



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

CHCFIN502A Facilitate the financial counselling process

Release: 1

CHCFIN502A Facilitate the financial counselling process

Modification History

Not Applicable

Unit Descriptor

Descriptor

This unit describes the knowledge and skills required to identify and respond to the immediate and ongoing needs of clients, including provision of referral services as required

Application of the Unit

Application

This unit is to be applied in the context of establishing a relationship of trust and support to enable clients to make informed decisions to address financial issues

In order to qualify for the ASIC exemption from the delivery of financial service contained in the Financial Services Reform Amendment Act (2003) a financial counsellor must be eligible for membership of the financial counselling association recognised in their State or Territory

Financial counselling operates from a strengths-based and client-focused model

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not Applicable

Pre-Requisites

Not Applicable

Employability Skills Information

Employability Skills

This unit contains Employability Skills

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements define the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

The Performance Criteria specify the level of performance required to demonstrate achievement of the Element. Terms in italics are elaborated in the Range Statement.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT

1. Respond to initial client contact

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- 1.1 Obtain informed consent from client to enter into a financial counselling process
- 1.2 Identify and address any conflicts of interest and/or other ethical considerations
- 1.2 Identify appropriateness of financial counselling on the basis of routine *client information* collected
- 1.3 Clarify with client the role of financial counsellor and expectations of the representative agency
- 1.4 Explain rights and responsibilities of client and counsellor in the financial counselling process
- 1.5 Clarify client expectations and needs to ensure their issues and motivations are suited to financial counselling
- 1.6 Make an appropriate *referral* if *client need is identified as outside scope of own work role*
- 1.7 Explain confidentiality policy of the representative agency

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA****2. Assess client's financial situation**

- 2.1 Collect information on client's financial situation including relevant personal issues
- 2.2 Examine and analyse the material with client to identify areas for further investigation
- 2.3 Seek additional information as required, including the *status and validity of contracts*
- 2.4 Highlight important features of the client's financial position
- 2.5 Assist client to identify areas where they want to take action
- 2.6 Identify and discuss client's legal rights and responsibilities

3. Discuss options with the client

- 3.1 Work with the client to establish a list of concerns
- 3.2 Identify areas for possible action and prioritise to reflect client's concerns
- 3.3 Provide information regarding client responsibilities and rights in relation to individual debts and overall financial situation
- 3.4 Discuss with client potential consequences of various options

4. Develop *action plan* in partnership with client

- 4.1 Work with the client to prioritise areas for action immediately and in the longer term
- 4.2 Assist client to identify workable *strategies to address their financial concerns*
- 4.3 Assist client to develop their own action plans to address their circumstances
- 4.4 Discuss need for advocacy or negotiation by client and/or financial counsellor

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- | | |
|--|---|
| 5. Provide and evaluate ongoing support | 5.1 Ask client about their interest in ongoing support |
| | 5.2 Identify areas where clients may require referral to specialists agencies or professionals |
| | 5.3 Identify range of support services able to be provided by the organisation and others |
| | 5.4 Develop and implement with the client an ongoing plan defining any support to be provided |
| | 5.5 With the client, work through roles and responsibilities of client and counsellor in the support framework |
| | 5.6 Implement processes to evaluate effectiveness of support provided to the client by the financial counsellor |
| | 5.7 Revise support services in the light of evaluation feedback |
| | 5.8 Terminate the financial counselling process in line with organisation procedures and professional role requirements and provide referrals as agreed with client |
| | |
| 6. Maintain client records as required in a financial counselling agency | 6.1 Implement processes to keep accurate records of financial counselling sessions in accordance with organisation and privacy requirements |
| | 6.2 Record appropriate file notes and retain relevant documentation taking into account professional and legal requirements |
| | 6.3 Maintain confidentiality of records in accordance with professional and legal requirements |
| | 6.4 Secure client records for storage, archiving and destruction as per organisation and privacy requirements |
| | 6.5 Prepare and maintain statistical records in line with organisation requirements |

ELEMENT

7. Participate in reflective practice processes

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

7.1 Implement *professional supervision* in accordance with organisation policy and procedures

7.2 Maintain knowledge of current industry information and best practice in financial counselling and utilise in professional practice

7.3 Undertake *professional development activities* to meet organisation and industry requirements

7.4 Ensure reflective practice is consistent with relevant codes of practice and ethical guidelines

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level required for this unit.

