



Universities Psychotherapy  
& Counselling Association

## **CPD and Individual Membership Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

This policy sets out the requirements for continued membership of the Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association (UPCA) and the expectations regarding Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

UPCA is an organisational member of the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) and the accrediting organisation for the Universities Training College (UTC). As such, UPCA ensures that its members maintain appropriate professional standards, ethical practice, and ongoing professional development.

This policy applies to all UPCA members and applicants for membership.

### **2. Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define UPCA membership categories.
- Establish standards for maintaining membership.
- Outline CPD requirements for members.
- Describe the CPD recording and audit process.
- Clarify supervision and professional practice expectations.
- Provide guidance regarding breaks in practice and return to practice.
- Ensure alignment with UKCP regulatory expectations.



### 3. Membership Categories

UPCA recognises the following membership categories:

#### 3.1 Student Member

This category of membership is open to all current non-practicing students of a UPCA accredited programme in psychotherapy or counselling.

- Students studying on UPCA accredited programmes, maintain UPCA student membership for the duration of their training, unless their training specifies moving to trainee membership when commencing in clinical placement.
- Members must agree to abide by the UKCP code of ethics and professional practice (2019).
- Members in this category are entitled to use the designator **Student UPCA**.

#### 3.2 Trainee Member

Trainee members are students who have not yet graduated but have begun an approved clinical practice or placement, agreed by their training institution.

- Trainees are required to have their own professional indemnity insurance, regardless of any insurance provided by their placement agency.
- Trainees must abide by UPCA's Terms & Conditions regarding clinical supervision of their practice:
  - Group supervision must be facilitated; the trainee must learn from and contribute to the group supervision (UTC June 2023).
  - In-person/face-to-face supervision hours are required during training.
- Upon graduating or completing the taught part of their course, trainees with outstanding accreditation requirements must transfer to **Non-Accredited Clinical Membership**.
- Members in this category are entitled to use the designation **Trainee UPCA**.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

### 3.3 Clinical Members

Clinical members are graduates of a University training programme in psychotherapy (minimum Masters or Doctoral level) or psychotherapeutic counselling (minimum undergraduate level), both accredited by UPCA.

There are two sub-divisions of Clinical members:

#### 3.3.1 Clinical Member – Accredited (MUPCA Accred)

- Open to graduates from a UPCA-accredited programme who have completed all training requirements and met criteria for registration as a psychotherapeutic counsellor or psychotherapist.
- Eligible to apply to UKCP for registration.
- Designation: **MUPCA (Accred)** plus professional title.

#### 3.3.2 Clinical Member – Non-Accredited (MUPCA)

- Open to graduates who have not yet completed full requirements for accreditation or UKCP registration.
- Available for up to five years (extensions possible with UPCA approval).
- Members are not eligible to apply for UKCP registration.
- Designation: **MUPCA**.

### 3.4 Non-Clinical Associate Member

- Open to university-affiliated individuals with an interest in psychotherapy or counselling.
- Includes non-practising psychotherapists or counsellors committed to academic development and retired UPCA members no longer in practice.



### 3.5 Honorary Members

- Appointed by UPCA Council for distinguished contributions to psychotherapy or counselling.
- Clinical honorary members must submit annual CPD declarations.
- Membership is free of charge.

## 4. Membership Application Process

Applications for membership must be made via the UPCA online membership portal.

Applicants are required to:

- Complete the relevant online application.
- Provide supporting documentation where requested.
- Confirm agreement with the UPCA and UKCP ethical frameworks.

**Clinical Membership applicants** wishing to be UKCP Registered must also complete a separate online UKCP membership form directly with UKCP. UKCP will contact UPCA to verify all applications for authorisation by UPCA before admitting a member to UKCP.

There are specific policies and procedures for those applying for clinical membership.

## 5. Clinical Training Requirements

The following requirements apply to all applicants for Clinical Membership (Accredited and Non-Accredited), and set out UPCA expectations for supervision, clinical practice, and training standards.

