



ASSESSOR GUIDE

CHCCCS019

Recognise and respond to crisis situations

Assessment 2 of 2

Case Studies



Assessment Instructions

Task overview

This assessment task is divided into seven (7) short answer questions.

Read each question carefully before typing your response in the space provided.

Additional resources and supporting documents

To complete this assessment, you will need the following:

- Learning resources.



Assessment Information

Submission

You are entitled to three (3) attempts to complete this assessment satisfactorily. Incomplete assessments will not be marked and will count as one of your three attempts.

All questions must be responded to correctly to be assessed as satisfactory for this assessment.

Answers must be typed into the space provided and submitted electronically via the LMS. Hand-written assessments will not be accepted unless previously arranged with your assessor.

Reasonable adjustment

Students may request a reasonable adjustment for assessment tasks.

Reasonable adjustment usually involves varying:

- the processes for conducting the assessment (e.g. allowing additional time)
- the evidence gathering techniques (e.g. oral rather than written questioning, use of a scribe, modifications to equipment)

However, the evidence collected must allow the student to demonstrate all requirements of the unit.

Refer to the Student Handbook or contact your Trainer for further information.



Please consider the environment before printing this assessment.

Question 1

Imagine you are a counsellor and seeing a new client, Pedro. At the beginning of the session, you asked Pedro a routine screening question, “At the beginning of counselling, I always ask about potential risks to clients... ‘Do you ever think about suicide?’” After a brief silence, Pedro looked down and nodded. According to your organisational policy, you must carry out a risk assessment, which involves assessing the following six aspects whenever a client has indicated a possibility of suicide.

Complete the following table by explaining what you would do/say to assess each area and describe any responses by Pedro to these that would suggest an increased or higher risk of suicide.

(Approximate word count: 150 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response should demonstrate an understanding of six other aspects/areas that a counsellor should explore in suicide risk assessment and information that indicates higher/increased risk. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

Areas to assess:	How to assess:	Suicide risk is higher if:
a) Suicidal thoughts	I would ask Pedro, “How often are these thoughts happening?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pedro expressed a desire for death.• Existence of thoughts about suicide.• Lack of fear of death or pain.
b) Suicidal intent and will to die	I would ask Pedro whether he intends to end his life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intent to suicide indicates that the risk is very high.
c) Suicide plans	I would ask Pedro whether he has an existing suicide plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having a present or previous suicide plan raises the risk level.• Where there is an identified means/method, higher lethality (i.e., likelihood of resulting in death) of the method and availability of means are associated with increased risk.
d) Previous suicide attempts	I would ask Pedro if he has ever attempted suicide before.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previous suicide attempts indicate increased risk.
e) Suicide preparation	If Pedro responds yes to the last question, I would ask if he has done anything to prepare for death.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking action to prepare for suicide indicates high risk.

Areas to assess:	How to assess:	Suicide risk is higher if:
f) Other warning signs	During my conversations with Pedro and his responses, I would take note of whether there have been other signs, such as emotional distress, cognitive issues, or difficult circumstances that might increase his risk, and ask follow-up questions on those signs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warning signs such as emotional distress, cognitive issues, difficulties relating to circumstances, and various behaviours are indicators of potentially severe and imminent suicide risk.

Question 2

Imagine that you are a counsellor working with Kurene. During counselling, you conducted a risk screening, and Kurene admits that he has been thinking about suicide lately. Having carried out a risk assessment, you decide that, in addition to safety planning, Kurene is likely to benefit from a referral to a crisis service for a mental health assessment and further intervention. As part of your organisational procedures, you will need to discuss this with Kurene and obtain his informed consent where possible.

- a) Write down what you would say to Kurene to obtain his informed consent. In your response, you should aim to introduce CATT in your own state, the support they can offer, and the steps you would take should he agree to proceed.

(Approximate word count: 95 - 105 words)

Assessor instructions: The students must demonstrate the ability to communicate with the person at risk to identify and agree on actions to reduce the immediate risk of harm. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

Example response (QLD):

“Kurene, based on what you’ve told me today, I’m concerned about your safety and well-being. It is important that we take this seriously and access professional support. What I can do is refer you to the Acute Care Teams, who are the specialists in dealing with these situations and help you stay safe. We can give them a call together right now and arrange for a mental health assessment. Then, they can also connect you with other services that can better assist you. Does this sound like something you’d like to do?”

