Keele University: Quality Assurance Office
Programme Specification Template

Information for students: the programme specification is the definitive document summarising the structure and content of your degree programme. The document aims to clarify to potential and current students what you can expect from the study of the subject over the course of your programme.

Name of programme: MSc in Counselling Psychology: Full Time

Name of award: MSc in Counselling Psychology/Postgraduate Diplomas in Counselling Psychology/Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling Psychology

Mode of study: full time

Duration of programme: The MSc programme consists of not less than twelve months full-time study. The Postgraduate Diploma programme consists of not less than nine months full-time study. The Postgraduate Certificate programme consists of not less than nine months full-time study. Students would normally be expected to have fulfilled the academic requirements of the programme within 12 months but may take up to a further 12 months to complete the counselling practice and supervision requirements.

Recognised by (If appropriate): British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) as a recognised route of counsellor training

1. What is the Philosophy of the Programme?

The philosophy of the programme is humanistic with person centred practice. The core theoretical model of the course is derived from an acceptance of Carl Rogers’ belief in the ‘self-therapeutic capacity and wisdom of clients’. The philosophical traditions of existentialism and phenomenology are used to illuminate understanding of humanistic practice through lectures and small group work. The personal attitudinal position of students is set into the framework provided by the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Gilmore's Structure of a Theory for Helping Relationships

Gilmore suggests that all counsellors are theory builders and that necessarily by practising counselling, we base that practice on theory which in turn is based on a philosophical view of what constitutes human nature. By transferring the Keele Model onto her structure, see below, we hope to make clear our philosophy, assumptions, basic principles and elements, concepts, strategies and techniques. Further clarification is given in the following sections b-g below.

**Conceptual Framework for Practice:**

- Emphasis on the relationship and core conditions
- Interest in client’s experience of the world
- Make sense of ‘there and then’ through here and now
- Working within the client’s frame of reference
- Not interpretative
- Client led

**Theory of Human Behaviour:**

Individuals are:

- Basically rational
- Socialised, forward moving and realistic
- Optimistic view of human nature - tendency to self-actualisation
- Trustworthy
- Wise about self
- Seek, and primarily exist in relationship
- Change happens in relationship and most effectively in relationships characterised by the core conditions
Philosophical Assumptions:

- Individuals make sense of the world phenomenologically
- Individuals are unique
- Individuals have an innate tendency to self actualise
- Individuals have a potential to move towards respect for self and others and a responsibility for self and others
- The most basic need of all humans is both to be loved and love unconditionally
- Contradiction and paradox are central to being human
- Individuals possess wisdom regarding themselves
- Individuals process their experiences consciously and unconsciously
- Individuals strive to make meaning of their experiences

Assumptions about the nature of human beings:

Our beliefs about **nature of human beings** as a basis for our practice, the foundation are that:

- The most basic need of all humans is both to be loved and to love
- People have the potential to move towards respect for self and others and a responsibility for self and others
- People possess both an innate wisdom and an innate drive to search for truth and meaning
- People are subject to conflict, contradiction and paradox and seek resolution in adaptive and maladaptive ways.
- People are complex wholes; the modern tendency to divide the person into physical, mental and spiritual ‘parts’ is unhelpful
- People’s lives are not determined – we have the choice to pursue all, any or none of the above
- People have the an innate thrust towards growth and development

As you can see from the above, these assumptions are very close to, but not wholly reflective of, a Rogerian view of the nature of the person and are rooted firmly in Humanistic Theory.

Assumptions about the development of human beings:

We begin our programme with a deep consideration of Rogers (1951) Structure of Personality and evaluate its usefulness in understanding the development of human beings. We stress the importance of a relationship characterised by the core conditions in facilitating constructive personality change (Rogers, 1957). We hold to humanistic principles of growth and development as encapsulated in the work of Maslow, Rowan, Assagioli, Mindel, Bowlby, Gerhardt, Schore and Stern.

We also evaluate the usefulness of Humanistic concepts of barriers to growth and the actualising tendency. We believe in the client’s capacity to be wise about themselves and to know and reflect upon their developmental needs.

