



Programme Specification

Counselling and Psychotherapy [Frenchay]

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Contents

Programme Specification.....	1
Section 1: Key Programme Details.....	2
Part A: Programme Information	2
Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes	2
Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes	3
Part B: Programme Structure.....	14
Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis	15
Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks	16
Part E: Regulations	18

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Counselling and Psychotherapy [Frenchay]

Highest award: MA Counselling and Psychotherapy

Interim award: PGCert Non-Clinical Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies

Interim award: PGDip Non-Clinical Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: Yes

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CHSS School of Social Sciences, College of Health, Science & Society

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies:

British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP)

Modes of delivery: Part-time

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website.

For implementation from: 01 January 2020

Programme code: C84D00

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The MA Counselling and Psychotherapy is a professional practice programme which aims to ensure that your training equips you for practice by qualifying as competent, reflective practitioners who are critical thinkers and can integrate theoretical understanding with practice, research and personal awareness. The programme involves taught modules, commitment to personal therapy throughout the training, clinical work and supervision, and the completion of a small-scale research project. The programme is designed to support your development as a trainee psychotherapeutic counsellor and to integrate your ongoing professional practice with academic study at Masters level.

The programme is delivered as a three-year, part-time, course and on graduation you will be eligible to apply to register with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) as a professional qualified counsellor. The programme course is designed for adult learners who already have some training and experience in counselling. It incorporates principles and values which are embedded in the BACP Ethical Framework and curriculum requirements.

Content and delivery of the course is interactive, reflecting a developmental approach that covers theory, practice and personal and professional development. Personal development and self-awareness form a key element of the training; some of this is undertaken through Personal Development groupwork which is timetabled during the programme day. The programme adopts an Integrative Relational Approach which is consistent with working in ways that empower clients and also demonstrates the high standards of anti-discriminatory practice appropriate to the pluralistic nature of society today.

Features of the programme: The Core Curriculum is guided and informed by BACP requirements which are laid down in the BACP 'Gold Book' Accreditation of Training Courses. This states the key domains of knowledge, skill and application for counselling and psychotherapy practice.

You are required to be in personal counselling/psychotherapy with an accredited

counsellor/psychotherapist for the duration of the course. Your learning from this forms an essential aspect of your personal and professional development and is relevant to all assignments, whether written or practical. You will submit logs of personal therapy hours which will be signed off by your individual therapist.

You are required to maintain a journal through which you monitor your personal development; this provides a source of reflection/learning for assignments on personal development.

The integration of teaching, learning and assessment strategies on the programme prepares learners for professional individual accreditation (BACP) following graduation.

The Programme is linked to potential employers and professional bodies who contribute to the programme through direct teaching involvement, provision of counselling placements, consultation, through clinical supervision, and general feedback. This synthesis ensures a reflective and responsive platform from which learning and skills can be developed in real-life professional work contexts, and where dialogue between stake-holders ensures enhancement of the curriculum.

References:

Core Curriculum extracted from Towards Regulation: The Standards, Benchmarks and Training requirements for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP 2007).

Accreditation of Training Courses (including the Core Curriculum) 2009 Scheme, 5th edition – amended 2012.

Educational Aims: The educational aims of this programme are to:

Provide a stimulating and supportive learning environment which will enable you to develop skills in theoretical learning, personal and professional development, research, and as independent, self-directed, critical and reflective learners. To help you achieve

this the programme offers variety, flexibility and creative methods of teaching and

learning to enhance opportunity for learning, transferrable skills, and the development of higher level critical thinking skills. Develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes

needed to establish and maintain positive and collaborative relationships with team members and other colleagues, disciplines and agencies.

Prepare you for a professional qualification which meets University guidelines for study at a Masters level and Professional Body (BACP) requirements for training. By the end of the programme you will achieve a high level of clarity in your oral and written communications including your communications with other professionals. You will

develop a comprehensive understanding of knowledge, skills, and the personal and professional development necessary to practice competently as autonomous Psychotherapeutic Counsellors.

