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## **COSCA VALIDATION OF COURSES COSCA COUNSELLING SKILLS CERTIFICATE**

### **VALIDATION AND REVALIDATION GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

The Application for COSCA Validation of the COSCA Certificate in Counselling Skills can be found on [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk), under Course Validation/ Certificate

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 COSCA Course Validation

COSCA (Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland) seeks to advance all forms of counselling, psychotherapy and the use of counselling skills by setting standards and promoting best practice. To this end, COSCA awards course validation to organisations delivering training courses related to counselling and psychotherapy that meet COSCA's standards and procedures. COSCA recognises the importance of high-quality training as a means of protecting both the public and practitioners.

It is COSCA's intention to help course planners by identifying and clearly stating essential course requirements and standards. This standardisation aims to ensure that essential elements are present while not dictating how these will be covered. Validation procedures provide a framework within which course planners, designing training courses at a professional level, can introduce their own material. Variety and innovation are to be encouraged.

## 1.2 Validation of COSCA's Counselling Skills Certificate

These Guidelines and Procedures are offered to help you to complete the application form for COSCA validation to deliver its Counselling Skills Course. In producing this document, COSCA's intention is to actively encourage and promote the use of counselling skills throughout Scotland and to provide increased access to all those who wish it, of high quality counselling skills training. COSCA is committed to regularly reviewing these Guidelines and Procedures and validated providers are required to abide by any changes made to them.

## 1.3 Course Validation Panel

COSCA's Course Validation Panel decides on all applications for course validation. It holds regular Panel meetings to consider applications for course validation. The Panel aims to function in an open and transparent manner and to work with applicants to build up the quality of training in counselling, counselling skills and counselling supervision throughout Scotland. It is the policy of the Panel to support and assist all applicants to develop quality training in counselling, counselling skills, counselling supervision and specialist courses and this support is extended to you and your application.

Any course and course provider claiming COSCA validation must have completed the full evaluation procedure with the COSCA Course Validation Panel detailed in section B of this document. Course's **must** have been awarded Conditional Initial Validation prior to permission to deliver the course being granted. Should you wish to deliver the course remotely i.e., via fully online real time delivery, you **must** apply for approval for this alongside your validation application. You may choose to delivery your course face to face, via online real time delivery or you may deliver both options, provided that you have been granted Conditional Initial Validation, and remote delivery approval. Please note we do not approve blended delivery of the certificate course. Courses holding Full Validation **must** also apply for approval to deliver the course remotely if they wish to deliver the course online. Application forms and guidance on the process can be found on the COSCA website under, *Validation/Fully Online Real Time Delivery*. Approval forms and any queries relating to the process should be submitted to the COSCA Course Validation Secretary [rozanne@cosca.org.uk](mailto:rozanne@cosca.org.uk)

## 1.4 COSCA Course Validation Guidelines

The Panel also understands that its procedures require continual monitoring, evaluation and refinement. The Panel, therefore, welcomes any written submission suggesting improvements to these validation procedures.

COSCA Validated organisations are required to abide by current and any future updated Guidelines and Procedures for Course Validation and Revalidation

## 1.5 Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework Award (SCQF)

The COSCA Counselling Skills Course has been credit-rated and levelled by the University of the West of Scotland.

The Course has been awarded 40 SCQF credits at SCQF level 8.

## 1.6 Useful Contacts

The COSCA Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) is available to respond to queries or concerns about applications, criteria or procedures – [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)

*Please note that Applicants require to use the current Guidelines and Application Forms for submission for Validation, found on [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk) - 'Validation'/ Certificate'*

All documentation mentioned in these Guidelines and Procedures are available from the COSCA website: [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk).

# A. GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING FOR VALIDATION

## 1. Ethics and Practice

- 1.1 In order to ensure the well-being of all concerned, the validation process requires that the training organisation/agency works within the COSCA Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice ([www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk)). Submissions for course validation therefore will only be considered from Corporate, Full or Companion Organisational members of COSCA and any award of validation will depend on the maintenance of COSCA Organisational Membership.
- 1.2 Only COSCA organisational members and not individuals can apply for Conditional Initial Validation. Information on COSCA organisational membership eligibility criteria, the application process, application forms and submission deadlines can be found on the COSCA website under 'Join COSCA'/ 'Organisational Membership'. For further guidance on organisational membership please contact the COSCA Administrator [christina@cosca.org.uk](mailto:christina@cosca.org.uk)

On completion of the Conditional and Initial Validation stages Full Validation will be awarded if the application is successful (see *Section C; Validation Process*). Organisations will not claim Full COSCA validation of courses until the validation procedure has been successfully completed. Courses can only be delivered remotely if approval has been granted through the online real time delivery application process; (please see *section 1.3 for further guidance on requirements here*). Course publicity material will not mislead candidates and will state clearly the validation status of courses.

- 1.3 In all cases it will be necessary to submit with your membership application a copy of your equal opportunities and/or anti-discriminatory and grievance/complaints policies or statement. The position of the course regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion, equal opportunities and/or anti-discriminatory practices should be clearly stated and adhered to, especially within any course publicity, throughout participant selection and in relation to assessment.
- 1.4 When organisations are applying for Conditional Initial Validation or revalidation, organisations must have robust and fair Complaints and Equal Opportunities Procedures. These must have been submitted with your Organisational Membership application. Conditional Initial Validation, Initial Validation, Full Validation or revalidation will only be awarded where appropriate procedures are in place.
- 1.5 It is the training provider's responsibility to recruit trainers in a fair, equal, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner, preferably with ample advertising and marketing of any vacant posts. COSCA expects appropriate use of measurable recruitment tools such as application forms/questionnaires, personal specifications and interviews. The posts should have job descriptions and the post holders should have a contractual agreement, terms and conditions of employment provided, from the trainer provider or an appropriate recruitment agency and should be covered by adequate and appropriate insurance. COSCA can assist with publicising training vacancies on our website, please contact our Assistant Administrator [danielle@cosca.org.uk](mailto:danielle@cosca.org.uk) if you require this.
- 1.6 In instances where an organisation's structure is such that it does not have a management committee or equivalent but is run by the trainers involved in the delivery of the course, it is essential that the organisation evidence in its application for Conditional Initial Validation or revalidation that it has an external and independent person who will deal with complaints and provides contact details for this person.
- 1.7 There is an expectation that participants will be informed that the training is provided within such policies and statements. This information should be readily available to participants although it may simply be included in the course publicity material, copies of which will be submitted with the application for validation.

## **2. Publicity**

- 2.1 It is required that organisations' publicity includes reference to COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland), the professional validation body for the course being publicised and/or promoted. Course publicity material will not mislead candidates and will state clearly the validation status of courses.

- 2.2 During the assessment stage, and prior to **Full Validation** being awarded, the course provider can use “COSCA Validation applied for” and/ or “awarded COSCA Initial Validation or COSCA Conditional Initial Validation” in publicity material.
- 2.3 All awards to participants on COSCA validated courses are required to use the COSCA logo. Please contact the COSCA Administrator [christina@cosca.org.uk](mailto:christina@cosca.org.uk) to obtain the COSCA logo.

### 3. Trainers

- 3.1 Trainers must be competent to fulfil their responsibility to the course participants in terms of knowledge and experience.

#### 3.2 Accredited Trainer Requirements:

To obtain and maintain Full Validation, the core training team must have at least one COSCA accredited trainer (Certificate or Diploma level), or a trainer who has been awarded Conditional Trainer Accreditation at Certificate or Diploma Level. Courses must also adhere to the trainer/participant ratio (*please see section 4*). When there is more than one trainer involved in the delivery of the course, a team approach to training must be taken.

#### Non-Accredited Trainer Eligibility/ Application Process:

All trainers who do not hold COSCA Trainer Accreditation must be approved to deliver on the course through the non-accredited trainer application process, prior to commencing training on the course.

