

University of Cambridge: Programme Specifications

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ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN COUNSELLING

1	Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2	Teaching institution	University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education
3	Accreditation details	Faculty of Education
4	Name of final award	Advanced Diploma
5	Programme title	Counselling
6	UCAS code	None
7	JACS code(s)	[All associated with the programme]
8	Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	Counselling (currently under development by the QAA).
9	Qualifications framework level	FHEQ Level 6
10	Date specification produced/ last revised	February 2009
11	Date specification last reviewed	May 2010

This Advanced Diploma will be delivered by the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education (ICE), as part of its programme of credit-bearing, modular and non-modular courses at CATS Levels 1, 2 and 3 (FHEQ levels 4, 5 and 6) offered to part-time adult students.

ICE is a General Board, non-School institution whose purpose can be defined in two complementary ways. It is a conduit both for transmission of the University's knowledge and research on the one hand and for enabling members of the public to access higher education courses, whether for personal interest or professional development, on the other. In these ways it contributes significantly to the University's public engagement and widening participation commitments.

Public Programmes Courses at Level 3 (FHEQ 6) are taught by members of ICE's Tutor Panel, all of whom are assessed under quality assurance procedures approved by the General Board. It is a requirement of Panel membership that tutors should have expertise in teaching adult learners with widely differing levels of Academic experience and expertise. Academic responsibility for monitoring the performance of individual tutors working within the Public Programmes Division of ICE rests with the appropriate member of academic staff.

Aims of the Programme

The course aims to:

- develop students' in-depth critical understanding of the psychodynamic approach to counselling, informed by both classical theory and current research

- enable students to set the approach in its psychological, sociological and historic context, being able to compare and contrast it with other approaches to counselling
- develop in students advanced level psychodynamic counselling skills which they are able to apply successfully in a clinical setting
- facilitate students' personal development to enable them to engage in the therapeutic relationship, in the role of counsellor, with sufficient emotional maturity and resilience.

Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes for this course for the Advanced Diploma are expressed in terms of the three integrated strands of the course, theoretical understanding, skills and personal development.

By the end of the Advanced Diploma, within the constraints of the course, students should:

Theoretical Understanding

- have an in-depth understanding of the psychodynamic approach to counselling which would inform their practice
- be able to set the theory in its historic and social context
- have a critical understanding of the psychodynamic theory of the personality and of the aetiology of distress
- compare and contrast this theory with that of other significant counselling approaches
- have an active knowledge of current research in the field
- have developed an understanding of the need for an ethical and professional approach to counselling

Skills

- have developed the range of skills required to practice as a counsellor using the psychodynamic approach
- have developed an ethical and professional approach to counselling
- be experienced in and able to make good use of the clinical supervision process
- have gained sufficient clinical experience in the counselling field

Personal Development

- have a sufficient degree of self-awareness and maturity to enable them to practice safely and ethically as a counsellor
- have internalised and integrated the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework and an anti-discriminatory approach to counselling
- have developed the ability to give and receive critical feedback in a reflective and constructive manner
- have internalised a system of professional boundaries which will enable them to practice safely and ethically as a counsellor.

Teaching and learning methods

In keeping with the integrated approach, the course is delivered in a variety of ways including; lectures, seminars, tutorials, project work, large and small group work, observed counselling, audio and video work and case presentation

Assessment methods

Students are assessed on all three strands of the course. The assessment of the theoretical component is by means of the written work. This is numerically marked with 40% being the pass mark.

The skills training is assessed by tutor observation, student and peer input and through the evaluation by audio recording or video of the student counselling. The case studies and feedback from the supervisors and placements are also taken into account. A written checklist of criteria is used in assessment. Students' work is measured against the Learning Outcomes. In cases of doubt, the opinion of the clinical supervisor will be sought. The skills work is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

The Personal Development component is measured against a set of written criteria to assure the learning outcomes have been met. Self and peer assessment also inform the tutor assessment. Personal Development is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Written Work

All the written work on the course reflects the integrated approach and incorporates all elements of the learning, theory, skills training and personal development. At the beginning of each year students are given an assignment timetable which lays out the programme for written work and helps them to plan out their study accordingly. Each assignment has a set of guidelines clearly laying out the criteria for the piece of work.

Terms 1-3

1. A theoretical essay of 2,000 words about the Ethical Framework.
2. A personal testimony of 2,000 words. This is a subjective piece of work in which students chart their progress through the year, identify learning, insights and areas of difficulty and set learning objectives and personal goals for the rest of the course.
3. A case study of 3,500 words. This study describes a piece of case work from the clinical practice, sets that practice into the framework of the theory and describes the internal process of the counsellor in that work. Reference is made to the use of supervision and the insights gained from this process.

