

REVISED SENIOR ACCREDITED SNCPS (Acc.) category

**GUIDANCE FOR :
CURRENT SENIOR ACCREDITED REGISTRANTS SNCPS (Acc.)**

**THIS GUIDANCE IS FOR APPLICANTS WHO DO NOT HAVE A
LEVEL 7 OR EQUIVALENT COUNSELLING OR PSYCHOTHERAPY
QUALIFICATION**



This document outlines the Application Guidance during the SCoPEd transition period for applicants who hold current (i.e. pre-SCoPEd) Senior Accredited Registrant SNCPS (Acc.) membership and do not have a Level 7 or equivalent counselling or psychotherapy qualification.

The Revised SNCPS (Acc.) category of Registrant is an option for members who wish to demonstrate advanced competence in counselling practice above and beyond the requirements for our Accredited Professional Registrant PNCPS (Acc.) membership category. It is aligned with SCoPEd Column C.

Before you attempt to submit your application, please read the following guidance carefully. If you do not submit the specific information required, as per this guidance, your application may be delayed or returned for further clarification.

ELIGIBILITY

1. You must hold current (i.e. pre-SCoPEd) Senior Accredited Registrant SNCPS (Acc.) membership with NCPS as a counsellor and / or psychotherapist and be in practice
2. Have experienced a minimum of 160 hours of personal therapy and/or personal development work relevant to practice
3. Have an ongoing contract for counselling/psychotherapy supervision for a minimum of 1 ½ hours per month.

GUIDANCE

160 hours of personal therapy and / or personal development work relevant to practice.

All applicants must provide evidence of a minimum of 160 hours of personal therapy and / or personal development work relevant to practice.

These hours can be counted from the start of your training.

‘Personal development work’ can include any activities that you have undertaken where you specifically intended to experience personal development / self awareness relevant to practice. It differs from CPD in that it focuses on personal development and self awareness rather than specifically professional development. Personal development work can take many forms, including:

Individual personal therapy, group therapy, experiential groups, personal development groups and psycho-educational activities – this list is not exhaustive. Assessors will need to see how the activities you include are explicitly relevant to clinical practice.

Supervision, whether individual or in groups, cannot be used to meet this requirement.

CPD can only be used if it clearly contained a personal, as well as professional, development aspect and has been applied to the applicant’s clinical practice.

Please show the approximate dates over which the personal therapy and / or personal development work took place using the [Professional Development Log](#).

Please also submit evidence in the form of a brief written statement of a total of 500 words (max) containing a description of how this work contributed to your self awareness (250 words max) and how this was applied to your clinical work overall (250 words max).

Personal written statement (8250 words max)

Your personal statement is to enable you to evidence the skills and competencies required for this membership category. Each section references the SCoPEd Column C competencies for guidance. Each section also indicates a maximum word count to help guide you as to the expected depth/breadth of your answer.

Section 1 Work-based experiences (500 words max)

For this section, applicants need to provide:

A summary of a piece of counselling or psychotherapy-related experience that involved taking an active role in the applicant's professional community.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competence:

1.13.C *Ability to take an active role within the professional community locally and nationally. Be able to communicate effectively with other professionals in sharing information, advice, instruction and professional opinion.*

It is acceptable for this experience to have been gained locally or nationally. This should demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively with other professionals in sharing information, advice, instruction or professional opinion. Having a letter, article or paper published would be a good example.

Section 2 Psychopathology and risk (1000 words max)

For this section, applicants need to provide:

A summary of experience gained in training, practice and / or CPD to evidence:

- Competence in conceptualising and / or formulating ways of working with clients with chronic and / or enduring mental health conditions
- Understanding of the language and discourses around diagnosis, psychopathology and mental disorders
- The ability to make complex judgements about high-risk clients and take appropriate action when required.

This experience could have been gained via:

- Training – if so, please include evidence of the relevant course(s) / qualification(s) and successful completion thereof
- Practice – if so, please include a description of the clinical work involved and specify by whom it was supervised
- CPD – if so, please include evidence of the relevant courses and successful completion thereof.

