

# **DPSYCH COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY**

**2021/2022**

## **PROGRAMME HANDBOOK**

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## WELCOME FROM THE PROGRAMME TEAM

Dear all

We extend you a very warm welcome to the DPsych Counselling Psychology programme at Regent's University London. This three-year full-time professional doctorate in counselling psychology is run by a staff team who are all passionately committed to providing an ethical and high-quality training in counselling psychology.

Our aim is to help you to become a skilled and reflexive counselling psychologist who will be a credit to our field and of great help to many. We see you as our current and future potential colleagues, and we look forward to collaborating with you on your journey of personal and professional learning and development.

Although our programme takes place at Regent's, we are validated by The Open University. This *Programme Handbook* overlaps with the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*, giving you a broad overview of the programme, and signposting you to other key documents.

We are pleased to inform you the DPsych underwent a successful revalidation with The Open University during 2018-19 and has been further revalidated for full-term period of five years with no conditions with effect from 1st September 2019.

**Section 1** of this handbook introduces Regent's, the programme and the team.

**Section 2** contains the programme specification.

**Section 3** outlines further relevant regulations.

Finally, in the **Appendix**, you will find the *DPsych Professional & Ethical Contract*. As a counselling psychologist in training, you will be interacting with communities who may be vulnerable and exploring topics that may be sensitive. It is important you understand and agree to abide by the relevant standards of professional and ethical conduct while participating in the training. We will ask you to sign this contract at induction.

You will need to use this handbook in conjunction with the other programme handbooks, which the *Assessment Handbook*, the *Research Handbook*, the *Placement Handbook*, together with, as above, the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*.

All these handbooks are available on the Programme Handbooks area of Blackboard, our web-based learning platform. They should tell you (nearly) everything you need to know; if in doubt, please do not hesitate to ask.

Overall, the programme team are here to support (and to challenge) you, and we are looking forward to working with you.

With best wishes

Professor Isabel Henton  
Programme Director  
DPsych Counselling Psychology

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction to The Open University

While the Regent's Doctorate in Counselling Psychology has been developed by and is delivered by Regent's, it is validated by The Open University (OU).

This means that through a process of internal and external peer review, the OU has judged the programme (the DPsych) and the University that houses it (Regent's) to be of an appropriate standard and quality to deliver and support the OU validated award of DPsych Counselling Psychology.

The academic regulations contained in the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University* supersede those of Regent's, except where it is noted in these regulations that local Regent's academic regulations apply (<https://www.regents.ac.uk/about/academic-governance/academic-regulations>).

For further information about the OU's validated partnerships, you can visit: <https://www.open.ac.uk/about/validation-partnerships/>.

*The Open University Students' Guide* is available in the Programme Handbooks area on Blackboard.

You may also find it helpful to review the free resources the OU provides all students of its validated partners: <https://www.open.ac.uk/about/validation-partnerships/students/free-ou-resources>.

### 1.2 About this handbook

This handbook contains the programme specification and is the formal and publicly available handbook for the DPsych programme. It is prepared ahead of the academic period to which it relates. Some changes may occur during the year; if so, these will be communicated by e-mail in advance of the publication of the new handbook.

The University reserves the right to make alterations or amendments as necessary and as approved by The Open University. Any offer of a place is made based upon current terms and conditions. It is important you are aware of these terms before accepting your offer. If you are unclear about any of the terms or conditions, you should ask the Admissions Office before you confirm your acceptance. By accepting a place at Regent's, you are agreeing to abide by its rules and regulations.

The information here is correct in so far as possible at the time of distribution. Omissions and errors may occur. Any comments, corrections, feedback or suggestions for additions should be sent in writing to the Programme Director.

### 1.3 Glossary of terms

To help you read this handbook, a useful glossary of terms can be found in the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*. Relevant terms are reproduced here:

Assessment component - an individual piece of work or a collection of pieces of work that forms a summative assessment.

Award – an Open University qualification given to student following the successful completion of an approved programme of study.

Credit - A means of quantifying and recognising learning, expressed as 'numbers of credits' at a specific credit level. Within this document it is assumed that one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning (including individual study).

Credit level - An indicator of the relative complexity, depth and autonomy of learning associated with a particular module (used in credit frameworks).

Assessment element - An assessment element is a piece of work that contributes to an assessment component.

Exit award - A lower award than one for which the student is registered. Such an award may be conferred if a student completes part of, but not all, of the requirements of the programme for which he or she is registered.

