Department of Psychosocial Studies

Graduate Diploma/MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling & Psychotherapy

Handbook 2015-2016
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1. Introduction

1:1 Welcome

Welcome to Birkbeck College. Your programme, the Graduate Diploma/MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy, is part of “Counselling and Psychotherapy at Birkbeck” (CPB), a cluster of clinical and pre-clinical programmes, (see http://www.bbk.ac.uk/psychosocial/prospective-students/counselling-and-psychotherapy-at-birkbeck-cpb). CPB is part of the Department of Psychosocial Studies (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/psychosocial/)

New students: getting started

You will need a Birkbeck College ID Card which is used to access the main Birkbeck College Library at Malet Street. You should also carry your card with you at all times when attending classes or visiting Birkbeck. Once you have enrolled, the weblink: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/you/cards gives you instructions and the form you need to obtain your Birkbeck College ID Card. Alternatively, you may go in person to the My Birkbeck Helpdesk at the main Birkbeck College building in Malet Street (entrance in Torrington Square), where an advisor will help you get your ID Card. The My Birkbeck Helpdesk is a good port of call for any queries.

Once you have accepted a place on a Birkbeck course, you will be sent your Birkbeck username and password. This will be sent to the email address you provided when you applied. (If you did not provide details of a personal email account with your application, your Birkbeck username and password will be sent to you by post.) If there are any problems with your username or password, contact the ITS Helpdesk: Tel: 020 7631 6543 Email: its@bbk.ac.uk

Moodle is the Virtual Learning Environment used at Birkbeck. All course materials and course information (e.g. timetables, rooms, seminar groups, reading lists) will appear on the Moodle pages that relate to your programme and year of study (note: Moodle is organized in terms of modules, so you will need to know which modules are taught in your year of study (see section 2:2).

1:2 Purpose of the Handbook

The aim of this handbook is to describe the content, process and regulations of the MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy. The handbook also aims to give some
general advice about making best use of the course and the tutorial system. Where possible, basic necessary information is summarised and set out in boxes for quick reference.

The handbook gives a general overview of the course and is correct at the time of writing. Students should note that certain details of the course such as the nature of some assignments may be subject to change as the course evolves, and should consult moodle for revisions and changes.

1:3 Who’s who: staff members

The programme administrator is Andrew Silverman, a.silverman@bbk.ac.uk
Room GO4, 30 Russell Square
London, WC1 5DT
020 76231 6611

School of Psychosocial Studies Website: www.bbk.ac.uk/psychosocial

Teaching Staff:
Year One
Senior tutor: Clea Mcenery-West
Peter Chapman
Rachel Gould
Ann Heyno
Jackie Moon
Judith Woodward

Year Two
Senior tutor: Stewart Beever
Jan Baker
Nicole Godwin
Clea Mcenery-West
Geri Russo

Year Three
Senior tutor: David Richards
Ann-Marie Reilly
Laurence Spurling
Judith Woodward

Placement Co-ordinator: Nicola Godwin, n.godwin@bbk.ac.uk

Programme Director, and Director of CPB: Laurence Spurling, l.spurling@bbk.ac.uk
Room 202, 30, Russell Square, WC1 5DT
020 7631 6395

Assistant Dean of Psychosocial Studies: Gail Lewis, g.lewis@bbk.ac.uk
2. Overview and structure of the programme

2.1 Structure of the programme years 1-3

**Year 1:**
One day a week of college-based learning
Clinical or related pre-placement paid or voluntary work as preparation for clinical placement (set up towards end of year one)
One group relations conference (information will be on Moodle)
Personal individual psychotherapy minimum once weekly (for duration of programme)

**Year 2:**
One day a week of college-based learning
Supervised clinical placement, half a day – one day a week
Group relations conference
Personal Therapy

**Year 3:**
Half a day a week of college-based learning (to be extended to mid afternoon in 2017/18).
Supervised placement
Group relations conference
Personal therapy

2.2. Modules and Credits

Teaching on the programme is organized in terms of year groups. However all assessment and awards are structured in terms of the modules taken by students in each year. Each year of the programme consists of three modules, which are taught *concurrently* throughout the year (as the teaching in each module links closely to the teaching of the other modules in the year). The modules for each year are described below.

All the modules are *core* modules, which means they must all be passed in order for students to progress through Years 1 and 2, and in order for students to gain the final award of MSc at the end of the programme.

Assessment takes place throughout the programme.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Academic Level</th>
<th>Credit Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td><em>Introduction to theoretical &amp; organisational concepts</em></td>
<td>Theory Essay: 100%</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSPA022 S6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Observation Essay (zero-weighted but must be passed)</td>
<td>Level 6 (H)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td><em>Basic clinical &amp; observational skills</em></td>
<td>Seen Examination 100%</td>
<td>Level 6 (H)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td><em>Development of professional attitude</em></td>
<td>Student Review Pass/Fail</td>
<td>Level 6 (H)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td><em>Basic psychodynamic theory &amp; organisational understanding</em></td>
<td>Organizational essay: 50%</td>
<td>Post Graduate/ MSc</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSPA026 S7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theory Essay: 50%</td>
<td>Level 7 (M)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td><em>Basic psychodynamic skills &amp; principles/techniques of practice</em></td>
<td>Case Study 100%</td>
<td>Level 7 (M)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td><em>Basic psychodynamic competencies &amp; professional attitude</em></td>
<td>Student Review Pass/Fail</td>
<td>Level 7 (M)</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td><em>Advanced psychodynamic theory &amp; organisational understanding</em></td>
<td>Organizational essay: 50%</td>
<td>Level 7 (M)</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSPA028 S7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clinical essay: 50%</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td><em>Advanced psychodynamic skills &amp; principles/techniques of practice</em></td>
<td>Case Study 100%</td>
<td>Level 7(M)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td><em>Advanced psychodynamic competencies &amp; professional attitude</em></td>
<td>Student Review Pass/Fail</td>
<td>Level 7(M)</td>
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2.3 Course accreditation

The 3 year Grad Dip/Masters programme is accredited by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. This accreditation only applies to students who have completed all three years of the programme. On completion of the programme students will be supplied with confirmation of the topics covered during their training, including the setting in which clinical work was undertaken and the range of clients seen.

Information on how to join BACP as a student member can be found on their website, www.bacp.co.uk. Information of gaining accreditation can also be found on their website, and in a specially organized seminar given in Year 3.

3. Teaching on the programme

3.1 Teaching aims

The main aims of the programme are as follows:

- to give students an understanding of psychoanalytic theory (and related theories) so as to be able to employ its basic concepts and principles in an informed way in practice
- to teach students the basic clinical competencies (knowledge and skill) to enable them to practice at a level commensurate with their experience and ability, and as a stepping stone towards BACP accreditation. We have taken the description of these competencies given in the Competency Framework for psychoanalytic and psychodynamic therapy (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/cehp/research-groups/core/competence-frameworks/Psychoanalytic-Psychodynamic-Therapy) as our baseline.
- to enable students develop a psychosocial perspective in their thinking and practice, one that takes account of the outer as well as the inner world, and so takes account of social categories and identities (race, class, gender etc.) in its understanding of psychoanalytic thinking and practice
- to give students an understanding of the professional context in which counselling and psychotherapy is practiced,
- as part of a psychosocial perspective and understanding of professional contact, to enable students to study and take account of the dynamics and structures of the organizations and institutions in which they practice, and which impact on their work.

3.2 Teaching methods: overview and rationale

In order to achieve these aims, the course uses three main types of teaching methods

1. intellectual and academic teaching
Seminars, lectures and small group discussion groups are used for the understanding and critical appraisal of theory and theoretical ideas, frameworks for understanding human growth and development, developing a psychosocial perspective, understanding organizations, learning about the professional and ethical frameworks of practice, understanding clinical concepts and frameworks for thinking.

2. teaching observational and clinical skills
Clinical competencies, knowledge, frameworks, principles and skills are taught on the course in counselling workshops and case discussion groups. Students learn about these first hand in their clinical placements. In their personal therapy students have the experience as client/patient of the practice and effectiveness of competent psychodynamic practice. A key part of learning clinical skills is learning how to make observations, and this is taught in observation groups. Students have the opportunity to practice their observational skills in the various components of experiental learning (see below).

The theory teaching on the course is informed by practice, and all the clinical and observational teaching is informed by theory. The capacity to practice in a competent, professionally sound and theoretically informed way is closely linked to the capacity for self-reflection and the development of self-knowledge, which is taught in the experiental parts of the programme (as well as developed in personal therapy).

3. experiental learning
A key part of developing as a psychodynamic practitioner is the ability to bring together intellectual and clinical knowledge and skill, together with one’s personal development and capacity to learn from experience. The integration of these elements is one of the main aims of the different types of experiental learning on the programme: experiental groups, large groups and group relations conferences. A distinctive feature of the type of experiental learning on the course is that it is also used to give students a first hand experience of the psychosocial dimension, in the way social categories and identities impact on how groups, institutions and individuals relate to each other.
3.3 Teaching methods: academic and clinical learning

The main teaching methods for academic and clinical learning are described below.

Years One and Two.

The Theory Seminar works through the theoretical syllabus. Students will be expected to present their thoughts about the reading for that week. The subsequent discussion should clarify the ideas. Gradually the student acquires a body of theoretical knowledge with which to inform clinical practice.

The Counselling Workshop is a session offering practical skill-based exercises linked to the content of the other parts of the course. These exercises may focus on self-reflection as well as directly on skills. Students may be asked to develop and run some of these sessions themselves. Sessions cover such topics as human development, observational skills, and revising and developing counselling skills.

In the Observation Group students take turns in presenting a record of an observation they have made. In the first year the subject of these observations may vary according to the student’s situation. Often observations begin with neutral subjects (e.g. a café or bus stop). Observations can then be made in work settings of meetings with groups and individuals. Students working in appropriate settings may present meetings with clients. In the Case Discussion Group students present client work from their placements for discussion.

The observation and case discussion groups introduce the student to some of the key skills which they will use on the course and in clinical practice. The primary skills include the observation, recall and recording of observed events and the monitoring of interactions between counsellors and clients. Discussion introduces the student to the experience of reflecting on their responses to the observation or client contact and to apply psychodynamic thinking.

Year Three

Case discussion and application of theory groups (normally 5 a term) are meetings with the students who share the same personal tutor. The group is small, normally about 7 in number. The aim is to help students integrate their placement experience with their theoretical learning in college. Each tutorial group will plan its own programme.

Theoretical seminars and application to practice, and organizational seminars cover clinical and organizational theory.
3.4. Teaching methods: experiential learning

Experiential groups run weekly in Years One and Two. Large groups (usually between two and four a term) run in each year. Each year also has a Group Relations Conference, of three days (normally Friday-Sunday or Saturday-Monday) in Years One and Two and two days (normally Saturday and Sunday) in Year Three (dates for these conferences can be found on Moodle).

Experiential Groups

The Experiential Group has as its purpose the study of conscious and unconscious processes as lived within this group, itself part of a wider system (of the Year Group, the Course as a whole and the college).

Specifically, students have the opportunity to

- Explore the impact of difference and diversity of, for example, class, age, sexual identity, gender, ethnic origin, among others, and consider how these affect the group processes and assumptions
- Experience resistance to change and development and understand more fully its origins within the group
- Understand more fully roles allocated and taken up and explore how these may enable or disable thinking and action
- Explore issues of collaboration and competition, envy and rivalry

The consultant’s task is to keep the boundary of the group and to offer observations and commentary as to what s/he thinks is happening within the group in order to foster learning and development both individually and collectively.

The content of the group (what people in the group talk about) is determined by the group, but is often used for students to reflect on their experience of being a student on the course.