Experience gained from working in a team is acceptable in addition to your own individual practice. Our assessors are aware that some applicants will not subscribe to a medical model. They will be looking for an understanding of the language commonly used about mental health and psychopathology around these issues and an ability to support clients who may have received a diagnosis and / or mental health treatment. They will also look for an ability to manage the complex professional and ethical judgements that can arise in this area and to assess the risks that may be involved.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competences:

2.1.C Ability to conceptualise and (or) formulate ways of working with clients or patients with chronic and enduring mental health conditions.

2.5.C Ability to understand the language and discourses around diagnosis, psychopathology and mental disorders.

2.8.C Ability to make complex judgements about ongoing work with high-risk clients or patients and take appropriate action as needed.

Section 3 Discriminatory practices and power differentials (1000 words max)

For this section, applicants need to provide:

A statement showing understanding of the harm caused by discriminatory practices and of how to address power differentials in therapeutic practice.

Assessors will expect to see evidence of how relevant theory and research in the areas of diversity and equality support the applicant's practice. An example from the applicant's own clinical experience is likely to be valuable here.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competences:

3.10.C Ability to communicate about the harm caused by discriminatory practices and aim to reduce insensitivity to power differentials within therapeutic service provision, training and supervisory contexts.

4.11.C Ability to integrate relevant theory and research in the areas of diversity and equality into clinical practice.

Section 4 Audit and evaluation (250 words max)

For this section, applicants need to provide:

A brief statement demonstrating knowledge of, and ability to use audit and evaluation methodologies to contribute to improving the process and outcomes of therapy.

Example of relevant methodologies include:

- Outcome Tools such as CORE-10
- Process Tools such as SRS
- Demographic / Service Audit Tools such as the CORE Assessment form.

Alternatively, some practitioners use structured review sessions in which particular questions are explored with the client.

The key is to focus on what you do in your work that relates to evaluating how effective it is and why this is important for you and for the client.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competence:

4.15.C Ability to utilise audit and evaluation methodologies to contribute to improving the process and outcomes of therapy.

Section 5 Unconscious or 'out of awareness' processes (2000 words max)

For this section, applicants need to provide:

- A written statement showing understanding of relevant theory that explains how the therapeutic process can be influenced and shaped by 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' processes in both the client and counsellor / psychotherapist.
- Case material demonstrating:
 - Application of this understanding in your counselling / psychotherapy practice.
 - Competence in working with ruptures or difficulties within the therapeutic relationship using awareness of 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' processes.

Our assessors are aware that some applicants will not subscribe to a theoretical approach which refers to 'unconscious' processes. Where these applicants are concerned, they will be looking for an understanding of how emotions, sensations and experiences may be outside a person's immediate awareness but can nevertheless influence their behaviour and the therapeutic relationship and process. Theory concerning how an individual may deny or avoid accepting truths about themselves which do not fit with their current self concept is likely to be relevant here.

Carl Rogers's 19 propositions, especially propositions 10, 11, 13 and 14 are examples, as is Gestalt Theory's view of interruptions or blocks to awareness and the concept of 'unfinished business'. Ideas found in Cognitive Therapy and Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) concerning automatic thoughts and irrational beliefs may also be useful.

Assessors will look for evidence, with examples from practice, of an ability to manage 'ruptures or difficulties' the cause of which was not immediately clear or obvious, such as offering premature interpretations, failure to understand a client's experience, empathic lapses, inappropriate questioning or unskillful challenging.

They will also look for examples of how the applicant's own self awareness is brought into their client work when working at depth. It is understood that theoretical approaches and traditions vary in how they view this subject. Concepts such as 'the therapist's use of self', 'countertransference' or 'working at relational depth' are likely to be relevant here. Making use of the applicant's own experiences and perceptions to meet clients in a two-way, interpersonal and exploratory dialogue would be a good example.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competences:

3.21.C *Ability to work therapeutically with ruptures, or difficulties, within the therapeutic relationship, using awareness of, and skills associated with, 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' processing.*

4.9.C *Ability to understand the nature and purpose of therapy to evaluate and use theory to conceptualise how 'unconscious' or 'out of awareness' processes in both client and therapist, may shape perceptions and experiences and influence the therapeutic process.*

Section 6 Personal philosophy of counselling (1000 words max excluding referencing and bibliography).