7,500 words in total

Terms 4-7

1. A case study of 3,500 words. This study is similar to that described above but should demonstrate a deeper understanding of the counselling process.
2. A dissertation of 10,000 words. Students explore psychodynamic theory in some depth. The plan for the dissertation is discussed with a course tutor who acts as supervisor for the work. Case material, evidence of research and critical analysis must be included, as well as the development of cogent and supported argument.
3. A personal testimony of 2,000 words. This provides the opportunity for students to clarify their thinking about the learning process they have undergone, identify strengths and

weaknesses in themselves as counsellors and consider their future needs in terms of professional and personal development.

15,500 words in total.

Programme structure: overview

The course is an Advanced Diploma, a nationally recognised qualification which is equivalent to 20 credits at HE level 2 and 120 credits at HE level 3 (FHEQ levels 5 and 6) and takes place over seven terms.

The first 20 credits at level 2 provide a bridge for ICE students who are progressing from the Certificate of Higher Education in Counselling, but more importantly for students coming on to the programme from other institutions, to level 3 work. The seven term format, which in effect adds another six months to the duration of the training, also enables most of the students to complete the 120 hours of clinical placement whilst they are on the course. This is crucial to the integrated learning because most of the assessed written work relates to this clinical practice. It also ensures that there are sufficient contact hours to meet the requirement of the BACP for accreditation.

Programme structure: detail

What follows is the indicative syllabus for the course which is delivered in an integrated manner across the seven terms.

1. Theory - this comprises;

- 1.1 Human Development
- 1.2 Pathology
- 1.3 Social Context
- 1.4 Psychodynamic Counselling Process Theory
- 1.5 Comparative Theory
- 1.6 Professional and Clinical Practice Theory
- 1.7 Theory of Groups

2. Skills Training - this comprises;

- in-depth active listening
- Observational skills
- Contracting
- Establishing and maintaining therapeutic framework
- Session management/time management
- Assessment and referral
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Record keeping
- Working with transference and counter-transference
- Working with defences
- Challenging and confronting
- Containment of distress
- Working with projective identification
- Interpretation
- Effective use of supervision
- Managing beginnings, endings and breaks.

2. Personal Development – this comprises;

- Giving and receiving feedback and challenge
- The development of reflectivity
- The development of the 'internal supervisor'.
- The development of professional boundaries and ethics
- The development of an anti-discriminatory approach to practice
- The development of a non-judgmental approach to practice
- The development of increased and enhanced self awareness

Delivery

The course is offered part-time, over seven terms.

Programme Requirements

The course is targeted at

- students who have successfully completed the Certificate of Higher Education in Counselling at ICE or its equivalent elsewhere
- students who wish to undertake a professional training in counselling
- students who demonstrate sufficient emotional maturity and resilience to be able to engage in the therapeutic relationship in the role of counsellor, both on the course and in the clinical placement.

Progression

Successful completion of the Advanced Diploma will require students to demonstrate the appropriate level of achievement against the learning outcomes . The minimum criteria for achieving a pass at HE Level 3 are outlined in the ICE *Students' Handbook*.

Students who have completed the Advanced Diploma will be able to progress to other HE Level M (FHEQ 7) provision at other higher education institutions. Credit awarded by the Institute can be transferred into the degree programme of other higher education providers. The amount of credit which can be transferred into degree programmes varies from institution to institution and is always at the discretion of the receiving institution.

Employability

Students completing the Advanced Diploma will have this qualification recognised by the BACP as fulfilling the training requirement for individual accreditation. This will enable them to work in the community, accumulating clinical hours until they have sufficient (450 hours) to apply for individual accreditation and access to the United Kingdom Register of Counsellors. At this point they could apply for counselling positions in the public, private and voluntary sectors. They will also be equipped with the skills to expand their existing work roles to include counselling activities.

Managing Teaching Quality and Standards

The teaching quality and standards of the course will be monitored throughout by the appropriate academic staff member (ASM), who will report annually to the Subject Moderation Panel, consisting of the internal, University and external moderators and other Faculty and ICE members as agreed by the Education Committee.

Student Support

Academic advice to students taking Public Programmes courses is available both before and after they have registered for a course: first, from the appropriate member of the academic staff and, once the course has begun, from the course director and/or the course tutor.

Administrative enquiries are dealt with by Academic Programme Managers.

All students are provided at the start of a course with the ICE Students' Handbook.

Indicators of Quality

The programme is accredited by the BACP and must be re-accredited every five years.