

CENTRE DETAILS & CERTIFICATION

REPORT DETAILS

Report Type	First Sampling
Centre Name	SUPPORTING MINDS
Centre Number	
Standards Verifier (EE) Name	04891
AA Number	
Has Been Submitted	MRS BA DEVLIN
	510807
	Yes

VISIT DETAILS

Date Of Sampling	29/04/2015
Feedback Presented To	Jenine Butroid
Designation	Company Director

PROGRAMME EVALUATION SUMMARY

Programme No.	Programme Title	No. of Reg.	Status
NTV45	THERAPEUTIC COUNSELLING (QCF)	8	Released

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Action Points From Last Report

Summary of Essential Actions
No essential actions raised by the external examiner.

Summary of Recommendations
Management of Academic Standards
Use Edexcel Sample plan to have consistency in the paperwork used within the centre.
By Date 31/05/2015

General Comments

Mention any points you may wish to make, including: comments on administration; communication with the centre; access to material needed to carry out the external examination; and comments about how the centre is meeting the expectations of the QAA Code of Practice and addressing the Academic Infrastructure.

Due to the small size of this centre there are clear methods of communication between the Director also current tutor and the IV. The quality of the work seen during this visit is to be applauded supported by the extensive feedback that is provided by the assessor to aid their progress...well done indeed in your first year.

Areas of Good Practice

Identify any areas of particularly good practice mentioned in other sections of this report.

The course information pack clearly communicated the requirements to study the Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling and professional body recognition and regulation requirements of students. There is a clear statement relating to barring entry and requirements for DBS. Also contained here is useful information relating to the emotive nature of the course and impact that this may have and expose vulnerability. It is clearly communicated to learners that this training is indeed challenging and challenge beliefs systems and assumptions. This is particularly important to learners when embarking upon a qualification that for them may required some deep reflection and disclosure.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Management of Academic Standards

Comment on the presence of effective management procedures that are supported by appropriate systems and policies. Make specific reference to the management of any programmes run on a collaborative basis in other institutions. Comment also on the operation of assessment meetings, including:

- **the fairness and consistency of decisions**
- **the decision making process**
- **administrative support for the meetings** • **the scope of the minutes of previous meetings**
- **the organisation and conduct of the meetings.**

Supporting minds is a non-profit community interests company. Their primary aim is to service the community, whether that be through education, counselling or occupational health services. They provide very low cost counselling to anyone aged 16 and over for a range of conditions including but not limited to depression, anxiety, bereavement, substance dependency and eating disorders. The passion of supporting minds is not only to provide counselling services but also providing affordable, accessible professional training course. The company director for Supporting Minds holds the responsibility for Quality Nominee and works very closely in partnership with the one Lead Verifier for this qualification. Together and in partnership they ensure best practices by having a close working relationships and regular contacts. Both have many years' experiences in colleges and schools ensuring quality assurance systems are embedded and continually reviewed. There is a clear structure available showing accountability and responsibilities for internal verification. There is also evidence that additional training has been accessed and the centre uses Edexcel documentation consistently across the centre. There is a clear internal verification procedure in place, sampling across all areas found internal verification to be very effective. There assignment briefs are well written and detailed. All assignments are internally verified prior to issue to distribution to the learners. Edexcel documentation and action points identified by the lead verifier have been signed off, across the centre. This is indeed pleasing to see that internal verifier is challenging assessment decisions and good recommendations relating to a criteria grade given. Learners receive clear feedback on their work which provides them with opportunities to develop their work further during the formative assessment window. The centre is its first year of delivery with this programme and has a planned assessment board standardisation at the end of this academic year. The appeals procedure is contained in the centres BTEC Handbook which is issued to all learners. Learners are fully informed of the appeals procedures during their induction and via continual assessment process throughout their programme. Learners are made aware of the consequences of malpractice during induction and agreement signatures collected from learners. There have been no appeals or cases or malpractice within the centre since the last centre visit. Learners are recruited with integrity onto appropriate programmes; there is evidence of learner's induction that addresses programme and organisational requirements. A healthy and informing dialogue during option events to ensure that learners are fully informed and equipped to make correct course selection. The materials within the programme and centre handbooks are up to date and reflect QCF qualifications. The central policies are held by the senior management Team and were available for the review during my visit.

