior to the first 'withdrawal date', whichever is later.

Duration of the Course

The course takes 12 months to complete in total and meets the requirements of a full-time program. The course can also be completed part time. For further information about the part-time course structure, please contact the VET and Short Course Registrar.

Graduate Learning Outcomes

The Diploma of Counselling prepares graduates with the skills and knowledge necessary to work effectively in various counselling roles. Upon completion, graduates will be equipped to:

- Apply evidence-based counselling models, strategies, and therapies.
- Develop and maintain therapeutic relationships with clients.
- Conduct client assessments and develop case plans.
- Address diverse client needs and provide tailored counselling support.
- Handle crisis situations and work within ethical and legal frameworks.
- Apply knowledge of counselling that is culturally sensitive and ethically and legally aware.
- Employs evidence of reflexive thinking, effective delivery and receipt of feedback, and effective teamwork skills.
- Develop and propose sound solutions that are relevant in various contexts.

Career Opportunities

Potential careers outcomes include working in welfare and counselling.

Graduates who have successfully completed this qualification, will be prepared for further studies in counselling; such as the Bachelor of Psychology and Counselling, Graduate Certificate of Counselling and Psychotherapy or the Graduate Certificate in Child, Youth and Family Mental Health. Please speak with the teaching team to know which pathways best suits you.

Professional Recognition

At the time of publication, the Australian Counselling Association (ACA) course accreditation is on hold and will be pursued in 2025 once ACA enable the accreditation process. Graduating students of the course can apply for membership with the Certified Practicing Counsellors Australia (CPCA).

Course Structure & Nominal Hours

This course has been designed to be completed in 12 months and meets the requirements of a full-time program. For further information about the part-time course structure, please contact the VET and Short Course Registrar.

Full-Time Course Structure:

Year	Term	Unit Code	Unit Title	Nominal Hours
1	1	CHCCSL001	Establish and confirm the counselling relationship	100
1	1	CHCCSL002	Apply specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills	60
1	1	CHCCSL003	Facilitate the counselling relationship and process	120
1	2	CHCCSL004	Research and apply personality and development theories	50
1	2	CHCPRP003	Reflect on and improve own professional practice	120
1	2	CHCLEG001	Work legally and ethically	55
1	2	CHCCSM005	Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management	75
1	3	CHCCCS019	Recognise and respond to crisis situations	45
1	3	CHCCSL005	Apply learning theories in counselling	65
1	3	CHCCSL007	Support counselling clients in decision-making processes	120
1	3	CHCPRT001	Identify and respond to children and young people at risk	40
1	4	CHCDIV001	Work with diverse people	40
1	4	CHCDIV002	Promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural safety	25
1	4	CHCCCS038	Facilitate the empowerment of people receiving support	50
1	4	CHCCCS017	Provide loss and grief support	55
1	4	CHCCSL006	Select and use counselling therapies	70
1	4	CHCFAM003	Support people to improve relationships	60

Course Details: 13 core units and 4 electives.

Coursework Units

Each of the units of study are detailed below. Please note students must pass all units before being eligible to graduate.

- CHCCSL001 Establish and confirm the counselling relationship

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to use a structured approach to counselling to determine, establish and confirm the nature of the counsellor client relationship according to the agency's counselling model.

This unit applies to individuals whose job role involves working with clients on personal and psychological issues within established policies, procedures and guidelines.

- CHCCSL002 Apply specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to use advanced and specialised communication skills in the client-counsellor relationship.

This unit applies to individuals whose job role involves working with clients on personal and psychological issues within established policies, procedures and guidelines.

- CHCCSL003 Facilitate the counselling relationship and process

This unit describes the skills and knowledge to support clients to identify and work though concerns, and to manage the overall counselling process to its conclusion.

This unit applies to individuals whose job role involves working with clients on personal and psychological issues within established policies, procedures and guidelines.

- CHCCSL004 Research and apply personality and development theories

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to research key concepts and constructs of theories of personality and human development, and link those to counselling practice.

This unit applies to individuals whose job role involves working with clients on personal and psychological issues within established policies, procedures and guidelines.

- CHCPRP003 Reflect on and improve own professional practice

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to evaluate and enhance own practice through a process of reflection and ongoing professional development.

This unit applies to workers in all industry sectors who take pro-active responsibility for their own professional development.

- CHCLEG001 Work legally and ethically

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to identify and work within the legal and ethical frameworks that apply to an individual job role.

This unit applies to community services and health workers who play a proactive role in identifying and meeting their legal and ethical responsibilities.

- CHCCSM005 Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to undertake case management meetings to plan, monitor and review service provision.

Workers at this level work autonomously and are responsible for own outputs within organisation guidelines.

This unit applies to work in a range of health and community services contexts.

- CHCCCS019 Recognise and respond to crisis situations

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to recognise situations where people may be in imminent crisis, and then to work collaboratively to minimise any safety concerns and make plans to access required support services.

This unit applies to any community services worker involved in crisis intervention. Management of the crisis may involve face-to-face, telephone or remote contact with persons involved.

