

COURSE SPECIFICATION

Course Aim and Title	Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology
Intermediate Awards Available	Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling Psychology
Teaching Institution(s)	UEL
Alternative Teaching Institutions (for local arrangements see final section of this specification)	N/A
UEL Academic School	Psychology
UCAS Code	N/A
Professional Body Accreditation	Regulatory Body HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council) BPS (British Psychological Society)
Relevant QAA Benchmark Statements	N/A
Additional Versions of this Course	N/A
Date Specification Last Updated	March 2021

Course Aims and Learning Outcomes

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate a critical appreciation of the scientist practitioner model and its application to a range of theories and practices across the lifespan, whilst appreciating the significance of wider social, cultural, spiritual, political and economic domains within which Counselling Psychology operates;
- Develop skills in assessment, formulation, planning and implementing interventions, consultation, supervision, service evaluation outcome and effectiveness;
- Develop competencies in integrative approaches to psychological therapy through models of cognitive behaviour therapy, and psychodynamic principles;
- Foreground a 'relational perspective' within theoretical models in Counselling Psychology by valuing the interpretative, personal and collaborative aspects in clinical work;
- Undertake and critically engage with and develop original research at Doctoral level for the creation of new knowledge relevant to Counselling Psychology, with an awareness to the inherent tensions of integrating theory and research into clinical practice;
- In line with HCPC and BPS regulations, exercise professional judgment and duty of care, including self- management, fitness to practise, personal conduct and ensuring safety within placements and client work.



What you will learn:

A candidate who is awarded a Professional Doctorate will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes:

Created and interpreted new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, which extends the forefront of the discipline and merits publication;

Systematically acquired an understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;

The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, application or understanding at the forefront of the discipline and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;

A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry;

Ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

Ability to continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches;

The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

Knowledge

K1 Critical appreciation of the epistemological underpinnings of the theories and research paradigms in Counselling Psychology;

K2 Depth and systematic understanding of assessment, formulation and interventions, alongside, theories and debates in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and psychodynamic theory and practice;

K3 Relevant dimensions of designing and conducting empirical projects at doctoral level that demonstrate the relationship between clinical issues, research theory and data;

K4 Critical understanding of the social, cognitive, biological underpinnings of human development across the lifespan and the significance of wider social, cultural, spiritual, political and economic domains within which Counselling Psychology operates;



K5 Relevant principles of integrating psychotherapeutic theory, psychological research and supervision in clinical practice, while retaining a sufficient grasp of their differences and the dilemmas implied by such differences;

K6 Evaluate the role of the therapeutic relationship and relational ideas in different models of therapy.

Thinking skills

TS1 Critically analyse, synthesise and evaluate the evidence base, in terms of research and practice, for applied professional practice in Counselling Psychology;

TS2 To systematically make informed critical judgements on factors affecting human development taking into account intra and interpersonal issues within social and cultural frameworks;

TS3 Critically reflect on personal and professional development and learning in response to clinical work;

TS4 Critically reflect upon and synthesise accounts of clinical and research experience from a variety of sources, and establish connections between them;

TS5 Make professional judgments about the appropriateness of therapeutic interventions taking into account the evidence base and the ethical, social, political and cultural issues surrounding such interventions.

Subject-Based Practical skills

SP1 Use appropriate skills in supervision, consultation and leadership;

SP2 Demonstrate skills in evidence based assessment, formulation and treatment planning;

SP3 Communicate ideas in different genres and for different audiences: clinical papers and reports, essays, group and clinical presentations, and a major research thesis; to peers and other professionals, in writing and orally;

SP4 Act professionally and in accordance with ethical propriety following guidelines of HCPC and BPS;

SP5 Produce reasoned and structured accounts of reflective practice in Counselling Psychology identifying professional and personal development needs;

SP6 Conduct evidence based assessment, formulation, treatment planning and evaluation of clinical work meeting the individual needs of the client.

Skills for life and work (general skills)

GS1 Present clinical and research evidence in support of arguments and analysis;

GS2 Produce reasoned and structured arguments orally and in writing;

GS3 Use information technology effectively for clinical and research purposes;

GS4 Work effectively with a group as a leader or member, able to negotiate and manage conflict;

GS5 Analyse, integrate and communicate complex information and be able to communicate this meaningfully to individuals and groups;



GS6 Manage self-learning and continuous personal and professional development: plan time, act autonomously and make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations, seeking help where necessary;

GS7 Engage confidently in academic and professional communications with other, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and competently;

GS8 Have a commitment to ongoing personal and professional development.

