

Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught For Academic Year 2024/25

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	MSc Counselling and Psychotherapy
Award type	Taught Masters
Mode of study	Full-time Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Normal length of the programme	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	<p>UK students:</p> <p>Full-time fee for 2024/25 is £12,700</p> <p>Part-time fee for 2024/25 is £7,000 per year*</p> <p>International students:</p> <p>Full-time fee for 2024/25 is £24,100</p>

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 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.

3. 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.

4. What you will learn

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.

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students 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

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:

- 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 above, with the exception of this final one. The alternative learning outcome for students exiting with the **Studies** MSc is:

- The ability to manage the therapeutic process when engaged in counselling skills practice with student peers.

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.

The 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 and ethical awareness**. 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.

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

Academic Expertise

That knowledge and skills develop as a consequence of doing a Master's almost goes without saying. We enjoy seeing our students' self-confidence grow as they meet the challenges that are set throughout the Master's 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.

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.

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.

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.

Professional Skills

We 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.

Throughout the programme you will be encouraged to reflect on how person-centred theory has implications both within and outside of counselling and psychotherapy. We hope you will discover, for yourself, the value of counselling by reflecting on the relevance of person-centred theory to your own life, through being in relationship to others, and through experiencing the impact on you, your peer clients by embodying and experiencing the Rogerian 'core conditions.'

In all counselling and psychotherapy practice, we are faced with the unknown and we 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 in particular, undertaking a piece of research, will help you to keep up to date with contemporary issues in counselling and therapy and engage in practice in a range of settings.

Personal Effectiveness

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 reflexive pieces, preparing a research presentation and having the choice of making a podcast or writing an article. The tutors on the MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy strive to set a good example for professional life that our students can follow. As future counselling and psychotherapy practitioners, it is important that you graduate with qualities of leadership, responsibility, integrity, straightforwardness and self-regulation.

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.

Social and Ethical Awareness.

All those engaged in the programme, staff and students alike, follow the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, and we are all required to strive towards developing the personal qualities espoused within that framework.

From the beginning of the programme, we encourage you to consider your own positionality and aspects of identity which may afford you power and privilege and those for which you may have experienced oppression. We aim to foster a strong sense of community across the programme and expect you to become active participants in both building and contributing to an inclusive community, where one can be curious and non-judgmental. We highly encourage you to take responsibility for your own learning and development. Engaging in a counselling placement and gaining a professional qualification in counselling and psychotherapy also engenders the ability to participate in considering aspects of social justice in your own community.

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.

These 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.

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 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 Academic Mentor
- **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/process (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 reflective 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. In the second semester students engage in a mixture of group and individual supervision. Each student is allocated up to a maximum of 10 hours of individual supervision which includes support with ethics applications and feedback on a draft submission of the dissertation.

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 Academic Mentors.

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/Process 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.

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, 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/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 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 normally be expected to have fulfilled the practice and the academic requirements within two years.

Full-time

To gain an MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy, students are required to obtain 180 credits at level 7 including a 60 credit dissertation.

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)
Semester 1 and 2	
PSY-40063 Practicum Part 1 (15 credits) & PSY-40065 Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)	
<i>NB: FOR STUDENTS UNABLE TO COMPLETE THE CLIENT HOURS REQUIRED BY BACP TO BE REGISTERED AND WISHING TO TAKE A NON-PROFESSIONAL EXIT AWARD THEY WILL INSTEAD TAKE:</i>	
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 obtain 180 credits at level 7 including a 60 credit dissertation.

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)
Semester 1 and 2	
PSY-40063 Practicum Part 1 (15 credits)	
<i>NB: FOR STUDENTS UNABLE TO COMPLETE THE CLIENT HOURS REQUIRED BY BACP TO BE REGISTERED AND WISHING TO TAKE A NON-PROFESSIONAL EXIT AWARD THEY WILL INSTEAD TAKE:</i>	
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)
Semester 1 and 2	
PSY-40065 Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)	
<i>NB: FOR STUDENTS UNABLE TO COMPLETE THE CLIENT HOURS REQUIRED BY BACP TO BE REGISTERED AND WISHING TO TAKE A NON-PROFESSIONAL EXIT AWARD THEY WILL INSTEAD TAKE:</i>	
PSY-40069 Studies Practicum Part 2 (15 credits)	
PSY-40027 Counselling Dissertation (60 credits)	

Year	Compulsory	Optional	
		Min	Max
Level 7	180	0	0

Module Lists

Level 7

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Research Methods	PSY-40026	15	Semester 1
Exploration in Counselling (15 credits)	PSY-40059	15	Semester 1
Understanding in Counselling	PSY-40023	30	Semester 1-2
Counselling Dissertation	PSY-40027	60	Semester 1-2
Practicum - Part 1	PSY-40063	15	Semester 1-2
Practicum - Part 2	PSY-40065	15	Semester 1-2
Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity	PSY-40054	15	Semester 2
Integration in Counselling (15 credits)	PSY-40061	15	Semester 2

Level 7 Module Rules

Students are automatically enrolled on PSY-40063 and PSY-40065.

NB: FOR STUDENTS UNABLE TO COMPLETE THE CLIENT HOURS REQUIRED BY BACP TO BE REGISTERED AND WISHING TO TAKE A NON-PROFESSIONAL EXIT AWARD THEY WILL INSTEAD TAKE: PSY-40067 and PSY-40069 (both Semester 1-2 modules)

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.

