

Questions to ask a Counsellor before Committing to a Contract of Counselling

This information has been compiled to assist the public to identify and select a professional counsellor.

1. Do you abide by a code of conduct (ethics) that outlines my rights? Can I have a copy?
2. Do you have professional indemnity insurance?
3. Are you a financial registered member of a National Professional Body of Counsellors? (Some of the peak national organisations are Australian Counselling Association (ACA), Australian Psychological Society (APS)).
4. Do you receive regular Professional Supervision?
5. What organisation are you a member of? (A current, dated and signed certificate of registration should be displayed in the counselling room). Is it a national organisation?
6. What are your hours and do I need an appointment?
7. What are your hourly rates and are there any other costs involved?
8. How long is a normal counselling session? (Sessions should be between 40 & 60 minutes on average no longer than 2 hours).
9. What happens if the session goes over time?
10. What are my rights of recall?
11. Do you take notes, what happens to them and can I read them, if not why?
12. What are your counselling qualifications and are they recognised? All non-tertiary Diplomas should be accredited through a state government authority eg VETEC, VETAB, VEET and preferable recognised by a peak industry body.

If a counsellor answers no to any of questions 1, 2, 3 & 4 that counsellor may not meet the minimum industry standard.

Counselling in Australia is an unregulated industry, this means anyone can claim to be a Counsellor.

If you choose a counsellor who is a member (not associate or student) of a National Professional Body then you are assured, that counsellor meets the minimum industry standards.

These standards include relevant education, experience, professional supervision and ongoing professional development. If you are in any doubt as to whether a counsellor meets the industry standards ring the ACA.