- b) Imagine that Kurene has refused to contact CATT and storms out of the session, and you believe that he is at high risk of suicide. Discuss what you would do, considering your legal, ethical, and organisational responsibilities.

(Approximate word count: 25 - 35 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate the ability to respond appropriately by referring to the following: Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the

following example.

- Seek advice or assistance from supervisor.
- Fulfil duty of care, for example, contact police immediately, report concerns, request a welfare check.

Question 3

Imagine that you are working in a local counselling service. You have just started working with Tom, a 23-year-old man who has come to the service after his mother's unexpected death. Tom was raised by his mother, with whom he was close. The loss of his mother has been extremely distressing for him. He tells you he is struggling to cope, sleeping poorly, and underperforming at work, which he worries will jeopardise his position.

While he has friends and relatives who offered support after his mother's death, he has not told any of them about the continuing effects of the loss. He says, "I haven't been speaking to anyone – whenever they call, I say I don't have time to talk or don't answer the phone. I'm getting slack replying to messages, too." When you ask whether he has seen friends or family recently, he says, "To be honest, I've been avoiding them. I've even been avoiding my housemates – just watching TV in my room or whatever instead of hanging out with them, which I used to do all the time. In a way, I think it's better to do that because it seems like every time I speak to someone, I get frustrated or upset."

He also says he is drinking more than is usual for him. He says that he is generally a social drinker and does not drink during the week, but he is now drinking every day and often to excess.

- a) From the information above, identify two (2) indicators that suggest the possibility of crisis or safety issues and explain what you would do to address these indicators.

(Approximate word count: 60 - 70 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to recognise two indicators of safety issues and refer to an appropriate way to respond. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

Indicators:

- Sudden change in circumstances – the death of a mother.
- Tom says that he is struggling to cope, sleeping poorly and underperforming.
- Unable to speak to anyone, social withdrawal.
- Drinking more than usual, and often to excess.

Possible ways to respond may include:

- To ask more questions about these indicators.
- To conduct a risk assessment.

- b) Imagine that you decide it is necessary to ask Tom about thoughts of suicide. Write what you would say to Tom to reflect what he has told you and ask him whether he was having any thoughts of suicide.

Note: Make sure you select appropriate words that demonstrate empathy and encourage Tom to disclose any suicidal thoughts.

(Approximate word count: 95 - 105 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to ask directly about thoughts of suicide. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

"You've had a tough time recently – the loss of your mum has been huge for you, and it's having an ongoing impact. I'm hearing your concerns about changes in your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that are out-of-character for you. I share those concerns, and I would like to ask you some questions about what's impacting you at the moment and whether there are any risks that we need to talk about. When people have experienced a significant loss, they sometimes have thoughts of suicide. Have you had any thoughts of taking your life?"

- c) Tom tells you, "I only have them on bad days, like, 'you could just end it', but it's not very often. Then I just do something else, and they go away pretty quickly. I mean, I don't want to die. And it's not just that I'm scared of dying, even though I am. I just want to know how I can stop feeling so bad, you know? But I would never kill myself. Even if I was considering it, I would think about what Mum would say if she was here. She was so strong, raising me on her own, and I don't know if there's a heaven, if she can still see me or knows what's happening, but I want to do what would make her proud."

Imagine that your organisational procedures require you to complete a risk assessment form whenever there are concerns about suicide risk.

Develop four (4) questions you could ask Tom to assess the intensity, frequency, and duration of his thoughts.

(Approximate word count: 30 - 40 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response should demonstrate the ability to ask specifically about thoughts of suicide in risk assessment. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

- Have you been thinking at all about suicide?
- Have you been having thoughts about death or dying?
- How often are these thoughts happening?
- How long do the thoughts last?
- How long does this kind of thinking happen for?
- How intense/powerful are the thoughts?

