

Domain Title:	COUNSELLING CORE Assess, implement and maintain a safe counselling services and training environment	Unit ID: 917
Level: 6		Credits: 12

Purpose

This unit standard specifies the competencies required to assess, implement and maintain a safe counselling services and training environment. It includes identifying hazards and assessing risks in the counselling services environment; identifying and assigning occupational health and safety responsibilities; developing and implementing actions to ensure the safety and welfare of counsellors; and monitoring OHS in the counselling services environment.

This unit standard is intended for people in counselling services and training.

Special Notes

1. Entry information:
Prerequisite:
 - Unit 908 *Follow workplace safety, security and emergency procedures in a counselling work environment* or demonstrated equivalent knowledge and skills.
2. Glossary of terms:
 - *'Counselling'* refers to individuals and organisations working to provide counselling, training, supervision, research, or other services which use counselling skills, or the management of any of these activities.
 - *'Counselling environment'* refers to an environment in which counselling and learning takes place to develop skills and knowledge for work through a planned and organised counselling services and training process. This may include a workplace, a training centre, a community setting, a virtual counselling services environment or a workplace where counselling services and training are conducted.
 - *'Hazards'* are defined as sources or situations with a potential for harm in terms of human injury, ill health or emotional damage.
 - *'Potential hazards'* refer to possible hazards created for people as a consequence of their specific needs.
 - *'Risk'* is defined as the likelihood and severity of injury or harm.
 - *'Likelihood of injury'* is defined as the chance or probability that an injury will occur; this is influenced by factors such as the exposure of the person to the hazard and the effectiveness and reliability of the existing controls.
 - *'Hierarchy of control'* refers to the preferred priority for risk control, emphasising hazard elimination and, where this is not possible, risk

minimisation by such means as: substitution with a lesser hazard, isolation of the hazard from people at risk, engineering controls, administrative means (e.g., safe work practices, procedures and training) and use of personal protective equipment.

- 'OHS' means Occupational Health and Safety.
3. This unit provides a focus for occupational health and safety in the counselling services and training sector. It covers the OHS responsibilities of trainers/facilitators, supervising counsellors and other parties in the provision of counselling supervision and counselling training services.
 4. Assessment evidence may be collected from a real workplace or an appropriate simulated realistic environment in which counselling services and training are offered.
 5. Regulations and legislation relevant to this unit standard include the following:
 - Labour Act, No. 11 of 2007
 - The Social Security Act 1994
 - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - Children's Status Act, No 6 of 2008
 - SA Children's Act, No. 33 of 1960
 - Child Care and Protection Bill of 2010 (being considered in Parliament)
 - Criminal Procedure Act, No 51 of 1977
 - Criminal Procedures Amendment Act, No 24 of 2003 (Vulnerable witnesses)
 - Combating of Immoral Practices Amendment Act, No. 7 of 2000
 - Namibia National Gender Equality Policy of 1997
 - Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
 - Married Persons Equality Act, No 1 of 1996
 - Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, No 29 of 1998
 - Combating of Rape Act, No 8 of 2000
 - Communal Land reform Act, No. 5 of 2002
 - Maintenance Act, No. 9 of 2003
 - Domestic Violence Act, No. 4 of 2004
 - National Policy on HIV/AIDS
 - Occupational Health and Safety Regulations No. 18, 1997all subsequent amendments.

Quality Assurance Requirements

This unit standard and others within this subfield may be awarded by institutions which meet the accreditation requirements set by the Namibia Qualifications Authority and the Namibia Training Authority and which comply with the national assessment and moderation requirements. Details of specific accreditation requirements and the national assessment arrangements are available from the Namibia Qualifications Authority and the Namibia Training Authority. All approved unit standards, qualifications and national assessment arrangements are available on the Namibia Training Authority website www.nta.com.na.

Elements and Performance Criteria

Element 1: Identify hazards in the counselling services and training environment

Range

Sources of information may include but are not limited to: the Labour Act No. 11 of 2007 and associated regulations, subject and technical specialists including OHS professionals, industry associations, reports of OHS assessments undertaken of the counselling services environment and hazard and injury reports from similar counselling services environments.

Hazards may include but are not limited to: heights; confined spaces; unpredictable human behaviour; accidents; sharp and faulty equipment; potentially dangerous objects; crime.

Specialist advisers may include but are not limited to: counselling specialists; OHS professionals.

Action to reduce risk of clients causing harm to self or others may include but is not limited to: protecting all concerned from harm; ensuring high quality of care that is as respectful of the client's ability to decide issues for themselves as circumstances permit; only taking potentially contentious decisions after appropriate consultation with colleagues, managers and supervisors.

