

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Master of Science in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy** and **Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **January 2009**.

The aims of this programme are:

- to provide individuals who are employed in mental health service provision and who have the need to use cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in their everyday work the opportunity to further their professional development at the postgraduate level through part-time study;
- to build on students' previous experience in order to develop a comprehensive and critical understanding of the theoretical basis of CBT alongside research evidence of its effectiveness for different types of clients;
- to provide the necessary practical experience that will enable programme graduates to be competent in the safe and independent application of CBT and to be recognised in this regard by the appropriate professional bodies.
- For MSc students, to provide the opportunity to develop advanced knowledge and skills in conducting a research project on a topic related to the clinical practice of CBT and its evidence and/or conceptual basis.

Attendance on the programme is part-time only for mental health professionals who are already employed in the health services. Students are required to see a minimum of eight clients for a complete course of psychotherapy over the 18 months of the programme. Completion of the required clinical work will be monitored using a clinical logbook to be signed by programme supervisors. To count as a clinical case, each case must have been seen by the student for a minimum of 5 individual treatment sessions and must have been discussed in depth in clinical supervision on a minimum of 5 occasions.

In terms of teaching, there are three modules spread over 18 months. Attendance is normally one day per week, except for occasional block teaching of two days or more. Teaching is provided by University staff, staff from the Central and Northwest London and West London Mental Health NHS trusts, and invited expert speakers.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following:

Knowledge and understanding

- Cognitive-behavioural principles of clinical intervention.
- The historical and philosophical context of the development of CBT.

- The experimental research evidence-base supporting (and contradicting) aspects of the cognitive behavioural model.
- The relationship of CBT to the principal biomedical and alternative psychotherapeutic approaches.
- CBT theory and practice in relation to the diagnostic categories in international use.

Skills and other attributes

- Forming a collaborative working relationship with clients/patients and implementing a therapeutic programme with their active participation.
- Developing innovative adaptations of methods of clinical intervention derived from the cognitive behavioural model to individual circumstances.
- Using theoretical and research-based knowledge to develop clinical hypotheses and to generate plans for clinical change.
- Monitoring the effects of treatment.
- Assessing the components of successful and unsuccessful programmes of therapeutic change.
- Collecting and synthesising information from diverse sources to underpin decision-making.*
- Assessing the available and often incomplete and contradictory evidence and making reasoned judgements and sound decisions.*
- Presenting complex clinical, conceptual, and empirical information clearly and concisely, both orally and in written forms.*
- Conducting conceptually driven clinical interviews that adhere to cognitive behavioural principles of clinical intervention.
- Developing the ability to work autonomously at a professional level.
- Developing the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.*

Additional Learning outcomes for the MSc

Through completing the Masters option students will demonstrate competence in the following:

- Knowledge of research design and methods
- Skills in the identification and critical appraisal of research literature
- Skills in research project management
- Skills and knowledge of methods for the analysis of results
- Skills and knowledge in the writing up of research results including the dissemination of findings.

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning in the programme employ a variety of formats and approaches. Knowledge and understanding are mainly developed through lectures both by core staff and by eminent specialists in the field including presentations of alternative and conflicting perspectives to the material and the encouragement of a critical, inquiring approach. Lectures are typically coupled with experiential learning formats, including small group work and mini-workshops. Learning also takes place in the context of clinical supervision of psychotherapy, where theoretical and practical source materials supplement face-to-face supervision. Finally, peer-led learning is encouraged that takes advantage of the diverse, multi-disciplinary nature of the student population.