- CHCCSL005 Apply learning theories in counselling

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to apply theory underpinning behaviourism and social learning to formulate and monitor a program for behaviour change in a counselling context.

This unit applies to individuals whose job role involves working with clients on personal and psychological issues within established policies, procedures and guidelines.

- CHCCSL007 Support counselling clients in decision-making processes

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to assist clients to clarify their goals, explore options and develop a course of action.

This unit applies to individuals whose job role involves working with clients on personal and psychological issues, within established policies, procedures and guidelines.

- CHCPRT001 Identify and respond to children and young people at risk

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to support and protect children and young people who are at risk of harm. This work occurs within legislative and policy frameworks and carries a duty of care responsibility.

This unit applies to workers in a range of job roles providing services to children and young people including in community services and health contexts.

- CHCDIV001 Work with diverse people

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to work respectfully with people from diverse social and cultural groups and situations, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

This unit applies to all workers.

- CHCDIV002 Promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural safety

The unit describes the skills and knowledge required to identify Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural safety issues in the workplace, model cultural safety in own work practice, and develop strategies to enhance cultural safety.

This unit applies to people working in a broad range of roles including those involved in direct client service, program planning, development and evaluation contexts.

- CHCCCS038 Facilitate the empowerment of people receiving support

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to facilitate the empowerment of people receiving support, and to deliver rights-based services using a person-centred approach. It should be carried out in conjunction with individualised plans.

This unit applies to workers in varied care and support contexts.

- CHCCCS017 Provide loss and grief support

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to recognise and respond to the needs of people who are experiencing loss, grief and bereavement.

This unit applies to workers in a range of community services and health contexts.

- CHCCSL006 Select and use counselling therapies

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to select and use different counselling therapies to meet client needs.

This unit applies to individuals whose job role involves working with clients on personal and psychological issues, within established policies, procedures and guidelines.

- CHCFAM003 Support people to improve relationships

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to engage with diverse people to determine relationship issues and support relationship building using a strengths-based approach.

This unit applies to individuals working with individuals and families in community services work. It does not include formal relationship counselling. When combined with other units it may apply to group work.

Enrolment Conditions

See also: Enrolment Conditions on the Cairnmillar eLearn for a copy of the current enrolment conditions.

Attendance

It is an expectation that students will attend all classes*. If you anticipate being absent, please advise your Unit Coordinator via email. Planned absences of several weeks should also be discussed with your Unit Coordinator.

Note: In accordance with national and state recommendations for social distancing due to COVID-19, we consider classes* to include to include synchronous online activities such as tutorials and lectures held in online platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

Online Etiquette

Students are expected to comply with the Cairnmillar Institute's policies and regulations concerning etiquette during online classes, webinars, and in their electronic communications including the TLP008 Student Social Media policy and FSP002 Discrimination Bullying Harassment Policy. All Policies and Procedures can be found here.

Submission of Written Work

Each unit of competency has an assessment workbook to help you complete all of the required tasks and evidence for the unit. You may be required to complete workplace observations, in class activities, in class tests, or other scheduled activity which will be detailed in your unit workbooks. Your teacher will talk through these activities with you on the first day of each term.

You have until the end of your enrolment period to finish and submit all of your workbooks for that term, but many activities are completed in class or at suggested times to help keep you on track with your learning.

All written assessment tasks, unless otherwise instructed by a unit coordinator, must be prepared in Microsoft Word and submitted via the Cairnmillar eLearn. Please refer to the relevant assessment documents within the unit modules on the Cairnmillar eLearn and the Assessment Style Guides and Formatting guide for more information on written assignment requirements.

Referencing & Style Guidelines

The referencing and format for all assignments must be in APA 7 style. Please see APA Style Referencing. See also Assessment Style Guides and Formatting on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Assessment Grades & Records

Final results for each unit will be calculated, then published on the the Cairnmillar eLearn by the relevant results publication date. The marks for your final assessment will be withheld until after the release of your final marks.

Extensions

An extension may be granted for assignments where there is evidence of unexpected disruptions in the student's available work time. Extensions must be applied for and approved in accordance with the Assessment Policy and Procedures and any other published procedures found on the Institute's website.

Applications must be made via the appropriate form before the due date and submitted to the Unit Coordinator. An extension is valid only after it has been approved by the Unit Coordinator.

Information about extensions, special considerations and alternative assessments can be found in your VET Student Handbook. See also the Cairnmillar eLearn for more information on how to apply for an assignment extension.

Special Consideration

Special consideration may be granted in situations where an extension is not possible, such as an exam or in-class work that has been missed. You should first discuss your situation with your Course Coordinator before applying. Please see the Assessment Policy and Procedures found on the Institute website for more information. Please see the Cairnmillar eLearn for how to apply for special consideration.

Word Limit

Students must adhere to the word limits provided in Unit Outlines and Assessment Guides. Please refer to your unit within the Cairnmillar eLearn for information regarding word limits for each assessment task.