For this section, applicants need to provide:

- A written account of their personal philosophy of counselling or psychotherapy showing an ability to practise at the equivalent of postgraduate level. It should contain evidence of some critical awareness of the history of ideas, the cultural context, philosophical basis, social and political theories that inform and influence their personal approach to practice.

NCPS is aware that academic achievement is not in itself a guarantee of competence as an ethically-sound practitioner. We nevertheless regard the ability to think and write about therapeutic practice in a way comparable to that expected at postgraduate level as a valuable hallmark of an experienced practitioner at an advanced stage in their career. We recognise that practitioners with years of experience of supervised practice are likely to have, to some extent, formulated their own approach to their work which goes beyond the formal theoretical approach in which they were trained.

This written account is likely to include:

- A description and evaluation of the beliefs, values and principles that guide the applicant's approach to their work
- An explanation of the kind of therapeutic relationship that they seek to establish with their clients and of their understanding of how the therapeutic process unfolds
- A critical discussion of ethical considerations, cultural competence and ongoing professional development.

Assessors will look for evidence of criticality, analysis, synthesis and evaluation in the way that the applicant writes about their work.

They will hope to see examples of some or all of:

- Specific experience with a range of clients and with the applicant's supervisor(s)
- Critically reflective observation – reflecting on the applicant's experience of client work and evaluating their successes and challenges as a practitioner
- Abstract conceptualisation – the development and application of their own understanding of theory, including critical discussion and analysis of complex concepts
- Active experimentation – using insights gained from experience, considering and appraising alternative ways of working and carrying out work independently and with some originality.

Appropriate referencing and a bibliography should be present.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competence:

4.2.C *Ability to critically appraise the history of psychological ideas, the cultural context, and relevant social and political theories to inform and evaluate ongoing practice.*

Section 7

EITHER

Option 1 (2500 words max)

A **Critical Review** of a counselling / psychotherapy research paper that is of particular interest in the applicant's practice.

To include:

- An evaluative summary of the nature, aims and outcome of the research
- Identification of the strength and limitations of the study
- Description of the application of the relevant findings in the applicant's counselling/ psychotherapy practice
- A clear reference for the chosen research paper.

OR

Option 2 (2500 words max)

A **Research Proposal** demonstrating:

- An understanding of the field of counselling research
- Ability to identify a viable and original research question
- Ability to evaluate the contribution of existing research literature to this question
- Some understanding of how to conduct research, in particular the ethical implications of the proposed research.

Guidance

Option 1 – Critical Review of a counselling / psychotherapy research paper (2500 words max)

Applicants choosing this option should choose a paper from the selected resources which can be found [here](#).

Applicants are advised to choose a paper that is relevant to an aspect of their current practice. Considering the following questions is likely to be helpful:

- Is it an empirical report, a theoretical study, a sociological or political account, a historical overview, etc? All or some of these?
- Does it follow a particular school of thought?
- What is its theoretical basis?
- What definitions does it use?
- What is its general methodological approach? What methods are used?
- What kinds of data does it use to back up its argument?
- What conclusions does it come to?

The Review should have an introduction, body and conclusion.

The **introduction** should include:

- A brief summary of the purpose, nature and outcomes of the research
- The parameters of the research – who or what it includes and excludes. For example, many studies will recruit participants that have a particular score on a rating scale often excluding those at the more severe end of the scale.

The **main body** of the Review could include relevant paragraphs on:

- Principal questions that are being asked
- Aims of the research including how the research paper agrees with or challenges classic texts
- Outcome of the research versus alternative theoretical or ideological viewpoints, including differing theoretical assumptions, differing political outlooks and other conflicts
- General conclusions that are being drawn – do the numbers ‘add up’ e.g. how many participants were there at the start of a study and how many at the end? What are the limitations of this study?
- Methodologies and methods in use. Assessors will expect to see the ability to evaluate the methodology used.

The **conclusion** should include:

- An evaluation of how well the stated aims of the research have been met
- How reliable this ‘evidence’ is when it is situated in the broader field
- What has been learnt personally as a result of carrying out this critique.

All sources cited in the critique (including the research paper itself) should be cited in a reference list that conforms to a conventional referencing system e.g. Harvard, APA.
E.g. Adapted from Shrensky, Ruth (2002) Writing a Literature Review.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competence:

4.16.C *Ability to successfully complete a substantial empirical research project, systematic review or systematic case study informed by wide current understandings of therapeutic practice.*

Option 2 – Research Proposal (2500 words max)

Applicants choosing this option should produce a Proposal which clearly defines a topic that they would be interested in studying were they to undertake a substantial empirical research project, systematic review or systematic case study.

