



Universities Psychotherapy and Counselling Association

Standards of Education and Training in Psychotherapy (SETS)

1. *Introduction*

The Universities Psychotherapy and Counselling 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 of education. These programmes 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 the both the University Training College (UTC) and United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP 2012) Standards of Education and Training documents. Thus successful completion of a Universities Psychotherapy and Counselling Association (UPCA) approved training programme and any post qualifying requirements leads to registration by UPCA and UKCP as a Psychotherapist. 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 psychotherapies, 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 postgraduate level. University based Psychotherapy training programmes should have in place appropriate procedures for assessing applicant's ability to undertake such a programme of education. These should normally include some of the following entry requirements:

- An undergraduate degree
- A relevant professional training
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
- Accreditation of Learning

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

- A capacity for critical 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 a postgraduate award in a psychotherapeutic subject by a UK University.
- Provide a training normally over a 4 year period (this may include an introductory year).
- Enable students to develop to a level appropriate for independent practice as psychotherapists.

4.2 The programme must lead to a method of psychotherapy which:

- is well defined
- has a sound theoretical basis
- is recognised by UPCA
- is research based
- integrates theory and practice.

4.2 Theory and Practice

Accredited programmes of education should include the study of the theory and practice of psychotherapy from assessment to termination. This will 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 psychotherapy.
- An understanding of the social context in which psychotherapy 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.
- The development of the skills necessary to engage critically with psychotherapy research evidence and the ability to design and implement a research project.

4.3 Research: Research acquisition should include a critical understanding of the relevance of studies and research findings in human development, psychopathology, sexuality, and ethics.

Accredited programmes of education will ensure that candidates gain an understanding of research methodologies and their application to the investigation and evaluation of the psychotherapeutic process and its interventions from assessment to termination.

Accredited programmes of education will 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 critically understand a research report in relevant clinical and professional journals.
- The capacity to evaluate 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 critique these.
- A working knowledge of research findings regarding psychotherapy process and their implications for practice.

4.4 Supervised Practice of Psychotherapy:

The supervised practice of psychotherapy 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 may occur either through appropriately supported and supervised independent practice or in a practice placement or through a combination of these 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 psychotherapists, or equivalent, and trained in a modality congruent with that of the training being undertaken.

Accredited programmes of education 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 **200** 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 Psychotherapy

Trainings 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 psychotherapy delivered by a UKCP, UPCA or BPC registered psychotherapist, or equivalent, and will not normally be less than 30 hours per year during the training and a minimum of 160 hours over the four year training.

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

- The successful undertaking of a four year postgraduate professional programme of education.
- 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 (minimum 10 minutes supervision for client hour)
- 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 30 hours per year during the training and a minimum of 160 hours over the four year training of personal psychotherapy congruent with the psychotherapy in which they are training.

4.7 Candidates should show that they have established themselves in practice with substantial experience in the kinds of psychotherapy that they intend to offer.

4.8 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 programmes of education*

- a) Accredited programmes of education in Psychotherapy will lead to a Masters' level qualification.
- b) Accredited programmes will demonstrate an integration of critical academic learning, supervised practice, experiential learning, and personal development.
- c) The length of programmes will not normally be shorter than 4 years. This can include an introductory year.

- d) A panel of UPCA representatives will validate each programme.
- e) Accredited programmes shall be reviewed for the purposes of re-validation by UPCA no less than every five years. This may take place alongside internal university revalidation processes.

6.0 *Assessment*

- a) Throughout the programme the candidate's clinical and professional progress will be adequately assessed according to the guidelines of the university concerned.
- b) All university based programmes of education in psychotherapy will have external examiners monitoring the quality and fairness of assessment criteria and feedback.
- c) Tutors involved with such programmes should avoid, wherever possible, the holding of dual roles in relation to the candidate in training (e.g. supervisor and trainer or personal psychotherapist and trainer).
- d) All university programmes of education in psychotherapy 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 psychotherapist.
- 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) Programmes of education in psychotherapy shall specify whether qualification coincides with the recognition of candidates as eligible for registration by UPCA/UKCP.
- b) Where qualification or graduation from one part of the programme and registration do not coincide programmes 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 training post qualification and pre-registration.
- e) University programmes will also set out clear procedures for ensuring criteria have been met including any completed post training.
- f) University programmes 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 UTC and UKCP guidelines.
- b) Graduates of approved trainings are required to apply for clinical membership with UPCA and to complete a CPD return for each year of their membership.
- c) Training programmes should have a commitment to life long learning and the need for monitoring practice.

9.0 *Programme resources*

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. Accredited programmes will provide a balance of tutor contact hours, personal study and peer group work.

10.0 *Student and staff support*

Programmes shall ensure that appropriate and proportionate provision is made for the academic and pastoral support for candidates and staff.

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