We encourage students to examine and question their own beliefs and assumptions and to develop a personal integrated theory of human development based upon humanistic phenomenological philosophy and principles. We do this by encouraging and offering opportunities to students to reflect upon the theory that is offered in the light of their own experience and thus to develop their own philosophical and theoretical base.
How do psychological problems develop?

We consider how psychological problems develop firstly from a person centred perspective i.e. that experiences that are threatening to our self structure are denied to our awareness – that the structure of self is formed by our experiences of being acceptable (or not) to significant care givers and that this structure may be influenced by conditions of worth. We suggest that psychological problems may develop if our self structure is not integrated with our experiential field i.e. we struggle with congruence. We also evaluate the usefulness of theories from other humanistic perspectives such as psychosynthesis (Assagioli), gestalt (Perls, Houston), process approach (Goodbread, Mindell), inner child theory, imagery and metaphor (Groves, Cox and Theilgaard) sub personality (Rowan), attachment theory (Bowlby) and configurations of self (Thorne) and integrate these understandings into how psychological problems may develop. Again, we encourage students to develop an integrated personal explanation for this development.

By means of contrast with the humanistic model, we introduce students to notions of how psychopathology may develop as understood in CBT, Psychodynamic approaches and the medical model.

How does the model account for the perpetuation of psychological problems?

Again, we begin from a Rogerian stance and suggest that psychological problems may be perpetuated because the client does not feel safe enough or have chosen not to change. We stress Rogers’ contention that all six conditions must be present for constructive personality change to occur. We consider blocks to change such as defensive, safety and survival needs and how re-enforcement can perpetuate maladaptive behaviour. We also evaluate the usefulness of labels of mental ill health in perpetuating psychological problems. We go onto to consider Maslow’s proposition that certain needs must be met in order for psychological movement to occur. We consider the blocks to movement that may be based in the unmet needs of the inner child and the warring sub-personalities which may need to be accommodated before change is made possible. We also believe that clients’ problems may be perpetuated by their social, cultural and economic context and prevailing discourses. From this perspective we consider a range of power dynamics (e.g. family, workplace and relationships) and the potential implications for change (e.g. David Smails and Mick Totton)

How does the model explain the process of therapeutic change?

The Keele model explains the process of therapeutic change through a relationship which is characterised by the core conditions, the client is able to allow experiences that have previously needed to be denied into conscious awareness. This allows changes in the self structure and a move towards greater self awareness and congruence. It is through the process of working at relational depth (Means and Thorne and Cooper) that therapeutic change is facilitated. In line with other Humanistic theories (e.g. Maslow, Rowan and Perls) we believe that fundamental needs need to met before therapeutic change can occur.

What is the range of therapeutic interventions explicated in the core model?

The core therapeutic intervention of the Keele model is the range of skills required to build and maintain a relationship with the client. We develop skills which enable students to build a strong therapeutic alliance
and understand barriers that may prevent this occurring or impact on the relationship. These skills include active, reflective listening, focusing, and immediacy, including appropriate therapeutic challenge. The core of the intervention is the person of the counsellor and their embodiment of the core conditions. We develop these characteristics through intensive skills and personal development training.

**How does the model deal with any apparent discrepancies between theoretical and practical aspects?**

Our experience suggests that apparent discrepancies between the Keele Model and practical aspects such as having to work with constraints such as time limited therapy, use of assessment forms such as Core, working within an environment that follows a medical model can be successfully resolved by returning to the core model. If we believe clients have wisdom and the ability to make choices and be forward moving, we respect their ability to make the most of any counselling as long as they are made aware of the constraints. Discrepancies need to be identified within the context of the relationship and the client’s wisdom relied upon.

**How are the modules taught?**

The modules of the programme are taught in an integrated holistic way. This reflects the philosophy and the core theoretical model of the counselling approach underlying the programme.

a. What are the broad educational aims of the programme? What makes the programme distinctive?

The programme aims to equip successful students with the knowledge and expertise to support their work as professional humanistic counsellors. The programme aims to integrate the ongoing professional practice with academic study at Masters level and to facilitate student learning in the three areas of counselling psychology practice i.e. professional practice, theory and self development.

b. What are the intended learning outcomes of the programme - i.e. what students should know, understand or be able to do by the end of the programme of study in terms of subject specific knowledge, subject specific and key skills and attitudes.