The application form; '**Non COSCA Accredited Trainers: Application to Deliver Training on a COSCA Validated Course**' can be found on the COSCA website under *Course Validation/General*. Applications should be submitted to the COSCA Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) for review and a decision on approval: [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)

To be eligible for non-accredited trainer approval at Certificate level, applicants must have successfully completed a relevant Certificate and require a period of 1 year from completion of their training in counselling skills to commencement of delivery of training. They must be continuing to practise counselling skills, for instance within a work based or voluntary setting.

#### Non COSCA Accredited Trainers Observation Report of Trainer Competence:

This observation report must be submitted within 6 months of a non-accredited trainer being involved in the delivery of training. The person completing the report must be familiar with the work of the trainer. The non-accredited trainer must also input their own self-assessment and reflective commentary in relation to each of the criteria.

It is suggested that the non-accredited trainer makes use of this feedback to support them in writing their COSCA Trainer Accreditation Application. This report should indicate whether the trainer has a level of competence sufficient to deliver the validated course, and must identify their skills and areas for development – see **Appendix 6**, and the COSCA website under '*Course Validation/General*'

## Applying for COSCA Trainer Accreditation:

In order to meet the terms of the validation guidelines, non-accredited trainers must be prepared to work towards COSCA Trainer Accreditation at Certificate level within 2 years of commencing delivery of the course (even if it is on freelance or sessional basis).

It is recommended that non-accredited trainers join COSCA as a Counsellor Member or Associate Member (unless the trainer is a practising counsellor/psychotherapist, whereby Practitioner Membership or accredited level membership may be more appropriate) in order to have access to COSCA resources and support. Membership applications including information on membership categories, eligibility, application process and application forms, including deadlines for submissions can be found on the COSCA website under *Join COSCA/Individual Membership*. For further queries on individual membership, please contact the COSCA Administrator [christina@cosca.org.uk](mailto:christina@cosca.org.uk)

Application forms and guidance on the trainer accreditation process can be found on the COSCA website under *Accreditation/Trainer*.

COSCA holds bi-annual Trainer Accreditation Workshops via either Zoom or in person meetings. Please see the COSCA website under '*Events*' for workshop dates and further details. COSCA also have the Trainer Accreditation Registration Scheme which offers enhanced support and contact regarding the process. Further information and registration forms can be found on the COSCA Website under *Accreditation/Trainer*. The COSCA Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) can offer further guidance and support towards the trainer accreditation process: [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)

## Revalidation:

When revalidation is applied for (*see section F; Revalidation*), all non-accredited trainers involved in the delivery of the course (even if it is on a freelance or sessional basis) for more than 2 years prior to the revalidation deadline must be COSCA accredited (Certificate or Diploma level). Revalidation is required within 5 years of the organisation's award of Initial Validation.

- 3.3 It is the responsibility of the training provider to quality assure the training delivered by non-accredited trainers.
- 3.4 Evidence needs to be provided on the organisation's trainer development strategy and the provisions for trainer support and supervision.
- 3.5 It is recommended that non-accredited trainers join COSCA as a Counsellor Member or Associate Member (unless the trainer is a practising counsellor/psychotherapist, whereby Practitioner Membership may be more appropriate) in order to have access to COSCA resources and support.
- 3.6: Continued validation requires that an Annual Monitoring Form (***see section D; Full Validation***) must be submitted for each year within the validation period.

Provided that the Non-Accredited Trainers Observation Report of Trainer Competence has already been submitted in the first year of delivery for each non-accredited trainer delivering the course, the training providers must evidence that they are satisfied with the level of competence of non-accredited trainers in the second and subsequent years of their delivery of the course. Examples of how to evidence this include the following:

- ✓ Updated Non-Accredited Trainer Observation Report of Trainer Competence
- ✓ Student feedback on the trainer
- ✓ Annual appraisal of the trainer
- ✓ Performance and competence review

#### **4. Trainer: Participant Ratio**

- 4.1 The optimum ratio of trainer: participant is 1:12.
- 4.2 The minimum number of participants permitted at the beginning of the course is nine.
- 4.3: If the number of participants on courses that have already started drops to less than six the course should be either cancelled or deferred. In the event of low numbers of participant's occurring, the Development Officer Individuals/Courses should be informed as early as possible. If the course is cancelled, all possible help should be given to participants to continue their training with other providers or in a partnership arrangement with the applicant and another COSCA validated training provider.
- 4.4 The upper limit on a course delivered by one trainer is fifteen. When the number of participants with one trainer exceeds 12, training providers need to pay particular attention to the needs of the trainer and the participants.
- 4.5 The maximum number of participants on courses delivered by 2 trainers is 24. Groups of more than 20 will be considered to be 2 discrete groups coming together as a large group for trainer presentations of theory only. In addition, particular attention should be paid to the provision of sufficient space for confidentiality in triad work and the management of large group processes.

#### **5. Course Monitoring**

- 5.1 The application will indicate in some detail how the overall structure, method of delivery and continued appropriateness for the target group is being reviewed.
- 5.2 The application will also indicate how this review will be ongoing and will involve internal and/or external monitoring as well as periodic evaluation.
- 5.3 The application will give the name, contact details and describe the monitoring role of your appointed External Assessor who will be in place within six months of your award of Initial Validation.



## 6. Resources

- 6.1 Applicants for validation will have access to adequate staff, accommodation, library and conditions to conduct the training in comfort and in line with health and safety requirements, delivery methods, and stated policies in relation to equality, diversion and inclusion. The application will include details of the resources available for staff and participants.
- 6.2 It is a requirement of validation that applicants inform COSCA in advance about plans to deliver validated courses in a different venue(s) or engage additional/different trainers. A change of delivery application must be submitted for review and approval by the Course Validation Panel in relation to new venues: see *Section D; Full validation phase*. The COSCA Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk) should be updated regarding the appointment of new trainers and non-accredited trainer approval application forms must be submitted for any new non accredited trainers (see *section 3; Trainers*) It is a requirement to fully inform COSCA about all trainers' activities carried out under the auspices of your organisation using the validation given by COSCA.
- 6.3 Participant's will be informed in writing of the outcome on completion of the Modules and at the end of course. The validation application will detail the methods, procedures and the personnel responsible for communicating outcomes to participants.
- 6.4 Course organisers will ensure that participants have access to adequate advice and guidance on appropriate progression. Advice and guidance services will be delivered within the requirements of ethical codes and policies.
- 6.5 Participant's must be aware of the course's validation status and the COSCA Assessor's role at the start of the course.

## 7. Course Structure and Content

- 7.1 The prescribed requirements with regard to content and delivery are that any validated course will correspond to the Aims, Learning Outcomes, Methods and Activities that have already been presented in the COSCA Certificate in Counselling Skills Course. (Please refer to the publication *COSCA Counselling Skills Handbook for Trainers*.)
- 7.2 The COSCA resource material provides a package defined by **Aims, Learning Outcomes, Range and Methods and Activities** and it offers one way of integrating these elements into a comprehensive training programme, but it is not the only way. How each trainer uses what is in the Handbook for Trainers will make it a course. In that transition from resource material to a course some elements will need to remain fixed and some can be adapted.

The Panel wishes to encourage a wide variety of training courses, particularly those that are designed to respond to the needs of specific groups. It is essential for validation however, that all teaching/learning is consistent with the Aims, Learning Outcomes, Range and Methods and Activities described in the Handbook, includes a

variety of delivery styles to encourage experiential learning, is non-oppressive, anti-discriminatory and enshrines equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion.

- 7.3 The application will include a reflective account with evidence of your understanding of the training process relevant to skills, knowledge and self-awareness.

## **8. Aims, Learning Outcomes, Range and Methods and Activities**

### **8.1 Aims**

The Aims provide the basic structure that the course designers believe is fundamental in any training at counselling skills certificate level. The Aims provide the key principles of the training programme and the skeleton that holds everything else together. The Aims also describe what the trainer is expected to “get across” in each unit by whatever means they choose.