### 5.1 Supervision Requirements

- Supervision must be undertaken in line with UPCA requirements, including a minimum ratio of 1:6 (supervision to client hours) prior to accreditation.
- Post-accreditation, a minimum of 1.5 hours of supervision per month is required.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

- Group supervision is permitted and counts in the same way as individual (one-to-one) supervision.
- Peer supervision hours may be counted for qualified practitioners only.
- UPCA does not differentiate between online and face-to-face supervision; both are considered equally valid.

### **5.2 Clinical Practice Hours**

- A minimum of 450 hours of clinical practice is required for Clinical Membership.
- Practice hours must be supported by appropriate supervision.

### **5.3 Online Practice During Training**

#### **Adult Training Programmes**

- A maximum of 50% of clinical practice hours may be conducted online.
- A minimum of 50% must be face-to-face / in-person.
- All online hours accrued prior to 1 October 2022 are fully recognised
- For hours accrued from 1 October 2022 onwards, a 50:50 ratio of online to in-person practice applies.
- Training providers are responsible for ensuring that students are appropriately prepared for online clinical practice.

#### **Child and Adolescent Training Programmes**

- A maximum of 10% of clinical practice hours may be conducted online.
- All online hours accrued prior to 30 September 2022 will count towards the total required hours.

### **5.4 Independent Practice Hours**

- Independent practice hours may be counted towards the required 450 clinical practice hours for adult training routes (as agreed by UPCA Council, January 2023).



## 6. Application for Clinical Membership – Accredited

This route applies to applicants who have successfully completed a UPCA accredited training programme and fulfilled all required post-graduation criteria.

Applicants must meet the accreditation requirements set out below, depending on their professional route.

Applicants must also meet the Clinical Training Requirements set out in **section 5 above**.

### 6.1 Psychotherapist Requirements

- Completion of a UPCA-accredited programme
- Minimum 160 hours personal therapy (face-to-face or online)
- Up to 20 hours group therapy included in personal therapy
- Minimum 450 hours supervised clinical practice
- Supervision ratio minimum 1:6
- Part E verification signed by official
- Exam board report if available
- Confirmation of current professional indemnity insurance.

### 6.2 Psychotherapeutic Counselling Requirements

- Completion of a UPCA-accredited programme
- Minimum 105 hours personal therapy (face-to-face or online)
- Up to 20 hours group therapy included
- Minimum 450 hours supervised clinical practice
- Supervision ratio minimum 1:6
- Part E verification signed by official
- Exam board report if available
- Confirmation of current professional indemnity insurance

### 6.3 Part E Verification Process

- As part of the accreditation process, once applicants have submitted their application form the UPCA Membership Team carries out an initial check.
- UPCA Membership Team then emails the Part E form to the applicant's university.
- The Part E form must be signed by an appropriately authorised representative of the training institution. This provides formal



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

verification that all training and clinical requirements have been met.

### **6.4 Procedure for UKCP Registration**

Once Accredited Clinical Membership with UPCA has been confirmed, members are eligible to apply for Registration with the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP).

Applications to join the UKCP Register must be made separately via the **UKCP website**.

Members should note that continued registration with UKCP is dependent upon:

- Maintaining active UKCP membership, and
- Maintaining ongoing UPCA membership.

Failure to maintain UPCA membership may affect eligibility to remain on the UKCP Register.

## **7. Application for Non-Accredited Clinical Membership**

This membership category applies to graduates of a UPCA accredited counselling or psychotherapy training programme who have not yet met the full requirements for Accredited Clinical Membership or professional Registration.

Applicants may include those who:

- Have outstanding training requirements, or
- Are in the process of completing the criteria required for accreditation and/or Registration.

Applicants must have maintained continuous UPCA membership following graduation.

Applicants must also meet the Clinical Training Requirements set out in **section 5 above**.

Non-Accredited Clinical Membership is available for a **maximum period of five years (or longer with UPCA approval)**, during which members are expected to complete outstanding requirements and prepare for



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

application to Accredited Clinical Membership as either a psychotherapeutic counsellor or a psychotherapist.

