

School of Psychology

Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology

Course information booklet for applicants



What is Counselling Psychology?

Counselling Psychology is distinctive amongst the psychological therapies by being firmly rooted in the discipline of psychology whilst at the same time emphasising the importance of the therapeutic relationship and process. It is a branch of applied psychology that emphasises the integration of psychological theory and research with therapy. The practice of Counselling Psychology requires a high level of self-awareness and competence in relating the skills and knowledge of personal and interpersonal dynamics within the therapeutic context. Counselling Psychology is grounded in a humanistic values base, which prioritises the individuality and empowerment of each client, non-discriminatory practice, understanding of social and cultural context, and ethical decision-making. The discipline of Counselling Psychology is regulated by **Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)** and its professional body is the **British Psychological Society (BPS)**. Further information about Counselling Psychology, the HCPC and BPS can be found at the end of this document, and applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with this information.

Training as a Counselling Psychologist

There are two key stages in training to become a Counselling Psychologist (or any type of applied psychologist). The first involves gaining what is termed the Graduate Basis for Chartered membership (GBC) with the BPS. This is conferred by the BPS to those who have completed an accredited undergraduate degree or conversion diploma in psychology. This ensures that all candidates have gained a grounding in the core discipline of psychology. The second stage involves either undertaking a specialist post-graduate training in Counselling Psychology, usually of at least 3-years duration, at an institution that offers an approved programme (such as the programme at London Met) or completing the BPS Qualification in Counselling Psychology, sometimes referred to as the “Independent Route”. Further information about training pathways in Counselling Psychology can be found under “careers and qualifications” at the BPS website at bps.org.uk.

Upon successful completion of a BPS accredited programme, graduates with GBC are eligible to apply to the BPS to become chartered psychologists. Where a training programme is also approved by the HCPC, graduates are eligible to register as practitioner psychologists with the HCPC and use the protected title of Counselling Psychologist. Applicants should be aware that the HCPC review applications to join the register individually and that an offer made to join a Counselling Psychology programme, and completion of the programme does not automatically guarantee registration with the HCPC. Further information on registration can be found at the HCPC website at hcpc-uk.org.

The Counselling Psychology programme at London Metropolitan University is a well-established training course that is accredited by the BPS and approved by the HCPC. Trainees on the London Met doctoral programme are required to be graduate members of the BPS and to become in-training members of the **BPS Division of Counselling Psychology** which has a variety of benefits. For more information see: bps.org.uk/networks-and-communities/member-microsite/division-counselling-psychology

The London Met programme

The Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology is a 3-year full-time or 4-year part-time postgraduate training programme designed to enable graduates to meet all of the criteria necessary to be eligible to apply for chartered psychologist status with the BPS (bps.org.uk) and registration with the HCPC (hpc-uk.org) as a counselling psychologist. The programme has been recently redesigned and reaccruited by the Health and Care Professions Council and British Psychological Society, and seeks to provide a cutting edge training experience in this expanding field of applied psychology. The course emphasises the development of clinical and research skills that enable graduates to make a valuable professional contribution to knowledge and practice in a variety of contemporary settings. Trainees join a vibrant and progressive learning community, which includes counselling and clinical psychologists with a range of theoretical orientations and areas of expertise.

The doctoral programme at London Metropolitan University is made up of nine core modules and takes a minimum of three years to complete. Seven smaller modules are completed at Masters level in Year 1, and two larger modules are then completed at Doctoral level over Years 2 and 3 of the programme. The table below provides an overview of these modules. To enhance the accessibility of the training, it can be taken in full-time (3 years) or part-time mode (4 years), where students complete the modules from Year 1 over 2 calendar years. There is an annual intake every September into Year 1 of 15-20 students, with a smaller number of students continuing into Years 2 and 3 to complete the doctorate.

