

**Quality Assurance**

**Masters in Counselling and Psychotherapy, Masters in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies**

**Programme Specification: Postgraduate**

This programme specification applies to students starting the programme from September 2021 onwards.

<b>Names of programme(s) and award title(s)</b>	MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy
<b>Mode of study</b>	Full-time and part-time
<b>Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award</b>	Level 7
<b>Duration:</b>	One year full-time / two years part-time

**Details of professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) (If appropriate):**

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) is one of the regulatory bodies for counselling and psychotherapy in the UK. The MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy is accredited by the BACP as a professional training route (both full- and part-time delivery modes).

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/professionalstatutoryregulatorybodies/>

**External Examiner:**

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

**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 (1967). 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 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 students opportunities 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.

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 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 Rogerian core conditions. We help students develop these characteristics through intensive skills and personal development training.

## **Aims of the programme**

The MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy is a full-time or part-time programme of study which incorporates the three strands of counselling training, namely counselling theory, counselling practice and personal development. The programme aims to facilitate the engagement of students in, not only academic study and research at Masters level, but also in personal and professional development designed to qualify them to practice as professional counsellors.

## **Intended learning outcomes of the programme**

The MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy is intended to facilitate learning and development across four broad categories: knowledge and understanding of applied psychological research; subject-specific skills pertinent to this MSc programme; more general intellectual skills commensurate with a higher university degree; and transferable skills such as would be required across a broad range of careers.

Specific intended learning outcomes are listed below.

### **Subject Knowledge and Understanding**

Successful students will be able to demonstrate:

- A knowledge and understanding of key aspects of counselling theory and practice, with a particular focus on person-centred and humanistic approaches.
- An ability to identify and evaluate a range of therapeutic approaches.
- An understanding of the power dynamics within and outside of the counselling relationship which may impact on the lives and growth of individuals.
- An understanding of the socially and culturally situated nature of counselling as a form of helping.
- The acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, informed by counselling research, and the ability to relate this to therapeutic practice.
- An understanding of empirical research methodologies used to explore key issues in counselling and psychotherapy.
- An ability to successfully complete a substantial empirical research project, or systematic case study informed by wide current understandings in the discipline.
- An ability to conduct a research study using a methodology appropriate to the research question and the philosophical beliefs guiding the researcher.
- An ability to apply and discuss empirical research methodologies used to explore key issues in counselling and psychotherapy.
- An ability to identify and appropriately apply reflexivity in research.
- An ability to articulate and evaluate research skills used and developed.
- An ability to present research plans, progress and difficulties coherently and critically.
- 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.
- An ability to act autonomously in planning, tackling and solving research tasks and implement these at a professional level.
- An ability to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in counselling and analyse and critique methodologies.

- The ability to manage their 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).
- An ability to critically discuss how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in counselling and psychotherapy.

### **Subject-specific skills**

Successful students will be able to demonstrate:

- Development of key 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 accreditation standards and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.
- An awareness of the issues involved in working with difference and diversity.
- An awareness of prejudice and oppression and of how these might impact on client, counsellor and the therapeutic relationship.
- An ability to discuss a range of professional issues.
- A thorough working knowledge of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions and the ability to apply this to practice.
- The ability to outline, discuss and critically evaluate person-centred counselling theory and to apply this theory to counselling practice.
- Reflective counselling practice.
- The ability to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.
- The ability to manage the therapeutic process and to work safely as a therapist.

Students who exit with the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy **Studies** can be expected to achieve all of the intended learning outcomes outlined which aren't related to their own individual practice. The alternative learning outcomes for students exiting with the **Studies** MSc is:

- Critically reflect on how the skill of evaluating counselling practice contributes to your own growth and development both personally and professionally Critically reflect on how the skill of evaluating counselling practice contributes to your own growth and development both personally and professionally
- Critically evaluate a person-centred counselling session, drawing on theory
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions and using this as a benchmark, critically discuss, if and how, it is implemented in the observed counselling session

### **Key or transferable skills (including employability skills) Successful**

students 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 difference and diversity
- Demonstrate the ability to identify appropriate sources of information and to extract relevant information to suit specific contexts

NB: Students who exit with the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy **Studies** or with any award at Post-Graduate Diploma level or lower will not, necessarily, be enabled to meet the intended learning outcomes outlined above.

In addition, the following two statements do **not** apply to students who exit with the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy **Studies** or with any award at Postgraduate Diploma level or lower.