Learning and Teaching

Knowledge, Thinking Skills, Practical Skills, and Skills for Life and Work are developed through

Lectures, seminars and workshops led by the tutor team and outside specialists

Problem based learning in small groups

Supervised practice on placement

Individual and group tutorials and progress reviews

Independent and directed reading

Reflection

Personal development work

Completion of essays and reflective personal and professional development log

A research thesis

Assessment

Knowledge is developed through

- Critical academic papers
- Process reports
- Group/individual presentations
- Research proposal and presentation
- Research thesis and integration paper
- Personal and Professional placement log

Thinking skills are developed through

- Critical academic papers/clinical papers and reports
- Group/individual presentations
- Research proposal and presentation
- Research thesis and integration paper

Practical skills are developed through

- Process reports
- Case presentations
- Case study
- Personal and professional placement log



Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through

- Process report
- Group and individual presentations
- Case study
- Personal and professional placement log

Students with disabilities and/or particular learning needs should discuss assessments with the Programme Leader to ensure they are able to fully engage with all assessment within the programme.

Work or Study Placements

With a focus on widening employability opportunities, all aspects of the programme are specifically designed to optimise work-based skills. The programme has close links with contemporary developments and role changes for Counselling Psychologists in the workplace. All assignments have direct relevance to placement learning. The Doctoral research thesis must have direct relevance to the development of a specific body of knowledge in Counselling Psychology.

Professional placements

It should be noted that although many therapeutic contexts vary in their model of service delivery, their emphasis and methods of learning and assessment are expected to meet the BPS Standards and the HCPC's Standards of Proficiency. Trainees are required to evidence 450 hours of supervised practice by the end of their training. Graduates placement portfolio will include at least two adult mental health and one other specialist placement across the lifespan, such as children and young people or other specialist contexts. Placements are agreed and monitored through regular communication with the named supervisor and placement manager, clinical tutors and placement tutor where relevant. Contracts and learning outcomes are agreed, set and assessed by the placement and the University. All placements need to be agreed upon by the programme team prior to any hours being recorded. Adherence to the HCPC 'Standards of Proficiency' is closely monitored and assessed over the three year programme with further learning opportunities specifically offered, if required, to ensure proficiencies are developed. Training and support is provided by the programme team for placement supervision and placement assessment.



Research/project work

Trainees are given the opportunity in the first year to develop the necessary critical thinking skills to support the development of research ideas, with relevant assignments to support this learning. There are corresponding lectures, group and individual tutorials, and workshops to assist with the development of research ideas and skills which culminates in the presentation of the research proposal at the start of year two. All students will be allocated an internal research supervisory team. Students must adhere to UEL ethical procedure for research and the UEL Code of Practice for post graduate Research. Registration of the research component can only take place following a recommendation from the relevant School Research Degrees Sub-Committee of the suitability of the candidate to undertake research. These approvals require appropriate academic judgement to be brought to bear on the viability of each research proposal.

Registration of the research component can only take place following a recommendation from the relevant School Research Degrees Sub-Committee to the university Research Degrees Subcommittee of the suitability of the candidate to undertake research, of the programme of research, of the supervision arrangements and of the research environment. These approvals require appropriate academic judgement to be brought to bear on the viability of each research proposal. Candidates for a Professional Doctorate must successfully complete all assessed elements of their programme before award of the degree can be made.

The examination of the research component of the Professional Doctorate has two stages: firstly the submission and preliminary assessment of the research; and secondly its defence by oral examination.

The research thesis presented will total 30,000 words (+/- 10%).

Course Structure

All courses are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 3 Equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree course.
- 4 Equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree course.
- 5 Equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree course.
- 6 Equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree course.



- 7 Equivalent in standard to a Masters degree.
- 8 Equivalent in standard to a Doctoral degree.

Courses are made up of modules that are each credit weighted.

The module structure of this course:

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Weighting	Core/Option	Available by Distance Learning? Y/N
Year 1					
8	PY8610	Professional practice in counselling psychology 1	90	Core	N
8	PY8602	Foundations of Counselling Psychology: Research & Practice	30	Core	N
8	PY8603	Integrating theory research and practice 1: relational CBT-informed practice and research	30	Core	N
Year 2					
8	PY8604	Professional practice in counselling psychology 2	90	Core	N
8	PY8605	Perspectives on Research	30	Core	N
8	PY8606	Integrating theory research and practice 2	30	Core	N
Year 3					



8	PY8607	Professional practice in counselling psychology 3	90	Core	N
8	PY8608	Supervision, consultation and leadership	30	Core	N
8	PY8609	Integrating theory, research and practice 3	30	Core	N
Research Thesis/portfolio commences at the start of year 2 for submission in semester 3 year 3	30,000 words		120 (not modular)		
Total credits			570		

Additional detail about the programme module structure:

All modules are core to the programme. All modules are level 8 and there are two opportunities to pass the module assessment. To obtain the degree of Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology, all components of the assessment procedure in all three years must be passed, including the research thesis. This is the only qualification which will allow the student to register with the Health and Care Professions Council and practice as a Counselling Psychologist.