Assessment of knowledge and understanding is an element of all forms of assessment, but is a particular focus of the written essays. Formative assessment takes various forms, such as feedback on preliminary statements of intent (these are submitted during the preparation of certain written assignments), feedback rather than marks given on the first clinical report and first psychotherapy audiotape, and comments on subsequent psychotherapy audiotapes. Discipline-specific skills will be evaluated in written and oral form through clinical case reports and also through ratings of audio taped psychotherapy sessions. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

The following is a summary of the topics covered in each module (all topics are covered in one day of teaching except those indicated by an *, which span multiple days):

In line with the requirements of the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) for course accreditation, the taught component of the post graduate diploma consists of not less than 200 hours of face-to-face teaching time. Additional teaching time is involved for those students enrolling on the MSc option where it is necessary to complete an additional course in research methods.

Year one:

Module 1, Part 1: Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Programme structure and requirements

Conceptual and historical overview

Assessment

Interviewing skills & the therapeutic relationship

Developing a cognitive formulation

structuring the therapy session

Identifying and monitoring thoughts and behaviours*

Testing automatic thoughts, evidence/thinking errors, cognitive techniques,*

behavioural experiments

Behavioural Principles and Behavioural Methods

Core Beliefs*

Review of Core principles and Skills

Module 1, Part 2: Application of basic Cognitive Behavioural techniques (Module 1 in total: 25%)

CBT for depression*

CBT for Panic Disorder

CBT for Social Anxiety

Simple Phobias

Working with Anger

Working with Imagery techniques

Self Esteem

CBT for Eating disorders

Working with Difficulties and obstacles*

Module 2: Advanced topics in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (30%)

Critical appraisal and academic writing

Working with resistance in CBT

Somatic Symptoms

CBT for posttraumatic stress disorder*

Introduction to CBT for psychosis

CBT for psychosis

Generalised Anxiety Disorder

Managing Endings

Relapse prevention

Year two:

Module 3: Further advanced topics in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (45%)

Supervision in CBT

CBT for Chronic Fatigue

CBT for chronic depression

Schema-focused CBT

CBT for Personality Disorders

CBT for Substance Misuse

Mindfulness, Acceptance and Compassion strategies

Chronic Pain

CBT and Diversities

Student Case Presentations*

Ethics and Professional Issues

Current and Future Directions in CBT

Review and Completion

MSc Programme requirements

Students will attend small group seminars covering key topics in research methods relevant for the completion of their research project. Seminars commence in Module 1 part 2.

Introduction to research methods
Developing research questions and formulating hypotheses
Research Design
Single case design and case series
Measurement issues
Quantitative analysis
Qualitative analysis
Research Ethics
Research Proposal
Student Presentations

At the end of Module 2 students are required to submit their formal research proposal. Students are required to complete a research dissertation describing an independent piece of original research. This should be submitted at the end of the 12 month period following the completion of Module 2.

The final grade for the MSc will be calculated by proportionately scaling down the marks for the PGDip to a mark out of 80, to which will be added the mark awarded for the Dissertation, which counts 20%.

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Progressions and Award requirements

Assignments due in each module must be passed with a mark of at least 50%. Failed assignments can be resubmitted once and must be passed by the end of the subsequent module in order to progress to the following module.

Clinical case reports are based on the student's ongoing cases. The topics of the essays are set by tutors based on the teaching content and focusing on academic aspects of CBT. The Extended Essay is concerned with research relevant to CBT but is not empirical (i.e., will not entail data collection); rather, it is based on a critical evaluation of the pertinent research literature. In addition to being given a mark, psychotherapy tapes are also rated on the Cognitive Therapy Scale (CTS), a standard scale of proficiency in CBT. In order to pass the programme, at least one tape needs to attain the minimum conventionally accepted rating on the CTS. In addition, a clinical logbook needs to be submitted at the end of the programme detailing full courses of psychotherapy with at least eight clients, signed by a clinical supervisor.

Each marked assessment will receive one of the following grades: Excellent (85 – 100%), Very Good (70 – 84%), Clear Pass (55-69%), Borderline Pass (50-54%), Borderline Fail (45-49%) or Fail (<45%). If an assignment receives a mark lower than 50% on first submission, it can be resubmitted once and must be passed on resubmission. However, the new mark will be capped at 50% in determining the overall award category.