Students who successfully complete the MSc will have fulfilled the following requirements of the QAA framework for the award of a masters level qualification:

**Knowledge and Understanding**

1. A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the counselling psychology discipline, field of study, or areas of professional practice.
2. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.
3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the counselling psychology discipline.
4. Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them, and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.
Application

5. Shows originality in the application of counselling psychology knowledge.
6. Has practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.
7. Shows self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems.
8. Acts autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.

Communication & Personal Development

9. Can handle complex issues systematically and creatively.
10. Can make sound judgements in the absence of complete data
11. Can communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
12. Able independently to advance own knowledge and understanding, to acquire new skills.
13. Has the qualities and skills for employment requiring exercise of initiative, personal responsibility, decision making in complex and unpredictable situations, and CPD.

Transferable skills

14. Communicate effectively using appropriate verbal, visual, graphic, IT and written means depending on the audience.
15. Demonstrate the ability to learn independently, using a range of information sources and approaches.
16. Manage time effectively and work to deadlines.
17. Use digital and electronic communication techniques, hardware and software, including word-processing, spreadsheets, email and internet.
18. Learn to improve work based on written feedback from tutors on drafts.

By the end of the program Postgraduate Diploma students will have demonstrated all LOs except 3 and 6 as these refer to the Research Methods and Dissertation Modules that Postgraduate Diploma students do not do. Postgraduate Certificate students will have also demonstrated the same LOs as the Postgraduate Diploma students but in the context of a narrower knowledge base.

Each student is required to be a member of a personal development group. This experience is not formally assessed but is necessary in order for the student to develop self-awareness. This self-awareness is assessed through the practicum.

Each student is required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice before the awarded is granted. This is evidenced by two satisfactory supervisors’ reports. Students are also required to undertake eight hours of personal therapy.

2. How is the Programme taught?

Large and small group lectures and workshops examine counselling psychology and research principles, theories and methods. Small group interactive and experiential workshops focus on practical research skills training and explore personal and philosophical assumptions. Group discussions of key ideas examine the links between theory, practice and personal experience. These activities are supported by tutorials –
individual and group. Assessed and non assessed work and self study tasks and directed activities allows progress to be assessed and monitored and feedback to be given.

3. What is the Structure of the Programme?

a. Give an outline module structure for the programme, including compulsory core, optional core, programme electives and approved electives.

The course comprises of six modules. The first three modules: Exploration in Counselling, Understanding in Counselling and Integration in Counselling reflect the process of a counselling relationship. When a client works with a counsellor the process may be described as beginning with exploration of the difficulty, proceeding to an understanding and then integrating this understanding into a new awareness of ‘self’. The process is not, of course, as linear as this suggests and is a very complex one. The first three modules of the MSc follow a similar model of process by beginning with an exploration of what counselling is, going onto an understanding of the more complex relationships and issues in counselling and putting that knowledge together through integration. The theory presented in these modules must also be experienced in practice (Module 4: Practicum) and through increasing self awareness. This self awareness is developed throughout the programme through participation in a personal development group, experiential exercises which relate theory to personal/professional experience, an encouragement within assessed work to evaluate theory through personal and professional reflection and through journaling. Module 5 (Research Methods) helps students through presentations and seminars to establish their research interests and create an appropriate design for their study. It is assessed on the basis of a 3,000 word essay in which they must demonstrate knowledge of research principles, theories and methods and include a report of the research methodology presentation. Module 6 (Dissertation) demands the writing of a dissertation of not less than 15,000 words and not more than 20,000 words on a topic related to counselling psychology which is of interest to the student.
All modules are compulsory core modules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Year Full Time Masters: 195 Credits</th>
<th>Module 1: Exploration in Counselling = 30 credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Module 2: Understanding in Counselling = 30 credits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Module 3: Integration in Counselling = 30 credits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Module 4: Practicum = 30 credits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Module 5: Research Methods = 15 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Module 6: Dissertation = 60 credits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total = 195 credits at level M/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Postgraduate Diploma: 120 (Possible Exit Award on successful completion of Module 1: Exploration in Counselling, Module 2: Understanding in Counselling, Module 3: Integration in Counselling and Module 4: Practicum)