Level 7

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
A knowledge and understanding of key aspects of counselling theory and practice, with a particular focus on person-centred and humanistic approaches.	Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An ability to identify and evaluate a range of therapeutic theories and approaches.	Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
An understanding of the power dynamics within and outside of the counselling relationship which may impact on the lives and growth of individuals.	Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An understanding of the socially and culturally situated nature of counselling as a form of helping.	Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059
The acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, informed by counselling research, and the ability to relate this to therapeutic practice.	Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 Research Methods - PSY-40026 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An understanding of empirical research methodologies used to explore key issues in counselling and psychotherapy	Research Methods - PSY-40026 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027
An ability to successfully complete a substantial empirical research project, or systematic case study informed by wide current understandings in the discipline.	Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027
An ability to conduct a research study using a methodology appropriate to the research question and the philosophical beliefs guiding the researcher	Research Methods - PSY-40026 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027
An ability to apply and discuss empirical research methodologies used to explore key issues in counselling and psychotherapy.	Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027
An ability to identify and appropriately apply reflexivity in research	Research Methods - PSY-40026 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027
An ability to articulate and evaluate research skills used and developed	Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027 Research Methods - PSY-40026
An ability to present research plans, progress and difficulties coherently and critically.	Research Methods - PSY-40026
An increase in self-knowledge and self-awareness	Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An ability to devise, develop and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of the counselling discipline.	Research Methods - PSY-40026 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An ability to make decisions in complex situations, and sometimes with incomplete information	PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An ability to act autonomously in planning, tackling and solving research tasks and implement these at a professional level.	Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027 Research Methods - PSY-40026

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
An ability to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in counselling and analyse and critique methodologies.	Research Methods - PSY-40026 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027
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).	Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 Research Methods - PSY-40026 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023
An ability to critically discuss how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in counselling and psychotherapy.	Research Methods - PSY-40026 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Development of key person-centred therapeutic skills.	Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
The ability to identify and evaluate person-centred counselling skills.	PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
Development of key professional and personal qualities and attributes in line with BACP accreditation standards and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.	Research Methods - PSY-40026 Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An awareness of the issues involved in working with difference and diversity.	Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An awareness of prejudice and oppression and of how these might impact on client, counsellor and the therapeutic relationship.	Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
An ability to discuss a range of professional issues.	Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
A thorough working knowledge of the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions and the ability to apply this to practice.	Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
The ability to outline, discuss and critically evaluate person-centred counselling theory and to apply this theory to counselling practice.	Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
Reflective counselling practice	PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
The ability to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.	Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 Research Methods - PSY-40026 Counselling Dissertation - PSY-40027 Integration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40061 Understanding in Counselling - PSY-40023 Exploration in Counselling (15 credits) - PSY-40059 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
The ability to manage the therapeutic process and to work safely as a therapist	Practicum - Part 2 - PSY-40065 Practicum - Part 1 - PSY-40063
The ability to manage the therapeutic process when engaged in counselling skills practice with student peers. (Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies award)	PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2
Reflect on self and on the personal and professional awareness and skills gained through undertaking the programme	Personal and Professional Development and Reflexivity - PSY-40054 PSY-40063 & 40065 - Practicum Parts 1 and 2 or PSY-40067 & 40069 - Studies Practicum Parts 1 and 2

8. Final and intermediate awards

Master's Degree	180 credits	You will require at least 150 credits at Level 7
Postgraduate Diploma	120 credits	You will require at least 90 credits at Level 7
Postgraduate Certificate	60 credits	You will require at least 40 credits at Level 7

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 degree 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 produce written work, which requires them to reflect upon the theoretical and philosophical concepts that underpin their therapeutic model 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.

Students meet regularly with their skills group and Academic Mentor 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/process 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 Academic Mentor 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
- Reflexive pieces
- Choice of podcast/ written article or essay
- Completion of 20 hours of personal therapy
- Completion of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice on placement
- Three satisfactory supervisor's reports

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 usually within four working weeks of submission, unless there are competing circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

10. Accreditation

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).

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/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

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/counsellingandpsychotherapy/>

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/ga/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

13. 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 academic mentor. (For part-time students, in Year 2 a different

academic mentor is allocated). 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 academic mentor 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. 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/process group at the start of the course, facilitated by a course tutor (for part-time students this will be in Year 1 only). This personal development/process group can be a source of learning to be reflexive, enable self and other awareness and build congruent relating.

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. This includes support for ethics submission and feedback on a draft of the dissertation. 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. (These are additional costs to the programmes)

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/studentservices/>
- There is a Student Learning website with many useful resources, accessed via the University website. <https://www.keele.ac.uk/studentlearning/>
- There are professional staff within the university, to assist with the use of electronic recording and other equipment, and the booking of rooms for skills practice.
- Students with additional needs 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/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 and personal development/process groups.

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

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

15. Other Learning Opportunities

Students must complete a minimum of 100 hours of supervised counselling practice. Students may locate placements in the Keele area but counselling placements may also 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 £40 to £70 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 usually 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.

16. Additional Costs

Activity	Estimated Cost
20 supervision sessions at circa £70 per session	£1,400
20 personal therapy sessions at circa £60 per session. However, if you need more therapy or take longer to do placement hours these will increase.	£1,200
Total estimated additional costs	£2,600

There will also be travel costs for placement, plus there may be additional training courses the placement asks you to do.

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%.

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

17. 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.

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/>

18. 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:

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: (2022): <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/counselling-and-psychotherapy>

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

d. BACP Standards for the Accreditation of Training Courses: 2012 <https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/1502/bacp-course-accreditation-criteria.pdf>

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 24 October 2024

What's Changed

Clarification that the Practicum modules are taken by default. Students only take 'Studies Practicum' if they are unable to complete the client hours required by the BACP to be registered.

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2024/25	SALLY CHISHOLM	10 June 2024	
1	2023/24	CLAIRE CARTWRIGHT	18 April 2023	
1	2022/23	TRACEY CLARE	19 August 2022	