

# COU707 Counselling and Mental Health

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast

**BLENDED  
LEARNING**

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

*Please go to [unisc.edu.au](http://unisc.edu.au) for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.*

## 1. What is this course about?

### 1.1. Description

This course will introduce you to the field of mental health, and provide a basis for the acquisition of foundational knowledge for the the practice of mental health counselling. You will learn about contemporary mental health assessment, explore dominant psychotherapeutic approaches, examine ethical counselling practise, and utilise experiential approaches to develop capacity in mental health therapeutic interviewing. Holistic case management and the recovery model are also explored.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – On campus workshop - 3 hours	3hrs	Week 1	11 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

Mental Health, Illness and Treatment in Australia;  
Counsellor Scope of Practice;  
Stigma in Mental Health; Learning from Lived Experience;  
Pharmacology for Counsellors;  
Protective and Vulnerability Factors in Mental Health;  
Trauma-informed understanding in Mental Health;  
Assessment in Mental Health  
Introduction to Psychiatric Classification: The DSM V  
Therapeutic orientations in Mental Health Counselling;  
Case Formulation and Therapeutic Planning;  
Attachment and Mental Health  
Mentalisation Approaches in Mental Health 1 and 2  
Introduction to Dialectical Behaviour Therapy  
Group Psychotherapy; Planning a group-based program  
Suicidality in Mental Health Counselling  
Art-based approaches in Mental Health Counselling  
Transpersonal Perspectives in Mental Health  
[Adult themes across all topics]

### 1.4. Mature Content

Adult themes

## 2. What level is this course?

700 Level (Specialised)

Demonstrating a specialised body of knowledge and set of skills for professional practice or further learning. Advanced application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts.

## 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

## 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1 Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the mental health field by critically examining understanding of what constitutes mental illness, health and recovery including evidence-based diagnosis and treatment paradigms.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered
2 Analyse and evaluate the role of counselling, pharmacotherapy and other treatment supports used with individuals impacted by mental health issues.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
3 Critically analyse and synthesise the complex knowledge required to enable tailoring and facilitation of individualised mental health counselling interventions.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered Ethical
4 Apply a client-directed and outcome informed approach in developing a comprehensive treatment plan for a client presenting with mental health issues in an ethical and responsible manner.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical
5 Apply specialist mental health counselling knowledge in the development of a tailored group counselling intervention. Evidence of ethical consideration in the intervention design.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered Ethical
6 Demonstrate a developing scholarly capacity in written submissions, incorporating clarity of written expression, integration of academic literature, and adherence to APA style.	Knowledgeable Engaged

## 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

### 5.1. Pre-requisites

Enrolled in Program AR708

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

### 5.5. Microcredential Information

Not applicable

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

### 6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

A Week 4 quiz will provide feedback in relation to acquired theoretical knowledge. An in-class presentation task presents opportunities for formative feedback in the early and mid weeks of the trimester. Timely and detailed feedback is provided for each of the later summative assessments. Informal feedback is provided within-class in response to individual and class activities. Students are invited to seek feedback through face-to-face discussion with the course coordinator.

### 6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Quiz/zes	Individual	20%	1 Hour	Week 4	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Oral	Individual	0%	15 minutes	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	In Class
All	3	Plan	Individual	40%	2000 Words	Week 10	Online Submission
All	4	Plan	Group	40%	2500 words	Exam Period	Online Submission

#### All - Assessment Task 1: Progress assessment of knowledge related to Counselling in Mental Health

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate acquisition of foundational knowledge in Counselling and Mental Health (Weeks 1-4 of the course).		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Quiz/zes		
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>			
<b>FORMAT:</b>	An online multiple-choice test.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Accuracy in understanding key concepts relating to material covered in the first 4 weeks of the course	1 2
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Information literacy		

#### All - Assessment Task 2: MH Presentation

<b>GOAL:</b>	Work in arrangements of three students, to jointly develop an oral/visual presentation focused on a selected Mental Health condition.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral		
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>			
<b>FORMAT:</b>	<p>The presentation will incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) a description of the presenting condition;</li> <li>ii) information about the course and progress of the condition;</li> <li>iii) presenting therapeutic needs/goals associated with the condition;</li> <li>iv) evidence-based (psychotherapeutic) treatment approaches;</li> <li>v) a brief lived experience representation of the MH condition - a resourced video/podcast/art-making/narrated poetry(as examples).</li> </ul> <p>Presentations will be timetabled as part of class time across weeks 5-10 of the trimester.</p>		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Demonstrate developing knowledge of a mental health condition, incorporating presentation, developmental factors, treatment approaches, recovery and an appreciation of lived experience.	1
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration, Organisation, Information literacy		

**All - Assessment Task 3: Mental Health Treatment Plan**

<b>GOAL:</b>	You will create a mental health treatment plan based on a provided case study																
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Plan																
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>																	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	<p>A 2000 word written report outlining a treatment plan for an identified case study.</p> <p>Your plan will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) assessment approaches and items;</li> <li>ii) presentation of a possible diagnosis,</li> <li>iii) conceptualisation of the client’s presenting issues,</li> <li>iv) identification of influencing factors,</li> <li>v) development of client/counsellor treatment goals;</li> <li>vi) description and scholarly rationale for a selected counselling approach(es); and</li> <li>vii) an outline of projected themes/ aims/goals/focus/activities across sessions 1-3 (early); 4-7 (mid); 8-10 (trajectory).</li> </ul>																
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<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy																

## All - Assessment Task 4: Group Therapeutic Plan

<b>GOAL:</b>	To create a six-session group therapy plan for a specific client population group.																						
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Plan																						
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>																							
<b>FORMAT:</b>	<p>A 2500 (approx.) word written report. The report will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a rationale for a group therapy approach with an identified client group – e.g. Individuals experiencing depression or anxiety or an eating disorder;</li> <li>• Detail a six-session group therapy plan developed to meet the therapeutic needs of the identified group'</li> <li>• Include a description of the identified client population;</li> <li>• Define particular therapeutic needs of this group;</li> <li>• Identify and describe the psychotherapeutic framework that is to inform program implementation;</li> <li>• Summarise the main aims and intended outcomes of the program;</li> <li>• Define the duration and structure of each session;</li> <li>• Present a weekly plan for each session, including activities,</li> <li>• Identify benefits associated with group participation (evidenced-based);</li> <li>• Reflect on dealing with any possible challenges in the presented program;</li> <li>• Reference appropriately.</li> </ul>																						
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## 7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

### 8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

### 10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

#### **Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment**

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

### 10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

- Less than 15 minutes: No penalty  
From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty  
More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

### 10.4. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

### 10.5. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

## 10.6. General Enquiries

For course-specific questions, contact your teaching staff or Course Coordinator.

For other enquiries or to access support, please contact Student Central:

- [UniSC Student Central](#)
- [UniSC Adelaide Student Central](#)