

INHERENT REQUIREMENTS STATEMENTS

The inherent requirements within this document apply to the following courses:

Diploma of Counselling and Psychotherapy
Associate Degree of Counselling and Psychotherapy
Bachelor of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Diploma of Arts Therapy
Associate Degree of Arts Therapy
Bachelor of Arts Therapy

Ikon strongly supports the right of all people to pursue study in counselling and psychotherapy and arts therapy.

What are inherent requirements?

Inherent requirements are the essential components of a course or subject that demonstrate the abilities, knowledge, and skills to achieve the core learning outcomes of the course or subject, while preserving the academic integrity of learning, assessment, and accreditation processes. The inherent requirements are the abilities, knowledge and skills needed to complete the course that must be met by all students.

To support potential and current student decision making, a series of inherent requirement statements have been developed. These statements specify the course requirements for student admission and progression. The statements are clustered under eight domains consisting of ethical behaviour, behavioural stability, legal, communication, cognition, relational skills, reflective skills, and sustainable performance.

How this affects you

To successfully complete a course, you must show you can safely and reasonably perform its inherent requirements. Inherent requirements help you to:

- understand the skills and attributes you must demonstrate to successfully progress the course
- make informed decisions about your study and career choices, and
- prepare for the professional standards you'll need to meet in a workplace

Standardised testing may be used to assess some inherent requirements (e.g. literacy and numeracy tests). Otherwise, your ability to meet inherent requirements will be evaluated throughout your course.

Students with a disability or chronic health condition may be able to have reasonable adjustments made to enable them to meet these requirements.

Ikon is committed to making reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning, assessment, clinical practice, and other activities to enable students to participate in their course. Reasonable adjustments however must not fundamentally change the nature of the inherent requirement. Students are required to undertake activities which reflect the Australian healthcare context which may include mixed gender, religious and culturally diverse environments.

Reasonable adjustments need to balance the interests of everyone affected, including other students and Ikon.

What you need to do

If you are intending to enrol in a course in the School of Counselling, you should look at these inherent requirement statements and think about whether you may experience challenges in meeting them during your studies.

If you think you may experience challenges for any reason including a disability or chronic health condition, you should contact Admissions who will help arrange a meeting with member of the Head of School (or they will nominate an appropriate academic) so you can discuss your concerns in detail.

Ikon will work with you to understand your needs and determine reasonable adjustments to assist you to meet the inherent requirements. In the case where it is determined that inherent requirements cannot be met with reasonable adjustments, Ikon may be able to provide guidance regarding other study options.

We recommend you do this as early as possible, so you can make an informed choice about your study options.

Contact Admissions via email to admissions@ikon.edu.au.

How to read the inherent requirement statements

The inherent requirements are made up of the following five components and domains:

- Level 1 Introduction to the inherent requirement
- Level 2 Description of the inherent requirement
- Level 3 Explanation of why this is an inherent requirement of the course
- Level 4 Nature of any adjustments that may be made to allow you to meet the requirement
- Level 5 Examples of tasks that show you've met the requirement *

There are eight domains of inherent requirements. Some domains have a number of sub-domains.

These inherent requirements should be read in conjunction with other published course information at ikon.edu.au/courses/ and the codes, guidelines and policies of the following professional bodies where you may apply for membership.

[Australian Counselling Association \(ACA\)](#)

[Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia \(PACFA\)](#)

[Australian, New Zealand and Asian Creative Arts Therapies Association \(ANZACATA\)](#)

* Note, these are examples only and not a comprehensive list

Ethical Behaviour

L1 **Statement.** Counselling and psychotherapy is a profession guided by the codes, guidelines and policies of the following professional bodies whereby counsellors and therapists are deemed accountable and responsible for ensuring their professional behaviour in all contexts:

- Australian Counselling Association (ACA)
- Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA)
- Australian, New Zealand and Asian Creative Arts Therapies Association (ANZACATA)

Counsellors and therapists practising in NSW and South Australia are subject to a statutory Code of Conduct for health practitioners and there are plans to introduce a National Code of Conduct. Counsellors must adhere to these codes and should demonstrate knowledge of and engage in ethical behaviour in practice.

L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates knowledge of, and engages in ethical behaviour in practice

L3 **Justification.** Compliance with the codes, guidelines and policies facilitates safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and/or the people with whom they engage. This supports the physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of all.

L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must not compromise professional codes, guidelines and policies or result in unethical behaviour. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).

