



STUDENTS GUIDE TO V22W ASSIGNMENT

There is no absolutely right or wrong way to write and present assignments, but what follows may help you make the most of the work that you have to do, in order to pass V22W.

The first and perhaps the most important point to make here is that doing the assignment presents a golden opportunity for you to learn. If you take the positive view that all of the work you have done up until now, has done no more than prepare you for this moment. You are now going to start to move on and up.

The process is simple, the reality less so!

There are three steps:

1. Gather information and data
2. Analyse and organise the data
3. Write the report

1. Gathering your information and data.

In this case you have got access to two streams of info/data:

- (a) Your own study, both your coursework and your independent reading and research.
- (b) From your experience of 8 counselling sessions. You may do more than 8 sessions with a client but the study must focus on the first 8.

Both are equally important in terms of the influence they could have on what you learn and how well you do.

In one sense your coursework study helps prepare you for your practical work. It will affect the way you go about the process and will influence what you might expect to happen. It is important that you have a good sense of where the theory will take you when you start your work with clients. The experience though will also be a valuable learning experience and reality may not reflect theory in the way you expect it to.

Gather information from each of the 8 counselling sessions as follows:

1. Prepare for the session, physically and mentally.
2. Conduct the session.
3. Write a confidential report on the session.

We are going to focus on point 3 at this stage. You should have covered point's 1 and 2 elsewhere.

Confidential report on each of the 8 sessions

This is essential – it is your data and you will need it to complete the final report.

Report on:

- (a) How things actually went and how you thought they might have done.
- (b) Pick out and describe some, 3 or 4, highlights, where you think the theory appears to be working or where it appears not to be working as expected.
- (c) Try to describe how you thought the client was responding during these highlights.
- (d) Describe what you were thinking and feeling in each case.
- (e) Identify issues that might need further investigation, perhaps to take to supervision and/or to read up on or discuss with your tutor.
- (f) Comeback and write about the outcomes of your actions:
i.e. (e) – **Note this is important.**
- (g) Do this for all 8 sessions.

The final report (your assignment)

You should now have completed 8 comprehensive case studies to select data/information from. The emphasis here is on the word SELECT. It is not necessary to write your report as a history of the 8 sessions. If you do this there is a temptation that you will be re-telling the client's "story" rather than focusing on the requirements for the assessment task. Whilst it is important that as a practitioner you honour the client's material, you must write with the aim of the assessment task in mind. The aim of the study is to assess your knowledge and understanding of the process of one-to-one supervised counselling practice.

You only have 2500 words to work with and so that is another reason why you are going to have to be very selective

Begin by looking at the Mark Scheme

In this case there are 8 opportunities to gain marks and you should try to exploit them all. The style of writing is not as important as the content. You may wish to write prosaically or you may prefer a more structured approach either will do, provided that you cover all of the mark carrying topics.

***Introduction** A short passage of 100 or so words, which explains what the work is about and what you set out to achieve. It is important that you state here the theoretical model that you are working from.

Theory and Key Concepts (500 words)

This simply means the way theory is likely to influence events. Select 3 or 4 instances where you attempted to apply theory and write about them using quotations where possible to reinforce your interpretations.

Challenges and Limitations (300 words)

This is likely to test your knowledge of other competing theories: e.g. CBT might suggest weakness in the other theories and vice versa – you will need to look outside of the box on this one. Some basic principles though – find examples from your experience and relate them to authoritative versions using quotes. Are there any particular challenges to using the model you have chosen in general? Or, with this particular client?

Self-Awareness (300 words)

This is where you use the thought and feelings you recorded earlier – select 2 or 3 instances and use them to show how they affected you then and how you might have changed (grown) as a result. You should also comment here on your learning from supervision and how that has helped you become more aware of the process between you and your client.

Contracting Skills and Forming a Therapeutic Relationship (250 words)

It is important to include some discussion to show that you know how to set ethical contracts and that you can identify the particular events that occurred between you and your client that helped you build rapport to start work together.

Building and Sustaining the Relationship. (250 words)

Here you need to focus on the things that happened that allowed the counselling relationship to become therapeutic ie a relationship that helped your client to change and grow. Describe which skills you employed and discuss the effects on you, the client and the relationship

Working Ethically (250 words)

Remember too to relate the work to **an Ethical Framework** and identify areas that may have led to conflict with your code or were particularly important in the relationship that you had established.

Conclusion (375 words max)

Finally, summarise the whole work by picking out 2 or 3 highlights or significant events that you think typifies and supports your theoretical approach, or perhaps explains why you might consider changing in the future. In this area you should also analyse and evaluate your own practice – what went well and why? If you could replay the sessions (like a videotape) what would you do differently?

Bibliography

Be sure to list the books you have used – not those you haven't.

Finally

Print the whole thing out on A4 paper, double-spaced and with appropriate margins.
Check the word count and then read it thoroughly.
Edit if necessary and read it again.

*You might want to leave this until last!