- d) As you ask Tom further questions, Tom indicates that he has no suicide plans, has never had a suicide plan or attempt, and has taken no steps to prepare for dying. Based on your assessment, Tom is at a lower risk of suicide. However, it is important to work with Tom to develop safety strategies and connect him with the support he can access if things worsen. Imagine that your organisation uses the SPI template for safety planning.

Write down what you could say to Tom to briefly explain the safety planning process and obtain his informed consent.

(Approximate word count: 120 - 130 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate an ability to identify and agree on actions to reduce immediate danger or risk. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

“Tom, I’d like to propose that we spend some time exploring some strategies around making sure you feel supported, particularly during those ‘bad days’. For many people, having a plan can be quite helpful so that they know exactly what to do or who they should talk to. If you agree, I will be using this SPI template here as a guide, and we will go through some questions, particularly around warning signs, coping strategies, places you can go or people you will contact, services that you can use, and things that are important to you. It is your plan, so you can add anything that will be useful for you to stay safe. What do you think of this idea?”

e) You and Tom agree to develop a safety plan. For each aspect of safety planning listed below, write two (2) questions you could ask Tom to draw out his own knowledge and ideas.

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate an ability to work with a client to develop a safety plan. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples. Marker must use their professional judgement regarding the student’s response.

Aspect of safety planning	Questions (Approximate word count: 30 - 60 words per cell)
i. Warning signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What sorts of things might tell you it’s time to start using the plan?” • “Are there particular signs that things could be heading into crisis territory?” • “Earlier, you mentioned [...]; is that something that should be included?” • “Have you noticed any particular thoughts happening before you started feeling suicidal, or while you have been feeling suicidal, that could tell you that it’s time to use the safety plan?” • “Do you notice any differences between the way you think/act when things are going okay and the way you think when a crisis is developing?” • “Do you notice any changes in your habits that could indicate to you or [support person] that a suicidal episode might be coming?” <p>Questions including specific examples, such as changes in routine,</p>

Aspect of safety planning	Questions (Approximate word count: 30 - 60 words per cell)
	<p>sleeping, eating, what Tom does during the day, what he wants to spend time doing or not doing, and how he changes when he interacts with or speaks to people.</p>
<p>ii. Internal coping strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What has been working to help you stay safe?” • “What has helped you stay alive up until now?” • “What are you already doing that helps you cope?” • “What do you like to do?” • “What do you find helps you feel better when you’re upset?” • “Is there something that can be relied on to make you smile or laugh?” • “You mentioned/I noticed you doing [...]. Is [...] something that might help when you’re feeling low?” <p>Making suggestions or providing a list of coping skills, stress management strategies, or pleasant activities to prompt ideas and asking for Tom’s thoughts.</p>
<p>iii. People and social settings that provide distraction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Who might you find it helpful to connect with?” • “Who would you be willing to connect with?” • “Who makes you laugh?” • “Who do you feel better for having spoken to or spent time with?” <p>Questions about people Tom can connect with to distract himself and get the benefits from social contact.</p> <p>Questions about people Tom likes to engage in activities with (e.g., chatting, such as watching a show together, playing a game, exercising, or some other activity that is healthy/neutral).</p> <p>Questions about places Tom can go when he feels unsafe, e.g., the home of a friend, family member, or other support person; a public place, such as a café, library, or park where other people will be present; or a group or worship setting.</p>
<p>iv. People Tom will ask for help (i.e., support people)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Who are the people you trust?” • “Who do you think you could tell that you were feeling

Aspect of safety planning	Questions (Approximate word count: 30 - 60 words per cell)
	<p>suicidal?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Who would you be willing to ask for help?" • "Who has been helpful in the past?" • "Who do you think would be helpful to you during a time of need?" • "Who do you feel safe with?"
<p>v. Professionals/services that Tom can contact during a crisis</p>	<p>Questions about various professionals, e.g., doctors and psychiatrists; psychologists, social workers, and specialist counsellors; specialist mental health services; issue-specific services; other community services; men's health services.</p> <p>Questions about Tom's willingness to contact them and how he will make contact.</p>
<p>vi. Making the environment safe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Is there a support person who can stay with you?" • "Can you go to a safe person's home?" • "How might you prevent the use of alcohol or other psychoactive substances?"
<p>vii. Reasons for living</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Tell me about the important people and relationships (including pets!) in your life." • "What are your hopes for the future?" • "What do you want to be around to see or experience?" • "What are your interests?" • "What do you enjoy doing?" • Questions about passions, purpose, commitment to causes, values, and beliefs.

f) Tom tells you that he thinks the worst times are when he ruminates about things he did wrong when he was younger that disappointed his mum and when he notices himself avoiding attempts at contact with his friends and family.