### **8.2 Learning Outcomes**

Learning Outcomes are next in order of priority and they are defined both in terms of underpinning knowledge and competence. This general heading of Learning Outcomes provides the key to assessment. Learning Outcomes provide the participant with a perspective on what the course offers and what they can reasonably be expected to take away from the course.

Given that the resource material itself does not contain any guidance towards selection, the role and value of the assessment process through the Learning Outcomes is a vital element in helping the participants to understand their suitability for this type of training. The participants are also encouraged to use the Learning Outcomes and Competencies to evaluate themselves in their use and understanding of counselling skills, and in their readiness to proceed throughout the training. All the Competencies listed in the course relate directly to skills practice. Units that do not have skills practice do not have a list of Competencies.

Together the Aims and the Learning Outcomes are the core of the training material. The trainer should not change these elements since they are the essential threads that keep the course coherent, comprehensive and transferable.

### **8.3 Range**

Range statements expand upon the key aspects of performance in terms of the breadth of competence required or the contexts in which the work is done.

### **8.4 Methods and Activities**

These offer one way of achieving the Learning Outcomes.

- 8.5 Applicants will provide details of how and when details of the Aims, Learning Outcomes, Range, Methods and Activities are given to participants.

## 9. Assessment

- 9.1 The course assessment process will be both formative and summative, and will be experienced by the participants as supportive.
- 9.2 The formative assessment will be ongoing and based on the Learning Outcomes of the Modules and/or units. It must include the use of observation of practice, feedback and personal reflection and will be linked to individual participant learning.
- 9.3 The summative assessment will be based on the Learning Outcomes of complete Modules and/or units. An assessment framework will be planned and executed based on the Module and/or units Learning Outcomes. The assessment framework will be progressive and cumulative while being consistently stringent and effective.

Evidence of how the framework for summative assessment is planned and executed and how it helps develop an environment where the participant can be self-reflective and self-assessing of their own learning will be submitted with the application.

- 9.4 The application will provide evidence that information and support concerning the process and criteria for assessment will be given to the course participants prior to the course or at the latest before the end of the first session. The application will provide information on who, when and how this will be carried out.

## 10. Timing and Spacing of Modules

- 10.1 Each 30-hour Module of the COSCA 120-hour programme, or equivalent, will be completed over a 3 – 12-week period, i.e., at least one and no more than 4 unit(s) is/are completed in a week. The training schedule will leave a gap of at least 2 weeks between Modules to allow participants to consolidate learning. Where training schedules require delivery outside this recommendation the application will show how the needs of the trainers and participants are to be met within the schedule.
- 10.2 The full 120-hour Certificate programme will normally be a) delivered and b) completed by participants in no more than 3 years.
- 10.3 Participants must have completed Modules 1, 2 and 3 (or equivalent) within the stipulated 3-year period. If applying to do Module 4 after the stipulated 3-year period, participants are required to submit written evidence of continued skills practice to the trainer for consideration.

The written evidence must show that they have continued to practise counselling skills during the extended period and should include a written account of how and where they have practised these since completion of the previous Module or equivalent training. The written summary should demonstrate that the participant is not only using counselling skills, but is also in touch with the relevant under-lying thinking and ethical framework.

- 10.4 Applicants are required to show evidence of how the information on the spacing of the training is communicated to participants.

## 11. Attendance

11.1 Trainer's should inform participants that they should plan for 100% attendance on the course. Participants should commit in advance to this level of attendance. Planned absences should be discussed in advance with the trainer and may or may not be acceptable. As a minimum, it is expected that participants attend 85% of the course. It is expected that participants attend 85% of each Module with no difference between face-to-face delivery and fully online (real time) delivery. Due to the experiential nature of the course and its possible impact on the group, absences are to be avoided.

If, due to circumstances, a unit or units are missed, the trainer can offer and provide at their own discretion, an appropriate way for the participant to catch up and to continue or, if it is possible, to offer them the opportunity to repeat the appropriate units with another group later.

- 11.2 Applicants are required to show evidence of how the information on attendance requirements is communicated to participants. Training Providers should ensure that any decision making and processes in relation to attendance requirements are consistent and aligned with their existing policies and procedures, such as in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and their discontinuation policy.

## 12. Selection

### **Individual Suitability:**

It is recommended that successful applicants will have demonstrated an ability to manage the emotional and academic demands of the course.

From the stage of applying for the course, participants should have an opportunity should they choose, to identify any adjustments or additional support that they may anticipate they may require in relation to the course, affording both the participant and the training provider to prepare and/or apply these as appropriate.

Clarity in communication surrounding the course requirements, content, setting, resources and any other relevant factors such as participant numbers, delivery method, and group arrangements is important here in supporting the participant and training provider to identify any potential difficulties at an early stage.

In these instances, the participant should also be encouraged to identify their own resources and support systems in relation to managing any additional needs and balancing these with the requirements of the course.

Of course needs and difficulties may only emerge as the course progresses, and an open dialogue in relation to the above should be encouraged, and trainers/training providers must work consistently in keeping with equality diversity and inclusion policies, and discontinuation policies.

## Selection Procedure

- 12.1 The selection procedure should produce a clear statement of the course criteria for selection and require all applicants to provide evidence that they meet the selection criteria through the chosen selection method (for instance individual interview, group-based interview, written submission etc).

In all cases, there will be a clear selection policy to avoid discrimination on any ground, including age, disability, gender reassignment, religious or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

There should be an opportunity from the application stage for the participant to identify any additional support needs should the prospective participant choose to, as per the criteria above, affording the training provider the opportunity to prepare and/or apply these as appropriate, and the participant the chance to identify and build upon their own resources and support system in relation to these needs.

- 12.2 Selection to Modules 2 – 4 will require successful completion of preceding Modules. Decisions on selection to Modules 2 – 4 will take account of each participant's proven ability and readiness to proceed.

## 13. Accreditation of Prior Learning and Experience (APL/APEL)

- 13.1 Where prospective participants have completed previous counselling or counselling skills training undertaken not more than 3 years prior to the start of the course, and which meets the Learning Outcomes outlined in the COSCA Modules, APL may be considered.
- 13.2 Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) may be considered where applicants have at least 5 years' experience in the use of counselling skills and can demonstrate achievement of all required Learning Outcomes.
- 13.3 The Assessment of APL and APEL will be carried out by suitably qualified personnel who can demonstrate competence in the assessment of APL and APEL in relation to the COSCA Training.
- 13.4 The application for validation will detail the criteria and procedures for the assessment of awarding APL and APEL and will demonstrate that the system accurately assesses all relevant Learning Outcomes.
- 13.5 All awards of APL/APEL will be communicated in writing to the COSCA Course Validation Secretary: [rozanne@cosca.org.uk](mailto:rozanne@cosca.org.uk) on the Participant Registration Proforma (available from the COSCA website).

## 14. Discontinuation of Participants

14.1 Course providers must have written contractual arrangements with participants to cover the discontinuation of participants from COSCA validated courses.

A statement to this effect should be presented to the Panel in the application for validation.

Discontinuation Policies must be applied consistently in relation to the training providers existing policy on equality, diversity and inclusion and any other relevant and related policies and procedures.

Discontinuation policies must meet the below criteria:

- a clear specification of the grounds for discontinuation on the course must be identified
- it must include clear policy in relation to the following areas: competency and performance, attendance, participant safety and wellbeing, plagiarism including in relation to AI technology, misrepresentation of self/practice, ethical practice, acceptable behaviour/conduct, use of recording devices without permission, online and personal presence and use of social media.
- It must include a clear outline of the sequence of processes that will be followed prior to a decision in relation to discontinuation being reached, from the initial stage at which a concern is raised, including any remedial attempts or additional support that may be offered, through to termination of studies
- Sensitivity must be applied in relation to the timing and communication in relation to the termination of studies whilst ensuring the protection of the needs of the participant trainers and the wider training group.
- It must include information on the support that will be offered to assist the participant to manage this ending.
- It must clearly stipulate who will be informed regarding the above concerns, and at what stage, and must be in keeping with the parameters of any other related policies such as equality, diversity and inclusion policies.