Members in this category are **not eligible** to apply for entry onto the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) Register.

### **Application Requirements**

Applicants must submit an online application along with the required fee and the following supporting documentation:

- A copy of their degree certificate (or equivalent qualification).
- Part E Verification: written confirmation from the relevant training institution confirming progress and/or completion status.
- Confirmation of current professional indemnity insurance.

### **Part E Verification Process**

Once applicants have submitted their application form the UPCA Membership Team carries out an initial check of the application. The UPCA Membership Team then emails the **Part E form to the applicant's university**.

The Part E form must be signed by an appropriately authorised representative of the training institution. This formal verification confirms the applicant's training status and any outstanding requirements.

### Application Procedure

The procedure for applying for Non-Accredited Clinical Membership is the same for applicants intending to progress towards Registration as either:

- A psychotherapeutic counsellor, or
- A psychotherapist.



## **8. Policy and Process for Appeals**

### **8.1 Appeals Policy**

- Who can appeal: Applicants refused membership.
- Timeframe: 28 days from receipt of refusal.
- Acceptable grounds for appeal:
  - Procedural irregularity or omission affecting outcome.
  - Material impairment due to health or other circumstances.
  - Demonstrable bias or prejudice by assessors.

### **8.2 Appeal Board Composition**

- Chair of UPCA (or nominee).
- Chair of a UPCA committee (not Membership Committee).
- UPCA Council member (not from applicant's programme).

### **8.3 Powers of the Appeal Board**

- Require written submissions, attendance, or evidence from staff/council.
- Review Membership Committee recommendations.

### **8.4 Possible Outcomes**

- Confirm refusal of membership.
- Re-examine application without additional fee.
- Allow resubmission with clear instructions on examiners.

### **8.5 Appeals Process – Summary Guidance**

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Chair of UPCA.
- Include full name, contact, grounds for appeal, and supporting evidence.
- No specific form required.
- Appeals submitted late may be considered with valid reasons.
- The Chair manages the process and refers evidence to the Appeal Board.
- The decision of the Appeal Board is final.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

### 9. Membership Renewal Process

Membership must be renewed annually through the online renewal process.

During renewal, members will be required to:

- Confirm professional status
- Declare CPD activity
- Confirm adherence to ethical and professional standards
- Confirm supervision arrangements where applicable.

Membership fees are determined annually by UPCA Council and published on the [UPCA Membership Fees webpage](#).

Membership of UPCA follows the academic timetable. The membership year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August each year. Each year in July UPCA will send a membership renewal reminder via email. They are then sent further reminders, 28, 21, 14 and 7 days before the 1st September.

Where members have not renewed by 1<sup>st</sup> September, UPCA will then send a final reminder. The member then has an opportunity to renew within 28 days. After this time their membership will be deemed to have lapsed and they will be removed from the UPCA Register.

### 10. Lapsed Membership and Re-joining UPCA

Clinical Members whose membership has lapsed must reapply using the lapsed membership application process. In addition, they will need to:

- Provide certificates of training.
- Provide certificate of professional indemnity insurance.
- Pay a rejoining fee, which, for lapsed members is £50 plus the annual fee of £85 for missed years.
- Provide evidence of CPD for all lapsed years, up to 5 years, where this has not been submitted to another college.
- Provide confirmation of supervision arrangements for the lapsed period.
- Provide a written statement of assurance confirming that the student has not been subject to a criminal investigation, a complaint or any disciplinary procedure.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

**Former clinical members** who have been lapsed for longer than 5 years, may reapply for admittance to membership as follows:

- A targeted plan of 12 months CPD that demonstrates knowledge of current trends in psychotherapy practice, including Difference, Diversity and Racism.
- Supervision from a UKCP Registered Therapist at a ratio of 1:6 hours (supervision to client hours).
- Normally, 4 client hours per week and ideally 150 client hours during the 12 months.
- A Reflective Statement of a minimum of 1000 words, entitled: "What will I bring to the psychotherapy room".
- Current indemnity insurance.
- A written and signed statement that there have been no investigations or convictions during the period out of membership.
- Re-join and maintain UPCA \*Non-Accredited Clinical membership for 1 year, prior to being confirmed as approved for Accreditation/UKCP Registration.