- In addition to equipping you for further study at doctorate level, successful completion of the programme gives you a professional counselling qualification, recognised as such by employers in the UK.
- Furthermore, successful completion of this BACP accredited programme will enable you to obtain direct entry onto the BACP register.

### **Keele Graduate Attributes**

Engagement with this programme will enable you to further develop your intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and activities. Whilst you will undoubtedly have already developed these skills and abilities to varying degrees, such existing capabilities can always be deepened and enriched. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to develop further as a well-rounded postgraduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in during and after your studies at Keele.

We outline below how these attributes are developed in the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

*An open and questioning approach to ideas:* We actively encourage you to engage in reflection on how the ideas which we share with you, and which you will share with each other, sit with you; fit with or conflict with your own experiences, values, beliefs; to hold them up for questioning against other ideas in the field and, overall, to hold in mind the idea that, “This is not **the** truth; this is simply one way of looking at these things”. We encourage you to do this within lectures, within skills groups and in all your assignments.

*Appreciating the value of your chosen subject:* Throughout the programme, you will discover, for yourself, the value of counselling and of the person-centred approach and, in particular, through reflecting on its relevance to your own life, through offering a person-centred relationship to others, and through experiencing the impact on you of being offered the Rogerian core conditions. You will be able to reflect on how the person-centred approach has implications both within and outside of counselling and psychotherapy.

*Information literacy:* In completing your assignments for this programme, you will develop and demonstrate your information literacy in a number of ways, including searching for up to date literature from which to draw; discerning reputable and relevant sources; carrying out library searches, etc. Your counselling studies will enable you to locate, evaluate and synthesise large amounts of frequently conflicting information, ideas and data.

*Problem solving:* Counselling is a hands-on discipline and problem solving is at the forefront of the MSc Counselling and Psychotherapy programme. You will be called upon to solve problems ranging from how best to respond, moment to moment, in your counselling practice with peers and clients; which methodology to employ in your

research study to best research your chosen question, to how to make best use of the word count at your disposal to write up your dissertation and other written assignments.

*An appreciation of the implications of your studies:* Clearly studying does not take place in a vacuum. The choices that you make in what and where you study will impact on others. Keele takes this subtle aspect of university life seriously. Keele has developed a policy to reduce environmental impacts, including waste minimisation and energy management. Clearly, counselling has its own responsibilities, and students are required, in all aspects of the programme, to act in accordance with the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions. In choosing to study counselling and psychotherapy at Keele, you have also chosen to focus on person-centred practice and the values and philosophy underpinning this approach.

*The ability to communicate clearly and effectively:* In carrying out all assignments, in undertaking counselling practice with peers, and in all interactional aspects of the programme, you will develop the ability to communicate clearly and effectively. You will do this in writing, through your written assignments, and verbally in counselling practice sessions, in giving presentations, in giving verbal feedback to peers on their practice, and in sharing ideas with others in lectures, tutor groups and personal development groups.

*Developing knowledge, skills, motivation and self-confidence:* That knowledge and skills develop as a consequence of doing a Masters almost goes without saying. We enjoy seeing our students' self-confidence grow as they meet the challenges that are set throughout the Masters programme in the shape of the regular assignments. In particular, we believe that developing and owning your research project promotes students' motivation and self-confidence. We also believe that developing as a competent practitioner and undertaking a counselling placement helps students develop the knowledge, skills, motivation and self-confidence to take forward to their future counselling and psychotherapy practice, in whatever context this occurs.

*Responsible participation in one's communities:* From the beginning of the programme, we encourage you to take responsibility for your own learning and development. We also foster a strong sense of community across the programme and expect you to become active participants in both building and contributing to the community. Engaging in a counselling placement and gaining a professional qualification in counselling and psychotherapy also engenders the ability to participate in your own community.

*A professional and reflective approach:* The tutors on the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy strive to set a good example for professional life that our students can follow. All those engaged in the programme, staff and students alike, follow the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, and we require of ourselves and of you, as students, to strive towards developing the personal qualities espoused within that framework. As future counselling and psychotherapy practitioners, it is important that you graduate with qualities of leadership, responsibility, personal integrity and self-regulation. A reflective approach is required in all that you do across the programme, from conducting research and undertaking counselling skills practice, to completing written assignments, including two reflective pieces.