## 15. Participant's Course Evaluation

15.1 COSCA is continually working to develop the quality and value of the services it offers.

To this end, it is required that you bring to the attention of your participants, the Course Evaluation proforma contained in the Participant's handbook and on COSCA's website – see under 'Find a training course/courses/counselling skills course'.

These should be submitted to the Course Validation Secretary: [rozanne@cosca.org.uk](mailto:rozanne@cosca.org.uk)

## 16. Registration of Participants

16.1 Participants Database – please refer to **Appendix 1**  
This is a statement of the information held on COSCA's Participants Database, and how to access the information contained in it.

## 16.2 Registration of Participants

Validated providers are required to complete the **COSCA Registration of Participants proforma** at the end of each Module and return it to the COSCA Course Validation Secretary [rozanne@cosca.org.uk](mailto:rozanne@cosca.org.uk) for the registration of participants. There is no charge for the registration of unsuccessful completion. The cost of registration and certification by COSCA is contained on the proforma (available from the COSCA website). Please note COSCA allows eight weeks from receipt of participant registration forms to register and issue certificates.

## 16.3 Signed Declaration by Trainer

The **COSCA Registration of Participants proforma** requires applicants to make a signed declaration that participants have been assessed to have met all of the Learning Outcomes detailed in the course validated by COSCA.

## 16.4 Sample Letter to Participants regarding the COSCA database/Participant Registration

– please refer to **Appendix 2**

This is a sample letter provider are advised to issue to participants containing information on the storage of information in keeping with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

## 16.5 Sample Letter to Participant Giving Permission for Registration

– please refer to **Appendix 3**

This is a sample form for participants to give permission for their details to be passed to COSCA for storage on the COSCA database.



## 17. Awards

### 17.1 Validation Awards

COSCA is pleased to provide Full Validation course awards to COSCA validated organisations. There is a charge for this award (please see the COSCA website under *About Us/Fees*)

### 17.2 Participant Certification

To facilitate consistency in the recognition of the COSCA Counselling Skills Certificate Course, COSCA certificates of completion must be issued to all participants who have successfully completed Module 4.

Validated providers must apply direct to COSCA for these certificates, giving a minimum of 8 weeks prior notice. There is a charge for certification, please see the COSCA website under *About Us/Fees*. Please note that COSCA does not send certificates direct to participants.

If validated providers wish to issue their own awards in addition to the COSCA certificate, providers are required to use the COSCA logo on these awards. Please contact the COSCA Administrator [christina@cosca.org.uk](mailto:christina@cosca.org.uk) to obtain a copy of the COSCA logo.

## 18. Participant and Trainer Handbooks

### 18.1 Participant and Trainer Handbooks

Organisations validated to provide COSCA's own Courses are required to use the materials produced by COSCA for the respective course. Trainer and Participant Handbooks are available for order from COSCA. Please see the COSCA website under [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk) under *Course Validation* for handbook order forms. Current fees for handbooks can be found on the COSCA website under *About Us/Fees*

Handbook order forms should be submitted to the COSCA Assistant Administrator [Danielle@cosca.org.uk](mailto:Danielle@cosca.org.uk) Please allow at least three weeks from receipt of handbook order forms to handbook issuing.

Should you have approval to deliver the course via fully online (real time) remote delivery you may also order electronic handbooks via the process as above. Electronic handbooks are issued on a licence fee basis per participant/trainer; please see the COSCA website under ***About Us/Fees*** for current licencing fees.

## B PROCEDURES FOR VALIDATION APPLICATION

### 1. Applying to the COSCA Course Validation Panel

- 1.1 Applications for Course Validation, presented on the appropriate validation application form, and completed in line with the Guidelines and Procedures, will be accepted from COSCA Organisational Members.

Applications should be made using the Certificate in Counselling Skills Validation Application Form. This can be found on the COSCA Website under *Course Validation/Certificate*. An electronic copy of complete applications for Counselling Skills validation must be submitted by email to Jenny Bell, Development Officer (Individuals/Courses): [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)

Please note that the minimum font size used in your application is 12. Should you require any guidance on the application process please contact the COSCA Development Officer as above. The Development Officer will undertake a technical review of your application and advise whether the necessary criteria have been included for review by the Panel.

Applications need to be submitted by April 30<sup>th</sup>, August 30<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> at the latest to be reviewed at the next corresponding Course Validation Panel meeting. The application must be submitted alongside the validation application fee before it can be processed; please see the COSCA website under *About Us/Fees* for current fee. The dates of Panel meeting deadlines are available from the COSCA website under *Course Validation/General*

- 1.2 Applications will be submitted to the Panel in good time before the start of the course or advertising of training. Please note that you require to be awarded Conditional Initial Validation prior to permission to deliver the course being granted. The applicant's training schedule will take account of the timing of Panel meetings, the time required to consider applications, the possibility of the Panel wishing to consult with the applicant and the time required to appoint COSCA Assessors (CAs) and arrange visits.
- 1.3 The principal agent acting on behalf of the organisation applying will sign all submitted applications for validation. This signature will be taken as an understanding and acceptance, by the organisation, of the terms and conditions for Course Validation as presented. The person signing will be understood by the Panel as being the **representative of the organisation**, responsible for ensuring that the training continues to meet the required standards for on-going validation.

## C. VALIDATION PROCESS

### 1. Application Phase

- 1.1 Applications need to be submitted by April 30<sup>th</sup>, August 30<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> at the latest to be reviewed at the next corresponding Course Validation Panel meeting. The dates of Panel meetings are available from the COSCA website under *Course Validation*.
- 1.2 When considering an application for validation, the Panel will meet privately and will follow the procedures outlined. The Panel has 3 options:
- **To award Initial Validation**
  - **To award Conditional Initial Validation**, during which additional information or action will be required before Initial Validation can be awarded. Conditional Initial Validation *must be* awarded prior to permitted being granted to deliver the course
  - **Not to award Initial or Conditional Initial Validation** - a complete re-submission will be required.
- 1.3 The decision of the Panel will be communicated in writing to the applicant by COSCA's Chief Executive.

### 2. Initial Validation Phase

- 2.1 **Initial** Validation means that the Panel has agreed that the course **as it is outlined on paper** provides sufficient assurance of quality and appropriate safeguards that it can be endorsed by the Panel to run with **one** cohort of participants. **Conditional Initial** Validation means that the Panel has agreed that additional information or action will be required before Initial Validation can be awarded.
- 2.2 During the period of Initial Validation a COSCA Assessor (CA) will be appointed by the Panel to check that the endorsement of the Panel is justified. The CA is the appointment of the Panel and their working contract is with the Panel. The cost of the assessment visit is included in the validation application fee.
- 2.3 The major part of the CA's work will be outlined in a report that will be submitted to the Panel.
- 2.4 The process of COSCA Assessment:

#### **COSCA Assessor's report:**

- 2.5 The COSCA Development Officer will advise the applicant when the CA has been appointed. The CA will contact the applicant to arrange the details of assessment.

As a general guideline it will be necessary for the CA to attend a course session. During the assessment visit the CA will look to observe course delivery and to liaise with the course coordinator, trainers, participants, and other relevant parties involved with the course to gather evidence on course delivery as required for the completion of the CA report.

the course to gather evidence on course delivery as required for the completion of the CA report.

The CA will visit the course during Module 1 (*wherever possible, or as at early a stage as is practical to engage with course delivery*) and subsequent to this will submit a report to the Panel for review. The CA will not share this report directly with the applicant however they will offer verbal feedback on areas of good practice and any areas for concern or development.

The CA will assess the course to check consistency between the paper application and actual delivery. A template of the COSCA Assessors report can be found on the COSCA website under *Course Validation/ Certificate/ COSCA Assessor's Report Form*, which offers an overview on the validation criteria which will be assessed by the CA.

Based on the CA's report, the Panel can request the applicant to supply information on the course delivery and decide if further visits may be required by the CA. The CA would normally only visit the delivery of Modules 2 and 3 if there was a need for specific evidence or because of a specific request of the applicant.

