

Master of Counselling

Create a positive change in the lives of individuals, families and communities.

This brochure contains information on:

- Master of Counselling
- Graduate Certificate of Counselling

Creative
thinkers
made here.



Creative thinking. It's essential for tackling challenges. Seizing opportunities. For today. But more importantly, tomorrow. And it's not limited to 'creative' roles.

It's essential for all roles. It's not a skill people are born with. So at ECU, we teach it. So you can give your future... superpower.



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ECU is committed to reconciliation and recognises and respects the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, cultures and histories. ECU acknowledges and respects the Noongar people as the traditional custodians of the land on which our campuses are located.

Why study Counselling at ECU Accelerated Online?

More than half of Australia's population is estimated to suffer from a mental health condition at some time in their lives, and many more will seek guidance for issues that impact their wellbeing, such as relationships, bereavement and self-image.

To answer this need, counselling skills are growing in demand — both in the counselling room and outside it. The number of full-time counselling roles continues to grow, and counselling skills are increasingly relevant to other professions, such as nursing, social work, teaching and other community-based roles.

If you're passionate about making a difference to individuals, families and communities, ECU's online Master of Counselling will give you tools that you can apply to a range of settings.

You will develop your capabilities in working with individuals and communities in a way that emphasises cultural awareness and person-centred approaches.

You will learn how to translate and deliver counselling across modalities, as well as key practices to continue your own development.





Accessible, flexible and accelerated

Study anywhere, anytime with our flexible online format delivered in accelerated mode, allowing you to earn your degree and put your skills into practice sooner.



Fully supported

Be supported throughout your study journey by a personal Student Success Advisor and online learning community of like-minded students and friendly, accessible staff.



Job-ready skills, relevant to industry

Our Master of Counselling has been accredited by the Australian Counselling Association (ACA). Gain a wide range of skills, identified and designed by industry experts, to meet the complex and evolving needs of individuals and communities in as little as 24 months, graduating sooner than traditional part-time study options.



ECU Accelerated Online enables you to **fit study around your life and graduate sooner** than traditional part-time study. Delivered in a flexible online format with six study periods a year, you could complete the Master of Counselling in as little as two years, meaning you can take advantage of the growing employment opportunities sooner.

Designed to meet best practice online learning standards using the latest learning technology, the Master of Counselling will give you the **same quality of education and learning outcomes that you would receive if studying on-campus.**

Note:

It is anticipated that students will need to travel for the three-day intensive and placement component of the course. Both components will be held in Australia. The three-day intensive location is yet to be decided, but there will likely be an option of both Perth and an East Coast location. Students may also be required to travel to their nearest capital city to complete the placement component of this degree. Contact one of our Student Enrolment Advisors to discuss your circumstances.





Michael Kay
Master of Counselling Student

“I had always been drawn to working with people in crisis, and the option of counselling and psychotherapy seemed appealing and achievable even as an older student.

I chose ECU’s online Master of Counselling because it was progressive. The course facilitators are friendly, encouraging practitioners with extensive professional experience. When I needed some support, I turned to my course coordinator, who is one of the kindest and most encouraging academics I had ever encountered.

My fellow students are a diverse range of professionals of all ages and make the degree even richer through their contributions.”

Course structure

Masters Units (including the three Graduate Certificate units).

Course codes

Graduate Certificate of Counselling: i93

Master of Counselling: i90

- Foundations of Counselling Practice (Graduate Certificate)
- Theories and Techniques in Counselling (Graduate Certificate)
- The Role of the Counsellor (Graduate Certificate)
- Ethics in Counselling
- Counselling in a Digital World
- Mental Health Counselling
- Trauma Informed Counselling
- Counselling at the Cultural Interface: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Practice
- Child and Adolescent Counselling
- Advanced Theories and Techniques in Counselling
- Professional Field Placement (equivalent of a double-weighted unit)

Have questions?

Book a quick 15-minute chat with a [Student Enrolment Advisor](#).