Large Groups

The Large Group offers an experience of being in a group or crowd where the struggle may be to find one’s voice and to make sense of the variety of images, thoughts, assumptions, myths and feelings generated, in order to try to understand what kind of organisational culture is created. The Large Group also allows for exploration of the relationship between students and staff, roles that are assigned and taken up, and the relatedness of the course to the wider organization. The consultant/s are in role to help with the task of studying these
processes by offering observations and commentary as appropriate in order to foster learning and develop new ways of thinking. Specifically, students will have the opportunity to:

- Explore the impact of difference and diversity of, for example, class, age, sexual identity, gender, ethnic origin, among others, and consider how these affect the group processes and assumptions
- Explore how conscious and unconscious forces operate in large groups and institutions
- Learn how groups construct their own realities and how different parts of a system affect and are affected by other parts, i.e. the relatedness of parts to the whole
- Explore the relationship of an organization to its social, political, cultural and economic environment

**The Group Relations Conference**

The Group Relations conference provides a development of the work of both the Experiential and Large Groups and is itself a temporary institution organised in such a way that the defences of familiar everyday structures, conventions and procedures are removed. This enables the study of usually latent and unconscious forces and anxieties. Students, in a variety of roles and a variety of settings, are able to explore and learn about the interplay and tensions between the individual and the group and the individual and the organisation. They have the chance to experience the part they play in different kinds of authority relations. This will help them to learn to exercise their own authority and gain greater influence over their working environment.

**A key aim of the Conference** is the application of the learning to work, and especially, to work in placement organisations, where students can observe and study the impact of the client group on the organisation and vice versa and learn how roles and tasks provide or hinder containment and the creation of a therapeutic alliance.

Specifically, the Conference aims to help students to:

- Explore how conscious and unconscious forces operate in institutions and gain awareness of how these may enable or disable thinking and action
- Experiment with ways of working with difference, for example, ethnicity, gender, age and other, less obvious difference
- Explore anxieties and uncertainties that can paralyse thinking and action
- Understand more fully the interplay between constructive and destructive competitive forces
- Explore the relationship of an organization to its social, political, cultural and economic environment
• Learn how groups construct their own realities and how different parts of a system affect and are affected by other parts, i.e. the relatedness of parts to the whole
• Manage themselves in multiple roles, both formal and informal, in complex organizations
• Develop capacities to take up leadership and authority roles
• Explore the relationship of an organization to its social, political, cultural and economic environment
• Reflect on the application of the experiences derived in the conference to their professional lives and workplaces

The Conference takes its membership from the two Masters courses. Staff who are appointed to work on the Conference are drawn from the teaching staff and from organizational consultants working in other institutions. The Staff have several roles in the Conference. Overall, their role is to provide a programme and to create a reliable enough container – the temporary organisation – to enable members’ experimentation and learning from experience to take place. The Staff act as managers to facilitate the work of the Conference. The Staff also take up specific directorial, administrative and consultancy roles. As consultants in the various ‘here and now’ events, staff will offer observations and hypotheses based on their understanding of what is happening. There are no formal teaching sessions or seminars.

In Year 3 students will have a 2 day largely experiential event. Drawing on their learning from their two group relations conference experiences in Years 1 and 2, they will be experiment with how to intervene in groups and how to begin to take up the consultant role. This learning may also help them in future employment in what is a very competitive marketplace, where this experience will help them to consult to work groups, for example staff groups, parent groups, hospital groups, in an organisational setting.

3.5 Personal Therapy
It is a requirement that you enter personal therapy by the end of the first term. Personal understanding and a capacity for self-reflection are essential components in the development of your ability and skill as a counsellor, and also to your development as a professional. Although there are opportunities to develop these capacities on the course – particularly in the experiential groups and the group relations conferences – students also need a setting in which their individual needs and difficulties can be explored and understood. Indeed, a student who has had no experience of being a client or patient is likely to be too inhibited or fearful to make good use of the opportunities for self-development on the course. For this reason students are required to be in personal therapy for the duration of the course, and to have started their therapy by the end of the first term.

Personal therapy also serves as a way for the student to learn at first-hand how a psychodynamic counselling/therapy is conducted. Students should expect to be given experience as clients or patients of how the basic psychodynamic principles and concepts – such as maintaining boundaries, fostering containment, making interpretations, working with transference etc. – are used in practice.

The minimum requirement is once a week therapy. However in order for personal therapy to be potent, effective and deep, students are strongly recommended to have an experience of more intensive therapy, that is, at more than once a week, for all or some of their period in therapy while on the course. Students are also recommended to choose more experienced practitioners as their personal therapist, as they are more likely to learn from therapists who themselves have had time to develop and mature.

Students should be aware that all the placement agencies used by the course place great weight on the nature, intensity and duration of the student’s personal therapy in choosing which students to select as trainees.

All students who start the course should discuss their existing therapy arrangement, if they have one, with their tutor. Students who need to find a therapist, or who wish or are advised to change their therapist, will be given a list of consultants. These consultants are senior and experienced psychotherapists who know the course and its requirements, and will offer the student an opportunity to discuss their readiness for therapy and their therapy needs. The consultant will be in a position to refer the student on to a suitable therapist. (A fee is payable to the consultant.)

The consultation is confidential. The consultant will have no contact with the College staff over individual consultations. The student’s personal therapy, however arranged, is also confidential. However, the student is required to inform their tutor and the Programme administrator of the name of his/her therapist and the College will write to the therapist to confirm the arrangements of the therapy and that he/she meets our requirements as an approved therapist. Apart from this the College will have no other communication with the personal therapist.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the requirement for personal therapy is met, namely that the personal therapy chosen is adequate for fostering a capacity for self-reflection, aiding professional development and giving an experience of psychodynamic concepts and principles in vivo. Where students are not able to demonstrate to their tutors that their chosen
personal therapy is meeting these requirements, it will be the student’s responsibility to arrange to change their personal therapist.

**APPROVED THERAPY**

The department lays down a minimum standard for an approved psychodynamic practitioner. A psychotherapist must be a graduate of a recognized psychodynamic training school, and will therefore be listed in the current register of either the British Psychoanalytic Council, or in the Psychoanalytic & Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Sections of the current register of the United Kingdom Council of Psychotherapists. Counsellors should be Psychodynamic in orientation and training, BACP accredited and must have considerable post-qualifying experience and/or qualifications.

This is a minimum standard. An approved practitioner would normally be expected to have achieved a level of experience and expertise beyond the minimum, i.e. to be an established and experienced practitioner.

All queries regarding the suitability of a therapist or counsellor should be directed to your tutor, and your tutor should be informed of any substantive changes in therapy arrangements (e.g. a decrease in frequency of sessions attended or termination of therapy).

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### 3.6 Clinical placements and client work

Client work is carried out in a clinical placement, which takes place at an agency or institution which is separate from the training and the course. Students learn to practice skills in the various elements of teaching on the course, but this is a quite different activity to working clinically with clients on placement, and it is not appropriate for students to take other students on the course as their clients, whether from their own or a different cohort. It is also not appropriate for students to gain their client experience in private or independent practice.

**Readiness for placement**

Normally students prepare to take on a clinical placement during the first part of their first year, and then start applying for placements towards the end of the first year, in order to have a placement set up by the time they enter Year 2.

Before starting client work, students need to demonstrate their capacity and readiness to take on client work on a clinical placement. The assessment for this is carried out by the tutorial team and forms an essential part of the Student Review in Year One (see Section 2:4). Students need the formal approval of their tutor before they can proceed to apply for a clinical placement.
The course has a Placement Co-ordinator who maintains a list of approved placements, and will help students in the process of applying for suitable placements. The client work you undertake must be congruent with the approach of the course. So a suitable placement is one which enables you to carry out psychodynamic work with your clients, and which offers good quality psychodynamic supervision (or, if this is not available on placement, agrees to provide or allow you to find suitable psychodynamic supervision of your own). A suitable placement also means one which recognizes and protects your student status (which will mean, for instance, that your clients are made aware of your student status).

**Supervision on placement**

The course regards clinical supervision as an essential part of professional psychodynamic practice, to be maintained throughout one’s professional life. Our placements offer either individual or group supervision on a weekly basis.

Clinical supervision has 5 main functions, as follows:

- educational: to stimulate critical thinking about the relationship between theory and practice
- reflective: to consider how the therapist’s own values, beliefs attitudes and behaviours etc. reflect upon the therapeutic process, and to help the student develop the capacity to reflect on and evaluate their practice
- developmental: to facilitate the student’s development as an ethical, competent and accountable practitioner
- supportive: to consider the student’s personal and professional well-being with respect to client work
- managerial: to have due regard to the needs of the client, student, course, placement, profession, society at large, in accordance with the BACP Ethical Framework for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

The course aims to ensure the quality of placement supervision by requiring placement supervisors to submit a c.v. to the placement co-ordinator. In taking on a student from the course the supervisor agrees to submit two supervisor’s report a year on the students’ clinical work and development in the placement. In these reports supervisors are asked to report any concerns about the student’s competence or performance.

**On placement**

Students need to complete a minimum of 100 hours of supervised practice (exclusive of missed sessions) before the end of the 3 year programme. The training period can be extended in order to complete the required number of clinical hours.

Details of your client work must be written up in a professional log, which you will need to maintain and present as evidence of your competence to practice. This log should include brief details of your clients (but you need to write this in a way that preserves their confidentiality). You will be asked to submit this log towards the end of the third year.

For information on the clinical placement in Year 2 see Section 2:8, and for Year 3 see Section 2:13.
4. Assignments and Assessment

4.1. Overview of assessment

Students on the programme are assessed in two main ways:

1) through formal writing assignments: essays and case studies/clinical reports/accounts of observations.
   These are designed so students can demonstrate their understanding of psychoanalytic, organizational and psychosocial concepts, and their ability to apply them appropriately and appraise their value.
   Students are also assessed on their ability to apply theory to practice in an informed and coherent way.

2) through the Student Review, which is an assessment of clinical and professional competence (described in section 4.3 below).
   The Student Review is based mainly on the student’s demonstration of clinical and professional competence on their clinical placement, but also draws on appropriate evidence over the programme as a whole (attendance, fulfilment of course requirements etc.).
   In Year One, when students prepare to undertake a placement later in the year or for the start of Year Two, the Student Review will assess the student’s readiness to undertake a clinical placement.
   In the Student Review the onus is on the student to demonstrate to the course staff their clinical and professional competence. It is the student’s responsibility to demonstrate that their personal therapy is adequate to the requirements of the course, and to ensure that their placement supervisor submits reports which will provide the main source of evidence for the Student Review in Years Two and Three.
   All elements of the Student Review have to be met in order for the student to pass the Student Review. A student who does not pass the Student Review as a whole will be given written feedback on what he/she needs to do in order to reach the required standard of competence.
4.2. What standard is required? Marking scheme and clinical learning objectives

Formal written assignments are marked in accordance with the marking scheme described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARK SCHEME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All marks are given in percentage:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% to 70% Merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% and above Distinction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each piece of work will be marked taking account of the following:
A. planning and structure
B. clarity of language and expression
C. ability to describe and understand relevant theory
D. ability to use theory to develop and pursue an argument (think critically, sustain a point of view)
E. psychodynamic/organizational/psychosocial understanding: theory/practice links
F. overview

Fail: lack of planning, inadequate structure and unclear or inaccurate use of language; and/or relevant theory absent or inaccurately described or poorly understood with no or inadequate links to practice, insufficient evidence of psychodynamic/organizational/psychosocial understanding.

Pass: sufficient planning and clarity of language with an adequate structure, showing a good enough understanding of relevant theory and an ability to link theory to practice with evidence of psychodynamic/organizational/psychosocial understanding.

Merit: well planned and structured with clear and careful use of language. Accurate, clear and thoughtful description of theory showing a developed ability to understand the basic concepts and their links with each other, together with a well-informed and broad knowledge of the relevant literature. Practice is described in a theoretically informed and insightful way, showing a sound and well-grounded level of psychodynamic/organizational/psychosocial understanding. An argument or point of view is developed and coherently pursued and well buttressed, with evidence and illustration showing an ability to think in a consistent and critical way.

Distinction: as for Merit, but in addition evidence of original thinking and/or a level of understanding and analysis showing depth, penetration and sophistication as well as breadth.

Marks are determined by the Board of Examiners. Any mark given to students by tutors prior to the Board of Examiners meeting is provisional, and subject to revision.
The assessment of **clinical and professional competence**, which concerns all the forms of assessment but is the specific subject of the Student Review, is based on the knowledge and skills described in the Competency Framework for Psychodynamic/Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy ([https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/cehp/research-groups/core/competence-frameworks/Psychoanalytic-Psychodynamic-Therapy](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/cehp/research-groups/core/competence-frameworks/Psychoanalytic-Psychodynamic-Therapy)).