He says that he does not have many coping skills, and this is something he would like to work on; however, he does tend to feel better when he goes for a run and listens to music. He also finds making himself reply to messages from his family and friends helpful; he says, "I'm really lucky; I've got a lot of people who care

about me. My housemates, Kieran and Jorge, are awesome – we don't really talk about feelings, you know, but they're great guys, really fun to hang out with and have a laugh. If they're not around, there's a park a few minutes away where I kinda know a lot of the locals, so I take my soccer ball down there and have a kick – there are always people who join in. And if I need to talk to someone, my uncle Mick is always there for me, and my friend Amanda is amazing, such a good listener."

Based on what he has told you, consider the factors that link Tom to safety and living. Write down what you would say to reflect on what Tom has said and encourage him to recognise that as his strength.

(Approximate word count: 95 - 105 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response should demonstrate the ability to affirm and strengthen the links to safety and living implicit in the helping relationship. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

"It sounds to me that you've got some good strategies there, and they have been serving you well in these difficult times. You enjoy the companionship of your family and friends who care a lot about you, like Kieran and Jorge, as well as Uncle Mick and Amanda. They sound like great support and people who you want to keep in touch with. It's great that you are looking after yourself and staying active as well. Every bit of these counts and will help make it a little bit easier to get through each day."

- g) Based on your discussion with Tom so far, record relevant information on the following sections of his safety plan. Include two (2) items for each section.

(Approximate word count: 30 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate how to document a suicide safety plan. The student must include two items for each section. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

i. Warning signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruminating about things he did wrong when he was younger which disappointed his mum • Avoiding attempts at contact from his friends and family
ii. Internal coping strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going for a run • Listening to music • Sending messages to friends and relatives
iii. People and social settings that provide distraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kieran • Jorge • The park

iv. People, I will ask for help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncle Mick • Amanda
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Question 4

Imagine that you are a counsellor working with Sean. Sean is 18 years old and has just been kicked out of home after coming out as gay to his father. Sean tells you that his father is very homophobic, and while Sean knew that his father might struggle with the idea, he didn't expect his father's reaction to be so extreme. Sean tells you that his father told him to "get out and never come back". Sean believes he meant it, and now Sean is in a state of shock and has nowhere to go. During the session, Sean kept repeating that he has nowhere to go and doesn't know what to do. You notice that he is also repeatedly picking on his fingers, which have a few bandages on them.

- a) Identify one (1) verbal and one (1) non-verbal indicator that would suggest possible safety or crisis issues.

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to consider indicators from direct and indirect communications that suggest the presence of safety issues. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

(i) Verbal indicator (Approximate word count: 15 words)	(ii) Non-verbal indicator (Approximate word count: 15 words)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sean provides information about a potential crisis– homelessness. • He is shocked; he has nowhere to go. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sean keeps repeating that he has nowhere to go or doesn't know what to do. • Sean repeatedly picked on his fingers with bandages on them.

- b) Imagine that you have assessed Sean's situation using the organisational assessment tool and determined that he is not currently posing immediate risks to others or himself. However, he does have immediate housing needs that can escalate his situation. You are aware of a local service, Place in Need, that can provide emergency accommodation for homeless people, which could be helpful to Sean. However, you are also aware that Sean may have personal resources that he can access for help.

Briefly outline how you might go about helping Sean identify and examine possible options for temporary accommodation.

(Approximate word count: 70 - 80 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of appropriate action that would enable Sean to identify and examine options for accommodation. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Sean what options he can think of (for example, has he stayed with anyone before, does he have any
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friends who would be happy to have him stay, etc.)

- Ask about friends and family he might be able to stay with and discuss emergency accommodation services.
- Provide information about Place in Need as a tentative option.
- Help Sean explore options and make a decision that works best for him.