Postgraduate Certificate: 60 Credits (Possible Exit Award on successful completion of Module 1: Exploration in Counselling and Module 4: Practicum)

b. State in a table as below the learning outcomes (i.e. level descriptors) for each level of study of the programme, alongside the modules that fulfil them and the forms of assessment used to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Knowledge and understanding of counselling psychology:</th>
<th>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</th>
<th>Modules which especially satisfy these Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Methods to satisfy Learning Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the counselling psychology discipline, field of study, or areas of professional practice.</td>
<td>Acquisition of A1-A4 is through a combination of lectures, counselling skills development, personal development groups and coursework</td>
<td>1,2,5</td>
<td>Module 1 has 2 x 3000 word assignments, Module 2 has 1x 5000 word assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,2,5</td>
<td>Module 5 has 1x 5000 word report of a presentation of proposed research</td>
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<td>See above</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the counselling psychology discipline.

4. Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them, and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

**B. Application of knowledge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Module</strong></th>
<th><strong>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Modules which especially satisfy these Learning Outcomes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Assessment Methods to satisfy Learning Outcome</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Shows originality in the application of counselling psychology knowledge</td>
<td>Acquisition of B5-B8 is through a combination of lectures, counselling skills development, personal development groups, individual supervision and coursework</td>
<td>Module 2 has 1x 5000 word assignment, Module 4 has DVD and evaluation, Module 6 has dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Has practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.</td>
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<td>As above</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Shows self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems.</td>
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<td>As above</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Acts autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.</td>
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<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Communication &amp; Personal Development</td>
<td>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</td>
<td>Modules which especially satisfy these Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Assessment Methods to satisfy Learning Outcome</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Can handle complex issues systematically and creatively.</td>
<td>Acquisition of C9-C10 is through a combination of lectures, counselling skills development, personal development groups, individual supervision and coursework</td>
<td>3,4,6</td>
<td>Module 3 has 1x 5000 word assignment, Module 4 has DVD and evaluation, Module 6 has dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Can make sound judgements in the absence of complete data</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,4,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Can communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.</td>
<td>Acquisition of C11-C13 is through a combination of practical counselling skills demonstrations, coursework, individual supervision and oral and written presentations</td>
<td>3,4,6</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Able independently to advance own knowledge and understanding, to acquire new skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,4,6</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Has the qualities and skills for employment requiring exercise of initiative, personal responsibility, decision making in complex and unpredictable situations, and CPD.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,4,6</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### D. Transferable skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D14. Communicate effectively using appropriate verbal, visual, graphic, IT and written means depending on the audience</th>
<th>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</th>
<th>Modules which especially satisfy these Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Methods to satisfy Learning Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of D14-D17 is through seminars, coursework and presentations on research</td>
<td>All modules</td>
<td>All assessment for all modules</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| D15. Demonstrate the ability to learn independently, using a range of information sources and approaches | As above | As above |

| D16. Manage time effectively and work to deadlines | As above | As above |

| D17. Use digital and electronic communication techniques, hardware and software, including word-processing, spreadsheets, email and internet | As above | As above |

| D18. Learn to improve work based on written feedback from tutors on drafts | Acquisition of D18 is through individual supervisory support |

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c. List the exit routes from the award and specify the numbers of credits needed for these.

