



**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION**

**MAY - AGUST 2025 SEMESTER
COURSE CODE: MFT 507 AND MCP 509
COURSE TITLE: PROFESSIONAL, ETHICAL AND LEGAL
ISSUES IN COUNSELLING
DATE: ... AUGUST 2025
DURATION: 3 HOURS
TIME: 5.30PM**

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Read the instructions and questions carefully before you write the answers.
- This Exam has TWO SECTIONS.
- **SECTION A** is Compulsory.
- Answer any **TWO** questions in **SECTION B**

SECTION A : COMPULSORY (20 MARKS)

QUESTION ONE

a) Study the case below and answer the questions.

Sarah, a licensed counsellor with five years of experience, works at a community mental health centre. She is counselling James, a 28-year-old client who has been attending weekly sessions for three months to address anxiety and depression. During a session, James discloses that he has been experiencing suicidal thoughts and has a plan to end his life by overdosing on prescription medication he has stockpiled. He begs Sarah not to tell anyone, stating that he trusts her and will stop coming to therapy if she breaks his confidence. Sarah is aware that James has a history of substance abuse and is currently unemployed, living alone, and estranged from his family.

- i) Examine one immediate action Sarah should take to address James's safety while preserving the therapeutic relationship as much as possible. (4 marks)
- ii) Identify any two ethical principles from a relevant counselling code of ethics that a therapist must adhere to in the above case. (4 Marks).
- iii) Discuss the legal obligations Sarah faces in her jurisdiction regarding James's suicidal ideation and plan. How might these obligations influence her decision-making? (6 Marks)

- b) There are several steps that professionals can take to ensure compliance and integrity in their counselling practice. Articulate any two steps. (6 Marks)

SECTION B : ANSWER ANY TWO (2) QUESTIONS FROM THIS SECTION

QUESTION TWO

- a) Examine one way a counsellor can address a conflict between their personal values and a client's value in therapy. (4 marks)
- b) Differentiate between legal obligations and ethical responsibilities in counselling when dealing with a client's disclosure of self-harm. (6 Marks)

QUESTION THREE

- a) Articulate any two ways that the shift to teletherapy complicates adherence to established ethical standards. (4 Marks)
- b) Explain one way that ethical principles conflict with legal requirements, and one way that professionals navigate these conflicts. (6 Marks)

QUESTION FOUR

- a) Discuss any two key personal qualities that a therapist should embody to maintain professionalism in counseling practice? (4 Marks)
- b) As a therapist, your practice involves working with clients whose cultural values emphasize family decision-making over individual choices. Articulate how would you apply the principle of autonomy from a counselling code of ethics. (6 Marks)

QUESTION FIVE

- a) Describe how laws impact counselling practice, providing one example. (4 marks)
- b) Explain how a therapist's neglect of self-care practices and their ability to maintain ethical boundaries with clients can lead to ethical violations. (6 Marks)