Performance Criteria

- 1.1 Sources of information are researched and accessed to identify common hazards that may occur in the environment in which the counselling services and/or training will take place in line with organisational requirements.
- 1.2 The counselling services environment is inspected prior to use in order to identify hazards in line with organisational requirements.
- 1.3 Any specific OHS needs of counsellors and trainees are identified in line with organisational requirements.
- 1.4 Any potential hazards created by counsellors and trainees with specific needs are identified in line with organisational requirements.
- 1.5 Action is taken to reduce the risk within the scope of individual responsibility in line with organisational policy and procedures and occupational health and safety regulations.
- 1.6 Personal limitations and responsibilities in identifying hazards are recognised and specialist advisers are consulted where appropriate in line with organisational requirements.

Element 2: Assess risks in the counselling services and training environment

Range

Risk may include but is not limited to: falling; claustrophobia; injury; violence; threats; manipulation; abuse; victimisation; death; entry; assault; theft; robbery.

Risk assessment may include but is not limited to: subjective assessment; qualitative assessment; a matrix process developed under the organisation's management system; an already existing system in public documents.

Prioritised for action refers to the sequence in which controls are to be implemented based upon the risk assessment and other considerations.

Performance Criteria

- 2.1 The risk as a result of exposure to any identified hazard is assessed in line with organisational requirements.
- 2.2 The severity of any potential injury, illness or negative or adverse outcome arising from the identified hazard is assessed for risk in line with organisational requirements.
- 2.3 Hazards are prioritised for action in line with organisational requirements.
- 2.4 Personal limitations in assessing risks are recognised and specialist advisers are consulted when appropriate in line with organisational requirements.

Element 3: Identify and assign OHS responsibilities

Range

Various parties may include but are not limited to: counsellor supervisors; community counsellors; trainee counsellors; trainers; program coordinators; workplace managers, supervisors and employees; designated persons with responsibility for OHS; OHS representatives; training and/or assessment organisation.

OHS legal responsibilities may include but are not limited to: requirements under legislation relating to OHS and common law duty of care, legislative requirements for consultation; requirements under hazard-specific and other OHS regulations; legislative requirements for reporting and record keeping related to OHS.

Organisational OHS documentation may relate to: the counselling services and training organisation and/or workplace in which the counselling services and training take place, and may include: policies and procedures; incident reports; emergency procedures; induction information; risk assessment; safety reports.

Appropriate information may include but is not limited to: rights, responsibilities and obligations of the various parties; code of conduct in the counselling services environment; types of potential hazardous events or emergencies and required responses; hazards and their control in the counselling services environment, including the use and maintenance of personal protective equipment; safe access and exits; work procedures; first aid provisions; arrangements in the counselling services environment for the management of OHS, including reporting procedures for hazards, incidents, injuries and faulty equipment; processes to use when injury does occur and policies and procedures, including staff handbooks.

Performance Criteria

- 3.1 Purpose of ensuring compliance with OHS requirements in the counselling services environment is known.
- 3.2 Documentation outlining the OHS legal responsibilities of the various parties in the counselling services environment is accessed, read and explained to staff in line with organisational requirements.

- 3.3 OHS responsibilities of counsellor supervisors and trainers are known and where necessary, strategies are adopted for improving this aspect of professional practice in line with legislative and organisational requirements.
- 3.4 Counsellors are provided with appropriate information related to OHS in line with organisational procedures.
- 3.5 Counsellors are assessed for knowledge of OHS requirements in line with organisational requirements.
- 3.6 Counsellors are supplied with personal protective equipment as required, in line with organisational and legal requirements.
- 3.7 Counsellors are instructed and assessed on the correct use and maintenance of personal protective equipment, as required, in line with organisational and legal requirements.

Element 4: Develop and implement actions to ensure the safety and welfare of counsellors

Range

Supervisory arrangements should take into account the counsellors' levels of knowledge and experience.

Performance Criteria

- 4.1 Risk controls are developed based on the hierarchy of control in line with organisational requirements.
- 4.2 A risk control action plan is identified and accessed or formulated in line with organisational requirements.
- 4.3 Actions within the control and responsibility of the counselling supervisor are implemented in line with organisational requirements.
- 4.4 Outstanding risk control actions are referred to appropriate management for implementation in line with organisational procedures.
- 4.5 Supervisory arrangements appropriate to individuals' levels of knowledge, skill and experience are implemented and monitored to ensure their safety and well-being in line with organisational requirements.

Element 5: Monitor OHS in the counselling services environment

Performance Criteria

- 5.1 Achievement against the risk control action plan is monitored and any issues addressed in line with organisational and legal requirements.
- 5.2 The effectiveness and reliability of existing risk controls are confirmed with relevant parties in line with organisational requirements.
- 5.3 Effective hazard and incident reporting and investigation processes are confirmed on a continuing basis in line with organisational and legal requirements.

Registration Data

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