

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELLING
2024/2025 – SEMESTER II – FINAL EXAMINATION



BSC (HONS) IN PSYCHOLOGY
PLU3309 – INTRODUCTION TO COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY – LEVEL 3
FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER
DURATION: 03 HOURS

DATE: 30th October 2025

TIME: 9.30 AM – 12.30 PM

INDEX NO:

SECTION 2: STRUCTURED ESSAY QUESTIONS (60 MARKS)

Choose 04 out of the 06 questions given below and answer using the provided answer sheets.

2.1 Counselling is a multidisciplinary approach that collaborates with other professionals.

- a) Briefly explain the three main roles of Counselling psychology according to Gelso & Fretz (2001)? *(5 marks)*
- b) Briefly explain the historical development of Counselling psychology. *(5 marks)*
- c) What are some of the emerging trends in the field of Counselling psychology in the 21st century? *(5 marks)*

2.2 A counsellor must respect the client's cultural values and worldviews, ensuring that diversity is acknowledged and honoured within the therapeutic process.

- a) Give five reasons why counselling should be sensitive to culture. *(5 marks)*
- b) In a culturally diverse country like Sri Lanka, what are five major challenges that a Counselling psychologist may face in their professional practice? Explain each challenge with an example. *(10 marks)*

2.3 Carefully read the case scenario provided below before answering the questions.

Nirmala is a 22-year-old university student who recently moved to a new city for her studies. Over the past few months, she has been feeling increasingly anxious and isolated. She struggles to make friends in her new environment and feels that her classmates are judging her. She avoids group activities because she fears she might say something stupid. At the same time, she feels guilty because her parents are financially supporting her education, and she worries she is letting them down by not doing well socially or academically. Recently, Nirmala has noticed a drop in her grades, and she has started questioning her self-worth. She says, Maybe I am just not good enough. No matter how hard I try, I feel like I don't belong anywhere.

- a) Describe Rogers' three core conditions necessary for effective counselling with examples. (5 marks)
- b) Analyse how a counsellor should handle the scenario described above using a Rogerian client-centred approach. In your answer, explain the relevant principles and illustrate them with brief examples of possible counsellor responses. (10 marks)

2.4 Ethics in counseling serves as the guiding compass that protects both the client and the counselor, ensuring trust, respect, and professionalism in the therapeutic relationship.

- a) Define "Ethics" in Counselling. (2 marks)
- b) Explain six principles of ethical reasoning in counselling with examples. (6 marks)
- c) Assume that you are working as a counsellor in a rehabilitation centre. A 28-year-old client, who has been making progress in recovering from substance abuse, shares something personal with you during a session. The client says, I've started a new relationship, and this person makes me happy. But I haven't told them that I am HIV positive. I know I should, but I'm terrified they will leave me if they find out. Please don't tell anyone. I trust you, and I can't risk losing this relationship.
This is an ethical dilemma faced by a counsellor. Because this situation places you, as the counsellor, in a difficult ethical position.

Based on the scenario given, what do you consider the most ethical course of action or decision, the counsellor should take? Justify your answer by identifying the ethical reasoning. (7 marks)

2.5 The role of the counsellor is not just to provide guidance, but to create a safe and supportive space that empowers clients to explore, heal, and grow.

- a) Briefly describe the three characteristics of a fully functioning person according to Carl Rogers. (3 marks)
- b) “The environment of an individual can influence his or her behaviour”.
Accordingly, imagine that you are going to open a private Counselling centre. What are five key elements of the counselling environment that influence therapy and that you would need to consider when setting up the Counselling room? (4 marks)
- c) Analyse the differences between counselling and psychotherapy. (8 marks)

2.6 The following is a conversation between a counsellor and a client who is experiencing work stress and family difficulties. Read the below conversation carefully.

Counsellor’s Question: “Can you tell me how you’ve been feeling lately, especially with everything happening in your life?”

Client’s Reply: “Honestly, I don’t even know where to start. Lately, I’ve been feeling extremely overwhelmed. At work, my boss keeps giving me more tasks than I can handle, and no matter how much I do, it never seems to be enough. I stay late almost every night, and when I finally come home, I’m too exhausted to spend any quality time with my family. My partner has started complaining that I don’t pay attention to them anymore, and I feel guilty about that too. On top of it all, I’ve been having trouble sleeping because my mind just won’t switch off. I keep replaying everything I didn’t finish during the day. Sometimes I wonder if I’m just not good enough at my job or in my personal life. It feels like I’m failing everywhere, and I don’t know how much longer I can keep this up.”

- a) Explain five different non-verbal communication techniques used in counselling. (5 marks)
- b) In the above case, explain how you would use Reflection on the client’s emotions as a counsellor. (5 marks)
- c) In the above case, explain how you would apply Summarising to condense the long response of the client as a counsellor. (5 marks)

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