The CA may be remitted to specifically address areas which the Panel feels need closer scrutiny, clearer explanation or minor development. These areas will be outlined in the letter sent out to applicants informing them of the Panel's decision and require to be resolved before the course can move to receiving Full Validation status. Failure to address issues to the Panel's satisfaction could mean that Initial Validation is withdrawn from the course.

- 2.6 Issues of concern that are likely to affect the validation status of the course will be communicated by the CA to the Panel during the period of Initial Validation. The Panel will require the applicant to resolve such issues before the course can move to Full Validation. Failure to address issues to the Panel's satisfaction could mean that all validation is withdrawn from the course.
- 2.7 In general, the CA will both support and monitor the delivery of the course to ensure that the Aims and Learning Outcomes are being met through the methods of delivery. Furthermore, it will be the role of the CA to ensure that the methods of participant assessment are fair, accurate and appropriate to the course.
- 2.8 The applicant for validation will inform the course participants of the existence and identity of the CA.
- 2.9 The role of the CA is part of the supportive and enabling function of the Panel. This means that the COSCA assessment task is not simply one of monitoring but also contributing to the guarantee of good practice. In effect the CA monitors and supports the course trainers in fulfilling the Aims and Learning Outcomes of the course in ways that are appropriate to counselling and the use of counselling skills and respectful of all participants. The facilitators of the training should, therefore expect to conduct a dialogue with the CA and be given verbal feedback on the delivery of the training.
- 2.10 The costs of COSCA assessment of your course are included in the validation fee.

## Modules 2 and 3 Reports:

At the end of both Module 2 and Module 3 an Initial Validation Report must be submitted separately by the course for both Modules 2 and 3. These Reports should be submitted electronically to the COSCA Development officer Individuals/Courses [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk) not later than 3 weeks following the completion date of each Module.

The Development Officer will undertake a technical review of the reports to ensure the necessary criteria has been included before submitting to the Panel for review. Should you require any guidance on the reports please contact the Development Officer as above. The proforma for the above Report is in **Appendix 4** – see **Completion of Modules 2 and 3 proforma (Appendix – 4)**.

A separate proforma should be used to report on each Module. Please clearly tick the box on the proforma to indicate whether the Report being submitted is for Module 2 or Module 3. The evidence required to be submitted with this form can be in the form of written, taped and/or videoed feedback. These reports **must** be written in an exploratory, reflective style and must capture a sufficient sense of the course's delivery over these modules. The Panel can then request further information if required and/or arrange for the CA to carry out a further assessment visit should the information required not have been satisfactorily evidenced.

## Course Completion Report:

On completion of Module 4, applicants must submit the **Course Completion Report (Appendix 5)**. This must provide a reflective overview of the course and evidence that participants have met the required standard for successful completion of the course prior to being awarded the Certificate.

This proforma must be submitted electronically to the COSCA Development Officer Individuals/Courses [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk) no later than 3 weeks following the completion of the course. The Development Officer will undertake a technical review of the application to confirm that the necessary criteria have been included before submitting to the Panel for review. For any further guidance on the Course Completion Report please contact the Development Officer as above.

The Course Completion Report must contain:

- Trainers Report: This must be written by a trainer(s) within the courses core delivery team. It must be written in a reflective exploratory style and document the course's delivery and development, areas of good practice, challenges that may have been encountered in relation to course development and delivery, learning points and improvements or changes to be made for future cohorts of participants. It must include reference to the trainers and participants experiences and feedback on course delivery.
- Participant assignments: a sample of final assignments to cover the range of ability among participants (minimum 3 / maximum 5) and any that were unsuccessfully completed.
- Participant Evaluations: A minimum of three and maximum of five
- External Assessor's report (as below)

## **External Assessor's Report:**

Applicants will require to engage, within six months of the award of Initial Validation, an External Assessor who must be different from the COSCA Assessor, and independent of the organisation, in order to provide the evidence required in this proforma. Impartiality should be observed when an organisation recruits an External Assessor. It should be noted that your External Assessor is a different appointment to the COSCA Assessor and you are advised to appoint someone into the role who has a good understanding of COSCA training standards, is experienced and preferably qualified in both training and counselling practice and who is independent of your organisation. The organisation's External Assessor is required to visit the COSCA validated course to observe and assess its delivery and to speak to the course participants to offer a view as to how the course is being delivered.

COSCA designate responsibility for appointing an external assessor to applicants. COSCA do not require to approve external assessor appointments however applicants must ensure to appoint a suitable assessor, as per the criteria above. Please see the COSCA website under *Course Validation/Certificate/Guide to Appointment of an External Assessor*, for guidance on appointing a suitable external assessor.

During the initial validation phase, the role of the External Assessor is to produce a written report (400-500 words) to confirm that the participants for whom certificates will be required from COSCA have met the learning outcomes. This report should be produced at the end of the course, not after each module, and should form part of the Course Completion Report (*Appendix 5*). External assessors may use their own preferred reporting template or they may use the reporting form which can be found on the COSCA website under *Course Validation/ General/A Guide for the External Assessor's Report'*

The External Assessor's role is one of verification and evaluation. The External Assessor needs to be able to remain objective and they are required to act as a moderator i.e., if there is a dispute regarding decisions, assigning marks and awards, etc. The appointment and costs of the organisation's External Assessor are met by the validated organisation and not COSCA.

An External assessor must regularly engage with and visit the course, and it is a requirement that an external assessor's report is submitted at least every third annual monitoring year, with courses annual monitoring submission. A recent external assessor's report is also required to be submitted with revalidation applications. Please see section's '*D; Full Validation*' and section '*F; Revalidation*' for further guidance on requirements here.

## **Decision on Full Validation:**

- The CVP meets to make a decision on the validation status of the course, upon receipt of the COSCA Assessors report, Course Completion Report and confirmation that at least one trainer within the core delivery team holds a COSCA Trainer Accreditation award (Certificate or Diploma level).
  
- Formal notification of the outcome of the COSCA Assessment, and COSCA's decision on validation, will be made to the applicant in writing and prior to the awarding of certification.

## D. FULL VALIDATION PHASE

- 1.1 The period of Initial Validation concludes with the consideration of the COSCA Assessor's (CA) final report and the review of the Course Completion Report. If appropriate, the requirements of Conditional Initial Validation also require to be met.
- 1.2 Although it is expected that a course will move from Initial Validation to Full Validation following consideration of the CA's report, **the decision to award Full Validation rests with the Panel** and cannot be assumed until that decision has been made.
- 1.3 During the period of Full Validation the course provider must:
- Continue in Organisational Membership of COSCA
  - Ensure that at least one member of the core training team is COSCA Trainer Accredited and that all other trainers are working towards COSCA accreditation as a trainer within 2 years of being approved as a non-accredited trainer
  - Continue to comply with the guidelines and procedures for validation
  - Submit COSCA Annual Monitoring Form by the 31<sup>st</sup> of October each year
  - Submit the necessary non COSCA Accredited Trainers Observation Report of Trainer Competence
  - Submit the necessary Application to Delivery Training on as COSCA Validated Course by non COSCA Accredited Trainers
  - Submit COSCA Validation Application to Change Existing Delivery for review by the Panel if any changes are made regarding delivery, setting or course content.
  - Submit the Online Real Time Delivery approval form if the course is to be delivered remotely
  - Demonstrate that the trainers are actively engaged in self-development and networking with other course providers by attendance at COSCA's Annual Trainers Event or similar.
  - Engage an External Assessor to produce a report that should be submitted with the Annual Monitoring Form. Courses
- 1.4 **COSCA Validation Application to Change Existing Delivery**

In the Full Validation phase the applicant is required to inform the Panel of any changes to the delivery, setting, content or personnel associated with the course. This is to be carried out in the first instance by completing the '**COSCA Validation Application to Change Existing Delivery**' which can be found on the COSCA website under *Course Validation/General*.