The principle aims of the course are to produce graduates who are:

1. Competent, informed, reflective, ethical and professionally sound practitioners of counselling psychology; who are able to work in a range of settings, and committed to their own personal and professional development.
2. Able to understand, develop and apply models of advanced psychological inquiry and research that enable the creation of new knowledge and which recognise the complex nature of human experience and relationships
3. Able to adopt a questioning and evaluative approach to the philosophy, practice, research and theory that constitutes counselling psychology; and aware of the wider social, cultural and political domains within which counselling psychology operates.
4. Possess a set of skills and competencies that are transferable to a variety of professional contexts and which enhance employability
5. Able to demonstrate the range of counselling psychology competencies needed to be eligible to apply for chartered status with the British Psychological Society (BPS) and registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

The main clinical focus of the training is on the development of advanced competency in the theory and practice of cognitive-behavioural models of therapy. This is underpinned by humanistic values, which emphasise the therapeutic relationship and uniqueness of the client, and a psychodynamic understanding of the interpersonal processes that underpin the therapeutic process. This approach enables trainees to develop a range of intellectual and practical skills and knowledge that draw on the strengths of these different

models, and means that they emerge as sophisticated and marketable practitioners of counselling psychology. Trainees are also expected to develop an advanced level of knowledge and skill in a range of psychological research methods, including qualitative and quantitative approaches, and a capacity to undertake and write up a piece of research at doctoral level that makes an original contribution in a relevant area of professional practice.

Key features and strengths of the programme

When planning to undertake counselling psychology training, applicants may consider a range of training providers, who are likely to adopt different approaches. We think it is important that applicants are supported in selecting a programme that is suitable for them. The summary points below are intended to support this by highlighting key characteristics of our programme:

- **A well designed and marketable blend of theoretical knowledge and clinical skills:** The programme combines key skills and strengths from cognitive behavioural, psychodynamic and humanistic models of therapy.
- **An innovative and trainee-centred teaching structure:** All teaching on the programme combines theory, skills practice, application and reflection, and places trainees at the heart of the learning process. Hence teaching input is complemented by continuous opportunities to practice skills, discuss cases, critique theory, examine process, engage in reflective practice and receive feedback. Every trainee has a one-to-one review and appraisal each year with a member of the programme team to nurture and monitor their individual learning and development.
- **A range of clinical and research expertise:** The teaching team comprises specialists in cognitive-behavioural, psychodynamic, humanistic and integrative therapies, who have a range of clinical and research interests. The programme emphasises an approach to research skills development that recognises the potential value of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, while emphasising the need for epistemological understanding and personal reflexivity.
- **Dedicated placement facilities and support:** The programme has strong links with placement providers in public, private and voluntary sectors and maintains a database over 200 placements to which Year 1 trainees are permitted access prior to the start of the course. The database holds information about current and past placements, trainee satisfaction ratings, as well as guidance for finding suitable personal therapists and supervisors. All trainees attend a comprehensive placement induction before starting in practice placements.
- **A vibrant and developing research culture:** The programme team believe that Counselling Psychology has a distinctive and valuable contribution to make to the development and application of psychological knowledge, and to society as a whole. To this end the programme actively seeks to promote counselling psychology research and to develop its research profile. Trainees are encouraged to publish and disseminate their research, and supported in this by research supervisors. Staff and trainees from the programme frequently attend and present papers at national conferences. Trainees are encouraged to view their work as a valuable contribution to the discipline.

- **A focus on employability:** The programme has been designed with input from placement providers and employers. It is continually seeking to maintain currency with the competencies that employers look for in counselling psychologists, and to maximise the marketability of its trainees. The programme has an excellent track record in graduate employment, including within NHS and IAPT services.
- **Part-time study:** In order to enable individuals with a variety of backgrounds and commitments to undertake counselling psychology training, the London Met programme provides the possibility of undertaking Year 1, the most intensive stage of the training, over a two year period.

Following programme reaccreditation in 2012, the programme received the following commendations from by the BPS for the aspects of good practice:

“The programme develops trainees to become mature, holistic and flexible practitioners that demonstrate a keen responsiveness to the needs of the client and who are accomplished at establishing good working alliances...The programme team has responded fully to the needs of trainees and feedback from a variety of sources, evidenced in the proactive and reactive redesign of programme. The staff group, benefitting from strong and positive leadership, represent a cohesive team that is committed to the programme’s development, which has made changes to the programme that will have an obvious positive effect on the cohesiveness of the training, the links between theory and assessment, assessment and learning outcomes, and the reflexivity of trainees.”

In 2012, trainees from the London Met programme also won both the 1st and runner up prizes in the national Annual Counselling Psychology Trainee competition, after entering academic papers to the competition which is organised by the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology. They have subsequently had their papers published in the Counselling Psychology Review.