Schedule a call



About ECU online

Rankings and accreditations

2025 Good Universities Guide

ECU is rated the top WA university for Overall Experience in postgraduate Business and Management.

2024 Times Higher Education (THE) Young Universities Rankings

ECU has ranked in the top 250 universities in the world for Business and Economic studies.



Accelerated and online

ECU Accelerated Online enables you to fit your education around your life by studying one unit at a time in seven-week study periods.

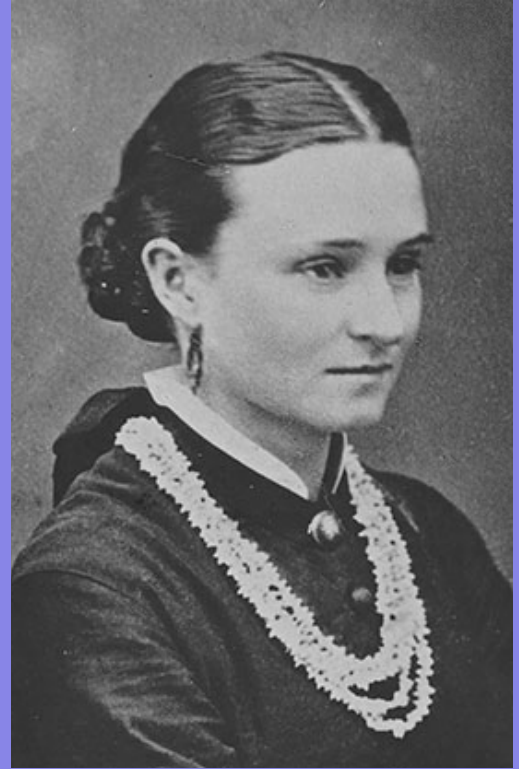
Our courses are:

- Delivered in a flexible online format with six study periods a year, so you can complete your course sooner than traditional part-time study.
- Career relevant which allows you to apply your learnings to your current role and be empowered to take advantage of new opportunities.
- Designed to meet best practice online learning standards using the latest learning technology. The Master of Communication will give you the same quality of education and learning outcomes that you would receive if studying on-campus. Enjoy an award-winning experience at ECU, rated five stars for Postgraduate Overall Experience in the 2023 Good Universities Guide



Our heritage and values

ECU is named after Edith Dircksey Cowan, the first woman to be elected to an Australian Parliament. Her life was dedicated to the belief that education is the key to growth, change and improvement in society.



This drives our purpose to transform lives and enrich society through education and research.

Everything we do at ECU is underpinned by our values of:

Integrity

Being ethical, honest and fair.

Respect

Considering the opinions and values of others.

Rational inquiry

Motivated by evidence and reasoning.

Personal excellence

Demonstrating the highest personal and professional standards.

Courage

Being bold and resolute in pursuit of our goals.

Tips for study

Everyone learns in different ways



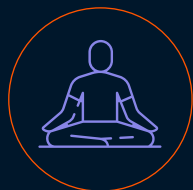
Prepare and plan ahead

Planning ahead is a must, especially during busy weeks. A physical planner can help you to see everything at a glance. To start your studies as prepared as possible, it is useful to bookmark important resources and download your e-texts, web resources, and notebooks in advance.



Tell your friends and family

Inform your friends and family of your commitment to study. When you've told others of your goals, not only will it help you stick to them, but it will also help you to say "no" to the occasional social engagement, if necessary, to complete an assessment.



Take time out when you need it

Research suggests that regular breaks while studying could be the key to creativity and learning new things. Having downtime when you're balancing many commitments is important because it can help you stay focused when you are studying. Whether it's a walk, a chat with a friend or some exercise, take time out when you can to reset and recharge.



Reach out to your Student Success Advisor

You can reach out to your dedicated Student Success Advisor with questions or concerns. Having regular contact with your Success Advisor can help with motivation. If you ever have a question they can't answer, they'll find the best person to help you.

Have questions?

Book a quick 15-minute chat with a [Student Enrolment Advisor](#).

