

Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

For Academic Year 2026/27

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	Graduate Certificate in Counselling
Award type	Graduate Certificate
Mode of study	Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 6
Normal length of the programme	1 year
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	n/a
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	UK students: Part-time fee for 2026/27 is £3,300 per year*

How this information might change: Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

* We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

2. Overview of the Programme

The Graduate Certificate in Counselling programme is a part-time programme of study which incorporates the three strands of counselling training, namely counselling theory, counselling practice with peers and personal development.

In addition to being a stand-alone programme, successful completion of the Graduate Certificate in Counselling, together with tutor recommendation, and the achievement of a minimum mark of 60% on at least one written assignment, will help you meet the criteria for entry onto the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy. The MSc Counselling and Psychotherapy is accredited by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. Successful completion of a BACP accredited programme confers direct entry onto the BACP Register, which is required by most organisations employing counsellors.

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 the Counselling Professions.

We encourage you to examine and question your 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 you opportunities to reflect upon the theory that is offered in the light of their own experience and thus to develop your own philosophical and theoretical base.

The core therapeutic intervention of the model is the range of skills required to build and maintain a relationship with the client. We develop skills which enable you 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 what have become known as the three 'core conditions' genuine empathic and non-judgemental attunement. We help you to develop these characteristics through intensive skills and personal development training.

3. Aims of the programme

The programme aims to develop your knowledge of the theory of person-centred counselling; to help you gain the skills inherent in forming and maintaining a facilitative counselling relationship, characterised by the 'core conditions' of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard, and to help you develop personal and professional awareness.

In addition, the programme aims to equip you with an understanding of and respect for safe, ethical counselling practice, in line with BACP recommended standards, and an awareness of identity, difference, diversity and inclusion.

4. What you will learn

The Graduate Certificate in Counselling is intended to facilitate learning and development across three broad categories relevant to the practice of counselling: knowledge and understanding of person-centred counselling theory, practice, and self; subject-specific skills pertinent to counselling; more general intellectual skills commensurate with study at undergraduate level and transferable skills such as would be required across a broad range of careers.

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what you should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Subject knowledge and understanding

Upon successful completion, you will be able to demonstrate:

- A knowledge and understanding of some key aspects of person-centred counselling theory and practice.
- An ability to evaluate counselling skills practice.
- An increase in self-knowledge and self-awareness
- An ability to devise, develop and sustain arguments, and/or solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of the counselling discipline.
- An ability to make decisions in complex situations, and sometimes with incomplete information
- The ability to manage your own learning and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the counselling discipline).

Subject specific skills

Upon successful completion, you will be able to demonstrate:

- Development of person-centred therapeutic skills.
- The ability to identify and evaluate person-centred counselling skills.
- Development of key professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.
- The ability to analyse and discuss person-centred counselling theory and to apply this theory to counselling practice.
- The ability to manage the therapeutic process when engaged in counselling skills practice with student peers.
- The ability to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Upon successful completion, you will be able to:

- Communicate effectively using appropriate verbal, visual, graphic, IT and written means, to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Demonstrate the ability to learn independently, using a range of information sources and approaches.
- Manage time effectively and work to deadlines.
- Use digital and electronic communication techniques, hardware and software, including word-processing, spreadsheets, email and internet.
- Learn to improve work based on written and verbal formative and summative feedback from tutors.
- Demonstrate the ability to build a relationship characterised by the Rogerian 'core conditions' of empathy, acceptance and genuineness.
- Demonstrate enhanced interpersonal skills, including active listening.
- Exercise initiative and personal responsibility.
- Demonstrate a non-judgemental and inclusive attitude to issues of identity, difference, diversity and inclusion.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify appropriate sources of information and to extract relevant information to suit specific contexts.

Keele Graduate attributes

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social, environmental and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

5. How is the programme taught?

The course is run in line with person-centred/humanistic principles and provides a wide range of different teaching and learning experiences, including:

- **Lectures**, which include the opportunity to engage in discussion and review
- **Experiential workshops**, which include the opportunity to learn about yourself and about counselling issues and practice from the perspective of self and others
- **Skills groups**, which include skills practice focused teaching, opportunities for practice, observation by tutors and peers. In addition, within the skills groups, you are encouraged to reflect on and discuss issues arising out of the lectures.
- **Formative recorded practice observation days**, in which you are given formative feedback on your practice by your tutor and peers
- **One-to-one tutorials** with your Academic Mentor
- **Completion of written and practice assignments**, with consideration of tutor feedback

In addition to teaching therapeutic theories and skills development, the programme aims to support trainees in developing sustained self-awareness and reflective practitioner skills. Therefore, the course provides regular and systematic opportunities for you to enhance self-awareness in a number of ways which are consistent with its rationale and philosophy, including the following:

- In most weeks of the programme, students meet in a personal development **Process Group**, which is facilitated by course tutors who both contain and encourage reflection on the group process and also model demonstrations of self-awareness. You are expected to use the process group as a very particular forum for demonstrating self-awareness by, for example, demonstrating your ability to embody, or to become aware of your struggles with embodying or experiencing, genuine empathic and non-judgemental attunement to yourself and your fellow group members.
- In all lectures, skills groups and other teaching settings, you are encouraged to respond to the material being taught in a personal way and to reflect on and share how the material resonates with you, fits with or conflicts with your values and beliefs, etc. You are also expected to engage in any experiential exercises which are offered in the context of lectures or in tutor groups, etc.
- In all written assignments, you are expected to demonstrate self-awareness, through evaluating theory against your own personal and practice-related experiences, values and beliefs.
- As a student you are required to undertake a minimum of eight hours of personal therapy, with a therapist who meets the criteria stated in the Therapy Contract.
- Reflexive skills are developed through self, peer and tutor evaluation and feedback. The focus of personal

development is also to assist the development of reflective practice. The course community meets regularly for Community Time, where staff and students meet as a whole community to reflect upon group dynamics and issues relating to the community. This structured community time provides a further opportunity to develop reflexive practitioner skills. You are required to keep a personal learning journal as a means of developing your reflexive self; the importance of journal keeping is emphasised in lectures and in tutor groups. In all assessed assignments, you are asked to reflect upon the relationship between theory, self and practice. In emphasising the relationship between these three dimensions, we are encouraging you to develop reflective skills.

- Each academic year there is an annual Keele Counselling Conference which is usually attended by national and international speakers. You are required to attend this conference as part of the Graduate Certificate programme.

Apart from these formal activities, you are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any additional learning needs you may have, with your Academic Mentors or course tutors.

These learning and teaching methods enable you to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme in a variety of ways. For example:

- Through lectures and through discussion in skills groups, you will gain a knowledge and understanding of some key aspects of person-centred counselling theory and practice.
- Through observed skills practice, you will develop the ability to apply therapeutic theory to counselling practice.
- Through participation in personal development process groups and through experiential workshops, you are supported to develop key professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with the BACP accreditation standards and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.

As this programme helps you meet the entry requirements for a professional training course, our course regulations stipulate that you are expected to attend a minimum of 90% of the course. The course includes a large amount of experiential work, so it may not be possible to make up the time and learning that has been missed, if you are absent from any part of the course. We understand, however, that there may be exceptional circumstances, for which evidence can be provided, which make it impossible for you to meet this attendance requirement. In such a situation, then you may, at the discretion of the course team, be permitted to drop to no less than 80% attendance, with the completion of reflective exercises to compensate for the sessions which have been missed.

6. Teaching Staff

All current core teaching staff on the programme are qualified counsellors with at least an MSc/MA in Counselling and/or a Postgraduate Diploma in counselling and/or psychotherapy. All staff have undertaken training in Person-Centred/Humanistic counselling and have experience of working in a variety of therapeutic settings including the NHS, the voluntary sector, private practice and in education. There is a wealth of therapeutic experience and knowledge amongst the core team. A number of the current core teaching team are also practicing counselling supervisors.

All core staff members are currently members of BACP or UKCP and adhere to their ethical frameworks. Additionally, several members of staff have teaching qualifications.

Information about counselling teaching staff is available on the school website:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/medicine/staff/>

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

7. What is the structure of the programme?

The academic year runs from September to June and is divided into two semesters. The dates of the teaching weeks may vary from year to year, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between mid-September and mid-December, and from early January to mid-June.

It is worth noting that, whilst required to follow the University's modular course design, the two compulsory Level 6 modules on the Graduate Certificate in Counselling are not discrete, as they might be on other University courses, but run parallel and connect with each other.

That said, each of the modules is assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10

hours of student effort. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided below.

Module Lists

Level 6

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Core Counselling Competences	PSY-30079	30	Semester 1-2
Personal Development and Professional Issues	PSY-30080	30	Semester 1-2

Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
A knowledge and understanding of some key aspects of person-centred counselling theory and practice.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
An ability to evaluate counselling skills practice.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
An increase in self-knowledge and self-awareness	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
An ability to devise, develop and sustain arguments, and/or solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of the counselling discipline.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
An ability to make decisions in complex situations, and sometimes with incomplete information	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
The ability to manage your own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the counselling discipline).	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Development of person-centred therapeutic skills.	Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
The ability to identify and evaluate person-centred counselling skills	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Development of key professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
The ability to analyse and discuss person-centred counselling theory and to apply this theory to counselling practice.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
The ability to manage the therapeutic process when engaged in counselling skills practice with student peers.	Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
The ability to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Communicate effectively using appropriate verbal, visual, graphic, IT and written means, to specialist and non-specialist audiences.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Demonstrate the ability to learn independently, using a range of information sources and approaches.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Manage time effectively and work to deadlines.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Use digital and electronic communication techniques, hardware and software, including word-processing, spreadsheets, email and internet.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Learn to improve work based on written and verbal formative and summative feedback from tutors.	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Demonstrate the ability to build a relationship characterised by the Rogerian 'core conditions' of empathy, acceptance and genuineness.	Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Demonstrate enhanced interpersonal skills, including active listening.	Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Exercise initiative and personal responsibility	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Demonstrate a non-judgemental and inclusive attitude to issues of difference and diversity	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080
Demonstrate the ability to identify appropriate sources of information and to extract relevant information to suit specific contexts	Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY-30080 Core Counselling Competences - PSY-30079 Personal Development and Professional Issues - PSY30080

8. Final and intermediate awards

There are no intermediate awards on this programme. The final award, on the successful completion of 60 credits at Level 6, is the Graduate Certificate in Counselling.

9. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance.

You are required to produce written work, in which you would reflect upon the theoretical and philosophical concepts that underpin the therapeutic model. You are expected to be able to relate theory to practice and your own self-development, particularly through your assessed recorded practice sessions, and this is an expectation in all assignments. All assessments aim to foster, in you, the ability to make the link between theory, practice and self-awareness. To achieve the necessary standard, extensive reading is required from published literature and current research material. All written work must contain evidence of your ability to relate relevant philosophical and theoretical concepts to your practice. In all written assignments, you are expected to demonstrate self-awareness, through evaluating theory against your own personal and practice-related experiences, values and

beliefs. You are encouraged to evaluate theory and your practice through the accessing of your own experiences and to reflect upon these experiences in terms of the impact this may have on you and, in turn, on those with whom you are in a helping relationship.

You are required to keep a personal learning journal throughout the programme, which is to facilitate your self-development and growth in self-awareness, as well as in your ability to reflect on the link between theory and practice.

Skills practice on the programme is assessed in a formative and summative manner.

You meet regularly with your skills group and Academic Mentor and you are provided with regular tutor and peer feedback on your skills development. You are expected to act upon this feedback to ensure a successful submission of their final skills assignment.

You are required to be an engaged member of the personal development group. This experience is not formally assessed but is necessary for you to develop self-awareness, which is formally assessed through written work and practice. In addition, you are required to undertake 8 hours of personal therapy, with a therapist who meets the criteria stated in the Therapy Contract.

The professional aptitudes of self-awareness and developing reflective practitioner status are monitored throughout the programme to ensure that you are fulfilling the requirement to move onto an accredited programme, whereby you would need to demonstrate safe practice with the public. If it is felt that you are not demonstrating professional aptitudes, attitudes or standards in line with BACP regulatory guidelines and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, then a course tutor, usually your academic mentor will firstly address such concerns with you. However, if serious concerns continue, you may be asked to speak with the Programme Director. In line with the University's Fitness to Practise regulations, you will be referred to the Health and Conduct Committee if deemed necessary.

For details regarding the University's Fitness to Practise regulations, please see the following link:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/regulationb5/>

The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used within Counselling:

- Essays
- Group Presentation
- Recordings of counselling sessions carried out with student peers; formative and summative assessment
- Evaluation of own counselling practice
- Personal learning journal
- Completion of 8 hours of personal therapy

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

Contact Time and Expected Workload

This contact time measure is intended to provide you with an indication of the type of activity you are likely to undertake during this programme. The data is compiled based on modules undertaken and learning patterns of students on similar programmes in previous years. Every effort is made to ensure this data is a realistic representation of what you are likely to experience, but changes to programmes, teaching methods and assessment methods mean this data is representative and not specific.

The figures below are an example of activities that you may expect on the Graduate Certificate in Counselling. Contact time includes scheduled activities such as: lecture, seminar, tutorial, skills group practice, personal development group, tutorials, attendance at the conference.

Activity	Graduate Certificate Level 6
Scheduled learning and teaching activities	25%
Guided independent study	75%
Placements	0

10. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

11. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

Students on the Graduate Certificate in Counselling are subject to the University's Fitness to Practise regulations, the details of which can be found here: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/regulationb5/>

12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/postgraduatestudy/postgraduatecourses/counselling/#entry-reqs>

Traditional academic qualifications are not a necessary requirement to enter the Graduate Certificate in Counselling. The programme is open to applicants who show appropriate commitment and motivation to participate in a programme that combines experiential learning and academic study.