What our trainees say about the programme

"Nearing the end of the three year doctorate, I feel the course has served me well. The research training is excellent, and the core model is CBT which means I feel well-placed in the current job market. At the same time, exposure to a wide range of other models and the emphasis on self-reflection and critical thinking encourages the development of an integrative approach supporting versatile practice for working in a range of settings" - Tara Lester, Trainee counselling psychologist

“After graduating from London Met, I got a job with the In IAPT. First I worked as a High Intensity Trainee where I did the IAPT diploma course. After I finished the course I kept on working within the IAPT as a CBT therapist/counselling psychologist. I currently see clients, run a group and supervise trainee clinical and counselling psychology trainees! I think I have developed a lot in the last few years and managed to accomplish many of my own professional dreams. In the future, once settled in the role of supervisor, I would like to take some teaching as well. As you can see the counselling psychology programme helped me to come closer to the job I like, as it opened opportunity for further learning and work.” - Dorothy Calleja, HCPC registered counselling psychologist

Programme background and philosophy

A doctoral qualification in counselling psychology is a relatively new development within the training of applied psychologists. This reflects the continuing growth and status of the profession within the wider context of applied psychology and mental health service provision. It is also indicative of the personal academic and time commitment required to successfully undertake the training.

Counselling psychology may be distinguished from other professional disciplines offering psychological therapy by its focus on the therapeutic relationship as the vehicle for change. While recognising that the practice of counselling psychology cannot disengage from prevailing dominant constructions of “evidence-based practice”, the London Met programme takes up a stance of critical and constructive inquiry towards this discourse and traditional notions of the “scientist-practitioner”. The programme places an emphasis on understanding the phenomenology and meaning of the individual psychological experience, and subjective and inter-subjective processes implicated in this. Trainees are encouraged to adopt a questioning stance that constantly looks to the client’s unique frame of reference for validation. Throughout the programme trainees are encouraged to critically engage with these and other important concepts within contemporary mental health care, and to develop their own personal philosophy of clinical practice and research.

In seeking to integrate scientist-practitioner and reflective-practitioner paradigms, the programme retains a values base that is firmly rooted in humanistic psychology; a philosophy that regards all people as inherently capable and constantly striving towards growth and fulfilment. This is significantly different from the more traditional medical-model, error-deficit paradigm, which emphasises concepts such as “diagnosis”, “treatment” and “cure”. We offer an alternative perspective that places importance on “individualised case formulation” and “being with” the client. We understand good clinical practice as an evolving process where a critical understanding of a variety of theoretical frameworks and forms of evidence may inform psychological formulation, appropriate intervention and service provision. Most importantly, we regard the individual characteristics of the practitioner, and their awareness and use of the self, as central to their professional work. It is through this philosophy that we hope to promote in our trainees the diverse skills, knowledge and personal qualities that will equip them to make effective and valuable contributions to clinical practice and research in a range of professional areas.

The humanistic philosophy underpinning the programme also means that we are dedicated to exploring, harnessing and developing the existing skills and potential of each trainee throughout their time at the University. In particular, we respect and value each trainee’s individuality and seek to promote and develop their critical self-awareness throughout the course: we see this as central both to reflective clinical practice and thoughtful research inquiry. A commitment to ongoing self-reflection is an important aspect of ourselves as trainers too: ongoing dialogue amongst ourselves and a willingness to contribute constructively to continuing debates and issues within the profession are essential to fostering the open attitude of inquiry we hope to inspire in our trainees. We see trainees as co-participants in the training process and aim to encourage them in a collaborative and stimulating free exchange of views and ideas. As

professionals in training we also expect trainees to behave professionally at all times, in ways that are consistent with HCPC and BPS standards.

A range of the models of psychological therapy and associated skills are taught on the course, including those deriving from cognitive-behavioural, psychodynamic and humanistic approaches. HCPC and BPS frameworks require trainees to develop proficiency in the theory and practice of at least one main model of therapy and to develop a working knowledge of at least one another. The London Met programme adopts a broad cognitive behavioural paradigm as its primary model while providing trainees with a working knowledge of the psychodynamic approach.