(Some Training Providers may subsequently accept such a Proposal for the purposes of the applicant undertaking an actual research project).

The Proposal needs to demonstrate:

- An understanding of the field of counselling research
- An ability to identify an interesting and original research question
- The ability to evaluate the contribution of the research literature to a specific research question
- Some understanding of how to conduct research, in particular the ethical implications of the proposed research.

It should contain:

- **Introduction (approx 300 words)**
 - Provide an introduction to the proposal
 - Identify the subject for research in terms of theoretical issues and relevant applications to the field of counselling
 - Briefly define the topic the applicant is interested in.
- **Literature Review (approx 1200 words)**
 - Indicate how it is envisaged that the research would contribute to debates / discussions in counselling
 - Outline relevant literature and theories relating to the proposed research area
 - Discuss major lines of argument that have been developed
 - Summarise ideas and findings of key researchers working on this topic.
- **Proposed topic / research questions / ethical considerations (approx 600 words)**
 - Develop one or two research questions that give the reader a clear sense of what the intended research would generate in terms of knowledge (for self and / or others) and practice (for self and / or others)
 - Consider the ethical implications of the research and safeguarding of participants and how the applicant would propose to obtain consent.
- **Research methodology and data collection methods (approx 400 words)**
 - Indicate the research method(s) the applicant would use and why.
 - Clearly demonstrate how these method(s) could provide data to answer the research question i.e. show that the research question is a viable area for investigation.

Appendix: References – a reference list that conforms to a conventional referencing system e.g. Harvard, APA.

Please refer to SCoPEd Column C competence:

4.16.C *Ability to successfully complete a substantial empirical research project, systematic review or systematic case study informed by wide current understandings of therapeutic practice.*

Supervisor's Report

Applicants also need to supply a recent report from their clinical supervisor, in which the supervisor addresses the following questions:

There's a separate form for you to send to your supervisor. Access form [here](#).

The questions asked are:

1. Is the applicant's personal statement consistent with your knowledge and understanding of their work experience and how they work with clients? Yes or No? If No, or if you are in doubt, please give your reasons.
2. If you have supervised the case material used to evidence Sections 3, 5 and 6, do you agree that the applicant's description is an accurate reflection of their work with this client(s)? Yes or No? If No, or you are in doubt, please give your reasons.
3. Please read the applicant's personal statement in full (Sections 1-7). For reference the framework can be found from page 16 to page 31. Please then comment on their overall competence in relation to the Column C competences in the SCoPEd framework. Please make reference to any areas for future development in relation to the SCoPEd framework that have been agreed with the applicant.
4. In your experience of the applicant, are they an 'Independent, competent and ethical counsellor / psychotherapist who has demonstrably developed their knowledge, experience and ethical working since their initial accreditation' who is, therefore, ready for Senior (Column C) Accreditation? Yes or No? If No, or if you are in doubt, please state your reasons.

Assessment Process

Applications are initially checked to ensure that all the required information has been submitted. Applications which are not in the required format or where information is not present will be returned for requested amendments or further information.

Once complete, they are passed to the assessment team who will determine whether the application satisfies the criteria set for accreditation. Assessors include professionally qualified counselling or psychotherapy practitioners with experience in training and / or assessing trainees in the Further Education and Higher Education sectors.

You will usually be informed of the assessment outcome within 6-8 weeks of submission. (Please note this timeframe may differ if further information is requested on submission and / or during the assessment process.)

Complex applications and a sample of successful and unsuccessful applications, are reviewed on a regular basis by the NCPS Professional Standards Committee. The NCPS's Independent Assessor reviews the work of the Committee annually.

At the discretion of the Committee, an online viva may be offered to applicants whose application is marginal or borderline in terms of meeting the requirements.



If you have any questions please do not hesitate
to contact our team



NATIONAL
COUNSELLING &
PSYCHOTHERAPY
SOCIETY

The National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society
19 Grafton Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1QT

T: 01903 200 666
E: hello@ncps.com
Registered In England No. 5861051.