



University of the
West of England

CORPORATE AND ACADEMIC SERVICES

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Part 1: Basic Data	
Awarding Institution	University of the West of England.
Teaching Institution	University of the West of England.
Delivery Location	Frenchay, Bristol.
Faculty responsible for programme	Health and Applied Sciences
Department responsible for programme	Health and Social Sciences
Modular Scheme Title	Professional Doctorate
Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body Links	British Psychological Society Health and Care Professions Council
Highest Award Title	Doctor of Counselling Psychology (DCounsPsych)
Default Award Title	None
Fall-back Award Title	NA
Interim Award Titles	Post Graduate Certificate Psychotherapeutic Studies Post Graduate Diploma Psychotherapeutic Studies MSc Psychological Therapy
UWE Progression Route	NA
Mode(s) of Delivery	FT (3 years) / PT (4 years) / PT (5 years)
Codes	UCAS: ISIS2:
	JACS: HESA:
Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements	HCPC Standards of Proficiency HCPC Standards of Education and Training BPS Subject Benchmarks for Applied Psychology, 2013 QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: - Placement Learning - Postgraduate Research programmes - Benchmark statements for counselling and psychotherapy UK Council for Graduate Education Report on Professional Doctorates
CAP Approval Date	24 March 2015
Valid from	September 2015
Review Date	September 2020
Version	6.1

Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme

The aims of the programme are:

- To foster in students a questioning and evaluative approach to the philosophy, practice, research and theory which constitutes counselling psychology;
- To develop expertise and competence in the professional and ethical practice of counselling psychology using a relational psychodynamic model and cognitive behavioural approaches to therapy;
- To develop a critical understanding of the current state of knowledge in counselling psychology theory and practice;
- To prepare students to work as counselling psychologists in a variety of settings and to develop transferable skills;
- To provide a learning environment which facilitates the development of student autonomy in the learning process and encourages self directed study;
- To develop the skills of analysis shown by comprehensiveness of approach, depth of understanding and critical self reflection;
- To enable students to conduct enquiry leading to the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research and to satisfy peer review by accomplished and recognised scholars in the field;
- To enable students to conceptualise, design, implement and review an original research project;
- To enable students to achieve a high level of presentation and dissemination of ideas in the academic world and wider community;
- To enable students to achieve a high level of clarity in their oral and written communications as counselling psychologists, including their communication with other professions;
- To enable students to achieve a high level of critical reflection on their own work;
- To stimulate a commitment from students to ongoing personal and professional development and inquiry and to lifelong learning as reflective practitioners;
- To foster an awareness and appreciation of the significance of wider social, cultural and political domains within which counselling psychology operates;
- To satisfy a demand for counselling psychology training which is not currently available in south west England or Wales.

Programme requirements for the purposes of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)

NA

Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

The award route provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

A. Knowledge and Understanding (subject specific)

The programme provides students with an advanced knowledge of counselling psychology theory and practice. It will cover knowledge of the professional contexts in which students are expected to operate. Students will learn the theory and practice of two models of psychological therapy, the Relational Psychodynamic and Cognitive Behavioural. They will critically compare and contrast these models, and consider how they can be combined in an integrative approach. They will consider the range of generic knowledge and skills that are necessary to practice as a psychotherapist, including ethics, boundaries, and client diversity. In preparation for the Doctoral thesis, they will also cover research skills appropriate

Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

for topics relevant to counselling psychology. They will be made familiar with the relevant research literature, and have the opportunity to consider the range of questions which might be asked in a research project relevant to counselling psychology practice. In line with the revised BPS accreditation criteria (BPS, 2014), they will also consider the theory and practice of clinical supervision and leadership, plus the use of psychometric and neuropsychological tests.

B. Intellectual Skills (generic)

In terms of intellectual skills, students will be required to develop the cognitive capacity to compare and contrast competing intellectual ideas. They will acquire the skills to interrogate the research literature, and produce a synthesis on a particular topic. They will be required to demonstrate an awareness of their own personal process and show an ability to reflect on their practice and how this relates to their developing self-awareness. They will demonstrate the ability to design and carry out an original and substantial research project, to a doctoral level of significance and rigour. This will demonstrate that they can derive a novel question arising from the literature, as well as the ability to critique previous findings.