Schedule a call

Your Student Success Advisor



Chirag
Student Success Advisor

Your Student Success Advisor offers non-academic support during your study. Just before you begin your course, one of our Student Success Advisors will be in touch with you via phone, chat or email. They will help plan your study schedule and give you advice while you're studying.

Chirag is one of our most experienced advisors. He answered some frequently asked questions below about what he does:

What are your responsibilities as a Student Success Advisor?

We work as an extra pair of eyes and ears for a student, ensuring they're on track with their assessments, enrolled in the correct units and don't miss any important dates. Most importantly, we are a listening ear and a motivator, helping students get over the finish line when life gets busy.

The most important part of my role is to support a student from the beginning of their study journey until graduation. I like to think of my role as being a "one-stop shop" for students with non-academic questions about their course, from "Where do I find my e-texts?" to "Is it ok for me to take holidays?"

What are the skills that make a great Student Success Advisor?

I think a desire to really help people is essential. Students start their course with a goal and a certain level of motivation, but this fluctuates as they juggle life's responsibilities and their studies. You need to be able to assist students in a variety of situations and calmly advise them while keeping the student's best interest in mind.

Why do you believe your role is important?

Studying online is still a very new experience for most students. Students feel reassured knowing that they have a dedicated advisor who is there with them from the beginning and can assist them with a variety of enquiries.

Masters admission requirements

Admission requirements you'll need to meet for this course:

- Bachelor degree from a country specified in the Admissions Policy (with preference given to degrees relating to 'helping professions') OR Equivalent prior learning including at least five years relevant professional experience.
- A personal statement about motivations to complete the course.
- Submission of academic transcript, two referee reports and an online interview.
English Language requirements (Band 4).

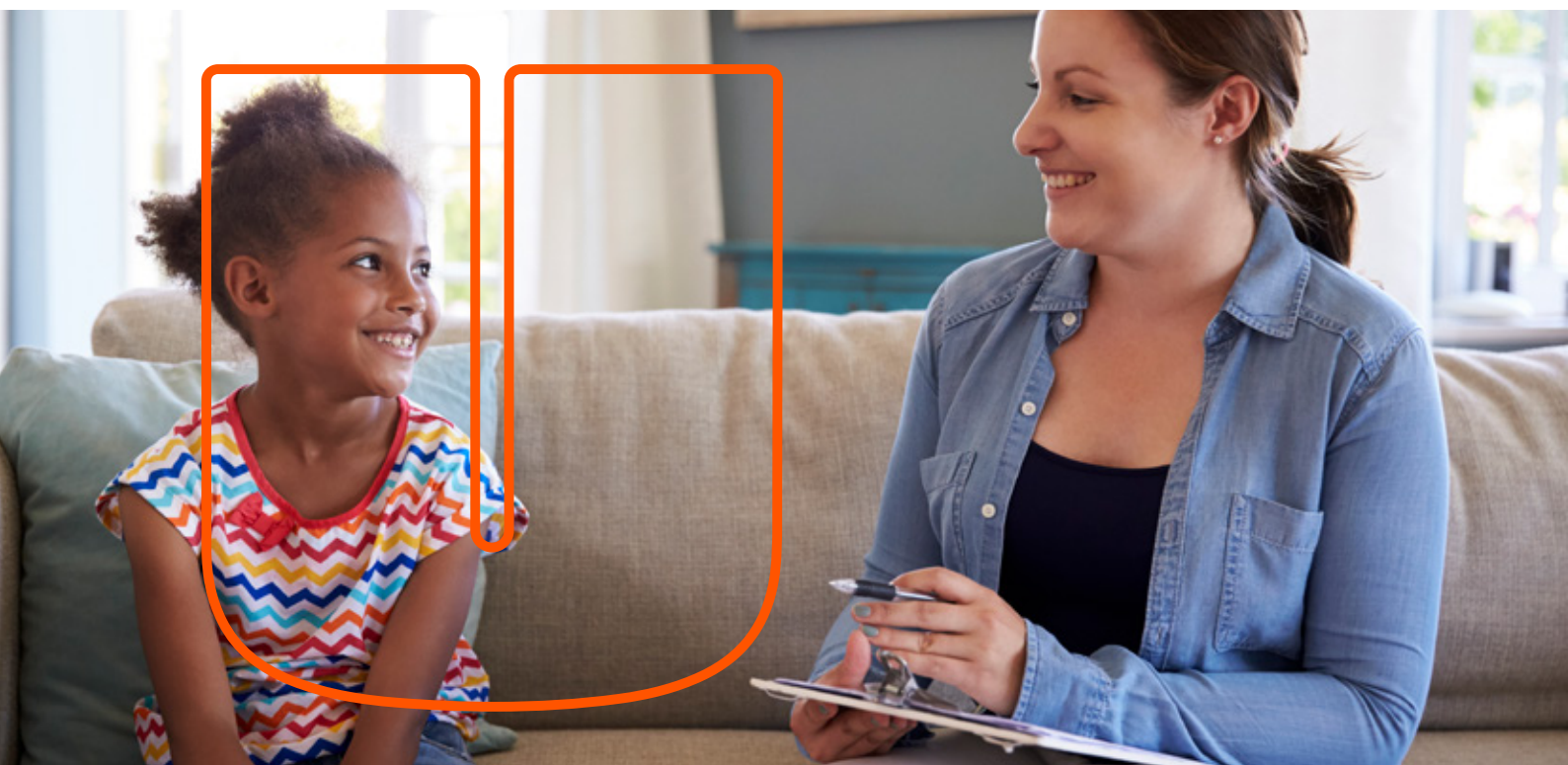
Students looking to enter the Graduate Certificate of Counselling are required to submit documentation covering points one and four. Points two and three are covered during the Graduate Certificate component of the course.