L5 **Exemplars:**

- Complying with conduct required to maintain professional registration
- Understanding and practising appropriate professional boundaries including confidentiality and duty of care in work with clients on placement

Behavioural Stability

L1 **Statement.** Behavioural stability is required to function and adapt effectively and sensitively in this role.

L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates behavioural stability to work constructively in a diverse and changing academic and clinical environment, which may at times be challenging and unpredictable.

L3 **Justification.** Behavioural stability is required to work individually and in teams in diverse and changing environments. Students will be exposed to situations which are challenging and unpredictable and will be required to have the behavioural stability to manage these objectively and professionally.

L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must support stable, effective and professional behaviour in both academic and clinical settings. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).

L5 **Exemplars:**

- Being receptive and responding appropriately to constructive feedback
- Managing own emotional state in order to be able to develop and maintain an appropriate relationship with a diverse range of clients, professional colleagues and supervisors, academic staff and peers

Legal

- L1 **Statement.** Counselling and psychotherapy practice is governed by legislation covering health professions, that are not subject to state registration, to enable the safe delivery of care. Counsellors and therapists are also subject to laws governing child protection, mandatory notification of children and young people at risk, and criminal activity. Professional practice is further governed by peer regulation through professional counselling and psychotherapy organisations.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates knowledge and compliance with relevant laws and professional regulations.
- L3 **Justification.** Knowledge, understanding and compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements are necessary pre-requisites to placements in order to reduce the risk of harm to self and others. Compliance with these regulations and the law ensures that students are both responsible and accountable for their practice
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must be consistent with legal and regulatory requirements. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Complying with legal requirements regarding all aspects of practice
 - Complying with professional peer regulation

Communication Skills

Verbal Communication Skills

- L1 **Statement.** Effective verbal communication, in English, is an essential requirement to provide safe and effective delivery of counselling and therapeutic and needs to be respectful, clear, attentive, empathic, honest and non-judgemental.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences; the ability to listen, understand and respond to verbal communication accurately, appropriately, empathically and in a timely manner; consistent and appropriate awareness of own verbal communication style; the ability to provide clear instructions and guidelines in the context of the situation; and timely clear feedback and reporting.
- L3 **Justification.** Communicating in a way that displays respect and empathy to others and develops trusting relationships. Speed and accuracy of communication may be critical for individual safety or therapeutic intervention. Accurate and effective delivery of verbal instructions is critical to individual safety, support and management.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments for verbal communication must address effectiveness, timeliness, clarity and accuracy issues to ensure safety and appropriate support. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Participating in tutorial and clinical discussions
 - Engaging in verbal reflection with peers, tutors and clients

Non-Verbal Communication Skills

- L1 **Statement.** Effective non-verbal communication is fundamental to clinical counselling and needs to be respectful, clear, attentive, empathic, and non-judgemental.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates the capacity to recognise, interpret and respond appropriately to behavioural cues, consistent and appropriate awareness of own behaviours and sensitivity to individual and/or cultural differences.
- L3 **Justification.** The ability to understand non-verbal cues assists with building rapport with people and gaining their trust and respect in academic and professional relationships. Displaying consistent and appropriate facial expressions, eye contact, being mindful of space, time boundaries and body movements and gestures promotes trust in academic and professional relationships. Being sensitive to individual and/or cultural differences displays respect and empathy to others and develops trusting relationships. The ability to understand non-verbal cues is essential for safe and effective observation of clients' symptoms and reactions as part of their assessment and treatment.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must enable the recognition, interpretation and appropriate response to non-verbal cues as well as initiation of effective non-verbal communication in a timely and appropriate manner. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Recognising and responding to non-verbal cues indicating a change in the emotional state of a client during placements
 - Recognising and responding to non-verbal cues in classroom situations

Written Communication Skills

- L1 **Statement.** Effective written communication, in English, is a fundamental counselling and therapeutic responsibility with professional and legal ramifications.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates the capacity to construct coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances.
- L3 **Justification.** Construction of written text based assessment tasks to reflect the required academic standards are necessary to convey knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter for professional practice. Accurate written communication for a range of purposes and audiences is vital to provide consistent and safe client care.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must not compromise the necessary standards of clarity, accuracy and accessibility to ensure effective recording and transmission of information in both academic and clinical settings. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Constructing an essay to required academic standards including appropriate referencing of sources
 - Preparing clinical reports which are appropriate to the purpose and audience, and completed in a timely manner