Institutional approval - The process through which an institution is judged to be a satisfactory environment for the presentation of programmes leading to The Open University validated awards. Approval is conferred for a period of up to five years.

Institutional review - The process through which an institution is critically reviewed for the purposes of confirming that it continues to meet The Open University's requirements. Approval is conferred for a further period of up to five years.

Learning outcome - What a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to demonstrate after completing a defined element of study. Learning outcomes features within the programme specification must align with module descriptors.

Module - A self-contained, formally structured, credit-bearing unit of study with explicit learning outcomes. (Some institutions use the word 'course' to refer to individual modules.)

Module specification - A document that defines key characteristics of a module, and includes learning outcomes, models of teaching and learning, and assessment schemes. (On the DPpsych these are known as module outlines).

Notional learning hours - the estimated number of hours you will typically spend acquiring module learning outcomes. 1 credit is equivalent to 10 notional learning hours, so a module worth 20 credits would equate to 200 learning hours. These hours may be split into contact hours and preparatory or reading hours.

Partner institution - An institution approved by The Open University for the delivery of validated programmes of study that lead to Open University awards.

Pre-requisite module A pre-requisite module is one that must be successfully completed before progressing to another designated module or stage within a programme of study.

Programme - A schedule of academic study and assessment which leads to an Open University award.

Programme specification - A document that defines key characteristics of an award, including learning outcomes, models of teaching and learning, assessment schemes, and how individual modules relate to qualification levels and contribute to the classification of awards.

Progression - The advancement (or progress) by a student from one stage of a programme to an adjacent higher stage. Such progression is the subject of regulations of the University and must be confirmed at a meeting of the Board of Examiners.

Qualification level - One of a series of defined points in the Further and Higher Education Qualification Framework (or Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework in Scotland). They are numbered in ascending order. Qualifications at the same qualification level share characteristics and require similar achievement.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) - The UK government-appointed agency that safeguards the quality and standard of the higher education awards offered by UK universities. The Open University complies with the codes of practice defined by the QAA and is subject to its scrutiny.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) - Assessment of prior learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college and university, and/or through life and work experiences. Once recognised through this process, prior learning can be used to gain credit or exemption for qualifications and/or personal and career development. RPL includes Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

Resit - To take again part or all failed assessments component in order to pass a module. Resit of the failed component does not require the student to participate in classes.

Retake- To take all assessments components of a module again, having failed a resit attempt. Retake of the failed component may require the student to participate in classes to prepare them for the second attempt.

Stage - A stage of a programme is a collection of study consisting of a total of 120 credits. In full-time programmes of study a stage is equivalent to the year of study. Stages are usually commensurate with a credit level.

Validation - The formal process whereby a new programme of study is critically appraised by The Open University, in order to establish that it meets the requirements for approval. Approval of a programme of study is for a period of up to five years before a further validation (re-validation) is required.

#### **1.4 Team contact details**

The DPsych team office is in Tuke Building 302. This can be reached via the Darwin lift to Floor 2, turn left and walk down the corridor and through the double doors, T302 is on your left.

The best way to contact members of the team is by email. You are reminded to use your University email address for all programme communications, without exception.

Contacting the team by telephone should only be attempted in an emergency; it cannot be guaranteed that any member of the team will be working at their desk, given teaching, supervision and other duties. However, if you need to contact a member of the team by phone and are telephoning from outside the University:

- If their extension number begins with a "7" call 0207 487 + the extension number.
- If their extension number begins with a "6" call 0203 075 + the extension number.

Isabel Henton	Programme Director	hentoni@regents.ac.uk	7526
Rosemary Lodge	Research Lead	lodger@regents.ac.uk	6216

Andreas Vassiliou	Professional Practice Lead	vassilia@regents.ac.uk	7442
Sharon Cahill	Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:cahills@regents.ac.uk">cahills@regents.ac.uk</a>	TBC
Nathan Faulkner	Associate Lecturer	faulknern@regents.ac.uk	7430
Helena Belgrave	Lecturer	belgravh@regents.ac.uk	7773
Alice Kennedy	Placement Coordinator	kennedya@regents.ac.uk	n/a
Martin Milton	Professor in Counselling Psychology	miltonm@regents.ac.uk	n/a

#### 1.4.1 DPsych visiting staff

Visiting staff on the DPsych include:

Dr Kate du Toit  
 Dr Anastasios Gaitanidis  
 Dr Alistair Pipkin  
 Dr Charlotte Harkness  
 Dr Kevin Hogan  
 Dr Kornilia Givissi  
 Dr Maria Kurdowitz  
 Dr Richard Sale  
 Professor Diana Waller

#### 1.4.2 A note about emails

You may be aware that most of the team work part-time for Regent's. We receive a high volume of emails each week, relating not only to our various roles on the programme, as well as to wider University or other institutional (BPS, HCPC, OU etc.) processes. Emails must be responded in between teaching, supervision, tutoring and other meetings. The number of emails different members of the team receive and the timings within which team members are able to respond may vary.