Late Submissions

Late assessment submissions may impact on your assessment of competency. Please refer to the assessment criteria on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Samples of Work

Samples of student work may be taken for purposes of course accreditation and benchmarking. In all cases anonymity will be preserved. If you object to your work being copied for this purpose you must advise the Unit Coordinator when submitting assignments.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process where a student may be granted credit or partial credit towards a qualification in recognition of previous study, skills or experience. RPL can only be granted for units prior to the commencement of your course.

See the Cairnmillar eLearn for more information on how to apply for RPL or credit transfer.

Marking Scales & Grade Definitions

You can view Cairnmillar's grade-mark schema on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Academic Integrity

Breaches of academic integrity are serious academic offences. It is the responsibility of all students to access, read, and familiarise themselves with the Institute's Academic Integrity and Student Conduct Policy and Procedures. See the Cairnmillar eLearn for more information about Academic Integrity at Cairnmillar.

All students must complete an Academic Integrity Module and Quiz on the Cairnmillar eLearn prior to beginning classes at Cairnmillar. Assessment marks are withheld if students have not completed the Academic Integrity Module and Quiz. Please see the Cairnmillar eLearn for more details.

Course Progress

The Academic Integrity and Progress Committee (AIPC) is a sub-committee of the Academic Board and is normally chaired by the Dean. The AIPC review incidents of possible plagiarism and other breaches of academic or research integrity, such as collusion or cheating in exams.

The AIPC also support students who have poor academic performance or are at risk of failing a course through an academic progress intervention and Student Progress Agreements. Please see Academic Integrity and Progress Review Hearings on the Cairnmillar eLearn for detailed information.

Policies & Procedures

It is the responsibility of all students to access, read, and familiarise themselves with the Institute's Policies and Procedures. These are published on our Institute's website. Detailed supporting information, guides and forms can be found on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Copyright

There are copyright laws that we need to be aware of and adhere to. Please see the Australian Copyright Council's website for full information on this topic.

Professional Standards

When you study at the Institute you are starting your professional career in counselling. It is important that students act appropriately as representatives of both the Institute and the profession more broadly.

Students are expected to show respect for staff, clients, and other students, and our faculty environment at all times and can expect the same in return. Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other forms of prejudice will not be acceptable.

If you feel unsafe at any time, or have concerns about the professional conduct of any member of the Institute's community, you are encouraged to let a staff member know as soon as possible.

Student Support, Counselling, & Wellbeing

For information regarding Student Counselling, Disability, International Student, Academic & Writing, and any other support services for students, please see the Student Support hub on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Tuition Fees

Information regarding the payment of fees can be obtained from our public website, see Tuition Fees.

Course Withdrawals and Refunds

Each term or teaching period will have a 'withdrawal date' which is the last date at which you can withdraw from a module or unit without academic or financial penalty. If you withdraw prior to the withdrawal date then all fees paid for that module enrolment will be refunded. The withdrawal date is normally the end of the first day of classes or prior to the start of the second class of that unit.

If you withdraw after the withdrawal date then the fees for that enrolment period will not be refunded and an incomplete 'late withdraw fail' result will be recorded against the units. Any future enrolment periods for that course will be withdrawn and invoices will not be levelled for those future enrolments.

Completed units will not be refunded.

Check the Cairnmillar eLearn for specific withdrawal dates.

Termination of Enrolment

Cairnmillar reserves the right to terminate a person's enrolment in a course if the student:

- fails to meet the complete assessment task requirements or breaches the Institute's privacy and ethical conditions
- exceeds the maximum (3 years) or negotiated time for completion of the course, or
- other conditions as specified in the Enrolment Conditions.

See the Cairnmillar eLearn for details on the Institute's Academic Progress procedure.

Graduation

To be eligible to have the relevant qualification awarded, a student must:

- comply with all the Institute Policies and Procedures;
- pay all relevant fees and charges;
- complete all requirements prescribed for the course of study at least at a PASS level;
- submit the relevant intention to graduate form by the due date.

The appropriate awards are given on satisfactory completion of the course. These are presented at a special annual ceremony or given (posted) directly to students for a fee.

For more information see: Graduating from your course on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Library Services

The Library at the Cairnmillar Institute is a specialist library resource, aimed at supporting the work of the Institute, focusing on the curriculum, teaching, research, and clinical requirements of the students, academic staff, clinical staff, and researchers.

Appointments about Library and research skills can be made through the Library.

Please visit the Library page on the Cairnmillar eLearn for more information.

Office 365

All students have access to Office 365 while studying at Cairnmillar. Your Office365 account includes free access to Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook (student email), and much more.

Students also have access to 1TB of OneDrive storage. Find more information on Office 365 on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Student Email

Students are provided with a Cairnmillar student email and are required to check this account regularly while enrolled. See Accessing your Cairnmillar Student Email on the Cairnmillar eLearn.

Computer & Printer Access

Each student has their own personal OneDrive account which can be accessed across any computer. Please see Printing/Copying at Cairnmillar on the Cairnmillar eLearn for more information.