C. Subject/Professional/Practical Skills (subject specific)

Students will be required to demonstrate a range of skills related to professional practice. They will demonstrate the ability to assess and formulate client concerns. They will produce evidence that they can begin, maintain and end therapeutic relationships appropriately. They will demonstrate the maintenance of professional and ethical boundaries. They will demonstrate an advanced awareness of client issues, including difference and diversity, mental health, and specific presenting problems. They will show an awareness of their own competencies and act appropriately, including the identification of future development needs.

D. Transferable Skills and other attributes (generic)

Through the programme the students will demonstrate a variety of transferable skills. They will demonstrate that they can read and analyse complex academic arguments. They will demonstrate the use of written and spoken communication skills. They will demonstrate good IT skills, both through accessing the course resources online, and preparing their work for submission and assessment. They will show advanced skills in listening and hearing, and being able to communicate understanding. They will demonstrate an advanced capability of tuning in to the emotional state of others, and then empathically demonstrating this understanding.

Key to modules:

Module number	Code	Name
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1. USPK6A-15-M Principles of Counselling Psychology
2. USPK6B-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 1
3. USPK6C-15-M Personal and Professional Development 1
4. USPK6D-30-M Systemic Thinking and Practice in Counselling Psychology
5. USPK6E-15-M Research in Counselling Psychology
6. USPJK-15-M Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Psychology
7. USPK6F-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 2
8. USPK6G-15-M Personal and Professional Development 2
9. USPK6H-30-M Exploring Client Issues in Counselling Psychology
10. USPK6K-15-M Professional Issues in Counselling Psychology
11. USPK6J-30-M Personal and Professional Development 3
12. USPK6M-30-M Advanced Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology
13. USPK6N-60-M Master's Thesis in Psychological Therapy (Optional)

Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

Learning outcomes. At the end of this program students will be able to:		Mod No: 1	USPK6A-15-M	Mod No: 2	USPK6B-30-M	Mod No: 3	USPK6C-15-M	Mod No: 4	USPK6D-30-M	Mod No: 5	USPK6E-15-M	Mod No: 6	USPJVK-15-M	Mod No: 7	USPK6F-30-M	Mod No: 8	USPK6G-15-M	Mod No: 9	USPK6H-30-M	Mod No: 10	USPK6K-15-M	Mod No: 11	USPK6J-30-M	Mod No: 12	USPK6M-30-M	Mod No: 13	USPK6N-60-M	Doctoral thesis	
		A. Knowledge and Understanding																											
1.	Demonstrate a critical knowledge and awareness of the relational psychodynamic and cognitive behavioral approaches to psychotherapy.			x	x									x	x	x													
2.	Critically discuss the importance and relevance of Culture, Diversity and Political considerations, including anti-discriminatory practice, in Counselling Psychology Theory and Practice.	x					x											x	x										
3.	Demonstrate a critical awareness of Theory and Research relevant to individual and social functioning in Counselling Psychology.	x	x			x	x					x						x			x								
4.	Give a critical account of the place of psychometric and neuropsychological tests in the practice of counselling psychology.																			x									
5.	Describe and evaluate the research evidence on process and outcomes of Psychological Therapies.		x			x	x					x						x					x						
6.	Demonstrate a critical and in depth knowledge of theories of Psychopathology and systems of diagnosis.		x			x							x					x											
7.	Have an advanced and critical knowledge of a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods.								x	x																x	x		
8.	Give a critical account of theories of human, cognitive, emotional, behavioural, social, neurological and physiological functioning relating to counselling psychology.		x			x							x					x				x							
9.	Critically evaluate the contribution of psychopharmacology to counselling psychology.													x				x											
10.	Demonstrate a critical awareness of philosophical bases of psychological theory and knowledge.	x										x																	
11.	Demonstrate an in depth knowledge of ethical frameworks & codes of conduct in relation to client work and research including the philosophical basis of ethical codes.	x				x	x	x										x											
12.	Critically evaluate theories around the nature of development and transition through the lifespan and within the context of interpersonal and family relationships.		x			x							x												x				
13.	Demonstrate a critical understanding of The dynamics and meanings of relationship including		x										x												x				

Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

significant problems through searching the professional literature and design and carry out appropriate empirical studies to address these.																				
C. Subject/Professional/Practical skills.																				
1. Demonstrate competence in the assessment, formulation and evaluation of client issues.			X						X					X						
2. Work with developmental stages, processes and deficits.		X		X					X					X						
3. Make intentional use of self in the therapeutic relationship.		X	X						X					X						
4. Manage reviews, endings and referrals.			X						X					X						
5. Work ethically with clients; demonstrate 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.	X		X						X					X						
6. Work collaboratively with clients and carers in their best interests in diagnostic and treatment decision making.			X						X					X						
7. Demonstrate sound, independent, judgment and decision making.			X						X		X	X								
8. Carry out independent research.																		X	X	
9. Use supervision appropriately.			X						X					X						
10. Practice competently, knowing own level of competency and maintaining fitness to practice.			X						X					X						
11. Conduct risk assessments.			X						X					X						
12. Use interview and assessment methods, including the diagnosis of clients with complex needs.			X						X					X						
13. Plan, run and evaluate psychological groups.			X						X					X						
14. Competently use and report on psychometric and neuropsychological assessments and tests.																		X		
15. Work with other professionals in practice contexts.			X						X					X						
D. Transferable skills and other attributes.																				
1. Communicate effectively orally and in writing	X		X					X	X					X				X	X	X
2. Use a range of IT applications			X					X	X										X	X
3. Evaluate, carry out, report and defend research						X	X												X	X
4. Work as part of a team and independently			X						X					X						
5. Work self-reflectively			X						X					X						
6. Be accountable and responsible in their working practices			X						X					X						
7. Demonstrate commitment to ongoing personal and professional development	X													X						
8. Apply theoretical concepts to research and practice.			X						X					X				X	X	
9. Evaluate and criticise both ideas and practice			X	X					X					X						
10. Practise and promote anti-discrimination	X		X						X					X						
11. Use self and life experience			X	X					X					X						
12. Work co-operatively with other professional groups and agencies			X						X					X						
13. Demonstrate creativity and innovation in their work.			X						X					X						
14. Enhanced ability to identify personal goals and draw on available resources	X			X										X						

Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

Teaching and learning strategies to enable learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

On the Doctor of Counselling Psychology programme, teaching is a mix of scheduled, independent and practice based learning.

Scheduled learning includes lectures, seminars, tutorials, project supervision, demonstration, practical skills classes and workshops; supervised client work, and clinical supervision sessions.

Independent learning includes hours engaged with essential reading, case study preparation, assignment preparation and completion etc.

Practice based learning: students will be required to obtain 450 hours of clinical work with clients. Linked to this they must also evidence regular clinical supervision at a ratio of at least one hour of supervision for 8 hours of practice. They also have to achieve 60 hours of personal therapy.

Description of any Distinctive Features

The programme is one of only a few in the UK which offers a part time option alongside full time. It is also distinctive in offering a relational psychodynamic approach alongside a cognitive behavioural approach. The extent to which theoretical and practical integration is considered is also quite distinctive.

- **Personal & Professional Development** -Students are required to be in personal therapy with a registered counsellor/psychotherapist/counselling psychologist during the first two years of the course. They will be required to maintain a journal in which they monitor their personal development. A critical reflection on this journal will be part of their assessed work. The process of being a client, and becoming more self-aware, offers students a unique learning opportunity and provides structured complementary support to their professional training at UWE and is an integral part of their development as reflective practitioners. Professional ethics and standards applied to counselling psychology are considered in all years. As a part of the PPD modules, students will submit a personal and professional development portfolio of evidence which will include a case study, video/audiotapes of client work, supervision and peer assessments and a personal development review. The portfolio will form the basis for appraisal interviews with counselling psychology tutors, in which students will be required to reflect critically on the evidence of their development as practitioners.
- **Theory & Practice**-Students will engage in theory-based workshops and skills practice throughout the course. There is an emphasis on interactive and experiential modes of learning. In year one, the core theoretical model is introduced; this is an integrative, relational approach. Cognitive-Behavioural approaches are also taught and integrated into the core framework. Students will be encouraged to explore ways of incorporating social, political and cultural awareness into their counselling practice. During skills practice workshops, students will train using video feedback, role-play and live supervision. There will be an emphasis placed on integration of counselling psychology theory, practice and research with personal awareness and development. Supervision groups at UWE and on placement will provide additional support in helping students to this integration.