For the purposes of describing the clinical learning objectives for the programme, we have divided these competencies into two levels, *basic* or *consolidated* level. At a basic level the basic principle or idea involved is grasped, but the level or depth of understanding or skill involved may be intermittent, variable or limited. We would expect students who have completed Years One and Two to have reached a level of basic competence. At a consolidated level the particular competence has been internalized and can therefore be employed or demonstrated in a coherent and thoughtful way. In order to pass Year Three, and gain the award of MSc, students would need to demonstrate clinical competence at a consolidated level.

The clinical learning objectives for the different stages of the course are described as follows:

**Clinical Learning objectives by the end of Year Two**

The overall aim is for the student to be able to demonstrate **clinical competence at a basic level**. This is assessed in terms of the following competencies (1-11), all at a basic level.

1. **Adopt the professional role of counsellor/therapist**
   (a) behave and conduct oneself in a professional, respectful and consistent way with clients, which includes (i) not making inappropriate self-disclosures, (ii) being able to work within a clinical agency and (iii) treating the client’s material as confidential
   (b) behave and conduct oneself in a professional manner with colleagues
   (c) be able to make appropriate use of supervision

2. **Negotiate a viable contract with a client**
   This will involve finding a viable focus for the clinical work

3. **Understand the psychodynamic significance of the client’s history**

4. **Form an initial counselling relationship with a client**

5. **Recognize and take account of defence mechanisms**

6. **Recognize, take account of and manage the client’s anxiety**

7. **Contain clients**
   (a) be able to contain a client’s expression of painful and/or disturbing emotion, thought and behaviour
   (b) in more extreme case be able to recognize and respond appropriately to suicidal and/or destructive thoughts, wishes, feelings or behaviour
8. **Manage the clinical setting**
   (a) do this in such a way that shows understanding of its therapeutic significance (e.g. the client’s attachment to the counselling agency)
   (b) be able to recognize and work with boundary issues, e.g. the beginning and end of each session, holiday breaks and absences etc.

9. **Sustain a therapeutic relationship**
   Participate and intervene with sufficient skill and reliability over time for the client to remain engaged in the clinical work.

10. **Negotiate and work with ending the counselling/therapy**

11. **Work with difference**
    Take account of and work with relevant differences between client and counsellor/therapist, e.g. age, gender, racial/cultural background, sexual orientation, social class etc.

**Clinical Learning objectives by the end of Year Three**

The overall aim is for the student to be able to demonstrate *clinical competence at a more consolidated level*; this involves:
(a) ability to take responsibility for their own professional and clinical development as a psychodynamic counsellor/therapist (work within appropriate ethical guidelines, seek personal therapy and clinical supervision appropriately)
(b) to be able to work with a range of clients (in terms of presenting problems, level of illness/disturbance) appropriate to the student’s level of training and experience

In the 3rd year clinical competence is assessed in terms of:
(a) The competencies for a 2nd Year student (numbers 1-11), but now at a *consolidated level*
(b) Plus the following competencies at a *basic level*:

12. **Assess the suitability of a client for counselling/therapist**
    This involves an understanding of whether a client is being helped or hindered by counselling/therapy. Students are not expected to be able to make a formal assessment of a client prior to the clinical work, but to be able to arrive at a judgement regarding suitability in the course of the clinical work.

13. **Work appropriately with unconscious derivatives**
    e.g. dream material

14. **Recognize and work with transference**
    this involves:
    (a) recognizing the nature, quality and degree of the client’s transference onto the therapeutic experience, the setting and the person of the counsellor/therapist
    (b) using this recognition and understanding of the transference in making sense of the client’s behaviour and experience
    (c) using this recognition and understanding to inform in a general way the interventions and interpretations made to the client (e.g. using transference to inform interpretations concerning the nature of the client’s past and present relationships)
(d) using this recognition and understanding in a specific way to inform interpretations, i.e. making here-and-now transference interpretations

15. Recognize and work with the client acting out
(a) look for meaning in acting out by clients, e.g. in being consistently late or early for sessions, missing sessions, seeking inappropriate contact outside of sessions etc.
(b) respond appropriately to acting-out by the client, e.g. by boundary-setting and/or interpretation

16. Recognize, process and make use of counter-transference feelings, thoughts, impulses etc.

17. Make interpretations, and other appropriate interventions
(a) make interpretations and interventions in a tactful, effective and timely manner
(b) be able to judge the appropriateness and effectiveness of an interpretation or intervention by the nature of the client’s response

18. Make use of clinical diagnosis to inform the overall clinical approach
Know the difference between neurotic, borderline and psychotic states or conditions, and use this understanding to inform the types of interventions made and the overall strategy of the counselling

19. Apply a psychodynamic understanding across a broad range of problems and issues
Demonstrate a capacity to transfer psychodynamic understanding and skill from one situation to another, e.g. in working with clients with different presenting problems

20. Work appropriately with clinical issues relating to follow-up and referral on

4.3. Course assignments throughout each year: Year One

Academic progress is assessed in the first year by an essay in the first and second terms and a ‘seen’ exam in the third.

Submission dates for all assignments can be found on Moodle.

Work is submitted electronically via Turnitin on Moodle. Each student is assigned a candidate number, which must be used in submission and must accompany each submitted piece of work so that it can be identified by the markers. Work that is submitted without an accompanying candidate number may not be accepted as a submission.

1. The assessment for the module Introduction to theoretical and organizational concepts is as follows.

   a) The Theory essay has a word limit of 3000 words. This will count for 100% of the final assessment on this module.
b) The Observation essay is a zero-weighted course requirement, which means that it does not count towards the final mark students receive for Year 1. However, submission of a ‘reasonable attempt’ at the essay is a requirement (i.e. the module cannot be passed without this, with ‘reasonable’ meaning that the essay would have got at least 40% if it were marked [the usual pass mark is 50%]). The essay will be read (by one tutor) and written feedback will be given as an aid to students’ learning and specifically to help you in your essay writing.

2. The assessment for the module Basic clinical and observational skills is by a ‘seen examination’ set in Term 3, which the student is allowed to take home and return a fortnight later. This exam reassesses the student’s overall grasp of the concepts taught in the first year.

3. The assessment for the module Development of professional attitude is through the student review, described in detail below.

Student review year 1

The Masters provides the foundation of knowledge and skill for the qualified student to begin their counselling career, and is a major step towards accreditation with the BACP. Consequently the assessment process needs to reflect not only each student’s academic progress but also their clinical and professional development, as well as their personal development in the context of the course. This is the function of the student review, which focuses on the student’s growing ability to develop a professional identity as a psychodynamic counsellor.

The Student Review is also designed to help students gain an overall picture of their progress on the course and the degree of integration between its different components. So another function of the student review is to assess the student’s development as a reflective practitioner, as demonstrated in particular in the capacity to learn on the course. The Student Review takes into account the student’s learning and development in all aspects of the course, including group relations conference and placement (if applicable) and will take account of reports written by the student and placement supervisor (if applicable).

Students should note that the course has an attendance requirement of 90% which means in effect not more than one absence per term or three per academic year. Extenuating circumstances will be considered but evidence may be required.

Around the middle of each year the student’s tutor will conduct a ‘mid-year review’ of progress on the course. Prior to the mid-term tutorial students are asked to write a self assessment for consideration with their tutor. For this reason students may find it helpful to keep a journal about their thoughts, feelings and how they see their progress while on the course. In the mid-year review the student will receive verbal feedback on his/her progress and development to date, and will have an opportunity to discuss what measures, if any, might be needed in order to reach the required standard. In the case of a student who, in the view of the staff, is in danger of failing, this feedback will be given in written form.
At the end of each year the tutor will write up a formal Student Review document, which will incorporate aspects of the mid-year review as well as the student’s response to it and the capacity to learn from it. This formal document is submitted to the Board of Examiners as part of the end of year assessment.

The Student Review is an assessed element of the course, which is marked as a Pass or Fail. No percentage mark is given for the Student Review. It must be passed in each year for the student to progress to the next year, or gain the award of MSc.

**Year One Student Review Document**

The Student Review is an assessment of the level of the student’s development as a professional practitioner, taking account of feedback from the tutorial team and placement supervisor. The Student Review document is submitted to the Board of Examiners at the end of the year. The criteria listed below spell out those attributes/competencies/attitudes etc. which are expected to have been attained by a student by the end of Year 1. They indicate the standard of professional development which is expected of a student by the end of the year. The Student Review is a general assessment, based on the student’s progress in academic, clinical and personal learning and the integration between these elements. Normally the student is expected to have met each of these criteria. However it can happen that failure to meet one or more of these criteria may not in itself result in the student failing the Student Review, for example if the degree of failure is judged to be slight and if the Review reveals particular strengths in meeting other criteria.

**By the end of Year 1 the student is expected to have:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Assessed by</th>
<th>Assessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrated a capacity to learn, as shown by the student having:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) attended at least 90% of the course</td>
<td>Attendance register</td>
<td>Senior Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) undertaken sufficient private preparation and study to manage the</td>
<td>Submitting essays and</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>course requirements</td>
<td>contributing to seminars as</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>required</td>
<td>required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) demonstrated competence in generic professional skills, including</td>
<td>Completing assessment tasks on</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>literacy, information technology, administrative skills, self-</td>
<td>time;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management skills, communication and interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Contributing positively to</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seminars and group experiences;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Managing presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>appropriately</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrated a readiness to start a clinical placement, by having:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) demonstrated sufficient knowledge and understanding of mental</td>
<td>Counselling workshop</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health problems</td>
<td>Observation group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) demonstrated sufficient knowledge of the BACP Ethical Framework for</td>
<td>Counselling workshop</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Practice in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy, and an awareness</td>
<td>Observation group</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
of its importance in clinical practice

c) demonstrated an awareness of issues of difference and equality  
   Counselling workshop  
   Observation group  
   Experiential group  
   Tutor

d) demonstrated a capacity, based on his/her college work so far, to make use of supervision on placement  
   Counselling workshop  
   Observation group  
   Tutor

e) demonstrated the emotional and psychological maturity which will enable him/her to engage a client in therapeutic work  
   Counselling workshop  
   Observation group  
   Experiential group  
   Tutor

f) demonstrated the emotional and psychological maturity which will enable them to deal with the emotional content of a counselling session  
   Counselling workshop  
   Observation group  
   Experiential group  
   Tutor

g) demonstrated an understanding of the importance of a therapeutic frame and boundaries and his/her capacity to establish and manage them  
   Counselling workshop  
   Observation group  
   Experiential group  
   Tutor

h) demonstrated an understanding of the importance of the professional network of relationships in which therapeutic work operates, and a capacity to manage these effectively  
   Counselling workshop  
   Observation group  
   Tutor

i) demonstrated sufficient capacity for self-awareness and self-reflection, as indicated by his/her commitment to personal therapy  
   Counselling workshop  
   Observation group  
   Experiential group  
   Tutorials

Readiness for placement and organizing the placement

One of the key aims of the first year of the course is to prepare you to start your clinical placement. You will need to have started personal therapy, gained some relevant experience, and demonstrated sufficient emotional/psychological maturity for the staff to agree that you are ready to start looking for a placement. If you are held back from applying for a placement, the reasons for this, and what you need to do in order to be considered ready, will be clearly spelled out in a letter to you from the senior tutor.

Your placement will be the setting in which you begin your clinical practice under professional supervision. Planning for a suitable placement normally begins in the first term and continues throughout the year. The College holds a list of organisations which have accepted our students in the past, offering a range of different experiences. There are student counselling agencies, voluntary counselling agencies and health service settings. Your tutor will help you think about which placement would be most suitable for you. Once it has been agreed with your tutor that you are ready to apply to a placement it is then up to you to make the application to the agreed placement agency, which will normally arrange to interview you and take up references. There is often competition for places and it may take more than one attempt before a suitable placement can be found. It is essential that you keep your tutor
informed of your progress while applying to placement agencies (for more information on placements see Section 2:8).

4.4 Course assignments throughout each year: Year Two

Although the daily timetable follows the same pattern as in Year 1, the tutor staff group will change, and you will be assigned a new tutor. Also the teaching day changes from a Monday to a Tuesday. Occasionally, deferred students from another year group may join your year, either because they are retaking a year or because they have taken a year out between years one and two.

First Essay (organizational essay)

The first essay of the second year focuses on examining what students have learned from the Group Relations Conference. Its focus will be on linking an organisational process that they have observed from their own experience with their theoretical understandings and their recent conference experience. The word count for the essay is no more than 3000 words.

