



# Universities Psychotherapy and Counselling Association

## Standards of Education and Training in Psychotherapeutic Counselling

### 1. *Introduction*

The Universities Psychotherapy and Counselling Association seeks to encourage diversity in our approved trainings and approaches to practice. We encourage the development of programmes and members who are able to engage critically with different modalities, whatever their preferred orientation.

University training programmes are all subject to rigorous quality assurance processes within their host university. They share a commitment to the highest professional as well as academic standards. These trainings draw on, and contribute to, a wide range of research traditions within the fields of counselling and psychotherapy.

These Standards of Education and Training conform to minimum Core Criteria as stipulated in both the University Training College (UTC) and the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) Standards of Education and Training (2008) documents. Thus successful completion of a UPCA approved training programme and any post qualifying requirements leads to registration as a UKCP Psychotherapeutic Counsellor. These SETS have also been written in reference to QAA's subject benchmarks in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

### 2. *Guiding Principles*

The following Guiding Principles have agreed that programmes of education in psychotherapy will:

- Recognise the existence of different approaches to counselling, based on different theories, and should promote respectful understanding of differences and similarities between theories.
- Be theoretically informed and practise based.
- Be related to clinical work in occupational settings.
- Provide transparency and accountability in their assessment processes.
- Operate within an ethical, equal opportunities and diversity framework.

### 3. *Entry Requirements*

3.1 Entry is at a minimum of undergraduate or post graduate level. University based programmes in Psychotherapeutic Counselling should have in place appropriate procedures for assessing applicants' ability to undertake such a training. These should normally include some of the following entry requirements:

- A relevant professional training or equivalent experience
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
- Accreditation of Prior Learning

3.2 Applicants will be assessed in relation to the following qualities:

- A capacity for self reflection and self-directed learning
- An ability to listen and respond with compassion and respect

- An awareness of prejudice and the ability to respond openly to issues of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, class, disability, ethnic, spiritual/religious and cultural differences, and diversity.
- A capacity to reflect on their own potential areas of prejudice and discrimination.
- Self-awareness and a commitment to self-development.

### 3.3 Selection Procedures

Programmes shall have in place:

- Published selection criteria
- Robust assessment processes for the selection of applicants. Interviews will normally take place with at least 2 members of staff.
- Equal opportunities policies and procedures to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against with regard to race, gender, class, age, sexual orientation, disability and cultural differences.

## 4. *Minimum Training Criteria*

### 4.1 Accredited programmes of education must:

- Lead to an undergraduate/postgraduate award in a psychotherapeutic counselling subject by a UK University.
- Provide a training normally over a minimum 3 year (part time) period.
- Enable students to develop to a level appropriate for independent practice as psychotherapeutic counsellors.

### 4.2. Accredited programmes of education must lead to a method of psychotherapeutic counselling which:

- is well defined
- has a sound theoretical basis
- is recognised by UPCA
- integrates theory and practice.
- Includes consideration of the implications of research relevant to psychotherapeutic counselling

### 4.2 Theory and Practice

Accredited programmes should include the study of the theory and practice of psychotherapy from assessment to termination. This should include:

- A model of the person and mind.
- A model of gendered and culturally influenced human growth and development.
- A model of human change and ways in which change can be facilitated.
- An extensive literature which includes critiques of models being taught.
- The philosophical underpinnings of models being taught.
- An understanding of a broad range of psychotherapeutic approaches.
- An understanding of psychopathology and complex presentations in psychotherapeutic counselling.

- An understanding of the social context in which psychotherapeutic counselling takes place.
- Ethical principles and their application.
- Evidence based practice of both open ended and time limited psychotherapeutic work.
- An understanding of the role of diversity and equal opportunities in the context of psychotherapeutic work.

#### 4.3 Research:

Research acquisition should include the development of research awareness including general knowledge of research methods relevant to psychotherapeutic counselling and the ability to review the relevance of studies and research findings in human development, psychopathology, sexuality, and ethics.

Programmes should provide sufficient opportunities for their students to develop the following capacities so that at the point of qualification the candidate has:

- An understanding of different approaches to research into psychotherapy practice.
- The capacity to understand a research report in relevant clinical and professional journals.
- The capacity to reflect on the significance of research findings with respect to their own practice.
- A working knowledge of research findings in relation to assessment for therapeutic intervention, and a capacity to consider implications for psychotherapeutic practice.
- A working knowledge of research findings regarding psychotherapeutic processes and their implications for practice.

#### 4.4 Supervised Practice of Psychotherapeutic Counselling:

The supervised practice of psychotherapeutic counselling is central to all UPCA approved training programmes. This requirement is achieved through individual practice as a candidate in training supported by an appropriately trained, experienced and qualified supervisor. This will occur either through appropriately supported and supervised practice placements approved by the relevant University training. The minimum ratio of supervision to practice hours is 1 hour of supervision (group supervision to be calculated pro rata) to every 6 hours of practice.

Supervisors should be UKCP, UPCA or BPC registered psychotherapeutic counsellors or psychotherapists, or equivalent, and trained in a modality congruent with that of the training being undertaken.

Accredited programmes must provide and operate an effective system for approving and monitoring all placements and supervisors for individual clinical practice.

Candidates should demonstrate their competency for a minimum of **100** hours of supervised practice during the life of the course. Consistent with their modality philosophy, trainings should stipulate whether their requirements with regard to long and short term work and clearly define these terms to candidates.