Research- Students will be required to carry out their own empirically based research in Counselling Psychology. In their first year of study, students will be introduced to a range of quantitative and qualitative approaches to counselling psychology and to experts in different fields of psychological research within the Department of Health and Social Sciences. Supervisory teams will be formed for each student. The supervision team will consist of a minimum of two people (Director of Studies and Second Supervisor). Normally one of these two supervisors will be a counselling psychologist, or be registered in a cognate professional discipline. In circumstances where this is not the case additional supervisory support will be offered to the supervisory team and student by a counselling psychologist, who will be available for consultation on the shape and focus of the research project.

- The students will have access to research members of the Group for Practice & Research in Counselling Psychology and established research Centres at the university such as the Centre

Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

for Appearance Research.. Students will be encouraged to attend and present posters and papers at research seminars, postgraduate research conferences and workshops.

- **Advanced Independent Study** – As students progress through the programme, it is expected that their interests and experiences will diversify and that the common taught sessions at UWE will increasingly be augmented by diverse learning experiences in their practice and in specific developmental experiences available to them in the broader world of counselling psychology. The Personal and Professional Development 3 module has been designed to include an element which will allow students in the later stages of their studies to reflect on their own learning goals and plans. This approach to learning is consistent both with the developing maturity of the students as counselling psychologists and with the programme aim of developing reflective practitioners who can critically evaluate the evidence for their own training needs and also the quality of learning experiences available to them.
- **Placement Learning** – The placement co-ordinator monitors and visits student placements to ensure that learning outcomes are consistent with those of the programme. The placement co-ordinator works closely with placement providers to ensure that the quality of the student experience meets the requirements of the programme and those of the regulatory bodies, HPC and BPS. There is an explicit process of collaboration and communication between the course and placement providers. As students progress through the programme, they are required to undertake placements which provide opportunities to practice in a range of models, modalities, contexts and time-frames of therapeutic practice and opportunities for wider professional commitments such as consultancy and service audit etc.
- **E-Learning** – Classroom and placement learning will be supplemented by the use of online computer-mediated technology. Students will be offered additional resources, via Blackboard, by which to extend their contact with the tutor and student groups and further advance their learning, both in counselling training and in the use of information technology. Through discussion boards, online peer tutorial groups, video-clip case materials and links to profession related websites, students will be encouraged to extend their opportunities to practise skills and develop critical thinking. The library resources such as PsychTHERAPY will be used extensively to illustrate practical case work. Online portfolio management systems such as PebblePad will be used for portfolio work on the programme, including all log books and supervision records.
- **Teaching and Learning Accommodation** – The counselling and counselling psychology programmes have access to specialist teaching and learning accommodation. This consists of a main counselling training room, an adjacent resources room and six specialist training rooms with fitted audio-visual recording equipment. All rooms are decorated and equipped to provide an environment conducive to the needs of counselling psychology training. In addition to this accommodation, all students on the programme are members of the faculty graduate school and have full access to the support of the Graduate School Office.

Part 5: Assessment

A: Approved to [University Regulations and Procedures](#)

Assessment Strategy

A variety of assessment types will be used across the programme to allow students to demonstrate the full range of academic and practice related learning outcomes.

In relation to the academic learning outcomes, students will be assessed using:

- exams
- theoretical essays
- presentations
- research proposals
- a final viva examination of the research thesis

Part 5: Assessment

In relation to the practice based skills, this again students will be assessed using a variety of methods which will include:

- the presentation of material from client sessions, including audio recordings, session transcripts, and for case presentations
- a logbook for each practice module
- a log of supervision hours
- a statement of personal therapy, with evidence of having completed 60 hours
- successfully completed in class skills exercises
- a critical self reflection on identity and practice

Research competencies will be assessed through some of the elements outlined above, as well as the final doctoral thesis (students wishing to exit with the MSc Psychological therapy intermediate award will need to take the optional 60 credit MSc dissertation project module).