Second Essay (theoretical essay)

The second essay, usually in the second term, is a theory essay. Students will be asked to demonstrate their understanding of a psychodynamic theoretical concept, idea or schema, and link their understanding to their clinical thinking and practice with clients. The word count for the essay is no more than 2,500 words.

The Case Study

The Case Study is the third piece of written work in the 2nd year, usually submitted in the third term. The key components of the Case Study are set out below and apply to the 2nd Year case study and the 3rd year long case study.

- The purpose of a case study in the assessment context is to demonstrate the ability to work with clients in a psychodynamic way. The assessment is not about the outcome of the counselling, but about whether the student has a good grasp of the case and can appraise the work done and the learning achieved, and can communicate this to someone who is unfamiliar with the work.

- The case study will usually concern one individual client (an adult aged over 18) who has been seen during the time on the course. Usually, this will be a client from the student’s placement (under exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the tutor, a client from elsewhere may be used). Normally we would expect the client to have been seen for a continuous period of at least 12 sessions, but a minimum of 6
sessions is acceptable. Permission to write on a client who has been seen for fewer sessions must be sought from the tutor.

- Essential information in a case study includes:
  a) A description of the context and awareness of the implication of this for the work.
  b) The route of referral and the contract of the work, including whether the contract was kept and any communication with the referrer.
  c) Age, sex, marital status, ethnic background, etc.
  d) The presenting problem and any other significant problems which emerged during the work.
  e) Salient points from the client's history - family, personal, social.
  f) A lively picture of the client - appearance, behaviour, presentation, and attitude toward counselling.
  g) A lively picture of yourself in the relationship and your feelings about the work as it progressed.
  h) A statement about what the work did or did not achieve, as well as a statement about what you learned from the work (including mistakes) and the impact of the case on you.
  i) Some reflection on the impact of the supervision on the work.

- It should contain evidence of psychodynamic understanding and of being able to work psychodynamically. Matters to bear in mind are:
  - transference and counter-transference issues
  - the development of the case over time
  - the impact of events in the relationship (beginning, breaks, ending)
  - an appreciation of the technical issues raised by the case
  - a theoretical grasp of the problem.

- There should be a balance between factual details, process recording, and analysis of the process. It is essential to include some process recording, and preferably more than one extract to indicate development over time.

- The case study should draw on detailed material from the sessions, providing sufficient data so that the reader is aware of the basis for interpretations and theoretical reflections. However, an extended summary of sessions which omits the counsellor's interventions is not satisfactory. The challenge is to identify the relevant and essential evidence for interventions.

- The write-up should reflect integration of theory and practice. The theoretical framework should be articulated with appropriate references within the text. We are seeking evidence of an effective link between concepts and practice.

- The case study is assessed in terms of what has been learned, not on the outcome of the work.

The word count for the Case Study in the second year is no more than 5000 words. The requirement in terms of clinical experience to write the Case Study is normally that a client or patient has been seen for at least 6 sessions. If you cannot meet this requirement it is essential to speak to your tutor, in order that a revised submission date can be arranged.
Clinical placement in year 2
All students should have been accepted at a placement agency by the start of the second year. If you have not yet found a placement it is important to keep your tutor informed of your progress. It is essential that placements begin early enough to allow sufficient work to be accomplished for the case study at the end of the year.

When you start your placement it is common for students to attend the supervision meeting at the placement prior to beginning with their first client. On starting placement students should bear in mind that the placement provides their opportunity for making an observation of an organisation. It is advisable to keep a journal of your observations and experiences of entry into the organisation for future reference.

Student review year 2
The Student Review is an assessment of the level of the student’s development as a professional practitioner, taking account of feedback from the tutorial team and placement supervisor. The Student Review document is submitted to the Board of Examiners at the end of the year. The criteria listed below spell out those attributes/competencies/attitudes etc. which are expected to have been attained by a student by the end of Year 2. They indicate the standard of professional development which is expected of a student by that stage of training. The Student Review is a general assessment, based on the student’s progress in academic, clinical and personal learning and the integration between these elements. Normally the student is expected to have met each of these criteria. However it can happen that failure to meet one or more of these criteria may not in itself result in the student failing the Student Review, for example if the degree of failure is judged to be slight and if the Review reveals particular strengths in meeting other criteria.

By the end of Year 2 the student is expected to have:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Senior Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) undertaken sufficient private preparation and study to manage the course requirements</td>
<td>Submitting essays and contributing to seminars as required</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) demonstrated competence in generic professional skills, including literacy, information technology, administrative skills, self-management skills, communication and interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Completing assessment tasks on time; Contributing positively to seminars and group experiences;</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Managing presentations appropriately

2. Demonstrated a capacity to manage and sustain a clinical placement, by having:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Undertaken sufficient clinical hours on placement to have achieved the clinical learning objectives</th>
<th>Clinical log</th>
<th>Tutor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b) Demonstrated sufficient knowledge in order to inform clinical practice, in particular:</td>
<td>Case discussion group</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) of mental health problems, their development and manifestation</td>
<td>Performance on placement</td>
<td>Placement supervisor (reporting to tutor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) of the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy</td>
<td>Case discussion group</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of analytic theory and its principles of practice</td>
<td>Performance on placement</td>
<td>Placement supervisor (reporting to tutor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Developed sufficient understanding of and sensitivity to the professional context in which clinical work takes place, in particular:</td>
<td>Case discussion group</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Demonstrated an understanding of the importance of the professional network of relationships in which therapeutic work operates, and a capacity to manage these effectively</td>
<td>Performance on placement</td>
<td>Placement supervisor (reporting to tutor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Demonstrated a capacity to manage time boundaries and the workload on placement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>iii) Demonstrated sufficient understanding of the social, legal, political and organizational context in which clinical work takes place wider context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d) Developed sufficient understanding of the nature and quality of the therapeutic relationship, in particular:</td>
<td>Case discussion group</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) awareness of issues of difference and equality</td>
<td>Performance on placement</td>
<td>Placement supervisor (reporting to tutor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) awareness of the importance of boundaries and frame</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>iii) capacity to manage the potential power imbalance between counsellor and client</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>iv) capacity to manage the therapeutic process, including capacity to work in the transference and with countertransference</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Developed sufficient skill and competence in the practice of psychodynamic work, in particular:</td>
<td>Case discussion group</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Capacity to apply the psychodynamic model flexibly and in line with the client’s needs</td>
<td>Performance on placement</td>
<td>Placement supervisor (reporting to tutor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Sufficient development of clinical judgement and an ability to apply the most appropriate interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Demonstrated sufficient professional development in order to develop an identity as a psychodynamic practitioner, in particular:</td>
<td>Tutorials</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiential groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
i) sufficient emotional maturity to engage a client and deal with the emotional content of clinical sessions
ii) capacity for self-reflection and an ability to learn by experience
iii) Demonstrated a commitment to personal therapy, and a capacity to use the experience of personal therapy in order to enhance self-knowledge and self-reflection
iv) demonstrated a capacity to make use of supervision on placement
v) Ability to recognize when he/she has gone beyond limits of his/her own competence, and the need for professional support
vi) Ability to take up a role as an active member of the counselling/psychotherapy community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case discussion group</th>
<th>Performance on placement</th>
<th>Placement supervisor (reporting to tutor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4.5 Course assignments throughout each year: Year Three

In the third year you will be taught by a different team of tutors, which will mean changing your personal tutor. The teaching day is a Tuesday.

You will be sent a programme and syllabus for the 3rd year shortly before the beginning of term. The first week of the 3rd year is spent at the group relations conference, usually around the middle or end of September. The second week of term takes place in college, when you will be introduced to the 3rd year staff and student group as a whole, and there will be an introduction to the third year and its structure.

The third year has two main teaching aims:

- To consolidate the learning that has already taken place. This will involve revisiting some of the texts and ideas which you have already come across in the first two years, but now with an opportunity to explore these in greater depth.
- As a preparation for you to become an independent psychodynamic counselling practitioner. There is more time given to the placement, with correspondingly less time spent in college, and in the teaching format students are expected to take more responsibility for their learning (for example in the clinical workshops, see below).

Teaching in college takes place over a morning on a Tuesday (see Moodle for up to date timetable). The structure of this teaching is as follows:
Case discussion and application of theory groups (normally 5 a term) are meetings with the students who share the same personal tutor. The group is small, normally about 7 in number. The aim is to help students integrate their placement experience with their theoretical learning in college. Each tutorial group will plan its own programme.

Theoretical seminars and application to practice, and organizational seminars cover clinical and organizational theory.

Large group meetings, with the whole student and staff group, normally happen three to four times a term, and are an occasion for reflecting on the experience of being on the course. There will be a short time given for business and practical matters.

There are three pieces of written work over the year.

The Mid-year essay

This essay is due in the second term, and has word count of no more than 5,000 words. The essay consists of two parts, organizational and clinical. In the organizational part students describe one observation they have made in their placement. The observation should be used as a basis to explore the institutional dynamics in play in the agency. Attention should also be given to the role of observer, how this was established and maintained, and what further light it throws on the dynamics of the organisation (or part of the organisation) being observed. In the clinical part students are asked to write an account of one session with a client with whom they are working. Attention should be given to both the content and process of the session, client anxieties and defences, and transference and counter-transference issues. The account should be situated within a theoretical schema.

In this essay and the End of Year essay reference can be made in the clinical part of the essay to the organizational part (and vice versa).

For reasons of confidentiality, just as the client must be disguised in the clinical part of the essay, it is essential that the organisation, and its personnel, is disguised in the organisational part (and in the End of Year Essay as well).

The End-of-year essay

This essay is due in by Sept 16th, and has a word count of no more than 5,000 words. Like the mid-year essay, it has an organizational and a clinical part.

- The organizational part will offer the student a choice of essay titles, on topics such as the following: the nature of leadership and authority, roles and boundaries in organizations, the management of conflict within an organization, ways of understanding institutional anxieties and defences. Students will be expected to draw on their experience of being an observer in their placement agency or organization, and to use details of and extracts from their observations in order to illustrate their argument. Students should also use their experiences on the Group Relations Conferences they have attended.

- In the clinical part of the essay students will be asked to demonstrate their clinical thinking about their counselling work, together with their ability to communicate this thinking to colleagues and other professionals. To this end, students should write
about their work with one client, in the form of a closing summary. This summary should include description and commentary on:

- how the work was started with the client; in particular:
  - the method and process of initial referral
  - the assessment (how this was conducted and how this affected the ongoing work)
  - (initial) presenting problem(s) of the client, and how these were first understood by the counsellor
  - the counselling contract (how this was initially established, whether it changed over the course of the work, and how it has shaped the work)

- how the work developed and came to an end. The student will be asked to describe and comment on the following:
  - client’s presenting problem(s),
  - brief description of the counselling and its progress,
  - diagnosis (level of disturbance),
  - psychodynamic understanding (client’s internal world),
  - transference and counter-transference issues,
  - ending (how the client managed the ending),
  - prognosis.

A note on the writing of the organizational parts of the mid- and end-of-year essays

The organizational parts of these essays are designed to test the student’s understanding of institutional and group dynamics, and how these affect both staff and clients. In their writing of these essays, students will also be able to demonstrate their capacity to take on the role of observer in their placement. This may be in the placement agency itself, or in a related part of the wider organization in which the placement agency is situated. One of the tasks given to the student on placement is that of negotiating a viable role as an observer. ‘Observer’ means ‘participant observer’, that is someone who is making observations while a member of the organization which is being observed. Depending on the ‘culture’ of each organization, this may mean being able to take up a more traditionally passive role, or it may involve being an active participant in whatever is being observed. Again, depending on the nature of their placement organization, students may be able to observe meetings, or they may have or choose to make observations of the agency in action (for example, the reception area or the general office). It is essential, over the course of the year, to have a series of observations made under the same or similar conditions, so that a consistent frame can be applied with which to observe the institution’s anxieties, defences and ways of dealing with conflict and authority (and other relevant issues). It is much easier to see patterns in organizational functioning if a student is able to make weekly or fortnightly observations. Sometimes this is not possible and the student will have to find other ways of making observations on an irregular basis. In such a case the student should consider six observations, carried out in the same setting over the course of the placement, as an absolute minimum number of observations required in order to have sufficient data to begin to make hypotheses and draw conclusions about the agency, department or organization being observed (many more observations would be far better).

