



# **National Competency Standards and Curricula**

**for**

## **COUNSELING**

### **NVQ LEVEL 4**

## Course Synopsis

This course is designed to introduce students to careers in the field of paraprofessional counseling and enable them to provide support for those with counseling needs, while identifying such in schools and workplaces. It will provide knowledge of basic psychological theories so as to facilitate understanding of emotional needs, and will involve sharing of experience and learning from peers and through case studies, with discussion and development of best practice. Understanding of existing systems in Sri Lanka will also facilitate referrals for more complex cases.

The course will include 6 months On the Job Training when students will be required to work with practitioners in the field.

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>Certificate in Counseling</b>	<b>6 months - 750 hours</b>

### **Job Outlook and Objectives**

Sri Lanka has for long been without sufficient personnel to deal with emotional problems arising from stress and other causes. There is also a crying need for more attention to school students who need support with regard to personal needs as well as guidance with regard to educational requirements and problems arising from social pressures. Meanwhile causes of stress have increased in society because of changing social patterns, work pressures and widespread competition, with family support systems in decline or not able to respond to contemporary needs.

This course is a step towards filling the gap by providing training to potential counselors so that they could provide support in case of need. The course is not intended to produce fully fledged psychological counselors, but students who complete the course will also be able to identify needs they cannot cater to and refer clients accordingly. But they should be able to deal with most situations in which problems of adjustment have arisen, in particular for children and adolescents, while also providing career guidance in the contemporary context through analysis of individual characters and their preferences.

### **Career paths available following completion of the course**

- Psychological service to members of the public including children
- House to House counselor
- Paraprofessionals in counseling
- Volunteers with organizations which carry out care projects
- Community based care
- Community based workers
- Counselors in educational establishments

### **Underpinning knowledge**

Students are required to have a basic understanding of the psychology of a person, human development and the role of Counsellors in paraprofessional settings. An NVQ Level 4 holder will be able to provide basic counselling and identify counselling needs for further referrals.

### **Modules to be covered**

#### **1. Introduction to Psychology**

This module is designed to provide understanding of the basic concepts of Psychology and explain the connection between Psychology and Counseling for front level paraprofessionals.

**2. Introduction to Counseling**

This module is designed to ensure that Para counselors become better informed practitioners in order to enable them to use basic counseling skills for identifying needs and responding to them while engaging in referrals as required.

**3. Development Psychology**

This module is designed to provide knowledge of the life span of human beings, explain the stages of the development of a person at different periods of their life span, and explore the relationship between human behavior and the social environment. Emphasis will be placed on the factors that influence the growth and development of an individual, and the need to develop through the building of human relationships.

**4. Society, Culture and Traditional Healing methods**

This module will recognize society related social problems and psychological counselling needs. This will enable students to analyze clients' problems related to his/her society, and also explain the traditional and Western models of healing.

**5. Psychological Disorders**

This module will allow students to explain psychological challenges faced by individuals and to identify mental health problems and cases for referrals where professional support is needed. This will also develop student skills in working in multi-disciplinary teams to support clients

**6. Communication Skills**

This module is designed to develop basic communication skills in building relationships. Students will be able to ask questions empathetically and in context, develop skills in active listening, recognize the do's and don'ts in counseling, and will be able to understand the underlying problems and follow up systematically. They will also understand the need to maintain notes and records, and ensure that information is preserved as needed on a confidential basis and transmitted when further support is needed.

**7. Community Counseling**

This module will provide the basic knowledge and skills to provide community counseling for traumatized communities in the aftermath of disasters, and also provide the correct medical and social information on Medical Counseling. This will enable students to gain the knowledge to rebuild and empower affected individuals in the community.

**8. School Counseling**

This module will provide students with basic school counseling skills for dealing with school related problems and also to support adolescents facing problems growing up. Students will be able to understand the impact of peer pressure and provide support to overcome these issues. This will allow children to take advantage of the right to education as per their strengths, which will further ensure the promotion of a healthy relationship between the children, parents and teachers.

**9. Introduction to Counseling with different Clients Groups**

This module will identify the different client groups, the various psychological needs of the target group, and will enable students to identify the psychological needs and the appropriate referral systems at community levels.

### **10. Cyber Exploitation & Violence (CEV)**

This module introduces students to Cyber Exploitation and Violence (CEV), which is when someone is bullied, blackmailed, threatened, discriminated, and/or coerced, online. This will enable students to understand the types of exploitation and violence that take place online, and identify counseling needs amongst victims and perpetrators. It will also provide students with knowledge of existing support mechanisms and referrals, including law enforcement authorities. It will also enable students to guide clients on sensible approaches to the online space, and promote a healthy, safe cyber culture.