Academic admission requirements (Band 6) may be satisfied through completion of one of the following:

- Bachelor degree; or equivalent prior learning including at least five years relevant professional experience.

English Language requirements (Band 4) may be satisfied through completion of one of the following:

- IELTS Academic Overall band minimum score of 6.5 (no individual band less than 6.0);
- Bachelor degree from a country specified on the English Proficiency Bands page;
- Successfully completed 0.375 EFTSL of study at postgraduate level or higher at an Australian higher education provider (or equivalent);
- Where accepted, equivalent prior learning, including at least five years relevant professional experience; or
- Other tests, courses or programs defined on the English Proficiency Bands page.



Fees and financial assistance

Course name	Total cost per course*
Graduate Certificate of Counselling	\$12,600
Master of Counselling	\$50,400

*2025 student fees are shown and are subject to change.

FEE-HELP

The government loan scheme that applies to most postgraduate courses is known as FEE-HELP. Australian citizens and holders of a Permanent Humanitarian visa who are residing within Australia are eligible to access FEE-HELP. Using this program, you can borrow enough money from the Commonwealth Government to cover your course fees. Once your income reaches a certain level, you will pay the loan back via the tax system.

For more information on fees and the FEE-HELP loan, call us on 1300 707 760.

Have questions?

Book a quick 15-minute chat with a [Student Enrolment Advisor](#).

Schedule a call

Units of study

Foundations of Counselling Practice

Unit description

This unit provides students with an understanding of the theoretical foundations and techniques of the three main schools of counselling; psychodynamic; behavioural; and humanistic. Students will critically review and analyse these approaches and examine how they relate to different types of counselling (individual, couple, family and group) and platforms of delivery (face-to-face, over the phone and digital).

Students will be supported to reflect on their own values, beliefs and interpersonal style in order to explore how these affect the counselling process. There will be an emphasis on working from a person-centred approach and the considerations of culture and identity when working within the Australian context.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically evaluate a range of theoretical counselling approaches across different modalities.
- Analyse the characteristics of effective counsellors with particular emphasis on the core principles of humanistic interventions.
- Reflect on how personal beliefs, values and style influence counselling practice.