Recommendation

Use Edexcel Sample plan to have consistency in the paperwork used within the centre.

By Date 31/05/2015

Effectiveness of Assessment Instruments

State, for each programme, whether the design and nature of the assessments permit the aims and learning objectives of the programme to be met and are of a standard appropriate to the qualification level.

Assessment records are stored in a secure area and all copies are retained by the centre and comply with the required 3 years. Learners are given relevant and robust feedback which enables them to improve their work. Work is annotated throughout to identify strengths and areas for development. The assessment processes are carried out to National Standards and documentation is clear and consistently completed across the centre. The centre has demonstrated a robust attitude to assessment and high quality learner work was available for scrutiny during my visit. There is a clear approach taken by this centre to ensure that the standards ensure that they not only meet with the awarding body requirements by in addition to the BACP Framework for Ethical Practise and a consistent application of the framework within the work and practices of the learners. The centre must also ensure that the meet the requirements of the awarding body and BACP they must also be compliant with current legislation relating to data protection, health and safety, equal opportunities. boundary issues; limits of own competence and the use of supervision in maintaining adherence to framework.

Maintenance and Audit of Records

State whether the procedure for maintaining and auditing assessment records is secure and effective.

Assessment records are stored in a secure area and all copies are retained by the centre and comply with the required 3 years.

Registration and Certification Claims

Summarise the process for ensuring that student registration and certification is accurate and monitored effectively.

The centres Director ensures that the registration details are sent to Pearsons within available annual registration and claim windows. She is responsible for the uploading of entries, results and removals of registrations. Certificates are checked against the receipt. The company director has clear procedures in place for the timely and accurate registrations of learners and clear mechanisms for checking the accuracy of learner's registrations and is confident and competent in her understanding of her role.

Student Support and Review

Key areas to discuss include:

- **The assessment process, assessment feedback to students**
- **The quality of teaching, the expertise and experience of staff**
- **Physical resources and learning support for the programme**
- **Tutorial and pastoral support**
- **Opportunities for students to give feedback on their programme**
- **For HN programmes, summarise the views expressed by students, including favourable comments and any concerns raised**
- **Summary of discussions with staff**

The BTEC professional diploma in Therapeutic counselling 2015-17 handbook has been professionally produced captures the available supporting documents relating to resources and staffing. The course embedded a tutorial system where learners are provided x 3 1-1 sessions annually. In addition they are advised that they could attend a counselling appointment as part of their supervision whilst doing the course and in particular due to the nature of disclosure of personal issues that may occur when they are undertaking their training. The programme is staffed by appropriately qualified and vocationally experienced team. Teaching Staff are provided with development opportunities that meets the needs of the organisation and delivery and assessment of Edexcel programmes. All new staff receives induction all BTEC staff are supported by the company director. The centre has a clear induction plan for new staff and a staff development policy. Resource planning is undertaken by the company director who currently is the teacher of this programme. There is adequate provision of physical and specialist resources that enhance the learner experiences and are accessible equally across the school. Staff with whom I meet reported that they listen to learner views, encourage learning engagements, their views are used to inform changes to delivery approaches and assessment methods used by the team. The company Director engage regularly in programme review and evaluation to assure the quality of the learning experience. There is good evidence of consultation with learners, staff as part of all programme processes. The learning and assessment remains effective and demonstrates compliance with qualification approval and quality requirements. Learners are provided with open events and taster sessions that provide them with the information they need to ensure that they make the appropriate choice of programme. Learners are recruited with integrity onto appropriate programmes; there is evidence of learner's induction that addresses programme and organisational requirements. The centre handbook and programme prospectus, subject leaflets, are shared with the learners during open and interview events and indeed during the induction for the learners. They also have useful website which provides them with additional information. The tutorial programme offers each learner to discuss their progress, concerns and achievements. However tutor support is also available throughout the course prior too or at the end of the session. The learners are recruited from a range of services in health, public services and care. The course is advertised on the website and social media sites. There is also now a word of mouth approach to this course following recommendations from others. There are provided work based learning arrangements in play and the learners are required to attend supervision following eight hours of client activity. It is also advisory that they undertake personal theory every two years to ensure their safety and ethical practitioners on graduation