



## Bhutan Board for Certified Counsellors (BBCC)

**Phendey Oudpel Lam**  
**Phendey Gyatshel, Lower Motithang**  
**P.O. Box 1404**  
**Thimphu, Bhutan**

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### What is the importance of continuing education for BBCC certified counselors?

Certified Counselors are expected to engage in continuing education to update their counseling knowledge, as per the Continuing Education Policy. This includes the knowledge of client assessment, counseling skills, and special areas of knowledge, including mental health, addiction treatment, special needs children and others with regard to mental health counseling. This will be assessed every three years at recertification.

All NCCs wishing to upgrade at the end of the three-year period must acquire 100 continuing education clock hours on the BBCC-approved topics of continuing education. NCCs may apply for continuing education credit for their direct participation as a student in continuing education activities. Some examples of appropriate activities are college/university courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, and in-service programs.

### BBCC-Approved Continuing Education Topic Areas:

1. **Counseling Theory/Practice and the Helping Relationship:** Topics in this area include: historic and well-established contemporary counseling theories; principles and techniques of counseling and their application to professional settings in schools, clinics, hospitals, and rehabilitation and employment agencies; diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders; the mind-body connection and its applications in counseling settings, psychopharmacology and the role and effects of psychotropic medications in mental health; burnout prevention for helping professionals; counselor self-understanding for mental health professionals; crisis/disaster management; and mediation or coaching for mental health professionals.
2. **Human Growth and Development:** Approved topics in this area include: the nature and needs of individuals at all development levels, normal and abnormal human behavior, personality theory, life-span theory, learning theory, and end of life issues.
3. **Social and Cultural Foundations:** Approved topics in this area include: societal changes and trends; human roles in society; societal or cultural issues affecting individuals, couples and families; differing lifestyles; and major societal concerns.
4. **Group Dynamics, Processing and Counseling:** Approved topics in this area include: group development, dynamics and theories, group counseling leadership styles, and basic and advanced group counseling approaches, methods and skills.
5. **Employment and Career Counseling:** Approved topics in this area include: career developmental theories; occupational and educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance and education; lifestyle, career and retirement decision-making; career development program planning, resources and effectiveness evaluation; worker behavior and adjustment; and workplace issues affecting worker performance and behavior.



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6. **Assessment:** Approved topics in this area include: group and individual educational and psychometric theories; approaches to appraisal, data and information gathering methods; psychometric statistics; factors influencing appraisals; administering appraisal instruments and interpreting appraisal results in helping processes; and legal issues affecting counselor rights to administer and interpret tests and inventories that assess psychopathology, abilities, interests and career options.
  7. **Research and Program Evaluation:** Approved topics in this area include: types of academic and professional research, basic statistics, qualitative methodologies, research-report development, research implementation, counseling program evaluation, needs assessment in the counseling setting, publication of counseling research information, and ethical and legal considerations in counseling research.
  8. **Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issues:** Approved topics in this area include: philosophic bases of helping processes, professional roles and functions, professional goals and objectives, professional organizations and associations, professional history and trends, ethical and legal standards, professional preparation standards, professional credentialing in mental health, federal and state laws and regulations affecting counselors, practice management issues for mental health professionals, the counselor as professional consultant, administration and management of counseling programs, and clinical supervision of mental health professionals.
  9. **School Counseling :** Approved topics in this area include: foundations and knowledge of school counseling, history, and philosophy and trends in school counseling; roles and functions of a school counselor; school counseling models; student development and learning; school emergency plans; fundamental skills and practices; advocacy for school counseling; prevention and intervention strategies; effective counseling programs; school counseling program design; implementation, management and evaluation strategies for helping students; transition programs; group dynamics in school settings; crisis intervention; individual, group and classroom guidance; prevention and intervention plans; suicide risk mitigation; issues of diversity and equity; identification of student opportunities and barriers to student development; multicultural competencies and student achievement; student development; parenting education; signs and symptoms of substance abuse among students; assessment of students' strengths and needs; selection of appropriate intervention strategies; evaluation of counseling outcomes; school counseling and academic missions; the achievement gap; dropout prevention; postsecondary programs and opportunities; collaboration and consultation with teachers, staff and community; peer helping strategies; referral procedures; leadership to enhance learning environments; comprehensive school counseling programs; comprehensive developmental of school counseling programs; plans for educational guidance programs; and prevention science.
  10. **Substance Abuse Counseling:** Approved topics in this area include: roles, functions and settings regarding substance abuse counseling; models and theories of addiction and co-occurring disorders; effects of substance use disorders; foundational skills and practice in substance abuse counseling,



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including prevention and intervention; the role of spirituality; helping strategies; self-help programs; diagnosis, treatment and referral; appropriate substance abuse counseling strategies; assessing and managing suicide risk; drug education programs; diversity and client advocacy; public policies associated with substance abuse; basic understanding of pharmacological medications; addictions effect on life problems; stages of drug dependence; and impact of co-occurring addictive disorders.