### **11. Career Skills 2**

This module is compulsory in all NVQ Level 4 courses. It builds on the soft skills developed on NVQ Level 3 courses. This will enable students to enjoy productive employment that requires fulfilling responsibilities. This course develops communicative skills in English and the ability to read and write constructively, and a command of grammar to facilitate this. It also develops cognitive skills with regard to effective work and the ability to work efficiently alone and in a team.

### **12. Field Practice (On-the-Job Training)**

This module provides the required opportunities for students to gain vital “hands- on” experience to deal with problems identified. This placement is scheduled as ‘on the job training’ sessions for a period of 6 months. The practicum will involve working with individuals, families, groups and communities. This unit would also familiarise the participants with the workings of the service delivery system. The participants can select locations in the relevant Divisional Secretariat (DS) divisions or social welfare organisations to accommodate the practical proposition of allowing the participants to attend their on the job tasks required to prepare them for social care. This is a supervised placement for them to learn while working.

Students will be required to maintain diaries during this period and reflect together with peers on work they have done and discuss possible interventions and work towards understanding best practice. They will need to prepare monthly reports and discuss these with supervisors. They will be expected to develop:

- a. Ability to test the knowledge gained and apply the skills required for a social worker
- b. Ability to apply values, principles, techniques and intervention strategies on the basis of best ethical practices in social care
- c. Maintain records for their own social care work and ensure information is systematically preserved as needed on a confidential basis

Module Title	Course Duration
<b>1. Introduction to Psychology</b>	<b>50 Hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b> This module is designed to provide understanding of the basic concepts of Psychology and explain the connection between Psychology and Counseling for front level paraprofessionals.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction to Psychology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is Psychology?</li> <li>- Field of Psychology</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Physiological Base of Human Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brain</li> <li>- Nervous</li> <li>- Endocrine nervous system &amp; Human Behavior</li> <li>- Genes</li> <li>- Organs</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is Learning?</li> <li>- Thorndike's Theory of Learning</li> <li>- Classical Conditioning Theory</li> <li>- Operant Conditioning Theory</li> <li>- Social Learning Theory</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. Motivation &amp; Emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is Motivation?</li> <li>- Motivation cycle</li> <li>- Theory of Motivation</li> <li>- Instinct theory</li> <li>- Drive theory</li> <li>- Theory of Abraham Maslow</li> <li>- Cannon Bard theory</li> <li>- James Lang theory</li> </ul> </li> <li>e. Personality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definition</li> <li>- Theory of Personality : Classical and Modern theories</li> <li>- The Humanistic perspective</li> <li>- Personality as adaptation to life conditions</li> </ul> </li> <li>f. The difference between children under 13, young adults and adults</li> </ul>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games etc.

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>2. Introduction to Counseling</b>	<b>50 Hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b> This module is designed to ensure that Para counselors become better informed practitioners in order to enable them to use basic counseling skills for identifying needs and responding to them while engaging in referrals as required.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What is counseling?</li> <li>b. Aims and Objectives of a Counselor</li> <li>c. Differences between ‘counseling’ and ‘advice’</li> <li>d. Individual Counseling</li> <li>e. Group Counseling</li> <li>f. The importance of listening</li> <li>g. Reaching out to the community in which individuals live</li> </ol>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, role plays , student group project, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games etc.

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>3. Development Psychology</b>	<b>50 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b> This module is designed to provide knowledge of the life span of human beings, explain the stages of the development of a person at different periods of their life span, and explore the relationship between human behavior and the social environment. Emphasis will be placed on the factors that influence the growth and development of an individual, and the need to develop through the building of human relationships.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Stages of Human Development</li> <li>b. Prenatal stage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 stages of Prenatal development</li> <li>- Prenatal environmental influences</li> <li>- Prenatal experiences</li> <li>- Problems in prenatal Development</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Birth and Neonate (Newborn)</li> <li>d. Infancy</li> <li>e. Toddler (Babyhood)</li> <li>f. Early Childhood Development</li> <li>g. Late Childhood development</li> <li>h. Family and parenthood in child development</li> <li>i. Adolescence</li> </ol>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Early adolescence</li> <li>- Late adolescence</li> <li>j. Adulthood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Early adulthood</li> <li>- Middle age adulthood / Adulthood</li> </ul> </li> <li>k. Old age and successful ageing</li> <li>l. Death and dying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Socialization and Personality Development</li> <li>- Factors affecting Personality Development</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games etc.

<b>Module Title :</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>4. Society, Culture and Traditional Healing methods</b>	<b>50 hours</b>

**Objective**  
This module will recognize society related social problems and psychological counselling needs. This will enable students to analyze clients' problems related to his/her society, and also explain the traditional and Western models of healing.