Essential knowledge:

The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to effectively do the task outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage the task and manage contingencies in the context of the identified work role

These include knowledge of:

- Client-centred, strengths-based approaches and other counselling models consistent with these approaches
- Concept of and legal implications of informed consent
- Framework for dealing with ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest
- Confidentiality and duty of care in a financial counselling context
- Agency policies and procedures
- Scope of practice for financial counselling and associated work roles
- Client rights and responsibilities within a financial counselling context
- Legal and financial framework
- Referral networks / resources
- Human, legal and welfare rights

Essential skills:

It is critical that the candidate demonstrate the ability to:

- Provide a supportive environment for clients to enter into a financial counselling process
- Obtain, organise and analyse client data
- Interview clients to identify client issues
- Facilitate client decision-making and planning
- Identify appropriate strategies for client to resolve financial issues and improve their financial management
- Work in a non-judgemental manner
- Demonstrate application of skills in:
 - communication
 - research

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- reading and interpreting contracts and other relevant documents
- clearly presenting opinions and information

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for this Training Package.

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate this unit of competency:

- The individual being assessed must provide evidence of specified essential knowledge as well as skills
- This unit is best assessed in the workplace or in a simulated workplace under the normal of range conditions
- Assessment should be gathered on one or more occasions but must reflect the normal range of client situations encountered in the workplace

Access and equity considerations:

- All workers in community services should be aware of access, equity and human rights issues in relation to their own area of work
- All workers should develop their ability to work in a culturally diverse environment
- In recognition of particular issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, workers should be aware of cultural, historical and current issues impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Assessors and trainers must take into account relevant access and equity issues, in particular relating to factors impacting on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and communities

EVIDENCE GUIDE

Context of and specific resources for assessment:

- This unit can be assessed independently, however holistic assessment practice with other community services units of competency is encouraged
- Resources required for assessment of this unit include access to:
 - an appropriate workplace where assessment can take place or simulation of realistic workplace setting for assessment

Method of assessment:

- In cases where the learner does not have the opportunity to cover all relevant aspects in the work environment, the remainder should be assessed through realistic simulations, projects, previous relevant experience or oral questioning on 'What if?' scenarios
- Assessment of this unit of competence will usually include observation of processes and procedures, oral and/or written questioning on Essential knowledge and skills and consideration of required attitudes
- Where performance is not directly observed and/or is required to be demonstrated over a 'period of time' and/or in a 'number of locations', any evidence should be authenticated by colleagues, supervisors, clients or other appropriate persons

Related units:

This unit is part of a suite of units that describe the financial counselling process and are to be assessed concurrently or sequentially:

- CHCFIN501A Identify and apply technical information to assist clients with financial issues
- CHCFIN502A Facilitate the financial counselling process
- CHCFIN503A Develop and use financial counselling tools and techniques

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Add any essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts.

Client information relating to their financial situation and relevant personal details will include:

- Income and entitlements
- Credit and debt commitments
- Assets
- Household expenditure
- Possible sources of financial assistance
- Employment status
- Constituents of Household
- Any personal issues with direct impact on the financial situation

Status and validity of contracts may include:

- Original documents
- Signatories
- Guarantors
- Co-borrowers
- Timeframe
- Contract calculations
- Security
- Payment history

Action plan may be:

- Short term or long term

RANGE STATEMENT

Strategies to address their financial concerns may include:

- Assessment of the legality of debts
- Assessment of possible legal remedies
- Development of a money plan
- Strategies for increasing income
- Strategies for decreasing expenditure
- Strategies for reducing credit and debt problems
- Referral to other appropriate professionals

Referral to range of support services that may address client issues may include:

- Government income support agencies
- Support agencies for mental health, domestic violence, alcohol and other drugs (AOD) issues, gambling counselling etc.
- Accommodation agencies including emergency housing agencies
- Community health centres
- Family support agencies
- Local community support networks
- Financial assistance agencies
- Emergency relief agencies
- Dispute Resolution Services
- Free legal services
- Other Counselling services

Professional supervision may include:

- Supervision by a senior financial counsellor
- Debriefing
- Mentor group meetings
- Review with peers
- Interagency meetings to discuss cases

Professional development activities may include:

- In-house training
- External training
- Attendance at conferences, seminars
- Clinical supervision
- Attendance at industry association activities
- Case presentations/discussions

RANGE STATEMENT

Client need is identified as outside scope of own work role may include, for example:

- Specific financial situations requiring specialist counselling
- Indicators of related on non-related behavioural, emotional, psychological and/or mental health issues
- Indicators of addictive behaviour

Unit Sector(s)

Not Applicable