Postgraduate Certificate: 60 credits (Possible Exit Award on successful completion of Module 1: Exploration in Counselling and Module 4: Practicum)

Postgraduate Diploma: 120 credits (Possible Exit Award on successful completion of Module 1: Exploration in Counselling, Module 2: Understanding in Counselling, Module 3: Integration in Counselling and Module 4: Practicum)
4. How is the Programme assessed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weighting of each piece per module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Module PSY 40022  
‘Exploration in Counselling’ (30 credits) | 2 X 3,000 word Assignments | Each assignment worth 50% |
| Module : PSY 40023  
‘Understanding in Counselling’(30 credits) | 1X 5,000 word Assignments | 100% |
| Module : PSY 40024  
‘Integration in Counselling’(30 credits) | 1X 5,000 word Assignments | 100% |
| Module : PSY 40025  
Practicum (30 credits) | DVD of practice (20 mins) and a written evaluation of 5,000 words  
Plus the satisfactory completion of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice as evidenced by the presentation of 2 satisfactory supervisors’ reports annually  
And evidence of a minimum of 8 hours of personal therapy | DVD = 50%  
Evaluation = 50%  
NB each element must attract a mark of at least 50%  
Placement: Compulsory requirement  
Therapy: Compulsory requirement |
| Module : PSY 40026  
‘Research Methods’(15 credits) | 3000 word essay in which they must demonstrate knowledge of research principles, theories and methods and include a report of the research methodology presentation | 100% |
| Module : PSY 40027  
Dissertation(60 credits) | Dissertation of not less than 15,000 words and not more than 20,000 words | 100% |

Assessment Criteria:

All assessed work must provide evidence of having met the learning objectives of the specific module for the assessment.

**Marking criteria for modules at level M (all modules)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>ILOs</th>
<th>Guideline Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>90 - 100</td>
<td>Threshold intended learning outcomes attained</td>
<td>Outstanding work showing an excellent understanding of complex issues and methodologies at the forefront of counselling theory and/or professional practice; the work is informed by original, independent critical thinking and is based upon rigorous argument accurately supported by evidence derived from a wide range of source material including primary sources and current research; the work could not be bettered in the time available.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80 - 89</td>
<td></td>
<td>Work demonstrating an excellent level of understanding of complex issues and methodologies at the forefront of counselling theory and/or professional practice; the work displays independent critical thought, and strong and well organised argument, using a wide range of sources including primary sources and recent research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70 - 79</td>
<td></td>
<td>Work showing most of the above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>65 - 69</td>
<td></td>
<td>Work demonstrating very good understanding of issues including some complex issues, with good and well organised argument and evaluation accurately supported by a standard range of sources including primary sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 - 64</td>
<td></td>
<td>As above with some shortcomings but no fundamental errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55 - 59</td>
<td></td>
<td>Work showing satisfactory grasp of main issues and methodologies, familiarity with the basic reading and awareness of the subject or professional practice, faithful reproduction of material with limited critical judgement, but with a few minor errors and/or minor omissions of essential material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>50 – 54</td>
<td></td>
<td>Work showing adequate grasp of main issues, sufficient familiarity with a proportion of the basic reading, sufficient awareness of the subject or professional practice but with minor errors and/or omissions of essential material, and with very limited critical judgement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>45 - 49</td>
<td>Threshold intended learning outcomes</td>
<td></td>
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<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 - 44</td>
<td>NOT attained</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>30 - 39</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>20 - 29</td>
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<td>10 - 19</td>
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<td>0 – 9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Unsatisfactory work showing understanding of only some of the issues raised by the question, limited use of relevant material, but with substantial errors or omissions or irrelevant material, weak critical judgement and weak appreciation of the subject or professional practice.**

**Unsatisfactory work showing only limited grasp of some of the issues, poorly conceived and poorly directed to the question or task set, or with serious errors or omissions, or with no use of critical judgement and with limited awareness of the subject or professional practice.**

**Unsatisfactory work, showing only skeletal grasp of some relevant issues and necessary material and/or skills, or with major errors, omissions, or misconceptions, and with very limited awareness of the subject or practice.**

**An attempt to answer the question or complete the task, but with little grasp of material or appropriate skills awareness of the subject or practice, and with major errors, omissions, or misconceptions**

**Work that shows fragmentary evidence of familiarity with course material or awareness of the subject or professional practice.**

**No work offered; or work that is totally irrelevant to the question or task set, or fundamentally wrong, or plagiarised**

**Module PSY 40025 Practicum:**

The written component of the Practicum is examined on the criteria for written assignments, as above. In addition to the above criteria, the student will be expected to show, in their **written evaluation**, an ability to relate theory to practice by:

1. Showing a capacity to report and evaluate the session
2. Showing an awareness of any ethical issues surrounding the session
3. Showing an ability to identify and evaluate the skills used in the session
4. Showing an ability to relate practice to relevant theory
5. Showing evidence of self exploration of values and beliefs
6. Showing evidence of that the work satisfies the assessment criteria for Masters work shown above

The **practical dimension** of the Practicum is examined using the following criteria:
1. Observance of the Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
2. The ability to establish an appropriate relationship, characterised by the core conditions of congruence, acceptance and empathy and including the holding of time boundaries
3. The ability to use counselling skills to help the client talk about self, in the present, at a feeling level
4. An awareness of the client agenda and an ability to keep to that agenda rather than to impose a counsellor-led agenda; to ‘walk alongside’ the client rather than leading
5. An awareness of and ability to work with non-verbal communication
6. An ability to engage in immediacy and ‘you – me’ talk where appropriate

Assessment Criteria for Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>ILOs</th>
<th>Criteria for practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>90 - 100</td>
<td>Threshold intended learning outcomes attained</td>
<td>Outstanding work demonstrating excellent practice in all areas. The work could not be bettered in the time available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80 - 89</td>
<td>Indications of a creative synthesis of all categories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70 - 79</td>
<td>Work showing most of the above.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>65 - 69</td>
<td>Indication of expertise in all categories</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 - 64</td>
<td>Indications of expertise in most categories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>55 - 59</td>
<td>Sound competence in all areas indicating an ability to work effectively with deep client material. An awareness of the dynamics present in the counselling relationship will be evident and articulated if appropriate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 – 54</td>
<td>A basic level of competence in all categories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>45 - 49</td>
<td>Threshold intended learning outcomes NOT attained</td>
<td>Failure in one of the a-f above. i.e.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 - 44</td>
<td>Failure in two of the a-f above</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>Failure in three or more of the a-f above</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>An attempt to complete the task, but with little grasp of appropriate skills and with major errors, omissions, or misconceptions</td>
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<td>10 - 19</td>
<td>Work that shows fragmentary evidence appropriate skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0 – 9</td>
<td>No work offered; or work that is totally irrelevant to task set, or fundamentally wrong</td>
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</table>

b. Briefly explain how students in the programme are supported through formative (i.e. non-mark-bearing) assessment.

All students are strongly encouraged to hand in a draft of the first essay and subsequently may hand in a draft plan for comment and feedback. Regular opportunities to give formative assessment on counselling practice are offered. The comments on this work are used in a formative sense to help with summative assessment. All summative work has formative comments from the marker and is used as formative
feedback. Feedback on all aspects of the course is available from the tutor.

5. What are the typical admission requirements for the programme?

Include levels and subjects required, as well as any other relevant factors such as arrangements for accreditation of prior experience or learning where these exist (n.b. this section should be consistent with the relevant prospectus entry).

The programme is open to graduates with a good degree or equivalent, for example, professional qualifications. In some cases where students have significant relevant experience this requirement may be waived. All successful applicants will demonstrate emotional maturity and a capacity for sustained self-directed study, the ability to present written exposition of information and argument, to work experientially as a member of a small group, an awareness of self and an awareness of the nature of prejudice and oppression. The minimum English language requirement for students who do not have English as their first language is an IELTS score of 7.0 or the equivalent. Students should achieve a score of at least 6.5 in each of the IELTS sub-tests.

Students may also apply for exemption from PSY-40022, 40023, 40024 and 40025 if they have previously been awarded a Graduate or Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling from Keele University or the equivalent from elsewhere.

6. How are students supported on the programme?

What arrangements are made for the academic support of students? Include information on academic support in relation to the choice of modules and other academic decisions, feedback on formative assessment, feedback on summative assessment. The emphasis should be primarily on support that is available at the level of programme, School and Faculty, as students will be separately informed about central generic student support provision.

Students join a tutor group (these are formed at the start of the course), led by a tutor. These meet regularly for counselling skills development, personal development and peer support and mutual reflection. In addition, students are allocated a dissertation supervisor.