**Competencies**

- a. Introduction to Sri Lankan society
  - Multi-ethnic, Multi-religious , Diverse Society
  - Kinship patterns in traditional and modern families
  - Urban/Rural characteristics and influences in families
  - Social taboos & cultural transformations among families
  - Coping skills of family members
  - Gender issues in family, community and work place
  - Interventions (Spiritual/Community Leaders, Teachers, Traditional healers)
- b. Current issues & social problems in Sri Lanka
  - Alcohol and drug dependence
  - Suicide
  - Peer pressure
  - Competition
  - Gender based violence
  - Disaster related issues (natural and manmade)
  - Poverty
  - Internet based crime
- c. Promoting family and parenting capacity

<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, reflections, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games etc.
<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>

<b>5. Psychological Disorders</b>	<b>50 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b>  This module will allow students to explain psychological challenges faced by individuals and to identify mental health problems and cases for referrals where professional support is needed. This will also develop student skills in working in multi-disciplinary teams to support clients.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction to Abnormal Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Differences between normal and abnormal</li> <li>- Factors affecting abnormal behavior (Biological, Psychological and Social factors)</li> <li>- Anxiety disorders</li> <li>- Somatoform disorders</li> <li>- Stress disorders</li> <li>- Personality disorders</li> <li>- Developmental disorders</li> <li>- Suicide</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games etc.

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>6. Communication Skills</b>	<b>50 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b>  This module is designed to develop basic communication skills in building relationships. Students will be able to ask questions empathetically and in context, develop skills in active listening, recognize the do's and don'ts in counseling, and will be able to understand the underlying problems and follow up systematically. They will also understand the need to maintain notes and records, and ensure that information is preserved as needed on a confidential basis and transmitted when further support is needed.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Helping relationship with client</li> <li>b. Qualities of a counsellor</li> <li>c. Rapport building / welcoming skills</li> <li>d. Attending</li> <li>e. Balancing empathy and empowerment</li> <li>f. Giving respect and encouraging responsibility</li> <li>d. Reflecting Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paraphrasing</li> <li>- Reflecting feeling</li> </ul> </li> <li>g. Reflecting nonverbal message</li> <li>h. Questioning and probing</li> </ol>	

i. Negotiation and advocacy	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, Small group work with case studies and response practice, Mental Health promoting (group project), Field visits, Individual Log book

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>7. Community Counseling</b>	<b>50 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b> This module will provide the basic knowledge and skills to provide community counseling for traumatized communities in the aftermath of disasters, and also provide the correct medical and social information on Medical Counseling. This will enable students to gain the knowledge to rebuild and empower affected individuals in the community.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is community counseling? (2 types: Community Counseling &amp; Medical Counseling)</li> <li>Medical information for community level counselors</li> <li>Emergency responses and community counseling</li> <li>Psychological first aid counseling</li> <li>Basic psychosocial work</li> <li>Palliative care as supportive services at community levels</li> <li>Role and skills of community counseling</li> <li>Levering community strengths to provide support</li> </ol>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games, Demonstration, guided practice, real work situations, etc.

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>8. School Counseling</b>	<b>50 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b> This module will provide students with basic school counseling skills for dealing with school related problems and also to support adolescents facing problems growing up. Students will be able to understand the impact of peer pressure and provide support to overcome these issues. This will allow children to take advantage of the right to education as per their strengths, which will further ensure the promotion of a healthy relationship between the children, parents and teachers.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to School Counseling</li> <li>Identify the different age groups – Preschool, School &amp; Adolescent</li> <li>Home - School - Community – Pupil Liaison approach</li> <li>Problems of School children: conducting awareness programs &amp; appropriate referral services</li> </ol>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance</li> <li>- School dropouts</li> <li>- Children with behavioural problem</li> <li>- Career Guidance &amp; Counselling</li> <li>- Learning Disabilities</li> <li>- Bullying and Peer Pressure</li> <li>- Sexual and Emotional abuse</li> <li>- Psychological and family problems</li> <li>- Children with special needs</li> </ul> <p>e. Skills for adolescents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Counselling for adolescents</li> <li>- Winning confidence</li> <li>- Leadership and Team-work</li> </ul> <p>f. School Mental Health Programme</p> <p>g. Levering support systems for students through teachers and school structures</p>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, sharing of relevant experiences, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games, Demonstration, guided practice, real work situations, etc.

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>9. Introduction to Counseling with different Client Groups</b>	<b>50 hours</b>
<b>Objective</b> This module will identify the different client groups, the various psychological needs of the target group, and will enable students to identify the psychological needs and the appropriate referral systems at community levels.	
<b>Competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction to Counseling and the needs of different client groups</li> <li>b. Counseling for addictions (Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking)</li> <li>c. Counseling for persons abused in domestic and work scenarios</li> <li>d. Grief and Loss Counseling</li> <li>e. Counseling for Clients of Emotional Problems (Anger, guilt)</li> <li>f. Reproductive Health Counseling</li> <li>g. Counseling the elderly</li> </ul>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games ,Demonstration, guided practice, real work situations, etc.