In the organizational parts of each essay, the student should include a very brief factual description of the agency, and a brief description of its primary task, its structures and roles. Consideration also needs to be given, again very briefly, to the relationship of the agency to
the wider environment, and the impact of events or policies in the wider environment on the agency.

The organizational parts of each essay are inevitably a reflection of the student’s experience of being in the placement agency. However the student must remember that they are being asked to write an academic paper and not a piece of personal biography, nor an account of their experience of their placement and its personnel. The use of personal experience must be subordinated to the task of understanding the dynamics of the agency, just as in clinical work exploration of the counsellor’s counter-transference is undertaken in order to understand the nature of the client’s transference. A major task of the organizational parts is in fact to find a viable position from which to write, and an appropriate tone and manner in which to do so, for example one which avoids the temptations of idealisation or condemnation.

The Long Case Study

This case study is due in on September 16th. It has a word count of no more than 6,000 words. It is an account of an extended piece of work, which normally means work extending over at least 6 months (students who are not able to write about their work with a client over this period of time should discuss this with their tutor). What is expected in a Case Study can be found in the section ‘Case Study’ in section 4.4.

Third year placement

In the third year we would normally expect students to be receiving weekly supervision of 50 minutes in individual supervision, or its equivalent in group supervision (this might work out as less than 50 minutes for presentation of individual work depending on the numbers in the group, level of experience of group members etc.). Students who are not receiving this amount of supervision may be asked, particularly if their learning is being compromised, to supplement their existing placement supervision by arranging some additional input, which will have to be paid for. This should be discussed with your tutor and the placement supervisor. Usually having this additional input once a fortnight is sufficient to meet the course requirements. This can be provided by your placement supervisor, an outside supervisor or a Birkbeck tutor not directly involved in the teaching on the third year.

The purpose of this additional input is to supplement the existing supervision on placement. It is often used to look at one clinical case in detail, with a view to using this case for the long case study. Its aim is to help the student learn from the client work. It is not intended to deal with the student’s management of their client work. It is therefore essential that the student continue to bring all of their cases to the placement supervisor, as it is the placement supervisor who holds the clinical responsibility for all the cases seen on placement.

In addition to the counselling work, students in the third year are encouraged to take on the role of observer in their placement in order to gather the data necessary for writing their institutional paper. It is the student’s responsibility, in consultation with their personal tutor, to decide the nature of these observations, e.g. attending a regular meeting or observing a part of the organisation in action. The College does not lay down or dictate how the student will set up their role as observer, this should be discussed with your personal tutor, and in your small group tutorials.
Completing the required number of clinical hours and extending the placement if necessary

The course, as a BACP accredited course, requires that current Year 3 students complete a minimum of 100 clinical hours by the end of the course. If you are in any doubt that this target will be met by the end of the course, you must discuss this with your tutor. If it seems possible or likely that you will have done fewer than the required hours by the end of the course, you are likely to be required to extend your placement so that you can gain sufficient counselling experience. (Personal accreditation with the BACP requires 450 hours of supervised counselling practice over not less than three and not more than five years. Students should go to www.bacp.co.uk for information on personal accreditation.)

Extensions to the course in order for sufficient clinical hours to be obtained are normally granted until the meeting of the next Exam Board after the end of the course (normally held in July). Students would be required to submit their professional log by the end of June. If more time is needed students should submit a written request to the Senior Tutor of Year Three.

In order to obtain an extension of the course to fulfil the criterion of gaining a minimum of 100 clinical hours, students must demonstrate to their tutor:

a) that they can continue at their present placement (or have arranged an alternative placement)
b) that they can continue with their present supervision arrangement (or have arranged alternative appropriate supervision)

Tutorial support will be offered to students who are extending the course in order to gain sufficient clinical hours.

Student review year 3

In common with the first and second years, all students will have a mid-year student review, given in the form of verbal feedback in tutorial, usually around the end of the second term and the beginning of the third term. At this point in the course, the review will consist of three main elements:

- The written feedback from the mid-year essay.
- Reports from the placement supervisor, which will have included an assessment by the supervisor on your progress to date and the likelihood of reaching the required standard by the end of the course. (If, by this point in the course, you do not feel you have a good indication of your supervisor’s view of your progress, it is essential you communicate this to your tutor and the senior tutor.)
- Your participation in College up to that point.

As in the first and second years, students who, in the view of the staff, are in danger of not passing the course by the end of the academic year (in September) will receive a letter from the senior tutor to this effect. The letter will indicate what needs to be done by the student in order to reach the required standard.

The Student Review is an assessment of the level of the student’s development as a professional practitioner, taking account of feedback from the tutorial team and placement supervisor. The criteria listed below spell out those attributes/competencies/attitudes etc.
which are expected to have been attained by a student by the end of Year 3. They indicate the standard of professional development which is expected of a student by that stage of training. The Student Review is a general assessment, based on the student’s progress in academic, clinical and personal learning and the integration between these elements. Normally the student is expected to have met each of these criteria. However it can happen that failure to meet one or more of these criteria may not in itself result in the student failing the Student Review, for example if the degree of failure is judged to be slight and if the Review reveals particular strengths in meeting other criteria.

The final Student Review is written by the staff team after the end of the academic year for the Board of Examiners, which normally meets in November. The review follows the format of the first and second year Student Reviews. In order to reflect the greater emphasis placed on the student’s clinical competence and ability in the third year, great weight is placed in the review on the placement supervisor’s reports. However the internal examiners (that is, the third year tutorial staff) will consider the placement supervisor’s reports in the context of the student’s overall experience on the placement, and assign an overall mark for the Student Review, that is pass or fail, bearing this in mind.

By the end of Year 3 the student is expected to have:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Assessed by</th>
<th>Assessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrated a capacity to learn, as shown by the student having:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) attended at least 90% of the course</td>
<td>Attendance register</td>
<td>Senior Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) undertaken sufficient private preparation and study to manage the course requirements</td>
<td>Submitting essays and contributing to seminars as required</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) demonstrated competence in generic professional skills, including literacy, information technology, administrative skills, self-management skills, communication and interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Completing assessment tasks on time; Contributing positively to seminars and group experiences; Managing presentations appropriately</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrated a capacity to manage and sustain a clinical placement, by having:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Undertaken sufficient clinical hours on placement to have achieved the clinical learning objectives</td>
<td>Clinical log</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Demonstrated sufficient knowledge in order to inform clinical practice, in particular:</td>
<td>Clinical case discussion</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) of mental health problems, their development and manifestation</td>
<td>Performance on placement</td>
<td>Placement supervisor (reporting to tutor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) of the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy of analytic theory and its principles of practice</td>
<td>Clinical case discussion</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Developed sufficient understanding of and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sensitivity to the *professional context* in which clinical work takes place, in particular:

i) Demonstrated an understanding of the importance of the professional network of relationships in which therapeutic work operates, and a capacity to manage these effectively
ii) Demonstrated a capacity to manage time boundaries and the workload on placement
iii) Demonstrated sufficient understanding of the social, legal, political and organizational context in which clinical work takes place wider context

**Performance on placement**

**Placement supervisor**

**(reporting to tutor)**

---

**d) Developed sufficient understanding of the nature and quality of the therapeutic relationship, in particular:**

i) awareness of issues of difference and equality
ii) awareness of the importance of boundaries and frame
iii) capacity to manage the potential power imbalance between counsellor and client
iv) capacity to manage the therapeutic process, including capacity to work in the transference and with countertransference

**Clinical case discussion**

**Tutor**

**Performance on placement**

**Placement supervisor**

**(reporting to tutor)**

---

**e) Developed sufficient skill and competence in the practice of psychodynamic work, in particular:**

i) Capacity to apply the psychodynamic model flexibly and in line with the client’s needs
ii) Sufficient development of clinical judgement and an ability to apply the most appropriate interventions

**Clinical case discussion**

**Tutor**

**Performance on placement**

**Placement supervisor**

**(reporting to tutor)**

---

**f) Demonstrated sufficient professional development in order to develop an identity as a psychodynamic practitioner, in particular:**

i) sufficient emotional maturity to engage a client and deal with the emotional content of clinical sessions
ii) capacity for self-reflection and an ability to learn by experience
iii) Demonstrated a commitment to personal therapy, and a capacity to use the experience of personal therapy in order to enhance self-knowledge and self-reflection
iv) demonstrated a capacity to make use of supervision on placement
v) Ability to recognize when he/she has gone beyond limits of his/her own competence, and the need for professional support
vi) Ability to take up a role as an active member of

**Tutorials**

**Experiential groups**

**Clinical case discussion**

**Placement supervisor**

**(reporting to tutor)**
4.6 Help with studying

The MyBirkbeck webpage has a useful guide for new students which contains detailed information about many aspects of being a student at Birkbeck including information on disability services, computing services, student support and course administration. Please read this guide carefully, it can be found via http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/guides/new-students. There is additional information about many of these aspects of studying at Birkbeck in this handbook.

Moodle

Moodle is the Virtual Learning Environment used at Birkbeck. All course materials, reading lists and administrative information (e.g. tutorial groups) will appear on the moodle page that relates to the relevant year of your course. To gain access to moodle go to the College website at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/, click on the moodle tab and then sign in with your College username and password. Please take time to familiarise yourself with moodle as it will be a primary route for communication and for learning. For example, you will be able to access many of the readings for the course direct from the relevant moodle page.

Communication with students

In line with other institutes of higher learning, Birkbeck uses email as the main method of communicating with students. Students are reminded we do not send junk mail, it is important that you read all emails we send carefully. **Students are expected to check their email inbox regularly.**

**Emails: please read this section carefully.**

- While you are a registered student with Birkbeck you will have a student email that is unique to you. Information about your student email address will be given to you once you have enrolled with the College.

- The college will use the email address which you provided on your application and enrolment documents. If you would like to link your personal and your Birkbeck email it is easy to organise the data to be forwarded to your regular email address – simply follow the instructions on the Birkbeck website. You will need your username and password that you will get when you enrol. It is very important that you inform us of any changes to your email address. You should also note that filters in some work
places may not allow you to download reading material, so it is important that we have the email that is most useful for you to use.

**Birkbeck Library**

The Birkbeck College Library contains some 250,000 books (excluding journals, pamphlets, theses etc.) and about 850 current journal subscriptions. The library is open 7 days a week in term-time and closes at 10:30pm on weekday nights; it is open 24 hours at weekends over the examination period. In the vacation the library stays open until 8:00pm. Most books are available for loan; journals are for reference only.

The library provides a modern study environment with access to PCs for searching and use of MS Office software; remote access to the catalogue if you have a PC with modem at home, so you can check what is in stock, or which books you have borrowed, and renew or reserve your books; Library Web pages, which tell you all you need to know about the library, and provide a gateway to a large array of electronic journals and databases you can search from home or work. Please see [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/) for details of Library services.

Wendy Lynwood, Psychosocial Studies subject librarian is able, on request, to offer group sessions on how to use electronic resources. She can be contacted directly on 020 7631 6062, w.lynwood@bbk.ac.uk.

**Personal Tutors**

Each student is assigned a personal tutor for the duration of the year. You should have one designated meeting with your tutor each term. You may need to have additional tutorials in which case these can be arranged with your tutor. Building a working relationship with your tutor is important. Your tutor is there to keep a critical and supportive eye on you and your development on the course. It is very important that, should you find yourself in difficulties during the course, you inform your tutor. In any case keeping your tutor in contact with your feelings about your general progress helps you both make fair evaluations of your development and understanding. The progress of your personal development and its relation to issues with regard to your personal therapy are part of this process. Alongside the informal aspect of your tutor’s support, the tutorial is the place where your formal progress under the student review is discussed.

**4.7 Referencing and word count**

General guidelines for presentation and referencing are set out below. Be sure when you write your essay to reference it consistently and correctly. If you are in doubt about your method look at the way references are presented in any of the professional journals. Remember that the point of referencing is both to attribute your sources accurately and to enable the reader to check those sources if they so wish.
Title Page - This must show the title, author or candidate number, because of blind marking and date, in capitals spaced and centred. And at the foot of the page the following statement:

‘Dissertation/Project/Essay etc (as appropriate) submitted for the award of MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy, Birkbeck College, University of London’

Preface - An optional section only used when you wish to make acknowledgements and/or indicate special abbreviations and usages.