We ask that you consider before sending an email whether the answer to your query may be contained in one of the programme handbooks. An email may contain what seems like a simple query; however, it is helpful to recognise that even simple queries can sometimes involve hidden complexities and/or the need to consult with other stakeholder(s) in order to formulate a response.

If you have sent us an email, you can be assured it has been received. It is generally better to wait for a reply before sending a further email, as this can sometimes lead to confusion and may not necessarily facilitate a quicker answer to the original email, given we generally try to answer emails (unless there is an urgent matter) in the order they come to us. Please be assured we will get back to you as soon as possible.

## **1.5 Staff roles on the programme**

### **1.5.1 Programme Director**

The Programme Director (HoP) fulfils the BPS required role of Programme Director (BPS, 2019). The HoP oversees all aspects of the delivery of the programme (practice, research, academic); recruits and leads staff, and promotes opportunities for staff development; allocates teaching, tutoring and supervision; oversees programme handbooks; leading the annual OU programme evaluation and contributes to the annual OU institutional review; ensures the programme maintains its validated, accredited and approved status with the OU, BPS and HCPC and leads programme revalidations, HCPC audits and BPS accreditory visits; attends University meetings and committees; liaises with the Registry, HR, marketing, admissions, student recruitment and other departments over strategic matters; and manages plans and budgets for the current operations and future strategic direction of the programme.

### **1.5.2 Academic Lead**

The Academic Lead manages the three-year 270-credit academic modules component of the DPsych programme. The AL ensures there is effective timetabling and room booking. They oversee the marking timetable and marking/moderation processes and monitor academic quality to ensure appropriate standards are maintained. The AL organises the four Subject Boards a year - ensuring responses to external examiners' reports; preparing samples for examiners; liaising with Registry around records, board preparation and minutes; and overseeing policies around resubmission and progression. The AL manages communications with trainees around results and resits and ensures the joint Regent's/OU academic regulations are kept updated in line with QAA and policy requirements impacting on the University's quality arrangements. The AL promotes good practice in learning and teaching, in line with Regent's policies and with the discipline; and ensures effective and adequate learning resources are available to trainees on Blackboard and via the *Assessment Handbook*.

### **1.5.3 Research Lead**

The Research Lead (RL) leads the doctoral research degree component of the programme (180 credits). The RL allocates new doctoral research supervision teams to Year 2 trainees; manages changes to supervision teams; leads the agenda for DPsych Research Degrees Committees (3 x year); acts as Chair of the DPsych Ethics Panel; informs trainees about research conference opportunities; manages the annual monitoring process for Year 3+ trainees; manages the allocation of internal and external examiners to vivas and the appointment of appropriate Chair; mentors internal examiners and Chairs in their role; is responsible for organising the extensions process in liaisons with supervision teams, students and the RDC; represents DPsych research in wider University meetings; is responsible for liaisons with the OU around research regulatory matters; and oversees the upkeep of the Research Handbook and associated regulatory documents. The Research Lead works closely with and supports the Programme and Research Degrees Officer with respect to the administration and coordination of the tasks and stages of each individual's research degree journey.

### **1.5.4 Professional Practice Lead**

The Professional Practice (PP) Lead module leads Year 1, 2 and 3 year-long professional practice modules (a total of 90 credits). The PP Lead supports personal tutors in their role; liaises between personal tutors, the Placement Coordinator, the Programme Director and the Careers and Business Relations office, as necessary; advises on issues relating to trainees' professional practice or personal development that cannot be resolved locally; works closely with the Programme Director to oversee BPS and HCPC policy and strategic matters; and manages the evaluation of fitness to study or practice issues as these arise, and consequent processes.

### **1.5.5 Placement Coordinator**

The Placement Coordinator (PC) oversees and is the point of contact for information about new and existing placements via the DPsych Placements Area on Blackboard throughout the year. The PC liaises with placements regarding organisational matters such as quality or health and safety, if these cannot be resolved via local channels; where necessary visits placements to support communications, quality and requirements; liaises with the Professional Practice Lead with respect to specific placement organisational issues; and liaises with the Placement Administrator in the Careers and Business Relations office regarding risk assessment processes. The PC plays an important role in supporting new entrants to Year 1 in finding a placement prior to joining the programme; this activity begins in the Spring of every year.