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>10. Cyber Exploitation &amp; Violence (CEV)</b>	<b>50 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b>  This module introduces students to Cyber Exploitation and Violence (CEV), which is when someone is bullied, blackmailed, threatened, discriminated, and/or coerced, online. This will enable students to understand the types of exploitation and violence that take place online, and identify counseling needs amongst victims and perpetrators. It will also provide students with knowledge of existing support mechanisms and referrals, including law enforcement authorities. It will also enable students to guide clients on sensible approaches to the online space, and promote a healthy, safe cyber culture.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction to digital devices and online media</li> <li>b. Guide and assist on sensible use of the internet, including various social media platforms</li> <li>c. Identify types of current exploitation and violence in the online space</li> <li>d. Identify the counseling needs amongst victims and perpetrators</li> <li>e. Identify the positive impact of the internet and online space for personality development</li> <li>f. Identify appropriate support mechanisms and services for referral</li> <li>g. Apply basic counseling skills to promote sensible approaches to the online space, and a healthy, safe cyber culture.</li> <li>h. Use of Information and Communication Technology Act No 27 of 2003</li> </ol>	
<b>Useful teaching methods</b>	Lectures, simulations, student group project, role plays, demonstration, case studies, student presentations, panel discussions, educational games, Demonstration, guided practice, real work situations, etc.

Module Title	Course Duration
<b>11. Career Skills 2</b>	<b>Up to 120 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b>  This module is compulsory in all NVQ Level 4 courses. It builds on the soft skills developed on NVQ Level 3 courses. This will enable students to enjoy productive employment that requires fulfilling responsibilities. This course develops communicative skills in English and the ability to read and write constructively, and a command of grammar to facilitate this. It also develops cognitive skills with regard to effective work and the ability to work efficiently alone and in a team.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies (these follow on competencies prescribed for Career Skills 1, which should be introduced / revised before moving on)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Understand and use simple expressions to communicate</b>  This subject provides the necessary communication skills so that students can express individual ideas, emotions, preferences, frame and answer questions with regard to reasons and methods, explain simple procedures, understand and respond to complex instructions, describe daily routines, conduct and respond to interviews, express ability and inability and describe a process sequentially</li> <li><b>b. Read and write effectively</b>  This subject provides students with the necessary skills to write about how they feel, connect sentences meaningfully, read and carry out instructions, understand/produce arguments, read/write longer texts and summarize them, prepare reports and charts, write Personal and Official Letters and apply for jobs</li> <li><b>c. Use English correctly</b>  This subject is not taught separately but is included in the development of the productive and receptive skills above, since awareness of the structure of the language is necessary for these The development of appropriate vocabulary is also targeted to deploy the above skills</li> <li><b>d. Develop the capacity to think and plan productively</b>  This subject develops cognitive abilities and skills with regard to effective work, with strengthening of the ability to organize information and assess information to solve problems systematically, understand chronological order, develop the concepts of mind and task mapping and apply them, understand governmental structures and coordination mechanisms, collect information and prepare development plans and make chronological charts.</li> <li><b>e. Develop effective working capacity</b>  This subject develops the capacity to work effectively individually and in collaboration with others through presenting themselves positively, understanding the advantages of working together, understanding the characteristics of different people and the impact these have, speaking persuasively and understanding and working with maps</li> <li><b>f. Develop effective working capacity</b>  Students will be able to work with computers so as to enter information swiftly and store it systematically, retrieve it easily, communicate on email, and use social media with due attention to ethics</li> <li><b>g.</b> Students will plan and implement two group projects, one with regard to environmental protection, the other a social service project in response to identified community needs. Students should plan the project systematically, target specific outcomes, report on progress, and evaluate the project on completion.</li> </ol>	

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Course Duration</b>
<b>12. Field Practice (On-the-Job Training)</b>	<b>6 months – 750 hours</b>
<p><b>Objective</b>  This module provides the required opportunities for students to gain vital “hands- on” experience to deal with problems identified. This placement is scheduled as ‘on the job training’ sessions for a period of 6 months. The practicum will involve working with individuals, families, groups and communities. This unit would also familiarise the participants with the workings of the service delivery system. The participants can select locations in the relevant Divisional Secretariat (DS) divisions or social welfare organisations to accommodate the practical proposition of allowing the participants to attend their on the job tasks required to prepare them for social care. This is a supervised placement for them to learn while working.</p>	
<p><b>Competencies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ability to test the knowledge gained and apply the skills required for a social worker</li> <li>b. Ability to apply values, principles, techniques and intervention strategies on the basis of best ethical practices in Social care.</li> <li>c. Maintain records for their own social care work</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Useful teaching methods</b></p>	<p>simulations, student group project, role plays, demonstration, student presentations, panel presentation, demonstration, guided practice, real work situations etc.</p>