This form should be submitted to the COSCA Development Officer [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk) who will undertake a technical review of the form to check the necessary criteria has been included, before submitting to the Panel for review and a decision on approval.

Changes to the training team do not need to be reported through the 'Change to Existing Delivery' system, however all new trainers must be approved by submitting a 'non-accredited trainer approval form' (as per *section 3.2*) to the COSCA Development Officer as above (unless the trainer is already COSCA Trainer Accredited at Certificate or Diploma level). The above changes must also be documented in the Annual Monitoring Form.

Changes to the training team do not need to be reported through the 'Change to Existing Delivery' system, however all new trainers must be approved by submitting a 'non-accredited trainer approval form' (as per *section 3.2*) to the COSCA Development Officer as above (unless the trainer is already COSCA Trainer Accredited at Certificate or Diploma level). The above changes must also be documented in the Annual Monitoring Form.

### 1.5 **Annual Monitoring Form:**

The completed Annual Monitoring Form requires to be returned to the COSCA office by October the 31<sup>st</sup> each year. It can be found on the COSCA website under *Validation/General*. It is the organisation/agency's responsibility to ensure that the Annual Monitoring Form is forwarded to the COSCA office.

The COSCA Assistant Administrator will send a reminder regarding the annual monitoring submission one month prior to the deadline. Annual monitoring forms should be submitted to the COSCA Administrative Assistant: [danielle@cosca.org.uk](mailto:danielle@cosca.org.uk)

During the first year of Full Validation the annual monitoring form will be reviewed by the Course Validation Panel who will issue feedback and any recommendations in response to the submission. It is a requirement of continued Validation that during the period of Full Validation, course providers complete this proforma and return it to COSCA by the end of October on an annual basis. This proforma provides COSCA with a means to ensure that the standards achieved at the point of Full Validation are maintained during its entire period. It also gives course providers a valuable opportunity to monitor their own activities and outcomes.

The proforma will be used as an important basis of awarding revalidation. The length of the report is variable, but it is essential that all parts of the proforma are completed. It must be completed in a reflective, exploratory style and must be accompanied by an internal or external assessors report, or both may be submitted.

At least every third annual monitoring year a recent external assessor's report must be submitted alongside the annual monitoring form. The external assessor may use their own reporting template, or use the COSCA pro-forma which offers guidance on the criteria the COSCA Development Officer/ Course Validation Panel will be looking to verify. Please see the COSCA website under '*Validation/General*' for the document '*Guide to External Assessor Report to COSCA*'.

If submitting an internal assessor's report (*i.e., written by an individual with significant involvement in the courses delivery*), the report must have a reflective and exploratory style and clearly identify the course, its trainer's and its participant's experience of its delivery over the monitoring period. It must document any developments and changes to the course over the monitoring period.

The length of the report is variable, but it is essential that all parts of the form are completed, and that sufficient information is provided. The COSCA Development Officer Individuals/Courses will indicate if any further information may be required, or the Course Validation Panel in the first year of annual monitoring. For further guidance on annual monitoring requirements please contact the COSCA Development Officer Individuals/Courses [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)



## E. NON-ACHIEVEMENT OF FULL VALIDATION

- 1.1 The Panel, acting on behalf of COSCA, reserves the right to withhold, refuse or rescind validation at any point in the process if it considers that there exists in the training programme factors which undermine COSCA's commitment to quality or if it believes that the position or standing of COSCA is being compromised by continuing to endorse the training.
- 1.2 At the end of a period of Initial Validation, where the Panel considers that the course has not provided satisfactory justification for being awarded the status of Full Validation, the course may be awarded Initial Validation status for a second period to allow a second assessment to be carried out. Alternatively, **Conditional Full Validation** can be awarded where specific requirement(s) are still outstanding. **Full Validation** may be awarded at a further Panel meeting after the Panel has reconsidered the application in light of the second assessment report.
- 1.3 Initial Validation status will not be awarded on more than two consecutive occasions and failure to gain Full Validation status on a second attempt automatically means that Initial Validation is rescinded and cannot be reconsidered for a minimum period of one year from the date of the Panel's decision.

## F. Revalidation

- 1.1 Validation will run for 5 years from the date of the Panel's awarding of Initial Validation and at any time during that time the Panel can ask a COSCA Assessor (CA) to visit the course. After 5 years the applicant must apply for revalidation. These forms can be downloaded from the COSCA website under *Course Validation/General*.

The COSCA Development Officer Individuals/Courses will send a reminder to course six months prior to their revalidation deadline. Revalidation applications should be submitted to the COSCA Development Officer [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk) who will undertake a technical check of the application to ensure the necessary criteria has been included before submitting to the Panel for review. Any queries regarding the revalidation process should be directed to the Development Officer as above.

Applications for re-approval for fully online (real time) delivery of the course should be submitted separately to the Course Validation Secretary: [rozanne@cosca.org.uk](mailto:rozanne@cosca.org.uk). The renewal application can be found on COSCA's website under 'Course validation/blended and fully online (real time) delivery'.

- 1.2 When revalidation is applied for, all trainers involved in the delivery of the course for more than 2 years prior to the revalidation deadline must be COSCA Trainer Accredited.
- 1.3 The revalidation process acknowledges that the course had already been validated by COSCA. It does not set out to repeat the Initial Validation process. Its main aim is to check that the course still meets the standards of the validation system.
- 1.4 The primary assessment instrument will be the Annual Monitoring Forms that have been submitted annually during the previous period of validation.
- 1.5 The form requires you to report on any changes and developments in relation to the course's organisational structure, delivery, delivery team and other personnel including administrative and support staff, administrative and evaluative procedures (internal and external) and location.

The revalidation application will offer an opportunity to report on any changes and developments in relation to the course over the revalidation period, and to ensure that the standards for validation continue to be met.

It **must** include a recent external assessor's report (*see section 2; External Assessors Report*) documenting development and changes over the revalidation period and specifying recommendations for revalidation, **and** an internal evaluation report documenting development and changes over the last 2 years of the revalidation period.

### Internal Evaluation Report:

This must be written in a reflective and exploratory style by an individual with significant involvement in the course's delivery, and must report and reflect upon the following criteria:

- The organisations evaluating procedures for monitoring the course

- The nature and impact of any changes to the course; for instance, with regards to structure, content, delivery, learning outcomes and assessment methods
- Key achievements and strengths of the course; for instance, with regards to increased participant interest and take up of the course, participant retention levels, positive feedback from participants, positive publicity, published research, achievements of participants/former participants, employment secured by former participants within the counselling skills field and achievements of its trainers,
- Interpersonal dynamics of the delivery team and staff culture
- Quality assurance issues and challenges experienced by the course and how the difficulties identified were resolved
- Critical feedback from course participants and how it was responded to
- The ways in which the course learning outcomes are monitored and reliably assessed
- Any other areas identified for development
- Any other relevant information regarding the course

Please see the revalidation application form for specific criteria for internal and external reports.

1.6 At the revalidation submission stage the following process will be carried out.

➤ **Factual verification stage:**

Factual verification by COSCA's Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) and Chair of the Panel to establish the completeness of the application and to identify any gaps to be filled.

➤ **Evaluative reading stage:**

The application will be evaluated by the Panel. If the course is approved by the Panel, a letter of revalidation to the applicant is passed by the Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) to the Chief Executive for signing.

➤ **Assessment stage:**

If the course does not meet the criteria a quality assurance visit is carried out by a COSCA Assessor. The CA reports directly to the Development Officer (Individuals/Courses). Based on the CA's report, the Panel reaches a decision.

If the course is approved at this point a letter of revalidation is passed by the Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) to the Chief Executive for signing. If the course is not approved at this stage requirements are set and the course is given a time frame within which the requirements need to be met.

After the deadline for meeting the requirements has passed, the Panel reaches a decision and, via the Development Officer (Individuals/Courses), passes a letter to this effect to the Chief Executive for signing.

When the application has been checked and approved at the factual and evaluative stages, there is no need for a quality assurance visit.