*Flexibility:* In all counselling and psychotherapy practice, we are faced with the unknown and have to develop the personal flexibility to be able to meet the client wherever and however they are, in all moments of the therapeutic encounter. We believe that undertaking a placement and undertaking a piece of research, in particular, helps you to keep up to date with contemporary issues in counselling and therapy and engage in practice in a range of settings.

The Graduate Attributes have been developed to reflect current practice at Keele and you may find them useful to draw on when you have completed the programme in preparing applications for jobs or further study. Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/>

## **2. 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 self 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, students are encouraged to reflect on and discuss issues arising out of the lectures.
- **Formative recorded practice observation days**, in which students are given formative feedback on their practice by their tutor and peers
- **One-to-one tutorials** with the student's personal tutor
- **Presentation** to dissertation supervision group of the proposed research project, with feedback from group members.
- **Dissertation supervision groups**, which include group reviews of the progress of individuals' research projects and the opportunity for one-to-one supervision with the student's dissertation supervisor.
- Completion of written and practice assignments, with consideration of tutor or dissertation supervisor feedback
- **Classroom test** - a multiple-choice questionnaire test, assessing students' familiarity with and understanding of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.

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

- For most weeks of the programme, students meet in a **personal development (PD) group**, which is facilitated by course tutors who both contain and encourage reflection on the group process and model demonstrations of self-awareness. Students are expected to use the PD group as a forum for demonstrating self-awareness by, for example, demonstrating their ability to offer, or their struggles with offering, the Rogerian 'core conditions' to themselves and their fellow group members.
- In all lectures, skills groups and other teaching settings, students are encouraged to respond to the material being taught in a personal way and to reflect on and share how the material resonates with them, fits with or conflicts with their values and beliefs, etc. Students 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, students are expected to demonstrate self-awareness, through evaluating theory against their own personal and practice-related experiences, values and beliefs.
- Students are required to undertake a minimum of twenty hours of personal therapy.
- Reflexive skills are developed through the keeping of a reflective journal and through self, peer and tutor evaluation and feedback. Students' abilities to reflect upon their own practice is further enhanced by the use of Interpersonal Process Recall (IPR) as a teaching method. 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. In all assessed assignments, students are asked to reflect upon the relationship between theory, self and practice. In emphasising the relationship between these three dimensions, we are encouraging students to develop reflexive skills. In addition, students are encouraged to become reflexive researchers, and are required to demonstrate an ability to identify and appropriately apply reflexivity in research.
- Each academic year there is an annual Keele Counselling Conference which is usually attended by national and international speakers. Students are required to attend this conference as part of the full-time and part-time MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy programme.

- Research teaching is delivered in lecture and seminar format. Students meet for lectures in the first semester and then in dissertation groups in the second semester. Alongside meetings with the supervisor in scheduled group supervision sessions, each student is also given the opportunity to meet regularly, on a one to one basis, with their dissertation supervisor, up to a maximum of 10 hours of individual supervision time.

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Personal Tutors.

### **How do these methods enable students to achieve the learning outcomes?**

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

- Through lectures and through discussion in skills groups, students gain a knowledge and understanding of key aspects of counselling theory and practice, with a particular focus on person-centred and humanistic approaches.
- Through observed skills practice, students develop the ability to apply therapeutic theory to counselling practice.
- Through participation in Personal Development groups and through experiential workshops, students are helped to develop key professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with BACP accreditation standards and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.
- Through meetings of dissertation groups, students develop the ability to articulate and evaluate research skills used and developed.

As this is 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.

### **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, and 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.

With regards to the research element of the programme, all of the current research teaching staff have conducted empirical, qualitative and/or quantitative research, and a number of the research supervision team have doctorates.

Information about counselling and psychotherapy staff is available on the school website:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/pcsc/ourpeople/counselling/>

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.

### 3. What is the Structure of the Programme?

The duration of the programme is one year (full-time) or two years (part-time).

Students would normally be expected to have fulfilled the academic and practice requirements of the full-time MSc programme within twelve months and part-time students would be expected to have fulfilled the practice requirements of the programme within twelve months and the academic requirements within two years.

