

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. An open evening will be held on Tuesday 10th February 2015 for those interested to meet with the core staff team. Please contact the Recruitment and Admissions Officer for further details of this event (contact details below).

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 and political contexts in which the profession of counselling psychology has developed and in which 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.

References

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Current Staff Team:

Programme Director:

Dr Terry Hanley

Core Staff:

Dr Laura 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 Administrator:

Jackie Chisnall

Tel: 0161 275 3511

Email: jacqueline.chisnall@manchester.ac.uk

Recruitment and Admissions Officer:

Laura Dobson

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Email: pgr-seed-admissions@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 (Wednesday, Thursday 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 Wednesday, Thursday, Friday for years 1 and 2 on the programme. The 2016-17 cohort teaching days will be Monday, Tuesday, 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, and 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 1 April 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:

- 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 Merit grade or equivalent in their dissertation
- Certificate in Counselling or equivalent qualification and some professional experience of using their counselling skills*
- 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.**

Course Fees:

Tuition fees for entry in September 2015 will be £7,000 per year for home / EU students and £16,000 per year 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:

Please read the following notes before you complete your application to the University. All applications are completed online at:

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/howtoapply/>

Once this page has been accessed and you have registered on the site please note the following points:

Selecting the course

This is a postgraduate research full time programme in Counselling Psychology. Please note you will need to change the drop down menu to indicate it is a research programme, rather than a taught programme. Once you have done this if you search either the terms 'counselling' or 'psychology' on the form then the programme will appear in a list.

Proposed Research

Please indicate any broad research areas that you are interested in. If you are able to provide more detail at this stage this would be helpful. Furthermore, it would be helpful to consider how you might see your interests fitting with the core staff team, and the Education and Therapy research group as discussed on the programme information sheet. We do not expect a full research proposal and you do not have to identify a research supervisor at this stage.

References

Where possible it would be desirable that you provide one academic and one professional reference. You are responsible for contacting referees and asking them to complete the reference. The standard University form is available here <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=9150>. This should be accompanied with a more standard letter on headed paper.

Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC)

To undertake the programme and ultimately have the potential to apply for Chartered status with the BPS it is necessary for you to have completed an appropriate initial degree in

Psychology. Although, on completion of this degree, it is not necessary to become a member of the BPS it is recommended. In the instance that you do it you will receive a letter noting that you have GBC and this can be used as evidence. In the instance that you do not we would ask that you compile a document including the web address on the BPS website where we can find evidence that your degree proves satisfactory to meet the criteria. Those with international degrees will have to approach the BPS personally to check the compatibility of their degree with their standards.

Certificate in Counselling

We require evidence that individuals have had a substantial experience of utilising therapeutic skills. This is most commonly demonstrated through the completion of a certificate in counselling programme. 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. We would require a copy of a certificate of successful completion alongside the application.

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.

Statement of Purpose

In section 9 you should upload copies of the required documents as listed (Degree certificates, evidence that you are eligible for GBC with the BPS and official academic transcripts, two references and English Language Certificates if appropriate). You should also prepare a Statement of Purpose to support your application to the programme and this should also be uploaded in this section of the form. This statement should be a brief academic piece of 1,500 words (+/-10%) which outlines your academic, professional and personal readiness to undertake this training. Within any of these sections we would like to see some use of academic referencing to support the points that you are making. These should be fully and accurately listed at the end of your work. Please note the reference list is not included within the word count.

What happens next?

The applications for the programme will be considered in two batches. These will be collected throughout the year, with early applicants (received before the 13th of February) being assessed in the subsequent week and interviews being held on Friday 20th February. Following this, the interview dates for 2015 are Tuesday 7th, Wednesday 8th, and Thursday 9th of April 2015.

We anticipate that approximately 5 people will attend each interview day with the interview process running between 10am and 4pm and consisting of the following:

- An overview of the programme will be provided
- All candidates will be individually interviewed (including discussion around a recent academic piece of writing)
- All candidates will complete an assessment activity
- All candidates will be invited to reflect upon the interview process as an activity.

The final cut-off date for applications is 1st April 2015. Applications will only be considered for the 2015 cohort after this date if the places on the programme are not filled following the interview dates.

We look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a horizontal stroke and a loop.

Dr Terry Hanley CPsychol AFBPsS