- 1.7 In considering an application for revalidation, COSCA reserves the right to seek further information or clarification. COSCA also reserves the right to carry out a quality assurance visit at the applicant's expense.

## **G. FEES FOR COURSE VALIDATION**

- 1.1 The fee for COSCA Validation requires to be submitted with the application and payment requires to be made prior to the Panel meeting. Please see the COSCA website under *About Us/Fees* for current fee.

## **H. APPEALS**

- 1.1 In the case of an applicant wishing to submit an appeal against the Panel's decision, COSCA's Appeals Procedure must be followed, within three months of the decision being made. The COSCA Appeals Procedure can be found on the COSCA website under *Complaints*.

## APPENDIX 1- PARTICIPANTS DATABASE

Information on participants involved in all COSCA validated courses is held on COSCA's participant database. The procedure for entering participant information onto this database varies depending on the nature of the validated course. Information on participants involved in:

- COSCA's Counselling Skills Course is entered at the end of each of the four Modules of the course
- COSCA validated counselling diploma courses is entered at the completion of the diploma course
- other COSCA validated courses is entered at the completion of the course.

Identifying data is held electronically and includes the participant's name, date of birth, home or work address, training provider, successful or unsuccessful completion of the training, if given APL/APEL, dates of commencement/completion of the course, month/year of issue of award by COSCA, work place.

All information kept on participants involved in COSCA validated courses is held by COSCA, in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

COSCA validated course providers can request access to information relating to whether a participant has started a COSCA validated course, which parts, if any, have been completed and which organisation or agency provided the training.

Participants whose names are listed on the database can have access to their own information. Information will only be given to other parties with the written permission of the participant on whom information is requested.

All requests for information must be made in writing either by email or letter, using the relevant **Participant Information Request Proforma** ([www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk)).

Access to the information on participant databases kept by COSCA is accessible through the Administrator at the COSCA Office.

## APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE COSCA DATABASE/PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION

Dear (Participant's name)

As you aware, *name of provider's course* is professionally validated by COSCA (Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland).

### Registration

As part of the validation system, COSCA maintains a register of all participants enrolled on COSCA validated courses. The register contains:

- The name and either home/work address of the participant
- Date of Birth
- Name of the provider of the training
- Dates of commencement and completion of the Modules/Course
- Confirmation of successful or unsuccessful completion of the Modules/Course
- Whether APL/APEL is applied
- Month and Year of issue of Certificate by COSCA
- Workplace

In order to maintain this register, *name of provider* with participants' permission, passes these details on to COSCA.

### Certification

On successful completion of the course, each registered participant is awarded a COSCA Certificate. The COSCA Certificate confirms the professional award included in the programme.

These certificates are issued direct to *name of provider* who passes them on to the participants.

In order to ensure that you are registered with COSCA, please complete the attached permission form. You are entitled to withhold this permission. In this case, however, you would not be able to receive the relevant COSCA Certificate on completion of your studies.

Yours sincerely

Etc.

## APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS GIVING PERMISSION FOR REGISTRATION

### Please tick relevant box

I hereby give permission for ***name of provider*** to pass the following details on to COSCA, Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland.

- My forename and surname and home or work address
- Date of Birth
- Name of the provider of the training I am enrolled on
- Dates of commencement and completion of the training
- My successful or unsuccessful completion of the training
- If given APL/APEL
- Month and year of issue of Certificate by COSCA
- Workplace

I do not give permission for ***name of provider*** to pass on the above details to COSCA.

You are entitled to withhold this permission. In this case, however, you would not be able to receive the relevant COSCA Certificate on completion of your studies.

**Signed:**

**Print Name:**

**Date:**

Please return this form to: ***name of provider***

# COSCA COUNSELLING SKILLS CERTIFICATE

## APPENDIX 4. INITIAL VALIDATION REPORT COMPLETION OF MODULES 2 AND 3

*Please indicate where additional information is included and clearly mark all additional paperwork with the relevant Section number. Please ensure that this report is written in a reflective and exploratory style. Please see Section C; Validation Process of the Certificate level validation guideline for further guidance on completing the report.*

The form must be submitted electronically to the COSCA Development Officer (Individuals/Courses); [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk) Any evidence submitted with this form can be in the form of written, electronic, and/or recorded feedback.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Name of Applicant  
Applying for Validation:**

**Method of Delivery of Course  
e.g face to face fully online (real time):**

**Address**

**Post Code**

**Telephone No.**

**Email address**

**Contact Person  
within the Organisation**

**Date of Submission of this Report**

**Initial Validation Report for: Please ✓ appropriate Module.**

*Module 2*

*Module 3*

**Name of COSCA Assessor for Module 1**



## 1. PERSONNEL

- 1.1 Please describe any changes to the personnel associated with the delivery of the course since the last Module. Please include Application Form(s) to Deliver Training and **Appendix 6: COSCA Non-Accredited Trainers – Report of Trainer’s Competencies**, for new or non-Accredited Trainers. Please also include information on any staff absences and how these were covered. Please see *Section 3; Trainers* of the Certificate validation guidelines for further guidance on requirements

## 2. TRAINERS

- 2.1 Please describe arrangements for trainers’ self-development, attendance at COSCA trainer events (or similar) and progress towards COSCA Trainer Accreditation Please see ‘*Section 3; Trainers*’ within the Certificate validation guidelines for further guidance on requirements.

### 3. TRAINER: PARTICIPANT RATIO

3.1 Please detail the ratio of trainer: participant on this Module and, where applicable, comment on the provision for dealing with larger or unusually small groups, especially those of more than 15 participants. Please see '*Section 4; Trainers; Participants Ratio*' within the Certificate validation guidelines for further guidance on requirements.

### 4. COURSE MONITORING

4.1 Please describe how this Module has been evaluated and include the evaluation report. Please see *Section 5* of the Certificate level validation guidelines for further guidance on requirements.

## 5. RESOURCES

5.1 Please comment on the accommodation for the delivery of this Module. Were resources allocated in line with the courses stated policies in relation to equality, diversion and inclusion and the courses delivery method(s)? Please see *Section 6*; of the Certificate level validation guidelines for further information on requirements here.

## 6. COURSE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

6.1 Please provide a statement that you have delivered this Module in keeping with the stated Aims and Learning Outcomes. Please see *Section 7* of the Certificate level validation guidelines for further details on requirements.

6.2 Please comment on when and how participants were given detailed information about the Aims, Learning Outcomes, Range, Methods and Activities of this Module. Please see *Section 8* of the Certificate validation guidelines for further guidance on requirements.

6.3 Please detail any additions made to the stated Aims, Learning Outcomes, Ranges, Methods and Activities of this Module, and comment on how decisions on changes were agreed and the effect of these changes.

## 7. ASSESSMENT

7.1 Describe how and when the assessment framework for this Module was communicated to participants. Please see *Section 9* of the Certificate level validation guidelines for further guidance on requirements.

7.2

Please confirm that the formative and summative assessments for this Module were carried out in accordance with the Guidelines.

7.3

Please describe how the assessment process for this Module supported self- reflection and self-assessment in your participant group.

7.4 Please describe how ongoing feedback was provided to participants on this Module.

## 8. TIMING AND SPACING

8.1 Please evidence how the guidance on the timing and spacing of this Module was followed. Please see *Section 10* of the Certificate level validation guidelines for further information on requirements here.



## 9. ATTENDANCE

9.1 Please describe the level of attendance of participants during the delivery of this Module and describe any arrangements made to make up for absences. Please see *Section 11* of the Certificate level validation guidelines for further information on requirements here

## 10. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Please provide any additional reflection on the delivery of this Module, for instance documenting areas of good practice, challenges experienced, and any other areas for improvements or development based on learning from the delivery of modules 2/3.