#### Full-time

To gain an MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy, students are required to pass their 'readiness for placement' assessment in order to begin working with clients in a placement and obtain 180 credits at level 7 including a 60 credit dissertation. All modules are compulsory requirements and the course is comprised of the following six modules:

Semester 1	Semester 2
PSY 40059 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits)	PSY 40023 Understanding in Counselling (30 credits)
	PSY 40061 Integration in Counselling (15 credits)
PSY 40026 Research Methods (15 credits)	PSY 40054 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity (15 credits)
<b>Semester 1 and 2</b>	
PSY 40063 Practicum Part 1 (15 credits) & PSY 40065 Practicum Part 2 (15 credits) <b>OR</b> PSY 40067 Studies Practicum Part 1 (15 credits) and PSY 40069 Studies Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)	
PSY 40027 Counselling Dissertation (60 credits)	

#### Part-time

To gain an MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy, students are required to pass their 'readiness for placement' assessment in order to begin working with clients in a placement and obtain 180 credits at level 7 including a 60 credit dissertation. All modules are compulsory requirements and the course is comprised of the following six modules:

Year 1	
Semester 1	Semester 2
PSY 40059 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits)	PSY 40023 Understanding in Counselling (30 credits)
	PSY 40061 Integration in Counselling (15 credits)
<b>Semester 1 and 2</b>	
PSY 40063 Practicum Part 1 (15 credits) <b>OR</b> PSY 40067 Studies Practicum Part 1 (15 credits)	
Year 2	
Semester 1	Semester 2
PSY 40026 Research Methods (15 credits)	PSY 40054 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity (15 credits)
<b>Semester 1 and 2</b>	

PSY 40065 Practicum Part 2 (15 credits) **OR** PSY  
40069 Studies Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)

PSY 40027 Counselling Dissertation (60 credits)

## Learning Outcomes

Subject Knowledge and Understanding		
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered	Principle forms of assessment (of the Outcome) used
<p>1. Critically discuss the key aspects of counselling theory and practice, with a particular focus on person-centred and humanistic approaches</p> <p>2 Critically evaluate person-centred counselling theory and how this relates to practice</p> <p>3 Critically demonstrate an understanding of how counselling, as a form of helping, is socially and culturally situated</p> <p>4 Demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate current research and analyse and critique methodologies</p> <p>5 Demonstrate an ability to devise, develop and sustain arguments</p>	PSY-40059 Exploration in Counselling	<p>Essay</p> <p>MCQ test</p>
<p>1 Demonstrate a critical understanding of empirical research methodologies used to explore key issues in counselling and psychotherapy</p> <p>2 Synthesise the key literature which will form part of the study or the methodological approach to the study if the former is mitigated by the methodological approach</p> <p>3 Illustrate how the proposed research may contribute to knowledge in the counselling professions and how it applies to practice</p> <p>4 Evidence the acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, informed by counselling research, and the ability to relate this to therapeutic practice</p>	PSY-40026 Research Methods	20 Minute narrated presentation

<p>5 Integrate the BACP Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions into the design</p>		
<p>1 Critically examine how power dynamics, within and outside of the person-centred counselling relationship, may impact on the lives and growth of individuals</p> <p>2 Critically discuss how culture, within and outside of the person-centred counselling relationship, may impact on the lives and growth of individuals</p> <p>3 Synthesise the issues involved in working with difference and diversity within the person-centred counselling relationship</p> <p>4 Demonstrate an understanding of prejudice and oppression and of how this might impact on client, counsellor and the therapeutic relationship</p> <p>5 Illustrate their understanding of key professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions</p>	<p>PSY-40023 Understanding in Counselling</p>	<p>5,000 word essay</p>
<p>1 Identify, and critically discuss a professional issue (or range of professional issues) or a particular therapeutic approach, (or a range of therapeutic approaches)</p> <p>2 Critically evaluate key aspects of counselling theory and practice</p> <p>3 Demonstrate the acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge informed by counselling research, and the ability to relate this to therapeutic practice</p> <p>4 Demonstrate a knowledge of key professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions</p>	<p>PSY-40061 Integration in Counselling</p>	<p>3,000 word essay</p>
<p>1 Demonstrate key person-centred therapeutic skills in counselling practice, and an ability to manage</p>	<p>PSY-40063 Practicum 1</p>	<p>Readiness for Placement Assessment</p>