The fee for rejoining in this case is £475.00

**Student and Trainee members** whose membership has lapsed will be required to:

- Pay for all missed years.
- Pay a rejoining fee of an additional £50.
- Provide evidence of good standing from their programme leader
- A written statement of assurance confirming that the student has not been subject to a criminal investigation, a complaint or any disciplinary procedure.

### **Exceptions:**

Students from Oxford have a break between their certificate course and the start of the Post Graduate Diploma Course, a re-joining fee or lapsing notice is not applied.



## 11. Continuing Professional Development

### Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Requirements

All clinical members are required to undertake regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The fundamental purpose of CPD is the protection of the public through the maintenance and enhancement of professional standards.

UPCA requires clinical members to demonstrate that their professional knowledge, skills, and clinical practice remain current, safe, and effective.

Members working towards Clinical Membership are also expected to maintain records of their CPD, supervision, and clinical practice hours, which may be requested as part of an application.

**A CPD resource** is available via the UPCA website to support members in recording their CPD activities.

### CPD Requirements

Clinical members must demonstrate the following as part of annual renewal and ongoing professional practice:

- **A minimum of 50 hours of CPD per year**, contributing to **250 hours over a five-year cycle** (in line with UKCP requirements)
- Maintenance of a **CPD portfolio**, including records of learning activities and reflective practice.
- Ongoing **clinical practice**, normally including a recommended minimum of **4 client contact hours per week during** the first five years of practice.
- Engagement in **regular supervision**:
  - A minimum of **1.5 hours per month post-accreditation**.
  - A **minimum ratio of 1:6** (supervision to client hours) prior to accreditation.
  - (See Section 5 regarding group and peer supervision)
- Consideration of **additional supervision** where caseloads are high or complex.
- Engagement in **personal therapy**, particularly in the early years of practice (recommended).
- Evidence of continuous indemnity insurance.

Where members hold more than one area of registration (e.g. work with different client groups or supervision roles), CPD and supervision must reflect all areas of practice.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

### **Types of CPD**

CPD activities (either online or in person) may include a broad range of professional learning, such as:

- Training courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences (with certification where available).
- Learning across different therapeutic modalities.
- Academic study, research, writing, and teaching.
- Professional reading and reflective practice.
- Learning gained through clinical experience and professional discussion.
- Complementary professional and developmental activities.
- Self-care activities (e.g. yoga, exercise, meditation), where these support professional practice.

### **Recording and Annual Declaration**

Members must maintain an accurate record of CPD activity and declare this annually as part of the online membership renewal process.

UPCA monitors CPD annually at renewal in progress towards five-yearly re-accreditation requirements.

Where a member does not complete the required 50 hours in a given year, a deficit may be carried forward to the following year, except in the final year of the five-year cycle.

### **Annual CPD Review Process**

All annual renewals are reviewed by the UPCA Membership Team to ensure CPD requirements are met.

The review process includes confirmation of:

- Completed CPD declaration.
- Completion of all required sections.
- Evidence of client contact hours (where applicable).
- Confirmation of supervision arrangements.
- Achievement of the annual 50-hour CPD requirement.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

Where CPD meets requirements, membership renewal is confirmed.

Where there are concerns:

- Further clarification may be requested.
- Guidance may be sought from UPCA Council.
- Members may be asked to address any shortfall and resubmit.

Failure to meet CPD requirements may result in:

- A requirement to complete outstanding CPD.
- Delayed renewal.
- Lapse of membership or accreditation.

### 5 Yearly Reaccreditation Audit Process

UKCP requires that UPCA operates an audit process to ensure compliance with CPD standards.