Contents - A list of the chapter headings and their page numbers. If, as in a longer piece of work, there are several preliminary pages, they should be numbered with small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, v etc.)

Main Text

The text of the essay should have numbered consecutive pages throughout. If the text is in sections (groups of chapters), insert a titled page between each section.

Make sure that you use a consistent typographical system for headings and sub-sections; and a consistent indenting or attention device, but beware of over-complicating your layout.

Tables and diagrams must be clearly labelled and explained. They should appear immediately after they are referred to in the text and should be noted there (e.g. ‘see Table 1’).

Appendices

Use an appendix if you have material which is supplementary rather than essential to the main text and argument. Separate this material according to type in different numbered appendices if necessary. Such sections should have a title, be numbered with Roman numerals like the preliminary pages, and should be listed on the contents page.

Disclaimer

On a separate page you should show the following statement.

‘I certify that the work submitted herewith is my own and that I have duly acknowledged any quotation from the published/unpublished works of other persons.’

REFERENCING

You should use the Harvard system for referencing.

It is important to include the following details in your list of references, and it may save time if you get into the habit of recording all these details as you do your reading rather than have to hunt them out at the end.

References in the Body of the Essay/Dissertation

References in the body of the essay or dissertation (as distinct from the Reference section) can occur in different contexts. Fundamentally, whenever reference is made to a published article or other source (e.g. the Internet) details should be given in the text in the form of the name(s) of authors and the date of publication. For example: ‘recent writing on hysteria (e.g. Mitchell, 2000) discusses…’ Or: ‘Mitchell (2000) claims that…’ If a quotation is given, it should conclude with the name of author, date of publication, and exact page number. For example:
By recognising our uncanny strangeness we shall neither suffer from it nor enjoy it from the outside. (Kristeva, 1988:192)

Note here that a quotation is often presented indented in the text. An alternative, when the quotation is of one sentence or less is to simply put quotation marks around it. For instance, there has been much discussion of the experience of otherness in psychoanalysis: as Kristeva (1988:192) comments, ‘By recognising our uncanny strangeness we shall neither suffer from it nor enjoy it from the outside’.

If a text has two authors, both should be given (e.g. Elliott and Frosh, 1995); if more than two authors use the convention et al after the first author’s name: e.g. Pattman et al, 1998. All the authors should be listed in the references at the end of the essay/dissertation.

References at the End of the Essay/Dissertation
At the end of the text, all references should be gathered together in a standard format, in alphabetical order. There are basically three relevant ways of presenting a reference, depending on whether it is to a book, a chapter in a book, or a journal article.

Books

Authored:
Name, initial. (date) Title. Place of publication: Publisher.

Multi-authored:
Name1, initial., Name2, initial. and Name3, initial. (date) Title. Place of publication: Publisher.

Edited
As with books, but with (eds) added after the authors.

Chapter from a Book
Name of author(s) of the chapter, Initial. (date) Title of chapter. In Initial. Name of editor(s), Title of Book. Place of publication: Publisher.

Journal articles
Name of author(s) of the article, Initial. (date) Title of article. Journal title in full, volume: start page number – end page number.
All authors should be listed for jointly written books, chapters and articles.

Referencing from Secondary Texts
If your only source for a reference is from another text, this should be acknowledged in the references as: Full reference of original, quoted in, full reference of secondary source.

Internet Resources
As with books or journals, but with the internet address and date of access appended.
Word count

In all written work students are expected to adhere to the word limit. If a student exceeds the word limit, they may be liable to a penalty of up to 5%.

4.8 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by the College as ‘the submission for assessment of material (written, visual or oral) without correct acknowledgement, in such a way that the work could be assumed to be the student’s own, or could be assumed to have been originally produced by the student for the purposes of the assessment in question, where this is not the case.’ Plagiarism includes the unattributed use of another person’s work, ideas, opinions, theory, statistics, graphs, models, paintings, artefacts, performance, computer code, drawings, quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words, or paraphrases of another person’s spoken or written words. It may also include the submission of unattributed work previously produced by the student towards some other assessment, or published in some other forum.

Plagiarism is taken very seriously by the college. Students need to learn to carefully attribute the sources of their work (with reference to publications, including page numbers so they can be checked). This includes reference to their own work which may have been submitted to this course or to other courses.

The College policies on plagiarism are described in section 7.7.

5. Awards

Summary of Exit Awards
Students who leave the programme at Year One, having passed two modules, are eligible for the award of *Graduate Certificate in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy*.

Students who leave the programme at Year One, having passed all three modules, are eligible for the award of *Graduate Diploma in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy*.

Students who leave the programme at the end of Year Two, having passed two modules, are eligible for the award of *Postgraduate Certificate in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy*.

Students who leave the programme at the end of Year Two, having passed all three modules, are eligible for the award of *Postgraduate Diploma in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy*.

Students who leave the programme during or at the end of Year Three who have not passed all three modules are eligible the award of *Postgraduate Diploma in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy*.

Students have to pass the modules in all three years to be eligible for the award of *MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Credit Points</th>
<th>Exit Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3 core modules @ 30 credit points each</td>
<td><strong>Graduate Diploma</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90 credit points</td>
<td>90 credit points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 core modules @ 30 credit points each</td>
<td><strong>Post-Graduate Certificate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90 credit points</td>
<td>60 credit points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Post Graduate Diploma</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120 credit points (90 credit points @ Level 7 and 30 credit points at Level 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 core modules @ 30 credit points each</td>
<td><strong>MSc</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>180 credit points Level 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Post-course practice*
BACP accreditation for the course only applies to the final award of MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy.

The award of MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling & Psychotherapy is intended as a substantial contribution to the student’s accreditation with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, and is not intended as a free-standing award which would in itself render students eligible to practice in agencies, medical settings or other specialist settings, or in independent practice.

6. Student Feedback

Informal feedback

We want to teach as best we can, so we welcome student feedback on any aspect of teaching, course design and delivery. A number of changes we have made on the programme as a whole have started with ideas from students. There are opportunities throughout the year (in teaching sessions and in administrative meetings such as business meetings) for students to give informal feedback. Students may contact their tutor, senior tutor, or the Programme Director, if they wish an issue or point of view to be addressed in an informal manner.

Formal feedback

At the beginning of the year students are asked to select two representatives. (You may also wish to select a third member to stand in, in the event of absence.) These representatives will meet with the Programme Director and staff team once a term on behalf of the student group to raise specific issues and reflect in general on the course as a whole. A written account of these meetings, with the points raised and how they are addressed, will be made available to all students via Moodle.

In each Year there is a course review meeting held at the end of the year where students have the opportunity to give verbal feedback to the staff.

All students are asked to complete a written evaluation of their teaching at the end of each year.
7. Assessment Policies

7.1 Sub-Board of Examiners Meetings

Sub-Board of Examiners

The Sub-Board of Examiners meets annually, in the summer term at the end of years one and two, and in November/December at the end of Year 3, where the final award is determined. All marks given during the year for assessed work are provisional, and only become formally adopted at the end of the year at the Sub-Board of Examiners meeting.

The main function of the Sub-Board of Examiners meetings in years one and two is to determine whether students have passed the modules of the year and are therefore entitled to progress to the following year.

The Year 3 Sub-Board of Examiners meets before the end of the calendar year, normally at the end of November or the beginning of December. Once the Sub-Board of Examiners has met, the results will be passed on to the Registry, who will have to approve these results. The Registry will then notify each candidate in writing of their mark for each part of the third year assessment, and for the MSc as a whole. (Students should note that if they have not paid their course or other College fees in full they will not be eligible to be examined until these debts are cleared.)

Course tutors are not allowed to inform students of their marks before this official notification from the Registry. Notification from the Registry may take several weeks.

All students who have gained the award of MSc will be invited to a graduation ceremony, which usually takes place in the following March.

7.2 How marks are awarded at the Sub-Board of Examiners Meetings

The marks for each assessed element in the course are determined at the annual Sub-Board of Examiners meeting. In the first two years the Sub-Board of Examiners will determine whether students have passed the modules of the year, which will allow them to progress to
the following year. At the third year meeting the Sub-Board will determine the category of the final award of the MSc. in Psychodynamic Counselling (fail, pass, merit, distinction). In its decision concerning the final mark, the Sub-Board of Examiners will be guided by the following principles

1. The marks for Year 1 are regarded as *formative* (when judging the marks for the course as a whole), while the marks for Years 2 and 3 are regarded as *summative*. This means that only the marks for Years 2 and 3 will contribute directly to the calculation of the final mark for the award of MSc.

2. The Student Review in all 3 years has to be passed. It is not assigned a percentage mark. Therefore the Modules of which it is the assessment do not figure in the calculation of the final mark for the award of MSc.

3. The final mark for the award of MSc is calculated by taking the marks from the year 2 modules *Basic psychodynamic theory & organisational understanding*, and *Basic psychodynamic skills & principles/techniques of practice*, together with the marks from the Year 3 modules *Advanced psychodynamic theory & organisational understanding* and *Advanced psychodynamic skills & principles/techniques of practice*. The marks from these 4 modules will be aggregated to determine the final mark. However the marks for Year 1 will be taken into account by the Board of Examiners in its overall thinking about each student and their development over the course.

### 7.3 Non-submissions, failures, re-takes and re-submissions

The following is a summary of the College’s policy, which can be found at [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/CAS%20Regs%201516.pdf](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/CAS%20Regs%201516.pdf).

**Non-submissions**

A student will be deemed to have attempted a module if they have registered for that module and not submitted any written notification indicating withdrawal from the module or programme by the relevant published deadlines.

If a student attempts a module but does not submit any work for the appropriate assessment as outlined in the course handbook and published guidelines for that module, and does not have an application for mitigating circumstances accepted by the Examination Board (see later), they will be deemed to have failed the module and to have used up one attempt at the assessment for that module. A result of zero will be recorded for that module.

**Failure of a module or assessment element**
If a student fails to achieve an overall pass in a the Sub-board of Examiners or nominated committee may decide at its discretion to allow the student to either:

(i) be *re-assessed* in one or more of the elements of assessment for the module by a date the Sub-board of Examiners will set, or,

(ii) *re-take* the entire module (i.e. re-attend all lectures and seminars AND re-attempt all elements of the assessment).

In this programme, as the modules in each year run concurrently and the syllabus of each module informs the syllabus of the other modules in this year, it is not possible to re-take one module only. This means students who need to re-take one module will be required to re-take the whole year (but will be exempt from a reassessment of those modules, or elements they have already passed)

Reassessment may take the same format as the original assessment of the element in question, or may take an alternative format at the discretion of the relevant Sub-board of Examiners.

Students will be offered *two attempts* at passing any element (other than where an assessment offences panel has decreed otherwise). A student who fails a module, or assessment element in that module, will be offered the opportunity to be reassessed.

**Reassessment**

The Sub-board of Examiners or nominated committee has the final decision on whether to allow a student to be reassessed in any element of a module.

A student may be eligible for reassessment in one or all of the elements of a module that they have not previously passed, at the discretion of the relevant Sub-board of Examiners.

If a module contains more than one element of assessment, a student will not normally have to be reassessed in an element in which they have already achieved a pass.

Any student who is offered reassessment but who does not take up the offer will retain the fail mark originally recorded for the element and the overall module result.

Reassessment is not compulsory. However, students who do not take up the offer of reassessment or fail the reassessment will be required to retake the module.

Any element of assessment that is submitted as a reassessment and for which no application for consideration of mitigating circumstances has been accepted *will be awarded a mark of no more 50%*. Where an application for consideration of mitigating circumstances is accepted, and a deferral awarded by the sub-board ( the work may be submitted without
penalty and the reassessment will not be capped at the pass mark. This capping does not apply to a module which is being re-taken.

The Sub-board of Examiners or nominated committee will determine and approve the timing and format of the reassessment that will take place. This will be either:
(i) at the next normal assessment opportunity (i.e. when the module next operates); or

(ii) as a reassessment before the start of the following academic year

7.4 Late submissions and mitigating circumstances

The following is a summary of the college’s policies which can be found at:
http://www.birkbeck.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules
http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/casregs.pdf

Late submissions and mitigating circumstances

Any piece of assessment that is submitted late, and for which no application for mitigating circumstances has been accepted, will be given two marks: a penalty mark which is the pass mark (i.e. 50%) and the ‘real’ mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. Both marks are given to the student on the feedback form. If the work is not of a pass standard a single mark is given.