<p>the therapeutic process and work safely as a therapist</p> <p>3 Demonstrate professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, and how to apply this in practice</p> <p>5 Demonstrate the ability to build a relationship characterised by the Rogerian 'core conditions' of empathy, acceptance and genuineness</p> <p>6 Demonstrate in practice the ability to form a person-centred therapeutic relationship and within the BACP's Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions</p>		<p>20 minute recording/or 'live' practice</p> <p>3,000-word evaluation of 10 minutes of 20 minute submission of recorded practice session.</p> <p>30 hour supervisor report, plus 10 hours of personal therapy</p>
<p>1 Demonstrate an ability to reflect on a range of professional issues, including prejudice and oppression and working with difference and diversity, and how these might impact on client, counsellor and the therapeutic relationship</p> <p>2 Develop a thorough working knowledge of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, and the associated key professional and personal qualities and attributes, and be able to apply in practice</p> <p>4 Demonstrate and critically reflect on their growth in self-knowledge and self-awareness, commenting on their enhanced interpersonal skills, including active listening</p> <p>5 Critically reflect on their counselling practice and their ability to form a therapeutic relationship</p>	<p>PSY-40065 Practicum 2</p>	<p>2,000 word essay</p> <p>70 hour &amp; 100 hour supervision reports, plus 10 hours of personal therapy (submission of evidence required)</p>
<p>1 Demonstrate the ability to critically reflect on the development of self-knowledge and self-awareness</p> <p>2 Demonstrate an ability to identify and critically reflect on their growth and development</p> <p>3 Critically reflect on their development of key person-centred</p>	<p>PSY-40054 Personal and Professional Reflexivity</p>	<p>3,000 word essay</p>

<p>therapeutic attitudes (empathy, UPR and congruence) and how this relates to practice</p> <p>4 Demonstrate the acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge informed by counselling research and the ability to relate this to therapeutic practice</p> <p>5 Demonstrate the key professional and personal qualities and attributes in relation to self, in line with the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, through critical reflection</p>		
<p>1 Critically discuss research methodologies used to explore key issues in counselling and psychotherapy</p> <p>2 Critically evaluate and apply a methodology appropriate to the research question and their underpinning philosophical beliefs</p> <p>3 Critically discuss how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in counselling and psychotherapy</p> <p>4 Critically evaluate and reflect on current research and advanced scholarship in counselling and psychotherapy, and devise, develop and sustain arguments</p> <p>5 Demonstrate the acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, informed by counselling research, and the ability to relate this to therapeutic practice</p> <p>6 Demonstrate the ability to organise, plan and produce a substantial empirical research project, or systematic case study, informed by wide current understanding in the discipline</p>	<p>PSY-40027 Dissertation</p>	<p>15,000 words</p>

With the exception of a multiple-choice questionnaire classroom test in Semester 1 of the MSc programme (Year 1 for part-time students), all modules are assessed on the basis of either practice, a presentation and coursework, or a combination of each. The pass mark for all modules is 50%.

**Exit routes:**

The MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy (full and part-time) is accredited by BACP as a route of professional counselling training.

However, ALL other exit routes (see below) are not BACP accredited routes of professional counselling training,

- MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies;
- Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy;
- Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies;
- Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling, and Psychotherapy, and
- the Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies.

Students can exit the programme with an **MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies** if they achieve 180 credits and complete the following modules:

- PSY 40059 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits)
- PSY 40023 Understanding in Counselling (30 credits)
- PSY 40061 Integration in Counselling (15 credits)
- PSY 40067 Studies Practicum Part 1 (15 credits) & PSY 40069 Studies Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)
- PSY 40026 Research Methods (15 credits)
- PSY 40027 Counselling Dissertation (60 credits)
- PSY 40054 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity (15 credits)

Students can exit the programme with a **Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy** if they achieve 120 credits and complete the following modules:

- PSY 40059 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits)
- PSY 40023 Understanding in Counselling (30 credits)
- PSY 40061 Integration in Counselling (15 credits)
- PSY 40063 Practicum Part 1 (15 credits) & PSY 40065 – Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)
- PSY 40026 Research Methods (15 credits)
- PSY 40054 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity (15 credits)

Students can exit the programme with a **Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies** if they achieve 120 credits and complete the following modules:

- PSY 40059 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits)
- PSY 40023 Understanding in Counselling (30 credits)
- PSY 40061 Integration in Counselling (15 credits)
- PSY 40067 Studies Practicum Part 1 (15 credits) & PSY 40069 Studies Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)
- PSY 40026 Research Methods (15 credits)
- PSY 40054 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity (15 credits)

Students can exit the programme with a **Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling and Psychotherapy** if they achieve 60 Credits. They can do this by completing any combination of modules within the programme for which the combined credits amount to 60.