Cognition

Knowledge and Cognitive Skills

- L1 **Statement.** Consistent knowledge and effective cognitive skills must be demonstrated to undertake safe and competent counselling practice.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates the capacity to locate appropriate and relevant information, the ability to process information relevant to practice, and the ability to integrate and implement knowledge in practice.
- L3 **Justification.** Safe and effective counselling practice is based on identifying and accurately extracting plus understanding information from a range of sources and applying this appropriately.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must not compromise or impede student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of knowledge and cognitive skill required to practise safely. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Ability to conceptualise and use appropriate knowledge in placement settings
 - Ability to conduct individual and group sessions for clients based on relevant treatment plans

Literacy (Language) Skills

- L1 **Statement.** Competent literacy skills are essential to provide safe and effective counselling and therapeutic practice.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates the ability to acquire information and accurately convey appropriate, effective messages. The ability to read and comprehend a range of literature and information. The capacity to understand and implement academic conventions to construct written text in a scholarly manner including making explicit links between practice and theory.
- L3 **Justification.** The ability to acquire information and to accurately convey messages is fundamental to ensure safe and effective assessment, treatment and delivery of counselling practice. The ability to read, decode, interpret and comprehend multiple sources of information is fundamental for safe and effective delivery of counselling and therapeutic practice.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must not compromise the student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable capacity to effectively acquire, comprehend, apply and communicate accurate information and engage in written reflection. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Conveying a spoken message accurately and effectively during placements
 - Paraphrasing, summarising and referencing in accordance with appropriate academic conventions
 - Producing accurate, concise and clear documentation while on placement which meets legal and professional requirements

Relational Skills

- L1 **Statement.** Counselling practice requires the ability to use highly developed interpersonal skills and establish and maintain strong relationships with people.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates the ability to establish and maintain rapport with clients, academic staff, supervisors and peers; engage in effective and empathic counselling and group work; and engage and relate appropriately in individual and group clinical supervision and experiential learning groups.
- L3 **Justification.** Highly developed relational skills are a cornerstone of effective therapeutic relationships that permit effective engagement, assessment, intervention and closure. Highly developed relational skills are necessary to engage effectively in individual and group supervision of client work and experiential training activities that support the establishment and maintenance of an effective and appropriate therapeutic relationship with clients.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must have the ability to demonstrate effective relational skills. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Building rapport with a client in order to engage them in effective practice during placement
 - Effectively using relational and interpersonal skills to manage the therapeutic relationship with clients
 - Relating effectively, openly and sensitively to academic staff, supervisors and peers

Reflective Skills

- L1 **Statement.** Counselling practice requires self-awareness and a capacity for reflection and reflexivity in order to consider the effect of one's own issues, actions, values and behaviours on practice.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates the ability to accurately reflect on their counselling performance, and the ability to accept feedback on their counselling practice and respond constructively.
- L3 **Justification.** Participation in supervision is a key teaching strategy in counselling training which requires well developed understanding of oneself in order to appropriately engage in this activity. Working with clients while on placement and understanding and responding to them requires well developed understanding of oneself and the ability to effectively manage one's reactions to situations that may arise.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must not compromise the student's ability to demonstrate an acceptable minimum level of capacity in this area. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Identifying when a clinical issue is outside one's scope or expertise, or when one's practice may be negatively affected by a counsellor's personal experience and/or reactions.
 - Identifying how one's own relational style and behaviour may impede or enhance work with particular clients on placement
 - Identifying and bringing difficult areas of one's clinical practice to supervision in order to reflexively improve therapeutic work with clients on placement
 - The constructive use of one's own responses within the interpersonal therapeutic and supervisory relationships

Sustainable Performance

- L1 **Statement.** Counselling and therapeutic practice requires both physical and mental performance at a consistent and sustained level to meet individual and group needs.
- L2 **Description.** Student demonstrates consistent and sustained level of physical energy to complete a specific task in a timely manner and over time; the ability to perform repetitive activities with a level of concentration that ensures a capacity to focus on the activity until it is completed appropriately; and the capacity to maintain consistency and quality of performance throughout the designated period of time
- L3 **Justification.** Sufficient physical and mental endurance is an essential requirement needed to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective support.
- L4 **Adjustments.** Adjustments must ensure that performance is consistent and sustained over a required period. Adjustments specific to the individual can be discussed with the Head of School (or their nominee).
- L5 **Exemplars:**
- Participating in tutorials and lectures
 - Providing consistent placement practice over a negotiated time frame



Got questions?

If you are a prospective student, please reach out to admissions@ikon.edu.au

If you are a current student, please reach out to experience@ikon.edu.au