#### 4.5 Personal Therapeutic Experience

Programmes shall include arrangements to ensure that candidates can identify and manage appropriately their personal involvement in, and contribution to, the process of the psychotherapy approach they practice. This will normally be achieved through the experience of personal psychotherapeutic counselling/psychotherapy delivered by a UKCP, UPCA or BPC registered psychotherapeutic counsellor or psychotherapist, or equivalent, and will not normally be less than 50 hours during the training and a minimum 105 hours overall for accreditation.

4.6 The following are the minimum requirements for accreditation and registration as a psychotherapeutic counsellor:

- The successful undertaking of a three year undergraduate professional training course of not less than 450 hours of skills and theory.
- A total number of supervised client hours accumulated should be not less than 450.
- The ratio of individual supervision hours to overall client hours should be a minimum of 1:6.
- Group supervision should reflect this ratio.
- Supervised hours should be made up of client contracts that reflect the approach to be practiced and demonstrate that the candidate has the appropriate experience and competence for the model of psychotherapy that they are practicing.
- A minimum of 105 hours personal psychotherapeutic counselling or psychotherapy congruent with the modality in which they are training.

4.7 Candidates should have the opportunity to develop:

- Skills in assessing and responding to the range or responses to shock and trauma, bereavement and psychological crisis and differentiate these from severe mental illness.
- The capacity to recognise severely disturbed clients and understand when the psychotherapist should seek other professional advice.
- An understanding of the procedures used in psychiatric assessment and liaison with other professionals involved in mental health.

5.0 *Requirements for programme of education*

- a) Accredited programmes for Psychotherapeutic Counselling will lead to an undergraduate/postgraduate award/qualification.
- b) Accredited programmes will demonstrate an integration of academic learning, supervised practice, experiential learning, and personal development.
- c) Accredited programmes will provide a balance of tutor contact hours, personal study and peer group work.
- d) The length of the programme will not normally be shorter than 3 years.
- e) Each training will be validated by a panel of UPCA representatives.
- f) Accredited programmes shall be reviewed for the purposes of re-validation by the College no less than every five years. This may take place alongside internal university revalidation processes.
- g) Programmes shall have published criteria and procedures for selection of trainees.
- h) Programmes shall adhere to the UPCA Code of Ethics and Practice in line with UKCP's Ethical Requirements.

- i) Programmes shall have published Fitness to Practice Procedures. These may be those of the host university.
- j) Programmes shall have methods and regulations for the processing of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Assessment for Prior Experiential Learning (APEL), and Credit Accumulation Transfer System (CATS) claims where necessary.
- k) Programmes shall publish a student Handbook that has clear information on the length and time frame of courses, a definition of supervised practice requirements as well as requirements for personal therapy. Any costs associated with the training but excluded from the course fees should be clearly identified such as those associated with personal therapy and supervision received outside of placement settings.
- l) Programmes shall ensure that appropriate and proportionate provision is made for the academic and pastoral support for candidates and staff.
- m) Programmes shall ensure that the resources provided to candidates and staffs are adequate to effectively support the learning, development and teaching activities for the program.
- n) Programmes shall identify a named individual who holds responsibility for leading the program. These should be led by appropriately qualified and experienced individuals and should be UKCP registered or equivalent.
- o) Programmes shall have a majority of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver the program effectively. This will mean that the majority of the staff will be UKCP registered.

#### 6.0 *Assessment*

- a) Throughout the course the candidate's clinical and professional progress will be adequately assessed according to the guidelines of the university concerned.
- b) All university based programmes will have external examiners monitoring the quality and fairness of assessment criteria and feedback.
- c) Tutors involved with programmes should avoid, wherever possible, the holding of dual roles in relation to the candidate in training (e.g. supervisor and trainer or personal psychotherapeutic counsellor and trainer).
- d) All university programmes of education have published appeals procedures in the event of disagreement over assessment.
- e) Assessment procedures will be designed in order to ensure that candidates can demonstrate fitness to practise as a psychotherapeutic counsellor.
- f) Programmes should ensure that handbooks clearly describe the assessment requirements for progress within and between each stage of the program.

#### 7.0 *Qualification and Registration*

- a) University programmes of education shall specify whether qualification coincides with the recognition of candidates as eligible for registration by UPCA and UKCP.
- b) Where qualification or graduation from one part of the programme and registration do not coincide trainings are required to specify what further professional development is required for registration.
- c) The definition of such further professional development might include considerations relating to the nature of supervision and the range, quantity and intensity of practice and/or study.
- d) Where qualification and graduation do not coincide the programme shall stipulate the nature of the ongoing relationship between the candidate and the programme post qualification and pre-registration.

- e) University programmes of education will also set out clear procedures for ensuring criteria have been met including any completed post training.
- f) University programmes of education will also set out clear procedures for providing written confirmation, to UPCA, of students' completion of the criteria for registration in line with the requirements set out in UPCA membership policy.

#### 8.0 *Continuing Professional Development*

- a) UPCA has in place a CPD policy in accordance with the UKCP guidelines.
- b) Graduates of approved trainings are required to apply for clinical membership (non accredited) with UPCA and to complete a CPD return for each year of their membership.
- c) Training and/or Accrediting organisations should have a commitment to life long learning and the need for monitoring practice.