- c) Sean begins to discuss the possibility of staying at his aunt's house (she had let him stay previously when he'd been fighting with his father) or staying with a friend (one of his friends has just moved into his own apartment and would probably be happy to let Sean stay for a few days at least). Sean discusses the pros and cons of each option clearly and coherently. He seems to think that staying with his friend will be a much better option because he likes hanging out and drinking with this friend, whereas going to his aunt might mean he remains under his father's supervision.

However, you think that it would be best for Sean to stay with his aunt. Would it be appropriate for you to convince Sean that it is the safest option and immediately call her on his behalf? Justify your response.

(Approximate word count: 55 - 65 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of the counsellor's actions being inappropriate and the need for collaborative decision-making, given that Sean was capable. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

- Even though Sean presented in a state of crisis, his reasoning and decision-making ability had returned. As a counsellor, it would have been more appropriate to be more collaborative.
- Because Sean appeared capable of making his own decisions and carrying out his own action steps, the counsellor should have been more collaborative rather than directive.

- d) Imagine that Sean confides with you that he has recently had sex with a girl who is underage. He didn't know that was the case until later and had not seen the girl afterward. You have a gut feeling that this information may fall into exceptions of confidentiality; however, you are unsure about this.

Explain what steps you would take to determine whether and how you could ensure you have acted consistently with your legal, ethical, and organisational requirements.

(Approximate word count: 15 - 25 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to confirm that actions are legal, ethical, and consistent with organisation policy. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

- Referring to relevant code of ethics and practice.
- Checking organisational policy document.

- Consulting with supervisor/manager.

Question 5

Jo is a counsellor working for a counselling organisation that provides counselling and other support services for women experiencing family violence. Jo works on the 24/7 telephone assistance line. She works five shifts per week, two of which are evening shifts that finish at midnight. When Jo began her role six months ago, she expressed to her family and friends how much she felt personally rewarded by knowing that she would be able to help so many women deal with their crisis situations.

Jo was so keen to make a difference that on her days off, she began to read up on the latest practice guidelines and research around family violence. This led to a reduction in her social activities.

While she still sees her friends from time to time, mostly when her friends call to arrange social get-togethers, Jo declines, saying, "I'm not up for it, sorry – I need to stay focused on my job." She feels so many women and their families need support that she doesn't feel right about going out and enjoying herself when people are suffering.

Jo has generally found her role to be challenging but quite rewarding. However, over the last few weeks, Jo has begun to feel extremely tired, physically, and mentally.

She isn't sleeping well, particularly on the days that she works the evening shift, and she often finds herself thinking about the women whom she has spoken to after she gets home from work. Jo has also started to notice that she has become more irritable at home, often snaps at her partner, and loses her temper over minor things.

- a) Based on your understanding of the risks associated with counselling, what is happening here for Jo? Explain your reasoning.

(Approximate word count: 35 - 55 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to recognise risks associated with crisis support and include a reference that Jo is potentially experiencing burnout, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

Jo is potentially experiencing burnout, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue – she is feeling extremely tired, both physically and mentally. She isn't sleeping well and is becoming irritable, snappy, and short-tempered over minor things at home – signs of burnout, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue.

- b) Imagine that you are Jo's co-worker, and she has come to you for some advice. What would you suggest Jo do differently to better take care of herself?

(Approximate word count: 30 - 40 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's responses must demonstrate the ability to develop strategies to minimise risks associated with crisis support. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

- Developing a self-care plan.
- Maintaining appropriate work/life balance.
- Engaging in specific self-care strategies, for example, engaging in social activities, practicing mindfulness, and developing hobbies.
- Seeking out supervision to discuss issues.

Question 6

Imagine that you are working as a counsellor, and your first client today is Ben. Ben has separated from Teresa, and they share care for their children, Maison and Tully (ages 8 and 4). During your appointment with Ben, he discusses behaviours of Teresa that were difficult for him to deal with, including regularly screaming and swearing at him, monitoring his behaviour and where he goes, and throwing his possessions if he fails to meet her expectations.