- A minimum of **20% of members are selected each year.**
- Selected members are notified and asked to provide supporting evidence.

Audit submissions may include:

- Evidence of CPD activities.
- Reflection on relevance to practice.
- Confirmation of professional indemnity insurance.
- Confirmation of supervision arrangements.

Audits are reviewed by two members of UPCA Council.

### Audit Outcomes

Possible outcomes of audit include:

1. **Approved** – all requirements met.
2. **Request for further information** – insufficient evidence provided.
3. **Referral for further review** – where concerns are identified.
4. **Failure** – where requirements are not met.

Where requirements are not met, UPCA may:

- Request further evidence or remedial action.
- Impose conditions on practice.
- Suspend membership pending required actions.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

- Require re-accreditation.
- Remove membership where necessary.

The purpose of the audit process is to **support professional standards and public protection.**

## Policy and Process for Appeals of Unsuccessful Audit

### 11.1 Appeals Policy

- Who can appeal: Members who have failed to meet the conditions of their audit.
- Timeframe: 28 days from receipt of refusal.
- Acceptable grounds for appeal:
  - Procedural irregularity or omission affecting outcome.
  - Material impairment due to health or other circumstances.
  - Demonstrable bias or prejudice by assessors.

### 11.2 Appeal Board Composition

- Chair of UPCA (or nominee).
- Chair of a UPCA committee (not Membership Committee).
- UPCA Council member (not from applicant's programme).

### 11.3 Powers of the Appeal Board

- Require written submissions, attendance, or evidence from staff/council.
- Review Membership Committee recommendations.

### 11.4 Possible Outcomes

- Confirm refusal of membership.
- Re-examine application without additional fee.
- Allow resubmission with clear instructions on examiners.

### 11.5 Appeals Process – Summary Guidance

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Chair of UPCA.
- Include full name, contact, grounds for appeal, and supporting evidence.
- No specific form required.
- Appeals submitted late may be considered with valid reasons.
- The Chair manages the process and refers evidence to the Appeal Board.
- The decision of the Appeal Board is final.



## 12. Breaks in Practice and Training

UPCA recognises that members may need to take a break from training or clinical practice for a variety of reasons. Each situation will be considered on a **case-by-case basis**, while ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect the public and support safe professional practice.

UPCA requires members to maintain accurate records and provide relevant information during any period of interruption to practice or training.

### Breaks in Training (Student and Trainee Members)

Where a Student or Trainee Member takes an approved interruption from their training programme and is not engaged in supervised clinical practice:

- Membership fees may be waived for the duration of the interruption.
- The interruption must be formally confirmed to UPCA by the member or Programme Leader.
- The member must not be in training or undertaking supervised practice during this period.

### Breaks in Clinical Practice (Clinical Members)

#### 1. Notification of a Break

Clinical members must notify UPCA of any break in practice lasting **more than three months**.

- Notification may be made **prospectively or retrospectively**, depending on circumstances.
- Members are required to provide relevant details, including any mitigating circumstances.
- Members should outline their **CPD intentions during the break**, where possible.
- UPCA recognises that in some circumstances CPD may not be achievable; this should be clearly communicated.



## 2. Maintaining Membership

During a break in practice:

- Members are normally required to **maintain their UPCA membership** and continue to pay applicable fees.
- Members on **maternity leave** who experience financial hardship may apply for a **50% reduction in membership fees**.

## 3. Return to Practice (Breaks up to 18 Months)

When returning to practice following a break of up to **18 months**, members are required to:

- Notify UPCA of their intention to return.
- Provide a **CPD plan** for the year of return to practice.

Where CPD has not been maintained during the break, members will normally be required to demonstrate:

- Completion of **structured and verifiable CPD**, or
- Equivalent retraining.

This will typically be undertaken over a period of **6–12 months** to support safe return to practice.

## 4. Extended Breaks (Over 18 Months)

Where a break in practice exceeds **18 months**, members will normally be required to undertake a more structured return-to-practice process.