The current evidence base for cognitive-behavioural forms of therapy and their popularity within NHS settings make them particularly useful for trainees developing their skills in case formulation, practice evaluation and outcome research. However, although this is the main model in which trainees develop their clinical proficiency, we aim to challenge and critique the view that CBT is primarily a protocol driven, directive therapy, that focuses on the acquisition of technical skills rather than on development of the therapeutic relationship. Meanwhile, the intellectually influential body of psychoanalytic theory underpinning psychodynamic models of therapy, together with contemporary attachment and developmental research, provides a solid framework for understanding the complex processes impacting on therapeutic and human relationships. Study of this model and its associated body of literature, also provides a standpoint from which to critically evaluate the traditional notions of “evidence” against which it has historically been judged to fall short. In the sense that these two models provide a critique of each other, they epitomise many of the philosophical, epistemological and clinical debates we wish trainees to grapple with on the course.

In sum, the broad model of therapy taught on the programme is constituted by a focus on developing in-depth competence in cognitive-behavioural theory and practice. This is underpinned by strong humanistic values, which emphasise the primacy of the relationship and the subjective experience and uniqueness of the client, and is informed by a psychodynamic sensitivity to and understanding of the complex intra and inter-personal processes that constitute and guide the therapeutic process. We believe that this model of training draws on the best of these three principal therapeutic traditions and thus enables trainees to develop a range of skills and knowledge that mean they emerge as sophisticated and marketable clinicians.

Programme overview

The structure of the training explicitly reflects the maturational tasks and processes involved in professional training and development. The programme builds up from a basic grounding in theory, research and clinical practice towards a more complex appreciation of the diverse philosophical, theoretical, ethical and contextual issues that inform and guide clinical practice. The table below indicates the modules that trainees take over the three years of the programme.

In the **first year** of their training, trainees are introduced to the humanistic, psychodynamic and cognitive behavioural models of therapy. They are encouraged to develop a set of generic counselling psychology skills (including assessment, formulation, treatment planning, intervention strategies and evaluation), underpinned by the core conditions of therapeutic relationships. This forms a framework which supports trainees’

early work in placements and within which model specific CBT skills can develop. Areas of core professional knowledge, including diversity, ethics, lifespan development, psychopharmacology, psychometrics, record keeping, evidence based practice and use of supervision are also introduced. Regular case discussion provides opportunities for trainees to reflect on their work and learning, and to receive feedback from other trainees and staff. A central role is also given to facilitating trainees' personal development and self-awareness. They engage in their own personal therapy and participate in reflective practice groups, which promote a capacity to reflect on therapeutic process, and ethical and safe clinical practice. Teaching on research provides trainees with knowledge, support and practical skills to enable them to utilise a variety of research designs, to carry out a literature review and develop a research proposal in a selected topic area.

During the **second and third years** of the programme, trainees are expected to develop a more sophisticated understanding of theory, practice and research issues, commensurate with the doctoral level of the training and their counselling psychology orientation. Cognitive-behavioural approaches to psychological therapy are presented in more detail and complexity, including work with specific client groups and contemporary models. Trainees also examine psychodynamic approaches to therapy in greater detail, including concepts such as transference and counter-transference, and consider their applicability to their work and development as reflective practitioners. Approaches to psychological intervention across a variety of settings and contexts, including work with couples, families and groups, are also critically discussed, and students are expected to gain practical experience which includes work in more than one modality. Facilitated case discussion assists students in developing their abilities to conceptualise clinical material from a variety of theoretical perspectives, and to use this understanding to enhance their own practice and critical evaluation. Trainees are also encouraged to develop critiques of theory research and practice issues through reflective examination of their own clinical experience. Trainees also develop and undertake a substantial piece of independent empirical research, based on their Year 1 proposals, which aims to make an original contribution to knowledge in a relevant professional topic area and is of a publishable standard.

All modules on the programme are run by a dedicated "Module leader" from the teaching team. Module leaders have overall responsibility for the management delivery and development of individual course modules. They provide a contact point and guidance for trainees taking the modules. They also encourage and coordinate trainee feedback, monitor the trainee experience on course modules.

Current modules and timetabling

Year 1			
Semester 1			
Wednesday		Thursday	
Advanced Research and Design for Psychology	9.30 - 1pm	Psychological Knowledge and Models of Therapy	10 – 12 pm
Research Project and Critical Skills:	2 – 5pm	Therapeutic and Reflective Skills	1 – 3pm
		Reflective practice groups	3:30 – 5pm
Semester 2			

