

# Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions

## Our commitment to clients

Clients need to be able to participate freely as they work with practitioners of the counselling professions towards their desired goals. This requires clients to be able to trust their practitioner with their wellbeing and sensitive personal information. Therefore, as members or registrants of BACP, we take being trustworthy as a serious ethical commitment. We have agreed that we will:

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### 1. Put clients first by:

- a. making clients our primary concern while we are working with them
- b. providing an appropriate standard of service to our clients.

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### 2. Work to professional standards by:

- a. working within our competence
- b. keeping our skills and knowledge up to date
- c. collaborating with colleagues to improve the quality of what is being offered to clients
- d. ensuring that our wellbeing is sufficient to sustain the quality of the work
- e. keeping accurate and appropriate records.

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### 3. Show respect by:

- a. valuing each client as a unique person
- b. protecting client confidentiality and privacy
- c. agreeing with clients on how we will work together
- d. working in partnership with clients.

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### 4. Build an appropriate relationship with clients by:

- a. communicating clearly what clients have a right to expect from us
- b. communicating any benefits, costs and commitments that clients may reasonably expect
- c. respecting the boundaries between our work with clients and what lies outside that work
- d. not exploiting or abusing clients
- e. listening out for how clients experience our working together.

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### 5. Maintain integrity by:

- a. being honest about the work
- b. communicating qualifications, experience and working methods accurately
- c. working ethically and with careful consideration of how we fulfil our legal obligations.

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### 6. Demonstrate accountability and candour by:

- a. being willing to discuss with clients openly and honestly any known risks involved in the work and how best to work towards our clients' desired outcomes by communicating any benefits, costs and commitments that clients may reasonably expect
- b. ensuring that clients are promptly informed about anything that has occurred which places the client at risk of harm or causes harm in our work together, whether or not clients are aware of it, and quickly taking action to limit or repair any harm as far as possible
- c. reviewing our work with clients in supervision
- d. monitoring how clients experience our work together and the effects of our work with them.

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