11. **Employment Career Counseling:** Approved topics in this area include: basic career facilitating processes, including productive interpersonal relationships; labor market information and resources; occupational information and trends; formal and informal career development assessments; special needs of various groups and how to adapt career and employment to lifelong development; gender, age and ethnic background's impact on employment; employability skills, including job search strategies and placement techniques; training clients and peers by preparing and developing materials for training programs and presentations; program management/implementation for career programs; working as a liaison in collaborative relationships; promotion and public relations marketing for career development programs; technology, including the understanding and use of career development computer applications; occupational and educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling; guidance and education; lifestyle, career and retirement decision-making; career development program planning; resources and evaluation; work behavior and work adjustment; workplace issues affecting worker performance and behavior; methods for alleviating unemployment among youth and adults; and career development and employment consultation.
12. **Family and Couples Counseling:** Approved topics in this area include: role and function of family and couples counseling, models and theories, family development and the lifestyle, impact of crises on families, use of models and appropriate techniques, issues concerning couples and family dynamics, human sexuality, preventive and developmental approaches, systems theory conceptualization, multicultural and diverse family systems, advocacy for couples and families, and family members involvement in treatment .
13. **Mental Health Counseling:** Approved topics in this area include: role and function of mental health counselors; mental health models and theories; management of mental health services and programs; emergency management in mental systems and crisis intervention; policy, financing and regulatory processes in mental health; prevention and intervention; mental disorder etiology; range of mental health service delivery; biopsychosocial case conceptualization; family, social networks and community in mental health; diagnosis, treatment planning and referral; optimal human development; community resources; suicide risk mitigation; record keeping; effects of discrimination; client advocacy and public mental health policy; intervention techniques for diverse populations; basic psychopharmacology; intake and evaluation; models of program evaluation in mental health; evidence-based treatments and best practices; and impact of co-occurring disorders.



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### What are the continuing education requirements?

- **Requirements.** These include the qualities of individuals applying for certification and their aptitude for counseling and education in relation to counseling.
- **Counselor Education.** This includes the knowledge of applicants based on client assessment, basic counseling skills, and special areas of knowledge, including mental health, addiction treatment, special needs children and others with regard to mental health counseling.
- **Supervised Experience.** This comprises the number of hours of counseling set aside solely for supervision received by the applicant while applying for NCC(S) and also supervision provided by the applicant in direct counseling sessions.
- **Joining the Association.** Applicants applying to register for the Certification of Counseling Professionals in Bhutan will hereby abide by the **ethical standards** of practice laid down by the BBCC. Applicants will pay a certification fee, as determined by the BBCC, and will be issued certification on completion of the protocols set by the BBCC for national certification.
- **Practicing.** Successful applicants can further their academics based on BBCC-approved subjects of study for higher levels of certification credentials. Applicants under all certification levels, except for the NCC(S), are to work under the guidance of a supervisor for competent counseling practices. It is expected that the applicants receive ongoing supervision and regular consultation upon receiving national certification. Applicants are expected to update their counseling knowledge (continuing education) at least every three years. Supervisors are expected to invite each other to supervise and facilitate with each other to enhance their knowledge and skills.

### Application for Continuing Education Approval

BBCC continuing education approval does not imply endorsement of any particular counseling theory or method. The BBCC works closely with its continuing education providers, like the Royal University of Bhutan and KGUMS, to ensure that the highest standards in mental health and psychosocial topics are maintained in all of the programs and activities that are offered as continuing education for NCCs.

For approval of any continuing education credits, the applicant may write to the Director, BBCC, RENEW Secretariat or may contact the BBCC at 02-334751.

*N.B.: Any program, conference or course attended by counselors should be recorded, since all programs will allow for credits and assist in the recertification process.*

### Process for Earning Continuing Education Credit



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- **College or University Courses:** Courses may be officially taken or audited. Academic Transcript, grade report or verification form is required for documentation of training hours.
  - **Workshops, Conferences or Seminars:** Certificate, verification form or letter verifying attendance is required for documentation of training hours.
  - **Publication/Presentations/New Program Development:** Limit of 500 clock hours for these methods of earning continuing education hours.
    - *Publication:* Activities are limited to articles in academic journals, a chapter in a book, or a published book. Required documentation for publication credit is a copy of the cover page of the article or book. For a chapter in an edited book, include a copy of the table of contents.
    - *Presentations:* This may be used only once in a two-year continuing education cycle. Only actual presentations may be counted. A letter from the sponsor or a professional colleague and a summary of the evaluations from the events are required documentation for continuing education training under this method.
    - *New Program Development:* This method includes a new workshop, course, seminar or community program. Documentation must include a new course proposal and outline/syllabus or a letter from the program director. New school, hospital, agency in-service programs, hospital mental health team programs or extensive community outreach systems can also be submitted. All such submissions must include documents, dates of development/implementation and supporting materials.
  - **Supervision/Consultation:** Limit of 500 clock hours for earning continuing education training using this method. Continuing education credit can be granted for supervision/consultation received on a regular basis with a set agenda or supervision that is provided by the BBCC. List the start and end dates of the period in which the supervision occurred and the site where supervision was provided or received. List the name of the supervisor or supervisee and include a letter from the supervisor or supervisee for required documentation.
  - **Leadership:** Limit of 1,000 clock hours. List the start and end dates of the period in which the counseling leadership occurred. List the names of the organization and the position where the leadership post was held. The following leadership positions are acceptable for continuing education training credit: officers of district or national counseling organization, editor of professional counseling journal, member of counseling certification board, member of a national ethics review committee rendering counselor certification, active member of a counseling committee producing a substantial written product, chair of a major counseling conference or convention, and other leadership positions with justifiable professional learning experiences. A letter from the organization with the dates and type of leadership is required documentation.
  - **Home Study Continuing Education:** No clock hour limit. NCCs are allowed to take all or any portion of the required continuing education training clock hours through home study programs.



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The same standards for selecting live programs apply to selecting home study programs; that is, they must meet BBCC guidelines for continuing education.

- **Unrelated Programs:** Limit of 250 hours. BBCC allows NCCs to claim up to 250 hours of continuing education that do not meet these guidelines as long as they submit proof of attendance along with a written statement regarding how the activity assists them in their service to their clients. Examples include: language courses, software training, medical topics and wellness training, etc.