If a Practicum module is one of the modules chosen, then it must be a Practicum module (PSY40063 and/or PSY 40065) and not a **Studies** Practicum module (PSY 40067 and/or PSY 40069)

Students can exit the programme with a **Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies** if they achieve 60 Credits. They can do this by completing any combination of modules for which the combined credits amount to 60.

If a Practicum module is one of the modules chosen, then it must be a **Studies** Practicum module (PSY 40067 and/or PSY 40069) and not a Practicum module (PSY40063 and/or PSY 40065).

#### **4. How is the Programme assessed?**

The wide variety of assessment methods used within Counselling and Psychotherapy at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge, skills and attributes that are developed as you progress through the full-time and part-time MSc 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.

Students are required to pass a 'readiness for placement' assessment in order to begin working with clients in a placement and produce written work, which requires them to reflect upon the theoretical and philosophical concepts that underpin their therapeutic model, make practice recordings, submit a presentation and to sit a classroom test based on the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions. All students are expected to be able to relate theory to practice and their own personal and professional development, particularly through their assessed recorded practice sessions, but this is expected in all assignments. All assessments aim to foster, in students, the ability to make the link between theory, research, 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 the student's ability to relate relevant philosophical and theoretical concepts to their practice and to their research. In all written assignments, students are expected to demonstrate self-awareness and reflexivity, by, for example, evaluating theory against their own personal and practice-related experiences, values and beliefs, and through considering their position in relation to their research. Students are encouraged to evaluate theory and their practice through the accessing of their own experiences and to reflect upon these experiences in terms of the impact this may have on themselves and, in turn, on their practice with clients.

Students are required to keep a reflexive diary, which is to facilitate them in their self-development and growth in self-awareness, as well as in their ability to reflect on the link between theory and practice. In addition, the reflexive diary helps facilitate students' development as reflexive researchers.

Skills practice on the programme is assessed in a formative and summative manner, and all students must pass a 'readiness for placement' assessment in order to begin working with clients in a placement

Students meet regularly with their skills group and personal tutor and are provided with regular tutor and peer feedback on their skills development. The student is expected to act upon this feedback to ensure a successful submission of their final skills assignment.

Each student is required to be an engaged 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 formally assessed through written work and practice.

Each student is required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice before the award is granted. This is evidenced by 3 satisfactory supervisor's reports. Students are also required to undertake 20 hours of personal therapy.

The professional aptitudes of self-awareness and developing reflective practitioner status are monitored throughout the programme to ensure that students are fulfilling the requirement of an accredited programme, and are safe to practice with the public. If it is felt that a student is not demonstrating professional aptitudes, attitudes or standards in line with BACP regulatory guidelines and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, then their personal tutor will firstly address such concerns with them. However, if serious concerns continue, they may be

asked to speak with the Programme Director. In line with the University's Fitness to Practise regulations, students 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 and Psychotherapy:

- Essays
- An MCQ classroom test
- Research proposal
- Dissertation
- Recordings of counselling sessions carried out with student peers; formative and summative assessment
- Evaluation of own counselling practice
- Presentation
- Completion of 20 hours of personal therapy
- Completion of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice on placement
- Three satisfactory supervisor's reports
- Critically reflective essays

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.

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

The entry requirements are as follows:

- a) a 2i degree in any discipline (or equivalent professional qualifications); or
- b) successful completion of the Keele Graduate Certificate in Counselling, with a mark of at least 60% in one assignment and recommendation from personal tutor in the form of a Progression Report, which will include an assessment of the student's ability to work with clients; or
- c) At least a 2ii in the Keele BSc Psychology with Counselling, and with an average mark of at least 60% in the four counselling modules (years 2 and 3) and recommendation from a counselling modules leader in the form of a Progression Report, which will include an assessment of the student's ability to work with clients.

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 be self-critical and use both positive and negative feedback; awareness of the nature of prejudice and oppression; awareness of the nature of difference and equality; 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-managements skills, communication and interpersonal skills.

Applicants will also need to address the requirements outlined above in their personal statements in the application form and in response to the criteria questionnaire to be completed as part of the application process.

For applicants who have not completed either of these two Keele programmes, we require them to have some experience of working with people in a helping capacity, whether voluntary or paid.

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 studies for this programme.