Additionally, individual tutorials are available for the purpose of progress review. Students are entitled to a maximum of 10 hours tutorial time during the programme. These can be arranged with the tutor concerned at a mutually convenient time and need not be of one hour duration. Sometimes short tutorials can be very useful. The first contact for further academic support and guidance within the School is the tutor group tutor. She or he will be able to suggest other sources of help, should they be needed. In addition, each student is assigned an Independent Support Tutor who is someone who does not teach on the programme. When students begin their counselling placements they must have an independent counselling supervisor and it is a requirement of the programme that students have a minimum of 8 hours of personal therapy. Other resources in the School and the University include:

- The School of Psychology Counselling Placement Officer who is responsible for maintaining and developing the School’s relationships with Counselling Placements and can offer information, advice and support for students to find and maintain placements.
- The University has a Learning Support division of the Department of Academic Affairs which can offer helpful guidance beyond the support of the course team and the School of Psychology.
There is a Learning Support website with many useful resources, accessed via the University website.

7. Learning Resources

Give information about the physical facilities and learning resources that are typically used in the programme.

The programme typically uses a large classroom for whole group work and a number of smaller rooms for personal development and skills work. We also use DVD recording and playback equipment.

8. Other learning opportunities

a. Give details of study abroad opportunities, field trips, placements and other learning experiences, which may be available during the programme, and indicate those in which there may be a time/cost commitment required from the student. Please also supply details of where students can obtain further information about these.

Students must complete a minimum of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice. Normally this will take place in the Keele area but counselling hours may be completed in students’ home area, including overseas, provided a suitable placement can be arranged?

Some placements provide free supervision to the required level but if not, students must pay for their own supervision. Costs range from approximately £10 to £50 per session.

In addition, students must have a minimum of 8 hours of personal therapy. Costs are similar to those for counselling supervision.

Information regarding this may be obtained from the placement officer

9. Quality management and enhancement

a. Describe how the programme is managed (e.g. programme management committee, programme director, etc.).

Staff roles and responsibilities
The Course Director is responsible for:

- Overseeing enquiries, recruitment and admissions
- Giving guidance and general advice on any aspect of the course overall
- Giving general advice on problems or personal difficulties at any point during the course
- Extensions of time for assessed work in the absence of the module leader
- Advice on future academic and career options

The Module Leaders are responsible for:

- Organisation, delivery and assessment of the module
- Ensuring that written feedback is given on written work (and informal verbal feedback if required)
- Being available for student consultations

Pastoral care & academic guidance
Principal contacts for pastoral care and academic guidance are the skills group tutor, module leaders and the Course Director. Individual supervisors provide additional academic guidance on research-related issues. Each student also has an Independent Support Tutor who is not a member of the Counselling teaching team.

Students are entitled and encouraged to make use of all the central University services, including the Keele Postgraduate Association (telephone 01782 734228). Full details of all the university services can be found on the internet at http://www.keele.ac.uk/admin/

b. Describe how the programme is monitored and reviewed. Include details of opportunities for students to express their views and how student views are taken into account.

The quality of the course is evaluated throughout the year. Formal student feedback is sought by completion of module evaluation forms and a module evaluation report produced for each module. Students are encouraged to give informal feedback throughout the year, and if appropriate and necessary, direct action is taken. A 30 minute session of community time is timetabled most weeks of the course. All students and core staff are expected to attend. This provides an opportunity to highlight issues, raise questions, give feedback and discuss the running of the course. If required, other members of staff or personnel may be invited to address particular issues. Students are given both formal and informal opportunities to give feedback on the course to staff. Two formal staff student liaison meetings are held each year, attended by students and core staff representatives and chaired by students. These are followed by two formal course committee meetings, attended by students and all core staff, and chaired by staff. Staff meetings attended by all core staff are held weekly to deal with day to day issues as well as planning and evaluation. Formal staff meetings for course review and evaluation are held twice a year. Students are invited to meet with the External Examiner in the absence of all core staff, to give direct feedback on the course.

c. Describe how students are represented in the management of the programme.

See above.

10. Date on which programme specification was written or revised 6th May 2010