Theories and techniques in counselling

Unit description

This unit investigates the diverse fundamentals of counselling theory and explores practical skills for implementation. Students will learn how to engage with clients and consider effective interventions from a range of theoretical backgrounds including; psychodynamic, behavioural, cognitive behavioural, and humanistic.

Students will be introduced to a case-conceptualisation framework and will learn how to consider cases, make assessments, plan treatments and implement a range of evidence-based interventions. Students will also become familiar with the ethical practices set by the counselling profession and begin to formulate their own personal theory of counselling.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Analyse, design and evaluate a range of evidence-based counselling interventions.
- Apply the characteristics and practical skills associated with a person-centred approach to counselling.
- Engage in self-reflection and evaluation to develop awareness of emotional processes and the impact this has on the counselling environment.
- Effectively communicate using professional writing standards of counselling.

The role of the counsellor

Unit description

This unit provides the student with an overview of the role of the counsellor and shows how skills, theory and personal self-awareness contribute to the development of the therapeutic relationship. The unit discusses legal and ethical obligations of the counsellor, highlighting the importance of working within a consistent, yet flexible framework of service delivery.

Students will be presented with a practical and structured approach to counselling, with a focus on the stages of counselling that are common across therapeutic approaches and modalities (face-to-face, phone and digital). The unit emphasises the importance of reflective practice and its relation to ethical considerations within the counselling setting.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically reflect on the legal, ethical and personal roles and responsibilities of the counsellor in a variety of contexts.
- Examine professional and technical therapeutic skills across a range of different modalities.
- Reflect upon the affect of the counsellor's knowledge of theory and personal values and beliefs on the counselling process.
- Use verbal communication techniques to present to a professional audience.

Ethics in Counselling

Unit description

This unit develops understanding of the ethical, legal, and regulatory dimensions of professional counselling practice, with special consideration given to agency context and modality of delivery (face-to-face, phone and digital). Students will examine the ethical foundations of the profession and gain an awareness of the complex moral obligations and dilemmas faced by counsellors as the field expands across the digital realm.

Content in this unit reflects the need for ethical diversity and supports students to appreciate the variety of human experience by recognising and responding to differences in client abilities, needs and culture. Students will reflect upon, and analyse, their values, beliefs, attitudes and biases to understand how these impact on their counselling practice and learn to resolve common ethical dilemmas, and more complex challenges, not addressed by professional codes of conduct.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically examine the ethical, legal and moral obligations of counsellors in a variety of contexts.
- Formulate and justify appropriate responses to complex ethical dilemmas which may arise in counselling practice.
- Critically review the impact of culture and social context factors on the ethical stance of the counsellor and subsequent interventions.
- Examine the role of reflective practice and supervision in ensuring ethical professional practice and ongoing development.

Counselling in a Digital World

Unit description

Counselling treatment as we know it is undergoing a fundamental change, driven by the widespread availability of digital technology and current global events. Now more than ever people are seeking psychological support via online platforms and advancements in communication technologies mean that counsellors can provide these services in unique and far-reaching ways.

In response to trends in the industry, this unit explores how the fundamental theories and techniques of counselling can be translated and adapted for delivery across a range of online modalities. The advantages and strengths of delivering online counselling will be examined, as well as the ethical and legal risks and challenges. This unit also provides students with opportunities to develop their practical counselling skills through online exercises.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically analyse counselling theory and its application in a digital setting.
- Investigate the ethical and legal frameworks relevant to online therapeutic interventions.
- Apply professional and technical skills to design, implement and evaluate counselling interventions across a range of modalities
- Collaborate and communicate with fellow students to practice a range of counselling skills via online platforms.
- Engage in reflective practice to monitor professional functioning and implement strategies for ongoing development

Mental Health Counselling

Unit description

This unit focuses on the incidence of mental health issues and their effects on the individual, family and community. It provides an understanding of common mental health problems and practical strategies to support individuals experiencing issues relating to depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, trauma, grief, loss and psychosis.