Wednesday		Thursday	
Professional and Ethical Issues	10 - 12pm	Psychological Knowledge and Models of Therapy:	10 - 12pm
Working with Difference and Diversity	1 - 3pm	Therapeutic and Reflective Skills	1 - 3pm
Research Project and Critical Skills	3:30 - 5pm	Reflective practice groups	3:30 – 5pm
Year 2			
Semesters 1 and 2			
Thursday			
Advanced Psychological Theory and Practice-1: Cognitive behavioural approaches therapy		10 - 12pm	
Advanced Psychological Theory and Practice-1: Psychodynamic approaches		1 - 3pm	
Reflective practice groups		3:30 – 5pm	
Advanced Psychological Research: research workshops and supervision throughout the year			
Year 3			
Semester 1			
Wednesday			
Advanced Psychological Theory and Practice-2: Contemporary models of psychological therapy		10 - 12pm	
Advanced Psychological Theory and Practice-2: Systems and modalities of psychological intervention		1 - 3pm	
Reflective practice groups		3:30 – 5pm	
Semester 2 (teaching ends at Easter)			
Wednesday			
Advanced Psychological Theory and Practice: Professional practice Workshops		10 - 12pm	
Advanced Psychological Theory and Practice: Professional practice Workshops		1 - 3pm	
Reflective practice groups		3:30 – 5pm	
Advanced Psychological Research: research workshops and supervision throughout the year			

The teaching team

The programme is delivered by a team of experienced practitioners, comprising counselling psychologists, clinical psychologists, psychotherapists and academic psychologists. Trainees benefit from exposure to a range of clinical and research experience, knowledge and skills. The core teaching team, who provide the majority of teaching and research supervision on the programme, and comprise the following:

- Dr Angela Loulopoulou, course leader and principal lecturer, counselling psychologist
- Alexandra Cross, senior lecturer and placement co-ordinator, counselling psychologist
- Dr Philip Hayton, senior lecturer, clinical psychologist

- Malin Sellden, senior lecturer, counselling psychologist
- Dr Isabel Henton, counselling psychologist
- Dr Catherine Athanasiadou-Lewis, counselling psychologist

Programme delivery is also supported by a number of associate lecturers who contribute to research supervision and the teaching of specialist topics on the programme. Other applied psychologists from within the London Met School of Psychology contribute areas to the Counselling Psychology programme, particularly in the areas of research methods and supervision. Further Information regarding the teaching faculty can be found on the University staff profile pages: londonmet.ac.uk/faculties/faculty-of-life-sciences-and-computing/school-of-psychology/school-staff

Teaching and learning resources

Studying for a professional doctorate in counselling psychology is a demanding and time consuming process, in which trainees need to balance a number of different roles responsibilities and activities. Trainees are supported in this process through access to a range of postgraduate learning resources and study environments. This includes access to a dedicated Psychology Academic Liaison Librarian, who provides specialist support and tutorials in information literacy. The University boasts its own state-of-the-art learning resources centre and library which provides access to a range of texts and journals to support postgraduate study and research activity. This comprises an extensive number of e-books and e-journals, as well as inter-library loans, by which trainees can order texts and journal papers from other UK libraries for collection at our University library. The learning resources centre also hosts well-equipped spacious suites of computing and photocopying facilities, secluded techno booths for undertaking group study meetings and activities, as well as ample free Wi-Fi and an onsite Costa Coffee cafeteria.

Teaching on the programme takes place at the Holloway campus. The programme has access to a recently renovated onsite health clinic, which it shares with Health and Forensic psychology programmes as well as colleagues from the Nutrition and Dietetics courses. This facility simulates a real life health clinic and includes a main teaching area, as well as private consultation rooms complete with state of the art video and audio recording equipment. These can be used to support skills based teaching exercises and observation, as well as booked for research work, supervision meetings and interviews.

Programme assessment

A range of assessment methods is used on the programme. This includes case formulations, reflective essays, integrated case studies and process analyses, examinations, research assignments and practice placement competency evaluations. The professional development of individual trainees is also continuously monitored and evaluated on the programme through 6-monthly annual reviews and appraisals with a dedicated member of the programme team. Trainees also submit a 10,000 word literature review and research proposal towards the end of Year 1. This must be assessed as demonstrating an adequate basis for a doctoral research project before a trainee can proceed into Year 2 of the programme. Trainees undergo ethics review of their research proposals at the beginning of Year 2 as a prerequisite to commencing their research. Trainees aim to complete their research project by the end of Year 3,

submitting a 25,000 word thesis and attending a viva voce examination. Trainees receive research supervision to guide their research work throughout the programme. Research progress is formally monitored and evaluated through the submission of annual reports to the Research and Postgraduate Office in Years 2 and 3.