Support you to develop expertise and competence in the professional and ethical practice of counselling using a Relational - Integrative model of therapy, and to understand how to select or modify approaches to the individual needs of clients.

Enable you to understand, evaluate and respond to current issues within counselling and psychotherapy disciplines. You will be supported to develop the ability to question and challenge practice, theory and evidence, with confidence and to take an active role as a member of a professional community.

Facilitate awareness and working knowledge of research methodology to enable you to plan, carry out and evaluate small-scale research projects that contribute to the knowledge-base related to therapy, therapeutic change and aspects of placement provision, and to display originality of thought in initiating the research project.

Support your development throughout supervised practice-placements. Placements provide the essential client and organizational-based learning experience that is necessary to the process of becoming an effective Psychotherapeutic Counsellor.

The

University of the West of England model allows for on-going integration of learning between the placement experience and what is being taught and facilitated at the University.

Introduce you to the concept of a continuum of mental wellbeing through to severe psychological and emotional distress and to foster an awareness of the influence of social, political, and cultural factors on mental health and the interrelatedness of psychological and physical symptoms.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Knowledge and Understanding

- A1. Articulate and critique the theory of key Integrative Relational approaches within counselling and integrate this into models for practice and ways of understanding the development of psychological problems and client issues.
- A2. Assess client problems/presentations through constructing and working with case formulations from different theoretical perspectives, evidencing:
 - Knowledge of when and how to carry out specific interventions
 - Ability to assess effectiveness of interventions/ techniques
 - Possession of a sufficiently wide repertoire of interventions or methods of working with clients.
- A3. Give a critical account of developmental theories of human emotional and social development, transition, and throughout the life-span; within the context of interpersonal and family relationships.
- A4. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the dynamics and meanings of relationship including therapeutic relationship and relationships in the wider context.
- A5. Articulate in-depth knowledge of the BACP ethical framework and codes of conduct in relation to counselling practice and responsibilities in the wider profession.

- A6. Evidence awareness of legal and ethical implications and scope for psychotherapeutic counselling interventions, particularly demonstrating understanding of safeguarding and professional suitability policies.
- A7. Exercise high levels of judgment, discretion and decision making in practice through:
- Knowledge of systemic, psycho-social and other contexts which affect the psychological well-being of clients.
- Awareness of the impact of the counselling agency on the client.
- A8. Critically understand theories relating to the influence of personal and group value systems and philosophy on practice and on group-process.
- A9. Understand roles and boundary issues around communication and collaboration within team and multi-disciplinary work settings.
- A10. Critically discuss the importance and relevance of Culture, Diversity and Political considerations, including anti-discriminatory practice, and issues of power in counselling theory and practice.
- A11. Evaluate the contribution of psychopharmacology to psychotherapeutic counselling through understanding the effects of medication and its relevance for client-work.
- A12. Demonstrate a critical understanding of common presenting problems and more complex presentations.
- A13. Demonstrate the capacity to develop and use support networks and clinical supervision; demonstrating awareness of supervisor/supervisee responsibilities and how supervision is used this to address professional and developmental needs.
- A14. Demonstrate enhanced knowledge of research processes and evidence based practice, including the ability to evaluate and synthesise a wide range of evidence, methodologies and theoretical frameworks.
- A15. Critically review a wide range of research evidence and literature and use relevant and up to date materials to inform and optimize counselling effectiveness.