In line with the requirements of BACP, applicants also need to demonstrate the following attributes: self-awareness, maturity and stability; ability to make use of and reflect upon life experience; capacity to cope with the emotional demands of the course; ability to cope with the intellectual and academic requirements; ability to form a helping relationship; ability to act upon developmental feedback; awareness of the nature of prejudice and oppression; awareness of one's own identity in relation to counsellor/client relationships ; ability to recognise the need for personal and professional support; competence in or the aptitude to develop generic personal skills, including: literacy, numeracy, information technology, administrative skills, self-management skills, communication and interpersonal skills.

In addition, applicants whose first language is not English must have an overall IELTS score of at least 7.0 with a score of at least 6.5 in each sub-test (or equivalent).

Please note: Students for whom English is not their first language are required to undertake a diagnostic English language assessment on arrival at Keele, to determine whether English language support may help them succeed with their studies. An English language module may be compulsory for some students during their first year at Keele.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

13. How are students supported on the programme?

You will join a tutor group (these are formed at the start of the course), led by a course tutor, who is then designated as your Academic Mentor. This group meets regularly for counselling skills development, peer support and mutual reflection. The whole cohort meets regularly as a personal development group and in Community Time . You have an entitlement to have one to one tutorials with your Academic Mentor for advice, support and feedback on academic, practice and course related issues; time for these is scheduled within the timetable and it is possible to ask for meetings outside of these times too. The Academic Mentor will be able to suggest other sources of help, should they be needed. Additionally, these individual tutorials are programmed for the purpose of progress review. These tutorials will be arranged with the individual tutor concerned.

It is a requirement of the programme that you have a minimum of 8 hours of personal therapy with a therapist who meets the criteria stated in the Therapy Contract whilst undertaking the programme.

Other resources in the School and the University include:

- A centre for Student Services, where you can access a range of support services, including academic, welfare and wellbeing, financial, and disability support. <https://www.keele.ac.uk/studentservices/>
- There are a wide range of online resources, to support learning, e.g. resources provided by the library, by IT Services, and One to One appointments for academic coaching, which can be accessed via the University website: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/library/academicsskills/>
- If you have additional needs you can access support from Student Services including access to the Student Experience Support Officer (SESO) assigned to the School and Programme. You can also inform the counselling tutor responsible for supporting students with disabilities who works in the role of a Disability and Inclusion Tutor (DIT) of any specific requirements you would need to support you through the programme. <https://www.keele.ac.uk/studentservices/>

14. Learning Resources

The programme typically uses a large classroom for whole group work and a number of smaller rooms for work in tutor groups.

All modules are supported by learning materials that are accessible to you via the Keele Learning Environment (KLE) and/or Microsoft Teams.

Rooms are also available with recording and playback equipment to practice skills.

Each academic year there is an annual Keele counselling conference which is attended by national and international speakers. You are required to attend this conference as part of the Graduate Certificate in Counselling programme.

15. Additional Costs

Mandatory costs

You can expect some additional costs as a student on this course, which may support learning activities, specialist equipment, fieldwork, placements, or other course-related requirements. Details of these mandatory costs are outlined below to help you plan accordingly.

On the Graduate Certificate course, you are required to attend 8 Personal Therapy Sessions. As a guide, costs range from approximately £40 to £70 per session.

You should be aware that possible additional costs may be incurred when attending the compulsory non-residential conference weekend. Refreshments and lunches are provided for you with no charge during the weekend. However, costs will be incurred if wishing to eat in the evening locally or book local accommodation.

These costs have been forecast by the University as accurately as possible but may be subject to change as a result of factors outside of our control (for example, increase in costs for external services). Forecast costs are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain representative. Where additional costs are in direct control of the University we will ensure increases do not exceed 5%.

Students may also incur general expenses related to university study, such as for printing, textbooks and other materials. Students who undertake a placement may be responsible for additional costs, such as travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs. For further information, please refer to the [additional costs](#) information.

16. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.
- A 30-minute community time is timetabled for most weeks of the programme. Staff and students are expected to attend. Community time provides an opportunity for students, in an informal forum, 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.
- At the end of the academic year, all staff get together to review the academic year, course design, curriculum, delivery and plan for the forthcoming academic year.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions

- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/ga/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

17. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

a. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

b. QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: Counselling and Psychotherapy (2022) <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/counselling-and-psychotherapy>

c. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 12 May 2026

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2025/26	SALLY CHISHOLM	12 June 2025	
1	2024/25	SALLY CHISHOLM	10 June 2024	
1	2023/24	CLAIRE CARTWRIGHT	18 April 2023	
1	2022/23	TRACEY CLARE	31 August 2022	