Programme modules

Year	Module	Credits	Level of study	Method of assessment
1: 1 a	Psychological Knowledge and Models of Therapy	20	Masters	Essay and case formulation
1: 1 a	Therapeutic and Reflective Skills	20	Masters	Process report
1: 1b	Professional and Ethical Issues	20	Masters	Examination
1: 1b	Working with Difference and Diversity	20	Masters	Essay
1: 1ab, 1b	Counselling Psychology Practice and Development	20	Masters	Appraisal
1: 1b	Advanced Research Design and Analysis for Psychology	20	Masters	Qualitative and quantitative research assignments
1: 1b	Research Project and Critical Skills	60	Masters	Reflexive critical literature review and proposal
2, 3	Advanced Psychological Theory and Practice 1 & 2	200	Doctorate	Two integrated case studies and process analyses; Two appraisals
2, 3	Advanced Psychological Research	160	Doctorate	Doctoral research thesis

Note: Students undertaking the training on a part-time basis complete the Year 1 modules over two calendar years: modules 1a in the first year and modules 1b in the second year. Descriptions of the above modules can be found on the Counselling Psychology Professional Doctorate course page.

Staff and trainee research

Trainees are encouraged to develop their understanding of the nature and potential scope of “counselling psychology research” early in the first year of the programme. Trainees’ research interests may reflect a particular concern within an existing domain of counselling psychology, or may seek to develop a novel area of application or relevant aspect of underpinning theoretical knowledge. Within these parameters, trainees are given considerable scope to develop a research project that reflects their own areas of interest. Trainees are not expected or required to develop a research project that fits with existing staff interests, although cross over between staff and trainee interests is promoted and supported. Although trainees are taught to value a variety of forms of psychological research, many develop projects involving the use of qualitative methods,

such as interpretative phenomenological analysis, grounded theory of discourse analysis. However quantitative projects are actively encouraged and trainees are encouraged to see all data as contestable knowledge that are determined by subjective and to co-constructive processes.

In keeping with the pluralistic ethos of Counselling Psychology, trainee and staff research interests are wide and varied. Doctoral research theses that have been completed by previous trainees are held in the University's library and available for reference. An indicative selection of projects completed by trainees includes the following:

- Therapeutic relationships with individuals with learning disabilities: a qualitative study of counselling psychologists' experiences
- On-line counsellors' experiences of the therapeutic relationship with young people: an interpretative phenomenological analysis
- The representation of the concept of personal growth by counselling psychologists: a longitudinal Foucauldian discourse analytic study
- Borderline personality disordered clients' experience and understanding of therapeutic boundaries: a Q methodological study
- How do the participants of psycho-educational groups construe the experience?
- Participants' lived experiences of equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP)- an exploratory study
- A qualitative investigation of cabin crews' experience of long haul travel: implications for coping style, psychological health, and personal, professional, and social relationships
- How do psychological therapists experience their psychotherapeutic work with individuals with dementia?

The programme team believe that Counselling Psychology has a distinctive and valuable contribution to make to the development and application of psychological knowledge, and to society as a whole. To this end the programme is actively seeking to promote counselling psychology research and to develop its research profile. Trainees are encouraged to publish and disseminate their research, and supported in this by research supervisors. Staff and trainees from the programme frequently attend and present papers at national conferences, most notably the annual conference of the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology conference. Trainees are encouraged to view their work as a valuable contribution to the discipline.

The teaching faculty on the London Met programme has a history of engagement in the promotion of the discipline and in the committee work on the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology. The programme team continually integrate their own academic and research activities and developing knowledge into their teaching on the programme. Information regarding the academic and research interests of the team can be found on via the staff profiles: londonmet.ac.uk/faculties/faculty-of-life-sciences-and-computing/school-of-psychology/school-staff

Programme structure and pathways

The counselling psychology programme encompasses a variety of training and progression options, from study at Masters or modular level to completion of the full

doctoral programme, as well as post qualification top up doctorates for qualified practitioners, as outlined below.

MSc in Psychological therapy

Students who successfully complete all of the Year 1 modules but who do not complete the full doctoral programme are eligible for the award of an MSc in Psychological therapy. This award does not confer eligibility to apply for HCPC registration as a counselling psychologist or BPS chartered psychologist status, but may be of interest to individuals seeking to gain experience in the field of counselling psychology or who do not intend to practice in the UK. It may also be of interest to individuals who wish to undertake some training to support their practice and development in a related area of professional activity, e.g. assistant psychologists, psychological wellbeing practitioners, mental health support workers or counsellors.