Intellectual Skills

- B1. Demonstrate understanding and application of the nature and purpose of counselling and psychotherapy with a focus on how internal and external worlds impact on the dynamics of the therapeutic relationship. This includes an advanced awareness of how unconscious processes affect therapy.
- B2. Use critical reflection in the learning process to explore the relationship between theory and practice and to analyse material and argument across the range of curriculum areas.
- B3. Analyse correspondence between childhood experience/development and issues presented in adult clients.
- B4. Comprehend and articulate the distinctive identity of the psychotherapeutic counsellor which is characterised by authentic and empathic engagement; consistently accepting the subjectivity of the client as valid and meaningful.
- B5. Comprehend and articulate the distinctive identity of the psychotherapeutic counsellor which is characterised by authentic and empathic engagement; consistently accepting the subjectivity of the client as valid and meaningful.
- B6. Comprehend and articulate the distinctive identity of the psychotherapeutic counsellor which is characterised by authentic and empathic engagement; consistently accepting the subjectivity of the client as valid and meaningful.
- B7. Synthesise information utilising creative and innovative methods to integrate learning gained from personal and professional development.
- B8. Critically reflect on the experience of taking part in the Personal Development group, large-group and inter-group settings.
- B9. Critically reflect on the experience of taking part in the Personal Development group, large-group and inter-group settings.
- B10. Demonstrate awareness of meta communication, and the relevance of this to personal development, training and practice.
- B11. Articulate high levels of judgement, discretion and autonomous decision making to ensure continuous improvement and development in clinical work.
- B12. Assess and manage risk in complex situations, and in doing so, develop effective relationships with clients, colleagues, and professionals.
- B13. Demonstrate effective inter-disciplinary and team work skills, alongside the ability to work independently and accept professional accountability and responsibility.

- B14. Evaluate new skills acquired in the context of the placement situation and articulate a developed and critically reflective orientation to practice.

Subject/Professional Practice Skills

- C1. You will be confident in assessing and formulating client concerns from an Integrative-Relational perspective.
- C2. Work with developmental stages and processes; discuss the aetiology of psychological distress with reference to social and family networks, past and present.
- C3. Manage assessments (including risk assessments), reviews, endings and referrals; understand the process of managing the therapeutic frame.
- C4. Work ethically with clients; demonstrating understanding of a range of ethical issues in therapeutic work and the therapeutic relationship; demonstrate understanding of the broader context of ethical decision making in relation to clinical issues.
- C5. Demonstrate an advanced awareness of a range of client issues, including difference and diversity, mental health, specific presenting problems, and legal and organisational contexts.
- C6. Critically examine counselling as a form of cultural practice; demonstrate awareness of political and social issues.
- C7. Demonstrate sound, independent, judgement and decision making; show an awareness of the level of your competencies and ability to act appropriately; identify your strengths and needs at any given time, and monitor future development needs; maintain fitness to practice.
- C8. Make effective use of opportunities for self-development; describe experiences of increasing self-awareness.
- C9. Make intentional use of the self in the therapeutic relationship.
- C10. Demonstrate application of learning from large group and inter-group settings to counselling practice.
- C11. Awareness of the value of counselling supervision and own supervisory needs. Make effective use of supervision.
- C12. Counsel in a helpful and effective way.
- C13. Carry out independent research and complete a small-scale research project.

C14. Demonstrate that you meet BACP requirements that aim to ensure public safety (BACP B6.4):

Readiness/competence to practice counselling

Ability to manage and monitor the therapeutic process.

Transferable Skills and other attributes

- D1. Communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- D2. Evaluate and critique complex theoretical ideas, material and practice learning; apply to practice/professional contexts.
- D3. Demonstrate interpersonal and group skills through participation in small and large-group experiential learning environments, seminar discussions, workshops, supervision and professional placement meetings.
- D4. Use self and life experience reflectively.
- D5. Give and receive positive and negative feedback, reflect and make appropriate changes.
- D6. Monitor capacity to cope with varying emotional demands.
- D7. Demonstrate capacity to cope with intellectual, professional and academic requirements.
- D8. Practise and promote anti-discriminatory practice.
- D9. Draw on personal and professional support.
- D10. Use a range of IT skills through accessing course resources online, preparing work for submission, assessment, and in practices related to the professional placement requirements.
- D11. Communicate understanding and an advanced capability for listening and tuning in to the emotional state of others, empathically demonstrating this understanding.
- D12. Demonstrate commitment to ongoing personal and professional development.
- D13. Work professionally with other professional groups and agencies.
- D14. Be accountable and responsible in working practices.
- D15. Identify personal goals for further professional development.

Assessment strategy: The MA Counselling and Psychotherapy is assessed through formative and summative methods across the course. This ensures that you will address both theory and competence, and evaluate knowledge and competencies in relation to the learning outcomes for the programme. The implication is that you are ready to engage in clinical practice immediately after the qualification is awarded.