If you submit late work which you wish to be considered for assessment you will need to submit a claim for mitigating circumstances (see below). If your claim for mitigating circumstances is accepted, the Board of Examiners will allow the ‘real’ mark to stand. If your claim is not submitted or accepted than the penalty mark will stand.

Where an assessment has not been submitted and no application for consideration of mitigating circumstances has been made within the time period of 7 days after submission date, a mark of zero will be awarded.

Mitigating Circumstances: Policy, Procedures and Guidance

The full College Policy on Mitigating Circumstances can be found at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/mitcircspol.pdf

Mitigating circumstances are defined by the College as unforeseen, unpreventable circumstances that significantly disrupt student performance in assessment. The purpose of the mitigating circumstances regulations is to enable the College to take into account circumstances that have prevented the student from demonstrating their achievement (rather than their potential). The College policy applies to specific circumstances that affect assessment only. It does not apply to long term medical conditions or other conditions – in
such situations the student needs to apply for allowance under the College’s special examination arrangements procedures (advice can be obtained from the Disability Office).

What counts as mitigating circumstances?

Examples of circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student:

• bereavement (near relative only)
• serious accident or illness
• serious infectious disease
• burglary and theft
• childbirth

Examples of situations which may be considered beyond the reasonable control of the student:

• medical operation (if approved prior to the point of assessment or an emergency)
• hospital tests (if approved prior to the point of assessment or an emergency)
• significant accident, injury, acute ailment or condition
• unanticipated and unavoidable professional obligations

Examples of circumstances that would NOT ordinarily be considered mitigating circumstance

• accidents to friend or relatives (unless within 3 days prior to deadline or where student is sole carer)
• family illness (except in an emergency or where the student is the sole carer)
• examination nerves
• feeling generally anxious, depressed or stressed (unless medically certificated and notified in advance i.e. at least 2 weeks)
• clash with paid employment
• minor accidents or injuries
• pregnancy
• cold, cough, upper respiratory tract infection, throat infection, unspecified viral infection
• childcare problems that could have been anticipated
• domestic problems (unless supported by independent evidence)
• mistaking the deadline, or time management problems (including alarm not going off)
• general financial problems
• legal problems (unless required to attend Court for the period of the examination)
• holidays or booked travel arrangements
• house moves
• notes burned or stolen (*unless supported by a fire or police report*)
• intermittent or last minute computing equipment problems (discs, machines, printers, viruses)
• handing-in problems
• ignorance of the Regulations or examination/assessment

**Submitting a Mitigating Circumstances Claim**

A Mitigating Circumstances claim should be submitted if valid detrimental circumstances result in:

a) late or non-submission of coursework
b) poor performance in assessment.

For a claim to be accepted a student must produce independent documentary evidence to show that the circumstances:

a) have detrimentally affected their performance/submission/attendance in assessment, or will do so
b) were unforeseen
c) were out of their control and could not have been prevented
d) relate directly to the timing of the assessment affected

A copy of this form can be obtained from the Course Administrator. The claim form makes clear that independent written evidence is normally required.

Students are encouraged to submit their claim for mitigating circumstances in advance and at the earliest opportunity. *The final deadline for submission of a claim is no later than 7 days after the submission deadline.*

**Mitigating Circumstances Panel and Sub-Board of Examiners**

The Mitigating Circumstances claim and associated evidence will be considered by a panel which will report to the next Sub-Board of Examiners Meeting. The Sub-Board will make one of the following decisions for each claim:

- Accept: the claim is accepted as affecting that item of assessment
- Allow late: no penalty will be applied in respect of late submission
- Reject: the claim is not accepted for that item of assessment

Where the Mitigating Circumstances Panel has accepted a claim, the relevant board should use its discretion to judge how these circumstances will be taken into consideration. Possible decisions could include a decision that the student:

Where the Mitigating Circumstances Panel has accepted a claim, the relevant board should use its discretion to judge how these circumstances will be taken into consideration. Possible decisions could include a decision that the student:

(a) should be given another assessment opportunity which shall not count as an additional attempt at the assessment (known as a reassessment without penalty). Alternatively, the
board may feel that the circumstances and evidence warrant a retake without penalty of the module.

(b) should not be penalised for late submission of coursework and allow the student their true mark for the element in question (where a panel has not already made this decision on the board’s behalf).

(c) in the case of failure by 2 percentage points or less, raising the numerical result to the pass mark.

(d) should only use the marks from non-affected elements of the assessment to decide the module result

(e) should have their final classification raised (if the final classification index is within 2% of a borderline).

(f) If the overall degree result is 2 percentage points or less below a class borderline, the numerical overall result may be raised so that the higher class is achieved.

Individual marks will almost never be changed in the light of mitigating circumstances. Assessment is designed to test achievement rather than potential.

Students may appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners on the basis that there were mitigating circumstances that the student was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling to submit to the Board of Examiners by the deadline.

7.5 Deferral and Break-in-Study

Deferrals

A student who fails to attend or submit one of all elements of assessment for reasons judged to be valid by the Board of Examiners may be allowed to be assessed as if for the first time. This is known as a ‘deferral’. A student who wishes to apply to defer an assessed element must apply in writing to the Senior Tutor as soon as possible before the submission date. Deferrals will only be granted for the same reasons as mitigating circumstances for late submissions. But in addition a student may apply for a deferral where they are unable to fulfil the criteria for submitting an assessed element, e.g. they have not yet started their clinical placement, or have not sufficient clinical hours to attempt a piece of clinical writing, or to give their placement supervisor sufficient evidence on which to write a placement report. Deferrals are normally granted until the next submission date. A deferral does not normally count towards the two attempts allowed for any individual element of assessment.

Break in Study

Students are normally allowed to suspend studies for a maximum of two years in total during their programme of studies. That may be for one period of two years or for non-consecutive shorter periods that add up to a total of two years or less.
Any break-in-studies would normally be for a minimum of one year. A student may also request a break-in-study during the course of the year, but will then normally have to repeat the year. A student may undertake a re-assessment of a failed assessment element during their Break in Study.

Any request for a break-in-study must be made in writing to the Senior Tutor at least one week before the end of the academic year.

Students are not normally liable for fees while on an approved break-in-studies. If you have attended for part of a term you will normally be liable for the fees due in that term, unless there are mitigating circumstances.

Students who have been granted a deferment and wish to have additional tutorial support, or who are on a break-in-study and wish to have some tutorial involvement over the year, can normally choose to enrol and pay a ‘writing up fee’, which entitles them to tutorials, or to register rather than enrol, and pay separately for library/computer use and exam fee. In the latter case, students should directly approach the Library and ITS so as to use their services. If registered rather than enrolled students are not entitled to any formal tutorial input.

The full College policy of Break-in-Study can be found at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Break-in-Study-Policy.pdf

### 7.6. Assessment Offences

Birkbeck policies on assessment offences can be found at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Assessment_Offences.pdf

Students found to have committed an offence are subject to a range of penalties that may be imposed by the College, up to and including exclusion from all further examinations of, and termination of registration at, the College. The procedures for investigating suspected assessment offences including the penalties that may be awarded are detailed in the ‘College Policy on Assessment Offences’.

Academic grounds, other than failure in an examination, for consideration of termination of registration of a student include the following: unsatisfactory academic progress, unsatisfactory attendance at prescribed lectures, seminars, classes, practical sessions, or other prescribed academic activities, failure to complete or submit required written work by due dates or to satisfactory standards, failure to attend for prescribed tests or examinations, failure to comply with examination requirements or regulations.

### 7.7. Plagiarism
Plagiarism is defined by the College as ‘the submission for assessment of material (written, visual or oral) without correct acknowledgement, in such a way that the work could be assumed to be the student’s own, or could be assumed to have been originally produced by the student for the purposes of the assessment in question, where this is not the case.’ Plagiarism includes the unattributed use of another person’s work, ideas, opinions, theory, statistics, graphs, models, paintings, artefacts, performance, computer code, drawings, quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words, or paraphrases of another person’s spoken or written words. It may also include the submission of unattributed work previously produced by the student towards some other assessment, or published in some other forum.

Plagiarism can occur in any piece of work. This policy applies for any alleged case of plagiarism in any piece of work submitted for formal assessment at the College.

A student who knowingly assists another student to plagiarise (for example by willingly giving them their own work to copy from) is committing an assessment offence.

It is accepted that not all cases of plagiarism are committed intentionally, and that it is not appropriate to invoke the formal processes within this policy for all cases where work submitted for assessment meets the College definition of plagiarism. Where, in the judgement of the marker, a student has committed a minor act of plagiarism for which the formal processes are not appropriate, a marker may:

- Reduce the mark for the element of assessment relative to the scale of the offence;
- Award a mark of zero for the element of assessment in question;
- Issue an informal warning. Records of informal warnings should be kept to inform decisions as to whether to consider allegations of plagiarism under the formal processes of this Policy; any allegation of plagiarism against a student who has already received an informal warning should be dealt with under the formal provisions of this Policy.

Any appeal against a decision made in this way must be submitted in writing within 10 days of notification of any decision.

**Collusion**

An assessment offence is committed if a piece of work is produced with the assistance of another person, or persons, when the assignment was to have been undertaken and completed by a student working individually. This includes cases where two or more students submit work for assessment that is identical in its entirety or in substantial parts. It also includes cases where help has been given to improve the style of written language in the work submitted, although help with basic proof-reading for typographical and grammatical errors is normally permitted.

The following sections are a summary of the College Policy on Plagiarism, which can be found at [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Assessment_Offences.pdf](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Assessment_Offences.pdf)

**School Based Investigation**
Allegations of plagiarism that cannot be dealt with informally as described above involve a formal process. Such offences may include, but are not limited to, substantial copying of paragraphs (without acknowledging sources), downloading essays from ‘cheat sites’ on the Internet, copying much/all of the work of a fellow student, allegations of plagiarism in multiple pieces of coursework submitted by a student and collusion.

In such cases the Assistant Dean of the relevant Department will nominate a Panel consisting of a minimum of two academic members of staff to consider the case. The student will be informed of the allegation and investigation, and will receive copies of any evidence to be used to support the allegation. The student will then be offered the opportunity to make representations to the Panel. This will normally be in writing, within 10 working days of the student’s receipt of the evidence, but the student may elect to make personal representations, in which case a meeting of the panel will be convened. Any request for personal representations should also be made within 10 working days of the student’s receipt of the evidence.

If a student who has indicated that he or she wishes to make personal representations to the Panel has been offered three separate dates and either does not reply within 10 working days without good reason, or declines all three dates, the Panel may decide the outcome of the case in the student’s absence. Where a student does not attend at a previously agreed meeting, the investigation will continue and may be concluded in his or her absence.

The Panel will examine the evidence, including any representations from the student. The Panel may wish to consider the following in determining the appropriate penalty:
- premeditation, intent to deceive;
- scale of the offence;
- previous history of the student;
- academic level (e.g. is the student undergraduate or postgraduate, their year of study;
- whether or not there is admission of the offence.

A student may choose to be accompanied by a companion. The role of the companion is to provide support for the student. Anyone acting in this role is not a member of the Panel and should not be involved in determining the outcome of the investigation. Companions should not contribute to any Hearing unless invited to do so by the Chair.

26. Where the finding is that an offence has been committed, the Panel may determine:
   a) that no further action be taken; or
   b) that a formal warning be issued; or
   c) that the mark be reduced relative to the scale of the offence;
   d) that a mark of zero (0%) be awarded for the element of assessment in question; panels may also determine that the mark for any subsequent reassessment should be capped at the pass mark; or
   e) that a mark of zero (0%) be awarded for the module of which the element of assessment formed a part; i. panels may also determine that any mark awarded following reassessment or a retake of that module is capped at the pass mark; ii. In addition where the module in question is an optional module, the cap should then be applied to any optional module attempted by the student as a substitute;
   f) that the student resubmits the assessment but the mark will be capped at the pass mark (the resubmission will count as a separate additional attempt at the assessment).
The Panel will inform the student of its decision within 10 working days of the Panel meeting. In addition to the above the student may be asked to undertake specific tuition in relation to plagiarism or seek guidance from a member of academic staff.