A core module for a programme is a module which a student must have passed (i.e. been awarded credit) in order to achieve the relevant named award. An optional module for a programme is a module selected from a range of modules available on the programme.

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 570 credits. If for some reason you are unable to achieve this credit you may be entitled to an intermediate award, the level of the award will depend on the amount of credit you have accumulated. You can read the University Student Policies and Regulations on the UEL website.

Course Specific Regulations

Admission requirements

This is a three year fulltime programme, successful completion of all components leads to a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology and eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC and Chartership with the British Psychological Society. The admissions procedure involves an online application. At least two members of academic staff will review each application before a decision is made to invite an applicant for an interview, which involves a number of different exercises and individual interviews. Please note: You will be required to provide two references, one academic and one from a clinical or related work setting. It is your responsibility to ensure that your referees receive the correct form and instructions for completion.

Admissions Criteria:

Essential:

- Applicants must meet the requirements of the HCPC Programme's admissions criteria
- A good honours degree in psychology (trainees normally have a 1st or at least 2:1) which confers Graduate Basis for Chartership with the British Psychological Society
- Ability and experience of conducting independent research
- Prior training in counselling skills and or other relevant therapeutic training (e.g., that offered by NHS IAPT programmes such as for psychological well-being practitioners; or counselling training undertaken as a health or social care worker; or certificate in counselling skills)
- Relevant work and or voluntary experience in a mental health setting (NHS or other)- This must be face-to-face and more than 'befriending'.
- Be academically able to succeed at doctoral level
- Post-admission successful completion of enhanced DBS check

Personal qualities:

- Demonstrate a capacity for self-reflection and be open to feedback from others
- Be open to, and respectful of, diverse perspectives, whilst showing awareness of the impact of prejudice and inequality.
- A commitment to ongoing self-development and reflective practice
- Demonstrate good interpersonal skills and sensitivity towards others

- Have sufficient maturity and robustness to cope with the demands of working with vulnerable client groups

Where English is not the applicant's first language, a minimum IELTS Academic English, or such qualifications as our University deems comparable, score of 7.0 overall, with a minimum of 6.5 in all components, is required at entry. Such assessment of English language competence must normally have been undertaken no more than two years prior to application, though relevant and more recent study in a United Kingdom Higher Education Institution may be accepted as sufficient proof of ability.

International qualifications will be checked for appropriate matriculation to UK Higher Education postgraduate programmes.

Professional indemnity insurance

You must have professional indemnity insurance; this is a condition of enrolment on the programme and is to safeguard trainees, clients and placements. It is a requirement that trainees take out personal liability insurance in addition to that provided by their placement. The costs for insurance will depend on the cover chosen. Further details relating to insurance can be obtained from the programme team.

BPS and DCoP membership

You are expected to become a member of the DCoP and retain your BPS membership. Rates are reduced for trainees, please see BPS website for details.

Typical Duration

The Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology is a 3 year full time programme

The normal minimum and maximum periods of registration for a Professional Doctorate are as follows:

	Minimum	Maximum
Full-time	33 months	48 months



Further Information

More information about this programme is available from:

- The UEL web site (www.uel.ac.uk)
- UEL Manual of General Regulations (available on the UEL website)
- UEL Quality Manual (available on the UEL website)
- The programme handbook
- Module study guides
- School web pages
- The Graduate School

All UEL programmes are subject to thorough programme approval procedures before we allow them to commence. We also constantly monitor, review and enhance our programmes by listening to student and employer views and the views of external examiners and advisors.

Additional costs:

When considering the feasibility of undertaking the training, applicants are made aware of the costs involved and advised to look on the University website where the programme fees are advertised www.uel.ac.uk/fees/. They are made aware that the fee is set annually and subject to an inflationary increase each year.

Applicants are also reminded at interview and when offered a place on the programme that they will also incur extra costs during their training. These include personal indemnity insurance (typically starting at about £45 per year for psychologists in training), BPS and DCoP membership (currently at £26 & £12, respectively), supervision and the requirement to complete personal therapy across the three years of the programme.

Supervision and Personal Therapy

Supervision provided by the NHS is usually free of charge. Trainees are required to have the majority of their client work supervised by a Counselling Psychologist who is at least two years post qualification. In some contexts, supervision is not available and this will need to be sought externally.

Trainees will be required to complete a minimum of 60 hours of personal therapy (a minimum of 20 hours per year) from a Chartered Counselling Psychologist who has been qualified for a minimum of two years. We do not recommend therapists. However, these can be easily located on the DCoP register.

The cost of supervision and personal therapy can vary and tend to be more expensive in Central London. However, many Chartered/Registered Counselling Psychologists will offer reduced rates for supervision and personal therapy to Counselling Psychologists in training. These are likely to be approximately £50 per hour.

Alternative Locations of Delivery

N/A