He explains that this behaviour was tough on him, and he eventually realised that he had become depressed. He says that accepting this was also difficult, and it took a long conversation with his GP before he recognised that he was experiencing mental health issues. The GP also said that Teresa's behaviour may have been abusive, but Ben does not completely agree with him.

- a) Based on your understanding of indicators of risks, is it necessary for you to assess Ben for possible safety or crisis issues? Explain your reasoning.

(Approximate word count: 60 - 70 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to recognise that it is necessary to consider possible safety issues for Ben, given his engagement with DFV situations. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

"Yes, it is necessary to assess for safety or crisis because Ben has described experiences of DFV, and there are children involved, too. He will also likely remain in contact with Teresa due to shared care. It is important to assess and ensure that he or the children are not exposed to any imminent crisis or risks."

- b) Ben agrees to complete a risk assessment with you, as per your organisational policy. As part of the process, you will need to ask Ben whether his children are experiencing DFV. Write what you would say to Ben in a direct, sensitive, and empathetic way.

(Approximate word count: 55 - 65 words)

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to ask about child-related risk. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

"Ben, I'm sorry that I have to put you through this, but we know that children can be impacted by violence between parents, and we need to make sure that we do what we can to ensure they are safe. Has Teresa done anything to or in front of Maison or Tully that worries you?"

- c) In this conversation, Ben appears distressed and tells you that he is extremely worried about the children – they appear upset and quiet after changeovers. He tells you that he picked up the children from Teresa’s home the day before; when they returned home, he noticed a large bruise on Maison’s leg. When he asked how she got the bruise, Maison would not look at him or answer the question but began to cry. Tully said, “Mummy done it. She was mean, and she done it.” In a later conversation, Maison confirmed what Tully had said and said that Teresa had hit her with a rolling pin. Ben has a picture of the bruise on his phone and shows it to you.

Ben repeatedly says he does not know what to do. He says he struggles to believe Teresa would do that; however, they are due to return to their mother’s house in three days, and he does not know if it is safe for them. He thinks of calling the police but does not want to upset the children and worries that this could put his fragile parenting relationship with Teresa at stake. Ben feels that he has failed his children and says it is all his fault that they are now suffering.

During the session, you notice a sense of frustration in yourself that Ben seemed not willing to accept that Teresa’s behaviours were abusive, despite his struggles to cope with her “difficult behaviours”. However, you quickly remind yourself that your role is to support and work collaboratively with Ben.

Describe the steps you would take to demonstrate that you are listening empathetically to Ben.

(Approximate word count: 70 - 80 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate the ability to listen empathetically to details of the current crisis situation. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

“I will acknowledge Ben’s feelings, stating that it must be hard for him to hear that Teresa may be abusive toward their children. I will also normalise his experience, saying that it can be widespread to feel this way, as most people find it upsetting and difficult to accept, let alone discuss their experience. I will also affirm and highlight his efforts to protect Maison and Tully.”

- d) You want to support Ben in considering some options for managing his situation; however, you feel concerned about his heightened emotional state. Consider what you have learned about crisis intervention principles in this unit as well as Reading A, and outline what you will do to stabilise the situation.

(Approximate word count: 115 - 125 words)

Assessor instructions: Student responses must demonstrate the ability to provide structure and strategies for dealing with the immediate crisis. Students are expected to develop responses in reference to the crisis intervention principles in their learning and Reading A for this unit. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

- Deal with the panic and stay calm
- Normalise the client’s experiences

- Focus on practical responses
- Assist the client in making informed decisions.

Example response:

“I will use a grounding activity to help Ben stay focused on the present moment. I will then acknowledge Ben’s feelings and affirm his efforts to protect his children by saying, “This sounds like a tough and frightening situation for you. It is heartbreaking to see children get hurt and even more challenging to think that Teresa might have done it. I can see that you care a lot about your children and understand that you want to do everything you can to protect them.” I will also discuss with Ben my mandatory reporting duty if any client discloses child abuse and encourage Ben to make that report himself, with my support.”

- e) Imagine that your organisation requires a counsellor to refer all clients to the local DFV services whenever DFV and associated risks are identified. Write what you would say to Ben in order to encourage him to access the DFV service.