Students will be introduced to interventions and tools relevant for mental health assessment, in accordance with their legal and ethical limits. Students will be provided with the knowledge and skills necessary to identify mental health problems, implement effective evidence-based therapeutic interventions, and make appropriate referrals to support individuals experiencing mental health concerns in their recovery journey.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically analyse common mental health issues and appropriate evidence-based interventions for delivery across a range of modalities (face-to-face, phone and digital).
- Critique mental health assessment tools and the relevant policies, procedures and codes of practice for use in different counselling contexts.
- Examine the need for sensitivity and understanding of cultural diversity and cultural contexts of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Engage in self-evaluation and reflective practice in relation to mental health, to monitor professional functioning and implement strategies for ongoing personal development.

Trauma Informed Counselling

Unit description

This unit introduces students to theories, models and neurobiology of trauma-informed counselling. Within the ethical and legal framework of trauma-informed practice, students will learn how to recognise a range of trauma symptoms and explore evidence-based interventions for assessment, planning, treatment and evaluation.

Historical and intergenerational trauma will be introduced, highlighting the value of these concepts in understanding the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. Emphasis is placed on developing the self-awareness of the counsellor, including the personal impact of working with trauma, and the importance of self-advocacy, professional supervision, reflective practice and self-care.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically analyse the impact of trauma and relevant evidence-based interventions, with consideration of legal and ethical codes of practice.
- Examine the political, cultural, social and familial contexts in which trauma occurs and how this influences the individual and their treatment interventions.
- Communicate appropriate skills and techniques to manage trauma presentations and crisis situations, including strategies for self-care.
- Reflect on the personal impact of working with trauma to monitor professional functioning and implement strategies for ongoing development as a professional.

Counselling at the Cultural Interface: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Practice

Unit description

This course provides students with the opportunity to critically reflect on contemporary mental health issues related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultural concepts of health, social and emotional wellbeing. Students will examine the responsibilities of counsellors working at the cultural interface, including their role in providing culturally safe and respectful therapeutic interventions.

Trauma informed practice will also be explored, including the effects of trauma within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and its intergenerational and collective impacts. Reflective practice is a core component of this unit, with students examining how personal perceptions and biases impact on professional practice and how cultural beliefs and values from a Western viewpoint can create barriers that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from engaging with services.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically examine trauma and the long-term effects on individuals and communities, including intergenerational impacts.
- Investigate the relevant ethical and legal codes of practice for counselling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in a range of professional contexts.
- Assess, plan and evaluate appropriate counselling interventions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families or groups using a range of different modalities (face-to-face, phone and digital).

Counselling at the Cultural Interface: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Practice (cont.)

Learning outcomes (cont.)

- Apply the skills and techniques of humanistic counselling and strengths-based frameworks to case conceptualisations.
- Engage in self-evaluation and reflective practice to monitor professional functioning and implement strategies for ongoing personal development.

Child and adolescent counselling

Unit description

This unit introduces students to skills, theories and techniques for working with children and adolescents in a counselling setting. Developmental psychology and an ecological systems perspective for assessment and intervention will be examined, including measures to facilitate effective collaboration with children, families, and their social and cultural networks.

An emphasis on strengths-based, child safe practices will be presented, highlighting the critical importance of delivering culturally and developmentally appropriate interventions in the best interest of the child.

Students will critically review the numerous unique, legal and ethical concerns relating to counselling children and adolescents, including informed consent, types of confidentiality, sharing information with parents, mandatory reporting, subpoenas and delivery of interventions through digital technologies.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically evaluate evidence-based therapeutic approaches and interventions for commonly encountered issues in child and adolescent counselling.
- Examine the unique ethical and legal challenges associated with counselling children and young people in a range of contexts.
- Apply developmental psychology and ecological systems theory to assessment and treatment plans for children of varying ages.
- Communicate the interpersonal skills and techniques required to establish rapport and create an effective therapeutic alliance with children and adolescents.
- Analyse and reflect on personal responses to counselling children and young people; including potential triggers, countertransference and boundaries.

