

Online Restorative Skills: Course Descriptor

Summary

This course takes learners through all stages of the theory and practice of the restorative process. It consists of 30 hours of direct training over 10 modules plus a further 5 hours of course work and self-directed study. Learners are assessed and, if successful, receive a certificate.

The course is equivalent to SCQF level 6 and is Approved by the Restorative Justice Council. Sacro has been delivering restorative skills courses for over 19 years, and feedback from learners has consistently been extremely positive.

Is Restorative Skills For Me?

Our experience is that most people can become competent restorative practitioners – what varies is the time and effort they need to put into learning restorative skills, and the degree of change they need to make in their style of interaction with other people. If you are used to working with people in another capacity, such as counselling, advice, guidance, or housing this will help, but it is not necessary.

If you can answer yes to the following questions, you are likely to enjoy and learn from restorative skills training:

- Do you enjoy meeting people who are different from you and may hold very different views?
- Are you interested in how other people see you, and how you come across to them?
- Do you enjoy working co-operatively rather than competitively?
- Are you interested in what motivates other people?
- Do you enjoy opportunities to discover more about yourself?

What Will Be Expected Of Me?

We aim to provide a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for learning. Our style is highly interactive and we use a lot of small group work, group discussion and role-play, as well as some written exercises. You will be assessed on whether you have successfully contributed to the course, but it is important to put this in context. We are looking for evidence of your ability to learn and use basic restorative skills and theory – we do not expect you to be expert practitioners!

What we look for from you is the following:

- To attend, and be on time for all six training days
- To participate and be open-minded
- To think about and discuss your own ways of dealing with harm
- To read the pre-course materials and complete the written exercises
- To participate appropriately in the role-play exercises.

Course Objectives

The objectives of the course are to understand:

- Your own and others' responses to harm and offending
- The main different approaches to dealing with harm and offending
- The ethics informing restorative practice
- The legal context in which restorative practice operates
- How current legislation affects restorative practice
- The role of the practitioner in different stages of the restorative process.

Learning Outcomes (LO)

Specific learning outcomes are:

- LO1 Be able to produce a reflective summary on how the course has prompted you to deal differently in your own life with causing harm and being harmed
- LO2 Demonstrate your ability to respond to and manage the different needs of persons harmed and persons responsible
- LO3 Demonstrate your ability to autonomously manage the restorative meeting, including handling heightened emotional states and ensuring needs are met
- LO4 Demonstrate your ability to autonomously manage a restorative intervention and the skills required of a restorative practitioner at different stages of the process
- LO5 Demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for the effectiveness of a restorative approach in repairing harm and addressing harmful behaviour, together with the limitations.

The Programme (M means Module)

- M1 - Handling Conflict Constructively
 - Welcome, introductions and course overview
 - Conflict - what is it and where does it come from?
- M2 - Responding to Conflict
 - Conflict management styles
 - Effective listening, summarising, and questioning
- M3 - Defence mechanisms
 - Positions and interests
- M4 - Formal or informal responses to conflict
 - Mediation or restorative
 - Review of knowledge learnt to in modules 1-4
- M5 - Course aims and methods of assessment
 - Feedback on knowledge unit*
 - Explaining restorative practice
 - Getting the story
 - Impartiality in a restorative context
- M6 - Practising staying impartial
 - Confidentiality
 - Helping people decide
 - Preparing for a restorative
 - The structure of a restorative meeting
- M7 - Introducing a meeting
 - From introductions to the facts
 - Building Agreement
 - Action plans
- M8 - Practice initial visits
 - Practice managing discussion stage of restorative meeting
- M9 - Restorative meeting practice – coaching
 - At end, negotiate submission deadline for reflective written questions
- M10 - Assessed restorative meetings
 - Next steps in restorative practice
 - Evaluation and closing

Course Structure

Days 1 and 2 can be undertaken as a separate unit by anyone wanting to understand their own and others' responses to conflict and how and when to use conflict handling skills to defuse and re-direct conflict.

Modules 1-8 are half-days, modules 9 and 10 are full days.

The trainers are there to help you and the course is designed to produce opportunities for you to learn from:

- Written information: pre-course information, the workbook and the exercise
- Discussion: in pair work, small groups and large group discussions
- Practical exercises taking through each stage of the restorative process
- Written work: the opportunity to reflect on key aspects of restorative practice
- Role-play: taking on the role of client, observer and restorative practitioner allows you to appreciate the input of all the parties
- Learners are required to attend and complete the whole course.

Written work

Written work consists of two elements: a knowledge unit with multiple choice questions, providing an introduction to some elements within restorative practice. This is followed by written reflective answers to four questions, which will be given out at M9 with the deadline negotiated on the day.

“Personable facilitation and positive approaches by facilitators were a highlight. Well balanced and thought out mix of activities and plenty interaction between learners and with facilitators led to a generally excellent experience. [learner, November 2025]

Assessment Procedure

This course is continually assessed by experienced trainers. It is designed to meet the standards of the Restorative Justice Council (RJC) and is a RJC Approved Course.

Assessment is based on the following:

- an individual's participation throughout the course
- personal reflective statements
- assessed role-play of a restorative meeting on final day.

Learners are expected to demonstrate the qualities required to be an effective restorative practitioner.

You will need to be able to:

- listen and attend to what is being said
- check out your understanding and others' understanding of what is said/heard
- ask appropriate open/closed questions at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner
- summarise facts and feelings
- rephrase and re-frame statements
- explore statements and meanings
- identify and deal with potential risks of re-traumatisation
- challenge inappropriate statements and behaviour
- identify positions and explore underlying interests
- identify and reflect common ground
- discuss and agree ways forward
- ensure the process is centred on the person harmed
- manage power imbalances
- draft a sustainable reparation agreement
- reflect on your own and others' performance
- provide feedback, demonstrating self-awareness of what worked and what could/should have been done differently

“The delivery was great, easy to follow and room for interesting discussion.”
[learner, November 2025]

Cost

The course fee is £700 per learner; group discounts are available. For organisations interested in commissioning this training, please contact us to discuss it.