## **6. How are students supported on the programme?**

Students join a tutor group; these groups are formed at the start of the course. They are led by a course tutor, who is then designated as the student's personal tutor. (For part-time students, these groups run in Year 1 only). Tutor groups meet regularly for counselling skills development, peer support and mutual reflection. All students have an entitlement to have one to one tutorials with their personal tutor for advice, support and feedback on academic, practice and course related issues; time for these is available within the timetable. The tutor will be able to suggest other sources of help, should they be needed.

Additionally, individual tutorials are programmed for the purpose of progress review. These tutorials will be arranged with the individual tutor concerned.

Students also join a personal development group at the start of the course, facilitated by a course tutor (for parttime students this, too, will be in Year 1 only). This personal development group can be a source of peer support for students.

In addition, students are allocated a dissertation supervisor (for part-time students, this will be in Year 2), and, alongside meetings with the supervisor in scheduled group supervision sessions, are also entitled to individual dissertation supervision time, up to a maximum of 10 hours, during the programme. These can be arranged with the dissertation supervisor concerned at a mutually convenient time and need not be of one hour duration; sometimes short tutorials can be very useful.

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 20 hours of personal therapy.

Other resources in the School and the University include:

- The 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.
- A centre for Student Services, where students can access a range of support services, including academic, welfare and wellbeing, financial, and disability support. <https://www.keele.ac.uk/student-services/>
- There is a Student Learning website with many useful resources, accessed via the University website. <https://www.keele.ac.uk/student-learning/>
- There are technical staff within the School of Medicine, to assist with the use of electronic recording and other equipment, and the booking of rooms for skills practice.
- Students with disabilities or medical problems can access support from Student Services and can also inform the counselling tutor responsible for supporting students with disabilities of any specific requirements they would need to support them through the programme. <https://www.keele.ac.uk/student-services/>

## **7. Learning Resources**

For most of the academic year, teaching takes place in the David Wetherall Building or Home Farm/The Hub. The programme typically uses a large classroom for whole group work and a number of smaller rooms for work in tutor groups and personal development groups.

All modules are supported by learning materials that are accessible to students via the Keele Learning Environment (KLE).

Practice rooms are also available with recording and playback equipment. Technical staff are available to support with the use of this equipment.

## **8. Other learning opportunities**

Students must complete a minimum of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice. Typically, this will take place in the Keele area but counselling hours may be completed in students' home areas, including overseas, provided a suitable placement, which meets the programme criteria, 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 £30 to £50 per session.

In addition, students must have a minimum of 20 hours of personal therapy. Costs are similar to those for counselling supervision.

Information regarding supervision and personal therapy may be obtained from the Placement Officer.

Each academic year there is an annual Keele Counselling Conference which is attended by national and international speakers. Students are required to attend this conference as part of the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy programme; for part-time students, attendance at the conference is mandatory in Year 1.

## **9. Quality management and enhancement**

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

- The School Education Committee of the School of Medicine is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the full-time and part-time MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year and as part of the University's Annual Programme Review process.

The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Internal Quality Audit (IQA) process.

- Findings related to the Counselling Programme from the annual Post-Graduate 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.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every Counselling and Psychotherapy 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 the Annual Programme Review process.
- Feedback received from representatives of students in the full-time and part-time MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the programme's Student Staff Voice Committee.
- In line with BACP accreditation procedures, a fortnightly 30 minute community time is timetabled throughout most 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/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

## 10. The principles of programme design

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

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:  
<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/qualitycode#:~:text=The%20Quality%20Code%20is%20a,to%20expect%20from%20each%20other.>
- University Teaching and Learning Strategy to 2020  
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/discover/strategicplanandmission/learningandteachingstrategy/>
- Keele University Code of Practice on Assessment:  
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/policyzone/data/assessmentprinciples/>
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: 2013 [https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statementcounselling-psychotherapy.pdf?sfvrsn=fde2f781\\_10](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statementcounselling-psychotherapy.pdf?sfvrsn=fde2f781_10)
- BACP Standards for the Accreditation of Training Courses: 2012:  
<https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/1502/bacp-course-accreditation-criteria.pdf>
- Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

## 11. Programme Version History

Version History	Date	CHANGES / NOTES
Date first created	October 2017	Update to reflect changes in programme structure.
Revision history	April 2018  August 2020	Update to reflect further changes in programme structure  Amended details to reflect the transfer of the programme to the School of Medicine
Date approved	May 2018	