(Approximate word count: 65 - 75 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate the ability to refer the client to appropriate community services as required. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

“Ben, I know you’re in a particularly challenging situation right now, and it’s part of my role to link you with the most relevant services. Many clients in your situation find it helpful to contact the local DFV services. They are trained specifically to provide support to anyone who may be experiencing DFV, including children. Would that be something that you’d consider?”

- f) Imagine that Ben is reluctant about calling the DFV services. He says to you, “I know about these services. They won’t understand how I feel.” Write what you would say to reflect on Ben’s statement and seek understanding of any potential barrier to him accessing the service.

(Approximate word count: 25 - 35 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s responses must demonstrate the ability to explore/seek understanding of any barriers to Ben seeking or accepting help. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

“Ben, you sound pretty confident that the service is not something useful for you. Can you tell me more about this?”

- g) Ben says, “A few of my mates have used them before, but you know, these services are there for the women. They don’t know what men have to go through. And they are always biased towards women.”

Based on Ben’s statement, identify one (1) barrier that may be stopping him from accepting the referral and explain the steps you would take to address such a barrier.

(Approximate word count: 85 - 95 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response should demonstrate the ability to address any barriers to seeking or accepting help. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

“The barrier for Ben is his understanding of the negative experiences of his mates. I will acknowledge his feelings about the service and provide more information about the service to him. I will also offer that we call the service together so that he can ask any questions he may have and then decide if he wants to go through with them. I can also find out if there’s any agency that specifically provides support to men in the DFV context as an alternative option.”

- h) After Ben has left, you want to document your session with Ben in case notes. Complete the following case notes on Ben’s electronic file.

(Approximate word count: 80 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response should demonstrate the ability to complete and maintain documentation as required. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

Risk/s identified:

DFV risk.

Child safety risk: Ben reported physical abuse to Maison – he noticed a bruise on Maison’s leg, clarified with Maison, who reported being hit by Teresa using a rolling pin.

Risk assessment notes:

The completed risk assessment form is attached.

The risk level escalated due to the presence of child safety risk.

Action taken:

I supported Ben in discussing child safety concerns with the Department of Child Protection via the child abuse report line; staff name Kin, call commenced 10/08/2023 at 12.24 pm.

Discuss referral to local DFV services.

- i) Imagine that you feel doubtful about whether you’ve covered everything you need with Ben, as per your organisational policy, and what you could have done better. Explain what you would do to confirm you have met all requirements relevant to your role, including whom you would seek advice from.

(Approximate word count: 20- 30 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response should demonstrate an ability to confirm that actions are legal, ethical, consistent with organisation policy, and meet the duty of care requirement through seeking advice or assistance from the supervisor as required. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

“I will debrief with my supervisor and seek their opinion on whether I have met all my organisational requirements.”

Question 7

Imagine that you are a counsellor working for a small counselling service. You specialise in providing general counselling services and do not have experience working with abuse or trauma. You have just started working with Aimee, a young woman experiencing extreme family violence and came to counselling in a state of crisis.

While you helped her through the initial crisis situation, you think Aimee would benefit from more DFV-specific counselling than you can provide and are in the process of exploring appropriate long-term support options with her. Aimee is resistant to the idea of talking with another counsellor – she says she is only comfortable speaking with you.

Write what you would say to Aimee to help her understand why a referral to a specialist would be beneficial. Ensure that your response appropriately acknowledges Aimee’s concerns, helps Aimee understand the benefits of referral, and aims to empower her to make her own decision rather than force her to accept the referral.


(Approximate word count: 90 - 100 words)

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate an ability to appropriately respond to the client’s resistance, discuss the benefit of referral, and empower the client to make her own choice. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

“Aimee, I understand that seeking help and talking to me in the first place was a big step for you. But that was just the first step on your path toward the life you want. Getting appropriate long-term support will help you to work through your experiences. Unfortunately, I don’t have experience in working with these issues, but a specialist counsellor will be able to help you begin to achieve the life you really want to live. Would you like to discuss some options for specialist counsellors?”

Assessment checklist:

Students must have completed all questions within this assessment before submitting. This includes:

1	Seven (7) short answer questions are to be completed in the spaces provided.	
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Congratulations, you have reached the end of your Assessment!

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