In exceptional cases, circumstances may prevent students from progressing beyond Module 2 (i.e., the one-year mark) of the programme. In these cases a written request can be made to receive a Postgraduate Certificate instead of a Postgraduate Diploma, provided that attendance has been at acceptable levels, all assessed work through Module 2 has been completed and passed, at least four clients have been seen for a full course of psychotherapy (as verified by the clinical logbook), and the minimum proficiency rating on the CTS-R has been met.

Progression from the Postgraduate Diploma to the MSc can occur following the completion of Module 2. Students are required to submit a research proposal and transfer to the MSc is contingent upon approval of this.

The **Postgraduate Diploma** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50% *and* has either chosen not to proceed to the dissertation, or has failed the dissertation on either the first or second attempt.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 65.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 60%.

To pass the **Master's programme** a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Masters degree with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 65.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Masters degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 60%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

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Student support and guidance

All students are allocated a Personal Adviser whose role is to offer advice on academic and clinical issues related to the programme. The Programme Director can be contacted on all teaching days and at specified times on other weekdays to discuss general administrative and academic matters, such as programme structure, delivery and assessment, and choice of assignment topics. In addition, students can call upon their clinical supervisor for all clinically related issues.

Before the commencement of the programme, all students are issued with a Programme Guide, which contains full details of the programme, including programme organisation, learning outcomes, core references, assessment procedures and regulations, staffing, timetable, complaints and appeals procedures. On enrolling in the programme, subject to health clearance, students not employed in the health service are issued an honorary contract with Central and Northwest London Mental Health NHS Trust, which affords access to occupational health and counselling services. Students also have access to the branch libraries of Imperial College, University of London and Trust hospital libraries. This includes inter-library loan facilities and access to the main online databases of interest. Students are also entitled to enrol in short courses periodically provided by CNWL on IT topics.

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Admission requirements

Selection is made from among suitably qualified mental health professionals (clinical and counselling psychologists, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, psychiatric social workers, and occupational therapists) although members of other professions with equivalent qualifications and experience will also be considered. Applicants are required to demonstrate that they have attained a 'Core Professional Training' in a mental health related field. Applicants should normally possess at least an upper second-class honours degree in psychology or the professional equivalent. Those with a lesser qualification who have extensive professional experience and can demonstrate the required level of preparedness for postgraduate academic work will also be considered. In addition, applicants need to present evidence of at least one year of post qualification experience in mental health, preferably with some experience of supervised practice in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and the interpersonal skills required for effective practice.

Students who apply for the MSc option will need to demonstrate the following:

- Undergraduate level study in Research Methods and Statistics

- Previous completion of an empirical research project (they need not have been the sole or principal individual involved in the research but must be able to demonstrate previous active involvement in research activity)
- Be able to provide an Academic Referee's report that is able to specifically address research related competencies.

Students will need to attend an interview with the Programme Director to determine their suitability and final admission to the MSc option will depend upon the assessment of the quality of their research proposal.

Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. For further details please refer to the [Prospective Students](#) web page.

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Further learning and career opportunities

Completion of the diploma programme will provide a substantial basis for meeting the requirements of the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) for accreditation as a Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist (please refer to the full Programme Guide for further details on BABCP accreditation).

NB: Those receiving a certificate only will not meet the coursework requirements for BABCP accreditation.

For further details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. The Department of Psychology was ranked joint 5th in the top 10 universities in the country in terms of proportion of 3* and 4* research, with 70% of its research profile being of 3* and 4* standard.

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List of programmes

The programme is taught by staff from Royal Holloway, University of London, staff from the Central and Northwest London and West London Mental Health NHS trusts, and invited expert speakers. The Masters leads to an award of the University of London, while the Postgraduate Diploma leads to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. The PGDip and MSc programmes are accredited by the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies. The Banner programme code is given in parentheses.

Master of Science Programme in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy

MSc in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy (2342)

Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy

PG Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy (1367)

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