Students who initially register to complete only the MSc but who subsequently meet the criteria to progress to Years 2 and 3 of the programme (as explained below) can apply to complete the remainder of the programme, subject to availability of places. If accepted they would be transferred to the doctoral programme and not be awarded an MSc. If a student enrolled on the MSc meets the criteria to progress to the full doctoral programme but does not apply to continue directly into Year 2 they would be awarded the MSc. However they may apply for entry to Year 2 of the programme at a subsequent point in the future. In this context, admission to Year 2 would be subject to availability of places, satisfactory assessment of an updated research proposal and evidence of having undertaken relevant professional activity during the intervening period. The student would also have to rescind their MSc award to receive the Doctorate.

Applicants state on their application forms whether they wish to enrol for the masters or doctoral programme, and whether they wish study in full or part time mode. The same initial admissions criteria (see part 2, section 3) are applied to all applicants, whether they wish to complete the full doctoral programme or just the MSc. Students who complete all modules at level 7 (year 1), pass the six core modules and accrue 120 credits, but who do not successfully complete either the Research Project and Critical Skills or Advanced Research Design and Analysis for Psychology modules, will be eligible for a Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Therapy.

Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology

Students who enrol on the doctoral programme in Year 1 are required to pass all of the Year 1 modules and submit a research proposal that provides a viable basis for research at doctoral level achieve in order to progress into Year 2. Students who meet these progression criteria may also apply to intermit their studies for one academic year before continuing into Year 2 of the programme. Approval of an intermission would be based on the student's rationale and circumstances. In addition, progression into Year 2 following an intermission would require submission of a satisfactory updated research proposal. Students who then successfully complete the Year 2 and 3 modules are eligible for the award of Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology, and to apply to the HPC for registration as a counselling psychologist and the BPS for chartered psychologist status. Modular study from the Counselling Psychology programme.

The modules from Year 1 of the programme (with exception of Counselling Psychology Practice and Development) are also available to take individually or in a variety of combinations up to the award of Postgraduate Diploma. Again, this course of study does not lead to eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC or chartered status with BPS, but may be of interest to applicants who are working in a related field of practice or training, and seeking to undertake relevant CPD activity. Applicants interested in taking Year 1 modules individually should apply using the same standard application form as applicants for the Masters or Doctoral programme (see below). Some flexibility regarding the usual admissions criteria and procedures may be possible for applicants in these circumstances and this will be ascertained following assessment of a candidate's written application.

“Top up” doctorates for qualified counselling psychologists

Counselling Psychologists who have already qualified through prior training but who wish to undertake a piece of professional postgraduate research and gain a doctoral qualification can apply to complete a “top up” doctorate. Candidates on this pathway enrol on the "Advanced Psychological Research" module. They join a community of counselling psychology researchers from the main doctoral programme, and participate in regular research supervision and support to guide them through the process of completing a piece of counselling psychology research at doctoral level. This culminates in the submission and examination through a viva of a 25,000 word thesis of that seeks to make an original contribution to practice. Supervision is provided by a team of experienced counselling and clinical psychologists. Availability of places varies year on year depending on the number of students enrolled on the main doctoral programme. The admissions criteria for the top up doctorate are as follows:

- Chartered status and full membership of the BPS division of Counselling Psychology and registration as a counselling psychologist with the HCPC
- Evidence of a capacity to undertake research at doctoral level
- A comprehensive and viable word research proposal in an area of relevance to counselling psychology, including consideration of ethical issues.

In order to apply for a top-up doctorate, applicants need to submit a research proposal of 3,000 words. All interested applicants need to contact the administrator Ketan Sudra to obtain a copy of the research proposal form, which they need to submit with their application form. Applicants complete the University's standard application form for indicating that the application is for the “Top up doctorate in Counselling Psychology” and send this with their proposal to the admissions department. Following assessment by the counselling psychology team, suitable applicants would then be invited to attend an interview to assess more fully their proposed project and capacity to undertake research at doctoral level. Candidates considering applying for the top up doctorate should contact the programme administrator Ketan Sudra (k.sudra@londonmet.ac.uk) in the first instance for further information and guidance.