Assessment Map

The programme encompasses a range of **assessment methods** including essays, exams, portfolios, case reports, logbooks and an oral examination. These are detailed in the following assessment map:

Assessment Map for Doctor of Counselling Psychology Programme

		Written Exam	Essay	Portfolio	Logbook	Case study or process report	Presentation	Thesis or MSc project
Compulsory Modules	Module No1 USPK6A-15-M	A (100)						
	Module No2 USPK6B-30-M		B (100)			A		
	Module No3 USPK6C-15-M			A	A	B (100)		
	Module No4 USPK6D-30-M		B (60)				A (40)	
	Module No5 USPK6E-15-M	A (25)		B (75)				
	Module No6 USPJVK-15-M	A (100)						
	Module No7 USPK6F-30-M		B (100)			A		
	Module No8 USPK6G-15-M		B (100)	A	A			
	Module No9 USPK6H-30-M		B (100)			A		
	Module No10 USPK6K-15-M	A (100)						
	Module No11 USPK6J-30-M			A	A	B (100)		
	Module No12 USPK6M-30-M			B (100)	A			
Option module	Module No13 USPK6N-60-M						A (25)	B (75)

*Assessment should be shown in terms of either **Written Exams**, **Practical exams**, or **Coursework** as indicated by the colour coding above.

Part 6: Programme Structure

This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a typical **full time student**, including:
 level and credit requirements
 interim award requirements
 module diet, including compulsory and optional modules

		Compulsory modules	Interim awards
	Year 1	USPK6A-15-M Principles of Counselling Psychology	PG Cert Psychotherapeutic Studies
		USPK6B-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 1	
		USPK6C-15-M Personal and Professional Development 1	
		USPK6D-30-M Systemic Thinking and Practice in Counselling Psychology	PG Dip Psychotherapeutic Studies
		USPK6E-15-M Research in Counselling Psychology	
		USPJVK-15-M Qualitative and Quantitative Methods	
		Optional module	
	USPK6N-60-M Master's Thesis in Psychological Therapy	MSc Psychological Therapy	
		Compulsory modules	
	Year 2	USPK6F-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 2	
		USPK6G-15-M Personal and Professional Development 2	
		USPK6H-30-M Exploring Client Issues in Counselling Psychology	
		USPK6K-15-M Professional Issues in Counselling Psychology	
		Compulsory modules	
Year 3	USPK6J-30-M Personal and Professional Development 3		
	USPK6M-30-M Advanced Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology		
	Professional doctorate thesis and viva	Doctor of Counselling Psychology	

GRADUATION

This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a typical **part time student**, including:
 level and credit requirements
 interim award requirements
 module diet, including compulsory and optional modules

		Compulsory modules	Interim awards	
ENTRY	Year 1	USPK6A-15-M Principles of Counselling Psychology	PG Cert Psychotherapeutic Studies	
		USPK6B-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 1		
		USPK6C-15-M Personal and Professional Development 1		
		USPJVK-15-M Qualitative and Quantitative Methods		
	Year 2	USPK6E-15-M Research in Counselling Psychology	PG Dip Psychotherapeutic Studies	
		USPK6D-30-M Systemic Thinking and Practice in Counselling Psychology		
		Optional module		
		USPK6N-60-M Master's Thesis in Psychological Therapy		
			Compulsory modules	
	Year 3	USPK6F-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 2		
		USPK6G-15-M Personal and Professional Development 2		
		USPK6H-30-M Exploring Client Issues in Counselling Psychology		
		USPK6K-15-M Professional Issues in Counselling Psychology		
			Compulsory modules	
	Year 4	USPK6J-30-M Personal and Professional Development 3		
		USPK6M-30-M Advanced Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology		
Professional doctorate thesis and viva				
			Doctor of Counselling Psychology	

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GRADUATION

This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a **part time student taking five years**, including:
 level and credit requirements
 interim award requirements
 module diet, including compulsory and optional modules

ENTRY	Year 1	Compulsory modules		Interim awards	
		USPK6A-15-M Principles of Counselling Psychology			PG Cert Psychotherapeutic Studies
		USPK6B-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 1			
		USPK6C-15-M Personal and Professional Development 1			
			USPJVK-15-M Qualitative and Quantitative Methods		PG Dip Psychotherapeutic Studies
	Year 2	USPK6E-15-M Research in Counselling Psychology		MSc Psychological Therapy	
		USPK6D-30-M Systemic Thinking and Practice in Counselling Psychology			
		Optional module			
		USPK6N-60-M Master's Thesis in Psychological Therapy			
			Compulsory modules		
	Year 3	USPK6F-30-M Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology 2			
		USPK6G-15-M Personal and Professional Development 2			
		USPK6H-30-M Exploring Client Issues in Counselling Psychology			
		USPK6K-15-M Professional Issues in Counselling Psychology			
			Compulsory modules		
	Year 4	USPK6J-30-M Personal and Professional Development 3			
Year 5	USPK6M-30-M Advanced Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology		Doctor of Counselling Psychology		
	Professional doctorate thesis and viva				

GRADUATION

Part 7: Entry Requirements

The University's Standard Entry Requirements apply with the following additions/exceptions:

Graduate basis for chartership with the British Psychological Society.

Normally, an upper second class or first class degree. Candidates with lower second class degrees may be admitted if they can demonstrate that there were adverse factors which affected their undergraduate performance. Evidence of additional achievement which demonstrates their potential will also be taken into account, e.g. success on a Master's level degree.

Certificate in Counselling Skills, with at least 100 hours contact time.

Experience in a helping / caring role relevant to counselling psychology.

Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

Description of **how** the following reference points and benchmarks have been used in the design of the programme:

This programme has been developed with specific reference to the following reference points and benchmarks:

- * the Quality Assurance Agency's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, and specifically the QAA's position statement on postgraduate qualifications and its descriptors for Masters and Doctoral level work. The Masters level criteria are met through the various taught modules, as noted below. The doctoral level criteria are articulated within the university's doctoral regulations and framework, and are demonstrated primarily through the research thesis.
- * the QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Postgraduate Research Programmes and Placement Learning. This programme requires all entrants to have a first degree in psychology that is recognised by the British Psychological Society as conferring graduate basis for Chartership (GBC). These programmes will be subject to scrutiny in relation to the QAA's benchmark statement for undergraduate psychology programmes.
- * A primary consideration in the design of the programme has been adherence to HCPC Standards of Proficiency and Standards of Education and Training as well as other codes of practice. In addition the programme meets requirements identified by the Membership and Professional Training Board of the BPS in its document 'Quality Assurance Policies and Practice for Postgraduate Training' (BPS, 2002) and the criteria for accreditation of postgraduate training programmes in counselling psychology laid down by the Training Committee in Counselling Psychology (TCCP, BPS, 2003) and the BPS statements for Subject Benchmarks for Applied Psychology (March 2005). Mapping documents for both HCPC and BPS requirements are available, which show how the standards are met through the modules and research requirements which make up the programme.
- * The Policy Statement on Qualifications in Counselling Psychology published by the Executive Committee of the Division of Counselling Psychology (BPS) on 24th November 2004 and printed in Counselling Psychology Review, vol. 20, No. 1, February 2005, p. 39.
- * The mission and vision statement of the University of the West of England, in particular in relation to the promotion of educational opportunity, the development of a postgraduate community, the provision of training relevant to regional needs and the development of a high reputation among employers; and
- * The needs of local employers as reflected in meetings with representatives of local health care trusts and in written responses from over sixty local chartered psychologists working in a variety of employment settings.
- * The UK Council for Graduate Education paper on Professional Doctorates (2002)
- * The UWE Doctoral Framework (2003) and Guidelines on the Use of the Professional Doctorate Framework (2005)

Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

QAA UK Quality Code for HE

QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications:

The QAA Framework provides the points of reference for setting standards across various levels of education. UWE has incorporated these into its assessment and grading profiles, and this programme will adopt the Health and Social Sciences standard marking and assessment criteria for level M. Some of the framework aspects are more closely tied to some modules than others: these are detailed below.

Master's degrees criteria (QAA framework)

- * A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice

Dissertation module or thesis particularly, but all modules.

- * A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship

Qualitative and Quantitative Methods, Research in Counselling Psychology.

- * Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in

the discipline

Dissertation module or thesis, Qualitative and Quantitative Methods, Research in Counselling Psychology.