Assessment tools reflect the independent learning and teaching methods employed and ensure that your work is evaluated from a variety of perspectives. Constructive feedback builds upon your strengths and takes a developmental approach to any difficulties you may experience.

Learners have different strengths and preferences for different assessment methods. Therefore, the programme deliberately utilises the following range of assessment approaches:

Written assignments / essays, case study and research project

Presentations

Counselling skills practice

Online practice competencies

Supervision of counselling practice

Logs of counselling practice hours

Logs of supervised counselling practice

Supervisor's report from placement

Logs / record of personal therapy

Reflections on personal and professional development.

To meet PSRB requirements, assessments include the requirement to attend a minimum of 80% of taught sessions in any module to pass that module. In the event that students do not attend to the minimum requirement, they would usually be required to retake the module in the following academic year. Finally, students must successfully complete each year of training before progressing to the following year, to ensure that standards of clinical ethics and best practice are maintained whilst the

student is in placement.

While the staff team hold overall responsibility for assessing students' performance, External Placement Supervisors comment on progress and professional development needs via a report at the end of each year. The counselling and psychotherapy profession relies on collaborative processes, and there are many actual and potential partners engaged in this at any one time (e.g. BACP, the university, clinical supervisors, trainers, agencies, statutory, and non-statutory services).

You are expected to provide evidence of client practice hours through:

Counselling Practice Log

Supervision of Counselling Practice Log - Students complete a minimum of 200 Supervised Counselling Practice Hours, which must be signed off by their Placement Agency (Counselling Supervisor), and by a member of the Core Teaching Staff Team at UWE.

Supervisor's Report.

These documents are signed off by the Placement Supervisor and evidence successful completion.

You are expected to attend one-to-one personal weekly therapy with an accredited counsellor or psychotherapist throughout the duration of the course (minimum of 30 hours per academic year). The nature of the therapy undertaken is confidential to both student (client) and therapist. However, the learning that takes place in the 'client' role is crucial to the personal and professional development of a sound and competent counselling practitioner.

While personal therapy sits outside of programmed hours, learning from this is assessed within written assignments, particularly the Case Study in Year 1, and the Viva in Year 3, where you are asked to comment on and integrate learning from your

personal therapy. This is essential and relevant to all assignments, whether written or practical. You will submit logs of personal therapy hours which will be signed off by your individual therapist.

Student support: The establishment of extended placement opportunities in the second year and the higher level academic requirements of the Masters level, enhance students' progress, enabling practise at an advanced level. The accrediting organisations (BACP, UKCP and BPC) are currently mapping the skills and abilities needed at different levels of training and our proposals fit with the requirements for Advanced Qualified Counsellor and Psychotherapist status. The programme will bring you closer to achieving advanced skills, and practice hours that contribute to individual professional accreditation at this level (450 hours, 200 of which will be achieved during training). Achievement at this level makes graduates even more attractive to the employment market as you will be equipped to respond to complex mental health issues and presentations.

Learning and teaching activities are supported and regulated through:

External Examiner feedback

Placement Provider feedback

Supervisor's Report

BACP Gold Standards Criteria

BACP accreditation and re-accreditation processes

Staff-student Liaison

Student feedback

A programme of CPD opportunities in the second year of training will enable students to meet with other therapists and students from different programmes.

The requirement to undertake two different placements will add to graduates professional experience and knowledge.

An annual Placement Fair and Keynote Speaker now features as part of the widening approach to promoting placements and enabling students to find out more

about the differing potential placements on offer to them. This also gives the placement providers an opportunity to meet with the staff team as well as current and prospective students.

There are regular placement meetings usually held termly at UWE, (for the past 15 years) and these are an important approach to working co-operatively with placement agencies who offer our students the opportunity to work as volunteer counsellors with their clients.