### ASSESSOR

**Signature:**

**Name (Please print):**

**Position in Organisation:**

**Date:**



**COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)**

**16 Melville Terrace | Stirling | FK8 2NE**

**t: 01786 475 140 f: 01786 446 207 e:**

**[info@cosca.org.uk](mailto:info@cosca.org.uk) w: [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk)**

## COSCA COUNSELLING SKILLS CERTIFICATE

### APPENDIX 5: INITIAL VALIDATION COURSE COMPLETION REPORT

*Please indicate where additional information is included and clearly mark all additional paperwork with the relevant Section number.*

*Please ensure that the report is written in a reflective and exploratory style, and is completed by an individual with significant involvement in the course's delivery. It should be submitted electronically to the COSCA Development Officer Individuals/Courses no later than 3 weeks following the courses completion: [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)*

GENERAL INFORMATION
<b>Name of Applicant Applying for Validation</b>
<b>Method of Delivery of Course e.g face to face fully online (real time):</b>
<b>Address</b>
<b>Post Code</b>
<b>Telephone No.</b>
<b>Email address</b>
<b>Contact Person within the Organisation</b>
<b>Date of Submission of this Report</b>

<b>Name of COSCA Assessors involved in Modules 1 – 3</b>
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## APPENDIX 5- INITIAL VALIDATION COURSE COMPLETION REPORT- EXPLANATORY NOTES

- ❑ The Course Validation Panel require a reflective and exploratory insight into the development and delivery of the course. This must document areas of good practice, any challenges that may have been encountered in relation to course delivery and development, and any other areas for improvements or development based on learning from the first cohort of participants. Trainers and participants experiences and feedback in relation to course delivery must be reflected upon. Please see *Section C* of the Certificate level validation guidelines for further information on requirements.
- ❑ The learning outcomes in the four Modules of the course are to be assessed by course trainers.
- ❑ At the end of Module 4, course trainers must ensure that the participants for whom Certificates are requested from COSCA have achieved the knowledge, skills and self-awareness contained in the learning outcomes of the entire course.
- ❑ You are required to submit the information requested below in order that the Course Validation Panel can make an informed decision that the assessment framework is in place that warrants the request for Certificates.

### 1. Report from the Course Trainer(s)

Please submit a report by the course trainer(s) (400 – 500 words) which provides a reflective and exploratory overview of the course, documenting areas of good practice, challenges that may have been encountered in relation to course development and delivery, learning points and improvements or changes to be made for future cohorts of participants. This must include reference to the trainers/training teams experience of delivering the course and participants experience and feedback in relation to course delivery.

### 2. Written Assignments

Please enclose a sample of the final assignments to cover the range of ability among participants (minimum 3 / maximum 5) and any that were unsuccessfully completed. Please note that these should not identify participants.

### 3. Participant Evaluation Form

Please include a sample of Participant Evaluation Forms for Module 4 (minimum 3 / maximum 5).

### 4. Organisation's External Assessor's Report

Please submit a report (400 – 500 words) from the External Assessor appointed by your organisation (not the COSCA appointed Assessor). This report should confirm that the participants for whom Certificates will be required from COSCA have met the learning outcomes. Please see *Section C; Validation Process* of the Certificate validation guidelines for further information on requirements here.

To be completed by the named person within the organisation applying for Validation.
I confirm that the participants for whom we request COSCA Certificates for successful completion of the course have met the learning outcomes of the course.
<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Name (Please print):</b>
<b>Organisation and Position within Organisation:</b>
<b>Date</b>



**COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)**  
**16 Melville Terrace | Stirling | FK8 2NE t: 01786 475**  
**140 f: 01786 446 207 e: [info@cosca.org.uk](mailto:info@cosca.org.uk)**  
[www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk)

## APPENDIX 6- NON-ACCREDITED TRAINERS OBSERVATION REPORT OF TRAINER COMPETENCE

- This form must be completed for all non COSCA Accredited Trainers during the period covered by this Annual Monitoring Form within six months of their appointment as a non-accredited trainer. It should be submitted electronically to the COSCA Development Officer Individuals/Courses [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)
- All non COSCA Accredited Trainers must be observed for the purposes of completing this form.
- The observer must comment on the trainer's performance and qualities and the extent to which they meet each competency and the non-accredited trainer must offer their own comments in relation to their feedback.

Details of Non-Accredited Trainer
Name
Address
Telephone Number
Email Address

Details of Validated Provider
Name of Provider
Method of Delivery of Course e.g face to face fully online (real time):
Address
Name of Contact Person and Designation
Telephone Number
Email Address

## APPENDIX 6- NON-ACCREDITED TRAINERS OBSERVATION REPORT OF TRAINER COMPETENCE

A reflective report about the ability and competence of all non-accredited trainers who are, or who have been, involved in the delivery of COSCA validated training is required on an annual basis to meet COSCA Validation criteria.

You are invited to provide a commentary of:

- Personal style and abilities of trainer
- Skill mix and level of competence
- Areas of strength
- Developmental points
- Progress towards COSCA Trainer Accreditation

A template is provided for the report if required, but it does not have to be used.

The non-accredited trainer must also input their own self-assessment and reflective commentary in relation to each of the criteria. It is suggested that the non-accredited trainer makes use of this feedback to support them in writing their COSCA Trainer Accreditation Application. This report must be submitted to the COSCA Development Officer (Individuals/Courses) for review: [jenny@cosca.org.uk](mailto:jenny@cosca.org.uk)

You may find it helpful to refer to the list of necessary skills and competencies on the subsequent page. The person completing the report must be familiar with the work of the trainer. Where appropriate, more than one person can contribute to the information.

Please note that in order to comply with COSCA validation and revalidation criteria and requirements, all non-accredited trainers who have been involved in the delivery of the course for *more than 2 years prior to the revalidation deadline* must be COSCA accredited at the time of applying for revalidation.

Provided that the Non-Accredited Trainers Observation Report of Trainer Competence has already been submitted in the first year of delivery for each non-accredited trainer delivering the course, the training providers must evidence that they are satisfied with the level of competence of non-accredited trainers in the second and subsequent years of their delivery of the course. Examples of how to evidence this include the following:

- ✓ Updated Non-Accredited Trainer Observation Report of Trainer Competence
- ✓ Student feedback on the trainer
- ✓ Annual appraisal of the trainer
- ✓ Performance and competence review

## TRAINER SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES:

- Ensures that participants feel safe and supported
- Models the counselling approach in interactions with students
- Presents and explains the aims and outcomes of the activity/exercise
- Presents information clearly and accurately
- Uses a variety of training methods to enhance the learning opportunities
- When using visual aids makes them legible and accurate
- Sequences and paces information to suit the group and individual learners
- Uses language appropriate to the level of understanding within the group
- Provides additional and summary information, on request
- Adjusts presentations in response to learners needs
- Deals sensitively and appropriately with distractions and interruptions
- Uses appropriate questioning and information seeking techniques
- Creates a climate where learners can comfortably ask questions and make comments
- Supports learners in learning new skills
- Appropriately challenges excluding or discriminatory behaviour or language
- Gives appropriate feedback in a positive and helpful manner
- Facilitates participants in self-assessment
- Welcomes and uses feedback about self from participants and others involved in training delivery
- Where fully online (real-time time) delivery is approved, demonstrates an ability to make appropriate use of the selected technology training delivery



<b>NAME OF NON-ACCREDITED TRAINER:</b> <b>NAME OF OBSERVER:</b>		<b>DATE OF REPORT:</b>
<b>Personal style &amp; Abilities</b>	<b>Observer Feedback</b>	
	<b>Non-Accredited Trainer Comments</b>	
<b>Skill mix and level of competence</b>	<b>Observer Feedback</b>	
	<b>Non-Accredited Trainer Comments</b>	

<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Observer Feedback:</b>
	<b>Non-Accredited Trainer Comments:</b>
<b>Developmental points/areas including progress towards COSCA Accreditation</b>	<b>Observer Feedback:</b>
	<b>Non-Accredited Trainer Comments:</b>

**Name of non-  
accredited  
trainer and  
observer  
completing the  
form**

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**Signatures of non-accredited trainer and observer:**

**Date:**