Advanced theories and techniques in counselling

Unit description

This is an advanced unit designed to extend and deepen student knowledge of theory and practical skills for implementation. Building on the first three Master of Counselling units (Foundations of Counselling, Theories and Techniques of Counselling; and The Role of the Counsellor), this unit provides students with opportunities to translate theory into practice through face-to-face simulated sessions.

Students will be required to attend a compulsory three day on-site intensive, where they will practice core micro-skills of counselling, critically reflect on practice and self-evaluate their professional development. It is anticipated that successful completion of this unit will equip students with the skills to transition effectively into their professional field placement.

Advanced theories and techniques in counselling (cont.)

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically analyse clinical and theoretical concepts, and link these to observations about the client and the process of therapy
- Apply the micro-skills of person-centred, humanistic models of practice to counselling interventions.
- Communicate ethical and legal codes of practice to clients.
- Evaluate personal responses to issues explored and analyse how these may impact upon the counsellor and the counselling process.

Please note:

This unit requires students to attend a three day on-site intensive. Students are responsible for paying for their own travel and associated costs.

Professional Field Placement

Unit description

This unit provides an opportunity for the student to receive supervised practice in an agency setting. Aimed at developing the full identity and competence of the counsellor, students will be required to plan, implement and evaluate counselling sessions, collaborate as part of an interprofessional team, engage reflectively in supervision and adhere to agency protocols, policies and procedures.

Students will spend approximately two days a week in an agency setting and will carry a client load allocated by the agency. Students are expected to meet professional standards of punctuality, dependability and responsibility. Placement will consist of 220 hours (minimum of 60 client contact) in which there is 16 hours of supervision.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Critically apply culturally appropriate, evidence-based theories and techniques and interpersonal skills to client presentations, formulations, interventions and evaluations.
- Investigate and employ policies, procedures and codes of practice relevant to the context of placement, agency mandate, and individual needs of the client.
- Communicate in a professional, ethical and culturally responsive manner in all modes of interaction (face-to-face, written, phone and digital).
- Engage in supervision, self-evaluation and reflective practice to monitor professional functioning and implement strategies for ongoing personal development.

Please note:

Placement will consist of 220 hours* (minimum of 60 client contact) in which there is 16 hours of supervision. This unit has all other Masters units as a prerequisite.

The fees for this unit reflect that this is a double-weighted unit. Full-fee paying students will be required to pay for the full cost of this unit upfront. Students with FEE-HELP loans will have the full cost of this unit added to their loan upon Census for the study period that they commence this unit.

In our experience agencies are very likely to request students present proof of Covid-19 Vaccination in order to attend placement. Please speak with your Student Success Advisor if you have any concerns related to this.

*Dependent on individual study path, placement requirements, and unit availability. Please speak to a Student Adviser for more information.

How to apply

When you are ready to begin your postgraduate study journey with ECU Accelerated Online, our Student Enrolment Advisors will be there to help you every step of the way.

Ready to get started? This is what you need to do next.

To apply, you will need the course name and code, as well as scanned, certified copies of your supporting documents.

Master of Counselling

Code i90

Graduate Certificate of Counselling

Code i93

1

Reach out to our Student Enrolment Advisors

Contact our Student Enrolment Advisors before you begin the application process to discuss any questions you may have and ensure you have everything you need to apply. You can call our team on 1300 707 760 or email future.student@studyonline.ecu.edu.au to request a call-back.

2

Gather your documents

Your Student Enrolment Advisor will advise you on what documents you need to accompany your application. Documents for a strong application often include transcripts, certificates to verify previous studies and work experience evidence.

3

Apply through the ECU online application system

Visit our online application system to complete your application. The great news is that you don't have to complete the whole application in one sitting; you can save it and come back later.



Have questions?

Book a quick 15-minute chat with a Student Enrolment Advisor.

Schedule a call

Ready to apply?

Once you've spoken with a Student Enrolment Advisor, you can apply online.

Apply online

Information contained in this brochure was correct at the time of printing, June 2023, and may be subject to change.
CRICOS Provider Code: 00279B.