Where the Panel (or the Sub-Board of Examiners) are unable to come to a clear decision or consider that the offence potentially merits a more severe penalty than that which can be authorised under a School-based investigation, a request can be made to the College to instigate a formal disciplinary proceeding.

7.8. Withdrawal and termination of training

Withdrawing from the course

Any student who withdraws from the Course must do so through MyBirkbeck, confirming this in writing to the Programme Director.

Termination of training

termination of training through academic failure

In the normal course of events, students may leave the programme at any point at their own choosing, or decide, or be advised to leave the programme as a result of failing one or more parts of the assessment. Students who fail elements of the course would normally be informed of this at the end of the academic year, after the Board of Examiners meeting, where they will be informed of what options are available to them to resit modules or repeat the year.

As the course is a professional as well as an academic training, students are assessed on their level of clinical and professional competence. During the year students who are deemed at risk of not reaching the required level of professional competence in order to pass the Student Review will be informed in writing of this and what action is required on their part in order to pass the Student Review.

College procedures regarding termination of training: student discipline

In addition to the normal academic grounds for terminating training, the College has published procedures for terminating the training of any student on the grounds of a disciplinary offence or fitness to study.

The Code of Student Discipline can be found at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/discipline.pdf. The Code describes the principles which all students are obliged to follow regarding the fair and just treatment of others in the college:
“that within the College as a community of scholars, the exercise and preservation of the rights and freedoms of individual students requires a respect for the rights of all in the community to enjoy them to the same extent”

Where this obligation is not met by a student, the Code describes what can then happen:

“If alleged misconduct by a student is sufficiently serious, a written request for formal disciplinary proceedings, which may include supporting evidence, may be submitted by any member of the College to the Academic Registrar or nominee.”

In such cases the Academic Registrar or nominee will set up a College Disciplinary Panel:

“The College Disciplinary Panel shall determine whether the charge of misconduct is well-founded and what action should be taken. Such action may include termination of the student’s membership of the College together”

**Fitness to study**

The College Fitness to Study policy can be found at: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Fitness-to-Study.pdf

The code states:

“Occasionally a student may suffer from a condition which could endanger either their own health and safety or the health and safety of other members of the College, should the student continue to attend the College. In these cases the College will need to ascertain whether the student is fit to study.

Actions taken under this Policy and Procedure are not of a disciplinary nature. If action is taken about a student who is not fit to study, it will be limited to that which is necessary to protect as far as possible the interests of members of the College and the student in question. Where a student’s conduct is considered, taking into account all of the circumstances including any declared disability, to merit disciplinary action then the Code of Student Discipline should apply.”

In order to determine whether actions under this Policy and Procedure need to be called into play, the College can set up a Fitness to Study Panel. The options available to this panel are as follows:

“The Fitness to Study Panel may conclude that:
(i) No further action should be taken;
(ii) that the School should make adjustments to enable the student to continue their study;
(iii) that the student’s registration should be suspended, either for a fixed length of time or indefinitely;
(iv) that the student’s registration should be terminated.”
Terminating the training of a student deemed incompetent, incapable or ethically unsound

It may happen on this programme, which is a professional training as well as an academic course, that staff (and/or fellow students or others connected with the programme) become concerned as to the professional and clinical competence or capacity of a student, as described in the BACP Ethical Framework. In such cases the course has a responsibility not only to the student concerned and to the College, but also to the clinical placement (if the student is on a placement) and, to protect clients/patients in treatment by the student from being exposed to risk or harm. Furthermore the College has a responsibility to protect the standards of the profession. In such cases where the published College procedures are considered not adequate or appropriate to cover this eventuality, the staff of the course may act in order to discharge these responsibilities.

The normal procedure in such eventualities would be as follows:

1. The nature of the concern/complaint would be brought to the student’s attention as soon as possible by the course staff, and a meeting arranged with the student to consider whether the concern/complaint is serious enough to constitute evidence of the student being incompetent, incapable or ethically unsound.

2. The aim of that meeting is to agree a plan of action, with a timescale, for bringing the student up to the level of competence, capacity or ethical practice required. This may involve the student agreeing to leave the programme immediately. It may also involve invoking the College’s code on student discipline or fitness to study. The outcome of this meeting will be communicated to the student in writing.

3. If the student is considered to be incompetent, incapable or ethically unsound, and the student is not yet on a clinical placement, he/she will not be put forward for placement. If the student is on a clinical placement, the Programme Director or Senior tutor will write to the placement co-ordinator immediately to say that the course can no longer endorse the student as competent to be seeing clients or undertake a clinical placement. A copy of this letter will be sent to the student.

4. If a student does not accept that he/she has been deemed incompetent, incapable or ethically unsound, and does not agree a plan of action, in addition to the action described in point 3, the Programme Director will make a formal request for a Fitness to Study Panel to be set up by the College (which has, as one of its possible outcomes, the termination of the student’s registration) or a College Disciplinary Panel to be instituted (which also has, as a possible outcome, the termination of the student’s registration).
Appendix 1

Complaints procedure

This is the procedure for making complaints concerning the course, or appeals about the decisions of the Board of Examiners. The course is part of Birkbeck College and so these course procedures should be read in conjunction with procedures described above.

The course is an organisational member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, and abides by the BACP Ethical Framework. BACP publishes its own Complaints Procedures, to run alongside the course complaints procedures, and copies may be obtained from the BACP website at www.bacp.co.uk.

Introduction

1. Students joining the MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling & Psychotherapy can reasonably expect the course will be delivered as described in the course brochure and that they will be assessed according to the Guidelines set out in this Handbook which is given to each student at the outset of the course. The course and the assessment are continually reviewed and revised in the light of experience, and the staff can reasonably expect that students will expect minor revisions to the course and the assessment procedures provided that adequate notice and explanation is given.

2. It is assumed that when students join the course they implicitly acknowledge and accept the core theoretical position of the course, the advertised teaching methods and learning requirements, and the qualifications of the staff to teach and assess, having been given the information and the opportunity to explore these at selection. Should they find that they cannot continue to accept them, then they should consider taking a break in study or withdrawing. Similarly, if the course staff feel that the course is detrimental to the student to the extent that the student is bound to suffer or fail, then this should be discussed with the student and the options of deferring or withdrawing presented.

3. Staff and students should be using the tutorials, the student review process and the system of student representation to raise, deal with and attempt to resolve any dissatisfactions and grievances. These should be raised as early as possible before problems become entrenched and while there is still time to respond. Students who bring a complaint against the course or its staff subsequent to failing the course without having brought the complaint at the time of its arising cannot be deemed to be in a strong position. Staff are obliged by the Student Review process to inform students of pending failure in good time, and they are required to keep records of the annual student review process in the file.

4. From time to time a student may feel that there are grounds for an appeal against an academic decision, or grounds for a complaint about the way the course is managed or delivered, or about how the student has been treated. The College has procedures for handling such complaints or appeals. However, in most instances the difficulties can be resolved without recourse to these formal procedures, and students are urged to try to resolve them sooner than later.

Appeals and complaints are dealt with separately.

A. APPEALS
The College Policy for making an appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners, and the procedures for doing so, can be found at [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Appeals_against_exam_board_decisions.pdf](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Appeals_against_exam_board_decisions.pdf)

It is the view of the course staff that any dispute concerning a decision of the Board of Examiners should, wherever possible, be resolved without having recourse to the formal appeals procedure. Students are encouraged to contact their tutor, senior tutor or the Programme Director if they are thinking of submitting an appeal. This should be done as soon as possible after official notification of results, as there is a time limit of 6 weeks after formal notification for the submission of a formal appeal.

B. COMPLAINTS

The college policy on complaints can be found at [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Student%20Dispute%20Resolution%20Policy%20%20Procedure.pdf](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Student%20Dispute%20Resolution%20Policy%20%20Procedure.pdf)

We encourage any student who has a complaint about the course to try to resolve that firstly through informal channels (B1, B2, B3 and B4).

B1. Where possible a student who wishes to consider making a complaint should discuss this with the person concerned. Alternatively, the student can discuss the matter with the student representative and ask that the matter be brought to the attention of the staff.

B2. If these steps are not appropriate or prove unsatisfactory, a student who has a complaint or wishes to consider making a complaint about the course should ask for a meeting with his or her individual tutor. They may be able to resolve the matter in discussion.

B3. If the individual tutor and student cannot resolve the difficulty the student should then approach the senior tutor to ask for a meeting. If the complaint concerns one of the tutors, the senior tutor, with the student’s agreement, may invite that staff member to be present at the meeting.

B4. If the senior tutor and student cannot resolve the matter, the student should then take the complaint to the Programme Director. The Programme Director will attempt to resolve the complaint through a meeting with the student. If a further meeting or meetings between student and Programme Director are agreed, the Programme Director may choose to invite a neutral person, such as a member of the Dept of Psychosocial Studies, to attend this meeting with the student. If he does so, he will inform the student prior to the meeting. The student may likewise choose to invite a friend or supporter to a future meeting, and will inform the Programme Director. By agreement, any other parties involved in the complaint may be invited to future meetings.
Appendix 2

Placement Documentation

All placement documentation can be found on the MSc Psychodynamic Counselling & Psychotherapy (3yr module on Moodle: [http://moodle.bbk.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3429](http://moodle.bbk.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3429)

These documents include:

- Guidelines for Placement Supervisors
- Clinical Learning Objectives
- Supervisor details form
- Placement progress report – template
- Placement contract
- Student review information

Students must send these documents to their supervisor before starting their placement, ensuring that the supervisor details form and placement contract are returned to the course administrator once complete.
Appendix 3

Disability & Dyslexia Service

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities, specific learning difficulties, medical conditions and mental health conditions. Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College’s Disability & Dyslexia Service.

The Disability & Dyslexia Service and Mental Health Service

The Disability & Dyslexia Service is located in the Wellbeing Centre G26, on the ground floor of the Malet Street building.

All enquiries should come to the Wellbeing Centre, who will determine the appropriate referral to specialist staff. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students’ Allowance, specialist equipment, personal support, examination arrangements, etc. If you have a disability or dyslexia, we recommend you call us on 0207 631 6316 to book an appointment.

The Disability & Dyslexia Service can help you to complete your Study Support Plan, confirming your support requirements with your School and relevant Departments at the College so they are informed of your needs.

Access at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access, accessible lifts and toilets, our reception desks and teaching venues have induction loops for people with hearing impairments, and we have large print and tactile signage. Accessible parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops can all be arranged by the Disability & Dyslexia Service.

The Disabled Students’ Allowance

UK and EU (with migrant worker status) disabled and dyslexia students on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). The DSA provides specialist equipment including computers with assistive technology and training, personal help e.g. note takers, BSL interpreters, specialist tutors for students with dyslexia and mental health mentors and additional travel costs for students who have to use taxis. It provides *thousands of pounds worth of support* and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Disability & Dyslexia Service can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support.

Support in your Department

Your Department will receive a copy of your Study Support Plan from the Disability and Dyslexia Service. This will make specific recommendations about the support you should receive from the Department.

Whilst we anticipate that this support will be provided by the Programme Director, tutors and Programme Administrator in the Department, they will also have a Disability Lead. If you
experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department then they may also be able to assist you. They may be contacted through the Programme Administrator.

**Support in IT Services and Library Services**

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes an Assistive Technology Room, which may be booked by disabled students. We have software packages for dyslexic students (e.g., Claroread and Mind view), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments available in our computer laboratories, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs, etc. We have an Assistive Technology Officer, who can be contacted via IT Services.

The Library has an Assistive Technology Centre, where there is also a range of specialist equipment, including an electronic magnifier for visually impaired students, as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability and Dyslexia Service Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service, who provide a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities and dyslexia.

**Examinations and Assessments**

Many disabled and dyslexia students can receive support in examination, including additional time, use of a computer, etc. They are often also eligible for extensions of up to two weeks on coursework, which should be requested in writing.

**Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)**

Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies to make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you can take an online screening test in the computer laboratories, the instructions for the screening test are available on the Disability Office website. If appropriate, you will be referred to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. Some students can receive assistance in meeting this cost, either from their employer or from Birkbeck.

**Further information**

For further information or to make an appointment to see the Disability & Dyslexia Service, please call the Wellbeing Administrators on 020 7631 6316 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk. Further information can also be found at:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability