

Doctorate in Counselling Psychology

Information Sheet: 2015 intake

Doctorate in Counselling Psychology 2015 Information Sheet

The professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology is the first of its kind in the North West of England. It has received approval from the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and is accredited with the British Psychological Society (BPS). Ultimately students completing this course will be equipped as competent Counselling Psychologists who are eligible to apply for HCPC registration and BPS Chartered status.

The course offers a professional training in Counselling Psychology and has four major components. These are (1) the development of appropriate theoretical knowledge, (2) the development of research skills, (3) a substantial therapeutic practice component, and (4) an emphasis upon personal development.

The programme recruits approximately twelve trainees annually. For further details please email our programme administrator Liam Grindell (contact details below).

PLEASE NOTE: The cut-off date for applications for entry to the 2015-16 cohort is the 26th May 2015

Within this document we hope to provide an overview of the core philosophy of the programme, a brief introduction to the staff on the programme, an overview of the programme of study and further information regarding the application process.

The Programme Philosophy:

The University of Manchester's Doctorate in Counselling Psychology is a pluralistic therapeutic training programme that acknowledges that "any substantial question admits of a variety of plausible but mutually conflicting responses" (Rescher, 1993, p.79; see also Cooper and McLeod [2011] for a discussion of pluralistic counselling and psychotherapy). It adopts a stance that values the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts in which the profession of counselling psychology has developed, in which individuals are situated and therapeutic work is undertaken. Furthermore it values the phenomenological intersubjective experience of those involved in the therapeutic process. With this in mind, the person seeking support is viewed as an active agent of psychological change with whom any intervention should be centred (see Bohart and Tallman [1999] and Duncan et al [2004] for more discussion on client agency within therapy). Such a collaborative view values the scientist-practitioner model of professional practice (e.g. Lane & Corrie, 2006) and is increasingly supported by the research exploring the effectiveness of psychological therapies (e.g. Wampold, 2001; Cooper, 2008).

The pluralistic framework for counselling and psychotherapy (Cooper & McLeod, 2011) and the Skilled Helper framework (Egan, 2010) are used as harnessing features to the programme. The former utilises demonstrably effective common therapeutic factors to consider therapeutic integration, and the latter is a three stage problem management and opportunity development framework that emphasises (1) exploration, (2) insight, and (3) action. In utilising these approaches the programme embraces the notion that there are common factors to successful therapeutic relationships. In particular, it aims to sensitise trainees to the three components conceptualised by Edward Bordin (1994) within their work as counselling psychologists. These are that a therapeutic alliance will consist of:

- (1) a mutual agreement between the therapist and client on the goals of therapy,
- (2) a mutual agreement between the therapist and client on the tasks of therapy, and
- (3) an emotional bond between the therapist and client.

In such a framework, the agreement between both (or all) parties upon the therapeutic activity becomes paramount when considering the overall effectiveness of any intervention. This framework acts as scaffolding for trainees to make sense of the numerous tensions that are present within the core therapeutic models that are presented within the programme.

Within the first year of the programme, trainees are supported in understanding the key postulates of humanistic psychology (Bugental, 1964) and the core competencies of humanistic counselling (Roth, Hill & Pilling, 2009). This approach has its foundation in the person-centred approach (e.g. Gillon, 2007) and introduces trainees to the model of psychological change first proposed by Carl Rogers (1951; 1959) and subsequently developed by contemporary thinkers (e.g. Cooper, 2007). Fundamentally, the emphasis of this year is upon the importance of the relationship within therapeutic work.

Within the second year, trainees will consider the core competencies of cognitive behavioural therapy (Roth & Pilling, 2007). Trainees will be encouraged to reflect upon therapeutic interventions and models of personality development in line with the original proponents of the approaches (e.g. Beck, 1976; Beck et al. 1979; Ellis, 1962) and more contemporary thinking (e.g. Ost, 2008; Trower et al, 2011). These models of change will be considered in relation to those presented within the first year of the programme and the differences and similarities between them reflected upon in relation to the integrative frameworks provided by the pluralistic approach and the skilled helper model.

In addition to input around the above therapeutic approaches, trainees will engage in professional input activities focusing upon generic professional issues. These will include

coverage of core Standards of Proficiency (HCPC, 2012), lifespan development (e.g. Sugarman, 2001), and models of psychopathology and psychopharmacology (e.g. Davey, 2007; Bentall, 2009). Trainees will also consider working with difference and diversity in counselling psychology, and issues of social justice (Chung & Bemak; 2012; Davies, 2000; Lago, 2005).

Trainees will be encouraged to learn through doing with regular skills activities and video assessed work. Complementing the structured theoretical input and practical sessions will be substantial placement activities (a minimum of 450 hours working as a trainee counselling psychologist). These will be delivered in a range of placement settings (between 2 and 5 over the course of the three year programme. Trainees are required to complete therapeutic practice hours in a minimum of two modalities (e.g. individual therapy, group work, couple therapy, family therapy), with two different client groups (these may be defined and vary according to, for example, age group of the client or presenting issue), and in the two different therapeutic models taught on the programme (i.e. person-centred counselling psychology and cognitive-behaviour therapy informed counselling psychology). They will be well supported by appropriate placement providers and trainees will be required to attend supervision at a ratio of 1 hour per 8 client hours as a minimum.

In line with the scientist-practitioner model of training (Belar & Perry, 1992), emphasis is placed both on therapeutic practice and research. Trainees are required to complete a number of research papers in years one and two of the course, in addition to the 50,000 thesis submitted at the end of the third year. The counselling psychology research group 'Education and Therapy' (EaT) sits within the Institute of Education and conducts research primarily across three main areas: (1) therapeutic work in educational settings, (2) therapeutic training, and (3) inequality, education and wellbeing. This reflects the research conducted by the core staff team, and trainees are encouraged to focus their research in or across these research areas. Applications to the programme are considered alongside the staff team's ability to supervise research projects.

Personal development also plays a major part within the programme. Trainees are encouraged to develop as reflective practitioners and to regularly consider their own growth during the programme. Additionally, trainees are required to undertake 40 hours of personal therapy. It is anticipated that these personal development activities will help to consolidate trainees' integration of psychological understanding with personal learning, their understanding of how the scientist practitioner works alongside being a reflexive practitioner and in a 'way of being' that proves congruent with personal values and allows appropriate navigation of professional roles.

Assessment will reflect upon the philosophical, theoretical and practical components to the programme. This will take the form of theoretical papers, case studies and practice reports related to placement activities. It will also involve conducting a substantial research project to be presented as a final thesis. Each of these pieces will represent a contribution to the body of psychological knowledge regarding the discipline of counselling psychology.

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Current Staff Team:

Programme Director:

Dr Terry Hanley

Core Staff:

Dr Laura Winter (née Cutts)

Dr Tony Parnell

Additional research supervision will be offered by:

Dr Liz Ballinger, Professor Erica Burman, Professor Neil Humphrey, Dr Graeme Hutcheson and Dr Garry Squires

Additional professional input will be provided by tutors on the Counselling and Educational Psychology Programmes.

Profiles for all staff can be found online at: www.manchester.ac.uk

Programme Administrative contact:

Liam Grindell

Tel: 0161 275 8477

Email: liam.grindell@manchester.ac.uk

Programme Overview:

Structure:

This full time programme will consist of three full days contact with the University for the first two years (Monday, Tuesday and Friday*). This will reduce to one full day within the third year (Friday). During this time students will take part in lectures regarding therapeutic theory, skills work (including skills development work, case discussion and professional issues seminars) and research seminars. A virtual learning environment (Blackboard) is also utilised to support communication between the course and students. Additionally students will be expected to attend a full day annual research conference held in the School of Environment, Education and Development.

* Please note the teaching days for years one and two rotate annually. For the 2015-16 cohort teaching days will be Monday, Tuesday, Friday for years 1 and 2 on the programme. The 2016-17 cohort teaching days will be Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for their first two years on the programme.

Teaching Methods:

There will be a large emphasis on experiential learning and case reflection in the programme. Professional input will combine large group seminars with smaller workshop based activities. Tutorials will be arranged at fixed intervals throughout the year and are available on request within tutor office hours. Trainees will be expected to take an active part in the sessions and must be prepared to undertake pre and post session reading.

Course units and assessment:

Students are required to submit the following for assessment:

Year 1: Counselling Psychology: theory, practice and research (Total: 17,000 words)

The first year of the programme will be divided up into four major elements - (1) Theory, (2) Research, (3) Practice, and (4) Personal Therapy. This will consist of professional input provided at the University alongside practice placements and personal therapy. In addition to attending and taking part in the workshop activities, to evidence learning in these areas, trainees will need to successfully complete a number academic assignments and provide documentary evidence of therapeutic activities. These are:

Academic Unit 1: Philosophy of Counselling Psychology: Humanistic therapy, the pluralistic approach and the skilled helper framework (Academic Paper - 5000 words) & Professional Issues Presentation (minimum 1.5hrs with a peer)

Academic Unit 2: Researching Counselling Psychology 1 (Research Proposal - 5000 words) & obtain ethical clearance from appropriate body

Academic Unit 3: Therapeutic Practice (Research Paper 1 - Case Study - 5000 words, Process Report – 2000 words, complete the initial fitness to practise review) & completion of Documentary Evidence noted below

Documentary Evidence 1: Counselling Psychology Practice (50 hours)

Documentary Evidence 2: Personal Therapy (10 hours)

Year 2: Counselling Psychology: advanced theory, practice and research (Total: 18,000 words)

The second year of the programme will once again be divided up into four major elements - (1) Theory, (2) Research, (3) Practice, and (4) Personal Therapy. It will continue in the same way as the first year and consist of professional input provided at the University alongside practice placements and personal therapy. In addition to attending and taking part in the workshop activities, to evidence learning in these areas, trainees will need to successfully complete a number academic assignments and provide documentary evidence of therapeutic activities. These are:

Academic Unit 1: Philosophy of Counselling Psychology: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (Academic Paper - 5000 words) & Professional Issues Presentation (minimum 1.5hrs)

Academic Unit 2: Researching Counselling Psychology 2 (Research Paper 2 - 5000 words – systematic review)

Academic Unit 3: Therapeutic Practice 2 (Research Paper 3 - Case Study - 5000 words and Process Report, 3000 words) & completion of Documentary Evidence noted below

Documentary Evidence 1: Counselling Psychology Practice (250 hours*)

Documentary Evidence 2: Personal Therapy (25 hours*)

*Please note these are cumulative totals including practice from year 1

Year 3: Research Thesis Preparation (Total: 53,000 words)

The third year of the programme will mark a shift in the delivery of the programme. This period of time will focus upon (1) conducting and writing up a piece of original research, and (2) provide documentary evidence of therapeutic activities. In total these are:

Academic Unit 1: Research Thesis (50,000 words) & Present preliminary findings at the School of Education Research conference (30 minutes)*

Documentary Evidence 1: Counselling Psychology Practice (450 hours**)

Documentary Evidence 2: Personal Therapy (40 hours**)

Documentary Evidence 3: Reflexive Essay (3,000 words)

* Please note that this is a requirement for completion at some point over the three years on the programme, and therefore can be done prior to year 3

** Please note these are cumulative totals including practice from year 1 & 2

Progression:

In addition to successfully completing academic assignments, throughout Years 1 to 3, students will also have to complete progression panels related to their therapeutic practice and research. This will include:

- initial fitness to practise review prior to commencement of first placement
- formal analysis of therapeutic practice (annually, as part of Documentary Evidence submission)
- regular review of the evidence of completion of the HCPC's Standards of Proficiency (annually, as part of Documentary Evidence submission)
- a research plan presentation (end of Year 1)
- a research progress panel (end of Year 2)

Only those successfully completing all components will be allowed to progress to the next year of study. Where students are unable to progress at the end of the second year of the programme, an exit award of M.Phil. Psychology of Counselling will be awarded on completion of a dissertation containing their assessed research papers from the first two years of the programme. This will be presented alongside documentary evidence of supervised practice and personal therapy. Students will also need to explain the context and implications of their work to the development of the discipline of counselling psychology and themselves as a researcher. Please note this exit award will not provide the necessary training for registration with the HCPC or entry onto the register of Chartered Psychologists with the BPS.

Registration date:

Annually in September

Duration:

3 Years Full Time.

Application information:

PLEASE NOTE: The cut off date for applications for entry to the 2015-16 cohort is the 26th May 2015

Participants:

The course is intended for people who have an academic background in psychology and are interested in and committed to pursuing a professional career in Counselling Psychology or related disciplines. Course members may come from a range of professional backgrounds, e.g. teaching; social work; the medical professions, pastoral ministry and from community voluntary organisations. We would expect that applicants would have some substantive work and professional experience on which to draw.

Entry Requirements:

Applicants are normally required to have:

- a 2.1 honours degree or above in psychology. For any candidates with a lower classification we would also require an additional Masters level qualification where the student was awarded at least a grade B or equivalent in their dissertation
- have a Certificate in Counselling or equivalent qualification and some professional experience of using their counselling skills*
- have the capacity to undertake research to Doctoral level
- Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC**) with the British Psychological Society (BPS). Please see the BPS website for more information about this criterion if more information is needed
- English GCSE grade C or above, or IELTS - 7.5 or above with a minimum of 7.0 in each separate sub-category (if English is not the first language)
- Satisfactory Criminal Convictions Check - undertaken and paid for by the University

Accreditation of prior or experiential learning (APL or APEL) towards the D.Couns.Psych. award will be awarded in line with the policy outlined by the School of Environment, Education and Development, University of Manchester. Individuals claiming parity of experience/qualification will be asked to provide evidence of completing studies similar in nature to those on the programme and that have been assessed at Doctorate Level – work previously assessed at Masters level is not eligible and will not be considered. Please note that case study presentations would have to be completed using a research frame and have appropriate ethical clearance. Furthermore, the research proposal and practice hours are not eligible to APL.

Admission procedures will be delivered in accordance with the University's Equality and Diversity policies.

* Please note that a certificate in counselling programme is a substantial training programme. They usually consist of a year part time study and are often at numerous educational establishments around the country – we are unable to recommend programmes or provide guidance on the quality of existing ones. Brief counselling concepts courses will not suffice as evidence of this criterion.

Where an individual makes a claim for equivalent experience we would expect an individual to put together a short document (500 words) outlining how they feel they have completed the equivalent of a year long certificate in counselling through other means. This should be included as an appendix to the statement of purpose required during the application process.

**Please note that GBC was previously referred to as GBR (Graduate Basis for Registration). The two are the same membership, and we will accept both as proof of appropriate prior training.

Application deadlines and interview process:

As noted above, the cut-off date for applications is the **26th May 2015**. Assessment will take place through application form, references, individual interview and assessment activities. The applications for the programme will be considered following the deadline on the 26th May and **we have 2 interview dates scheduled on Tuesday 9th and Wednesday 10th June 2015**.

We anticipate that approximately 4 people will attend each interview day with the interview process running between 10am and 4pm and consisting of the following:

- A presentation from course staff giving an overview of the programme
- All candidates will be individually interviewed (including discussion around a recent academic piece of writing)
- All candidates will deliver a presentation in front of course tutors (you will be informed of the topic of the presentation when invited for interview)
- All candidates will be involved a group assessment activity

Course Fees:

Fees for 2015-16 entry are £7000 for home/EU student and £16,000 for international students.

These fees will not include the additional costs of insurance, personal therapy or practice supervision.

Please note that the University does not offer studentships or bursaries for this programme. Those on the programme are usually self-funded or funded by their employer.

How to apply:

Applications should be made online at www.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate. A document briefly outlining this process can be obtained from the programme administrative contact or the University website. This provides answers to many of the frequently asked questions related to the programme and gives practical advice and essential advice regarding the application process.

Email: pgr-seed-admissions@manchester.ac.uk

Telephone: 0161 275 0969