This will typically include:

- Evidence of **structured and verifiable CPD or retraining**, undertaken over a period of approximately **12 months**.

## 5. Re-Joining Following an Extended Break

Where a former Accredited Clinical Member wishes to return to practice after an extended break, the following requirements must normally be met before accreditation can be reinstated:

- Completion of a **targeted 12-month CPD plan**, demonstrating up-to-date knowledge of current psychotherapy practice, including difference, diversity, and anti-racist practice.
- Supervision must be provided by a UKCP Registered Psychotherapist, or by a practitioner with equivalent core training, ongoing CPD, and adherence to the UKCP Code of Ethics and

Professional Practice, including its Complaints Procedure.



## Universities Psychotherapy & Counselling Association

- A gradual return to clinical work, typically including:
  - Approximately **4 client hours per week**, and
  - Ideally **150 client hours over a 12-month period**.
- Submission of a **reflective statement (minimum 1000 words)** entitled: *“What will I bring to the psychotherapy room”*.
- Confirmation of **current professional indemnity insurance**.
- Re-joining UPCA as a **Non-Accredited Clinical Member** and maintaining this status for a minimum of **one year** prior to re-accreditation and eligibility for UKCP registration.

UPCA will review all return-to-practice applications individually to ensure that members are able to resume clinical work safely, ethically, and in line with current professional standards.

### 13. Professional Wills and Professional Executors

Planning for unexpected circumstances is an important part of responsible professional practice. Practitioners should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage their professional responsibilities if they are suddenly unable to practise due to illness, incapacity, or death. This planning may take the form of a Professional Will or the appointment of a Professional Executor.

A Professional Will is a document that outlines instructions for managing professional matters if a practitioner can no longer carry out their work. This may include guidance on handling client records, maintaining confidentiality, communicating with clients, and arranging the safe closure or transfer of ongoing work. Alternatively, practitioners may appoint a Professional Executor—a trusted and suitably qualified colleague who agrees to take responsibility for these duties if needed.

UPCA requires clinical members to ensure that one of these arrangements is in place. Having a Professional Will or Professional Executor helps protect client welfare, ensures confidential information is handled appropriately, and provides clear guidance to those who may need to manage professional matters unexpectedly. It also helps reduce the burden on family members who may otherwise be left dealing with sensitive professional responsibilities.

These arrangements form part of good professional practice within the counselling and psychotherapy professions and demonstrate a commitment to ethical standards, client care, and professional responsibility.



## 14. UPCA Welfare Fund and Fee Reduction

UPCA recognises that some members may experience financial pressure, particularly those who are **unwaged, volunteering, or reducing their practice as they move towards retirement**. The costs associated with maintaining professional practice—such as supervision, professional indemnity insurance, CPD, and membership fees—can present challenges in these circumstances.

To support members, UPCA offers a **reduction in membership fees** for eligible individuals and access to additional support through the **UPCA Welfare Fund**.

### Fee Reduction Eligibility

Clinical members who are **unwaged, retired, or semi-retired** may apply for a reduced membership fee on the grounds of financial hardship.

- The standard annual fee may be reduced from **£85 to £45 per annum**.
- Applications must be made to UPCA and may require supporting evidence.

UPCA reserves the right to request appropriate documentation, which may include:

- Evidence of **state pension status**, or
- Confirmation of **voluntary or unpaid professional work**.

Each application will be considered on a **case-by-case basis**.

### Ongoing Professional Requirements

Members receiving a reduced fee remain fully responsible for maintaining professional standards. This includes:

- Engagement in appropriate **clinical supervision**
- Completion of required **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**
- Holding valid **professional indemnity insurance**

Fee reduction does not alter the expectations for safe, ethical, and competent practice.



Universities Psychotherapy  
& Counselling Association

### **UPCA Welfare Fund**

In addition to fee reductions, members experiencing financial hardship may be eligible to apply for support through the UPCA Welfare Fund.

Further information about eligibility and how to apply is available via the [UPCA website.](#)