All students and placement providers are provided with a Placement Handbook outlining the requirements of the course in line with the BACP's Gold Standards Criteria.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

The student must take 75 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory modules

The student must take 75 credits from the modules in Compulsory modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
USPKFK-30-M	Professional Practice, Skills and Supervision 1 2023-24	30
USPKFH-15-M	Professional Practice: Personal Development 1 2023-24	15
USPKFM-30-M	Theory and Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy 1 2023-24	30

Year 2

The student must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Year 2 Compulsory modules

The student must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
USPKFL-30-M	Professional Practice, Skills and Supervision 2 2024-25	30
USPKFJ-15-M	Professional Practice: Personal Development 2 2024-25	15
USPKFN-15-M	Theory and Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy 2 2024-25	15

Year 3

The student must take 45 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Year 3 Compulsory modules

The student must take 45 credits from the modules in Compulsory modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
USPKFF-15-M	Evidencing Work Based Learning – Counselling and Psychotherapy 2025-26	15
USPKFG-30-M	Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy 2025-26	30

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Graduates benefit from a unique combination of university resources and intensive focus on practice. At the end of the programme they have key skills to assess and formulate client concerns from an Integrative-Relational perspective, including:

Specialisms; experiences in diverse areas of practice, familiarity with mental health.

Ability to maintain professional and ethical boundaries.

Safeguarding; working within legal and organisational contexts.

Ability to conduct research that contributes to professional knowledge.

Critical skills learned through MA level study.

Advanced practitioner status; counsellors who are resilient and able to deal with the increasing complexity of mental health and psycho-social issues of clients.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

The design of the MA Counselling and Psychotherapy has been developed with reference to a number of key guidelines, policies and strategies. External influences have been considered e.g. professional accrediting body requirements (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, BACP) and QAA.

The Core Curriculum is guided and informed by BACP requirements which are laid down in:

BACP 'Gold Book' Accreditation of Training Courses, which states the key domains of knowledge, skill and application for counselling and psychotherapy training and practice (Appendix 1).

QAA Framework Benchmark statements for Masters Degree Counselling and Psychotherapy (2013; Appendix 3)

BACP Ethical Framework (Appendix 2).

The University Professional Suitability Policy and Procedure, Fitness to study and Student Conduct Policy have particular relevance for the programme and provide a supportive but rigorous structure which allows the programme team to provide a duty of care to the public (and the student) if there are concerns about a student's fitness to practice. This mirrors requirements outlined in the BACP Ethical Framework and curriculum documentation.

Constraints:

BACP requires (Gold Book, A6, p.5) that the course must have at least two core

members of staff who have substantive involvement in admission, assessment, course management and decision making, in addition to teaching.

The majority of the course staff should have current BACP counsellor/psychotherapist accreditation or be registered with an appropriate professional body to an equivalent level and should be in current, supervised practice (Gold Book, A8, p5).

The target Award is a professional Masters rather than a traditional MSc where the final year is focused on a research dissertation.

QAA Framework. Benchmark statements for Masters Degree Counselling and Psychotherapy (2013)

Benchmark standards are set at the threshold level for graduates at level 7 in The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or Scottish higher education level honours in The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland, and represent the minimum expectations in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities required for work as a counsellor or psychotherapist (6.1). Therefore, all students should be competent in all aspects of the standard before completion of their qualification. The training provider will make an assessment on whether these areas have been suitably evidenced by the trainee.

QAA states that the following additional statements describe the threshold level of competence for holders of a Master's degree in Counselling and/or Psychotherapy.

Knowledge base extends to a systematic understanding and critical awareness of topics which are informed by the forefront of the discipline of counselling/psychotherapy.

Show a critical awareness of the history of ideas, the cultural context, and social and political theories that inform and influence the practice of counselling and psychotherapy.

An appropriate methodology can be identified for dealing with complex problems or those of an unfamiliar or unpredictable nature.

Critical discussion and analysis of complex concepts and work is carried out independently and with some originality.

Ability to successfully complete a substantial empirical research project, systematic review or systematic case study informed by wide current understandings in the discipline.

All statements are fully supported in the Core Curriculum (BACP Gold Book) and key areas are outlined and expanded in the mapping section above.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.