- * Conceptual understanding that enables the student:

to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

All modules

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- * Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences

All modules

- * Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level

Dissertation module or thesis, Theory and Practice in Counselling psychology 1 and 2.

- * Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

All modules, but particularly Theory and Practice in Counselling psychology 1 and 2.

And holders will have:

- * the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- * the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility

- * decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations

- * the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Dissertation module particularly, but all modules.

There are no QAA subject specific benchmarks for Counselling Psychology at M level. There are however QAA benchmarks for counselling and psychotherapy which can be applied across undergraduate and Masters level provision. These can be found at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statement-counselling-psychotherapy.aspx>

Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

These QAA benchmarks envisage graduates having knowledge and skills under a number of key themes which are:

- relationship building
Students are observed developing this skill during in class skills sessions, and provide evidence of effective client work through the provision of a logbook detailing 450 hours of work, as part of Personal and Professional Development in Counselling Psychology 1 and 2.
- communication
Effective communication skills are developed throughout all modules in the degree, in terms of oral, written and non verbal communication.
- assessment
Students are taught the principles of effective assessment in Theory and Practice in Counselling psychology 1 and 2, and Personal and Professional Development in Counselling Psychology 1 and 2. They are taught psychometric and neuropsychological assessment and testing in Advanced Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology.
- formulation
Students are taught the principles of effective formulation Theory and Practice in Counselling psychology 1 and 2, and Personal and Professional Development in Counselling Psychology 1 and 2.
- psychotherapeutic strategies and interventions
Students are taught about a wide range of strategies and interventions as part of the two theory modules, Theory and Practice in Counselling psychology 1 and 2. Additional material is covered in Exploring Client Issues in Counselling Psychology.
- reflective practice
Students reflect on their practice in clinical supervision sessions as part of the practice modules, Personal and Professional Development 1, 2 and 3, and also engage in personal reflection exercises. This allows students to consider how different perspectives and strategies relate to their own histories, and how this impacts upon their practice.
- monitoring, evaluation and research.
This is covered in the Theory and Practice in Counselling psychology 1 and 2, plus the dissertation module or thesis.

In developing this programme the QAA Code of Practice has been consulted. Most issues highlighted in the Code of Practice are covered by general faculty or University systems, but specific attention has been paid to Career Education Information and Guidance.

Career education, information and guidance is embedded within the curriculum within the Principles of Counselling Psychology, Professional Issues in Counselling Psychology and Advanced Theory and Practice in Counselling Psychology modules, as part of the emphasis within the programme on ensuring that students not only develop skills to enhance their employability, but also are able to articulate these and know where to best utilise them. The QAA code of practice states that where career education is embedded in the curriculum, awarding institutions ensure that intended learning outcomes contribute to the aims and objectives of the programme, clearly identify knowledge, understanding and skills, are assessed appropriately. This is clearly the case through the practice modules assessment and teaching, in particular through the work supporting students develop their ongoing professional development reflections within these modules.

University strategies and policies

This program is highly consistent with the University's 2020 strategy. It aims to advance knowledge in counselling psychology, by enabling and inspiring psychology graduates to conduct original and significant research which will transform their own as well as client futures.

The programme is professionally recognized by the HCPC and BPS, as a practice orientated programme in counselling psychology. It connects with the local and regional economy through students being on placement in local organisations, both NHS and non-statutory sector. The programme aims to

Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

be digitally agile through the use of a range of learning technologies. It will be inclusive, through encouraging diversity amongst its trainees, and promoting a positive attitude around diversity from trainees towards their clients. It will be global through accepting international students, and developing closer links with centres abroad.

The programme will offer students outstanding learning, so that they can become ready and able post-graduates, conducting impactful research in counselling psychology, with access to strategic partnerships, connections and networks.

What methods have been used in the development of this programme to evaluate and improve the quality and standards of learning? This could include consideration of stakeholder feedback from, for example current students, graduates and employers.

Consultation events have been held with external stakeholders from local placement organisations, each of whom has experience of taking our past students on placement. A consultation was also held with current students. Finally, a consultation held by the professional body with course directors around the future standards for accreditation has been taken into account. Future requirements from the HCPC around user involvement will also be acted upon in the next three period, with the requirement for these to be in place from 2015.

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in module specifications, available on the [University's website](#).