### **1.5.6 Personal tutors**

Personal tutors are the first point of contact for trainees' personal and professional development and occupy a required role by the BPS of "coordinating supervisor." Personal tutors provide continuity of support throughout the year. Urgent placement issues arising out of term time are to be directed to personal tutors, who will inform trainees regarding periods of annual leave and suggest alternative arrangements. Personal tutors also liaise directly with all trainees' placement supervisors at the mid-year point to enquire about progress.

The personal tutor's role encompasses:

- Guidance and support, if needed, on placement-seeking strategies.
- Mentoring regarding what kinds of placements are appropriate at what stage of learning.
- Tailored advice an appropriate placement « portfolio » over the course of the programme.
- Review and signature of the Placement Application and Agreement and Health and Safety forms after all other checks and signatures, including on the Risk Assessment form, are completed. The personal tutor checks that placements and placement providers are compliant with course requirements.
- Review and signature of the Personal Therapy Agreement and, if applicable, External Supervisor and Change of Internal Supervisor forms and discussion of an appropriate personal therapist or external supervisor.
- Regular progress checks and mid-year and end of year collaborative evaluations of progress (CEPs) within professional practice modules.
- Approving all changes to placement contracts or supervision or early termination of placements.
- Training supervision, exploration, discussion and support for areas such as: use of supervision; multi-disciplinary working; report and letter writing; initial meetings with clients and conducting assessments; understanding formulations and therapeutic planning; relationships, processes and interventions in therapeutic work; reflection and use of self; feelings in therapeutic work; endings and outcomes; ethics, conduct, and professional issues; experiences of difficulties; and organisational policies, systems and dynamics.
- Support with issues within placement supervision or other external professional relationships if these are proving difficult to resolve locally.
- Placement communications to explore any individual issues or concerns arising.
- Responding to uncertainties or circumstances affecting fitness to practice, or progression. Conveying concerns to the Professional Practice Lead and/or Programme Director.
- Providing references for placements or in other professional contexts.

### **1.5.7 Year 1 research tutors**

As part of the module EPC725 Year 1 Counselling Psychology Research trainees are allocated an individual research tutor at the start of the Spring term. Each trainee is offered four (non-compulsory) meetings of fifty minutes, plus one further hour of administrative time. During the meetings, the focus and design of the literature review and research proposal may be discussed and refined. At the start of the Summer term, a draft skeleton critical literature review and research proposal is submitted to the research tutor for formative feedback in advance of the submission of this assignment in Week 9 of the Summer term. For further information, see the EPC725 module outline in the *Assessment Handbook*.

### **1.5.8 Doctoral research supervisors**

Doctoral research supervisors are allocated from the beginning of Year 2 onwards. DPsych supervisory teams consist of a Director of Studies (DoS) and a second supervisor. Supervisory teams, taken as a whole, will generally include staff with:

- A degree at doctoral level.
- History of successfully facilitating the completion of doctoral-level research theses.
- Knowledge of the counselling psychology discipline.
- HCPC registration and/or BPS chartership, and/or UKCP registration.

In terms of responsibilities, the DoS is the lead supervisor, responsible for organising and signing off the Annual Monitoring Form (AM1), and any extensions to the programme of research.

The second supervisor (SS) will provide another perspective in relation to the research project and may be significantly involved in the project as it progresses. Every supervisory team is unique, and if an SS has knowledge of the methodology, the topic area, or some other aspect of the research, their input may be substantial. The SS acts as a support for the DoS and may also act as the lead supervisor in the absence of the DoS. For more information about doctoral research supervision, see the *Research Handbook*.

### **1.5.9 Research and academic operations officer**

The Research and Academic Operations Officer (RAOO) comprises two separate roles. The academic operations officer role is a BPS-required role to provide dedicated administrative and coordination support to the programme. The RAOO supports reporting, visits, audits and other processes in the programme's relationships with the BPS and the HCPC. The academic operations officer also supports the day to day running of the DPsych programme through providing meeting minutes and web updates, and supporting room booking and invoicing.

The research officer is a regulatory role and involves coordinates research degree component of the programme and its adherence to OU requirements. The RAOO works closely with the Research Lead and liaises with registry, finance, the student hub, student records, Regent's postal service, the library, room bookings, catering, academics at other institutions, wider Regent's staff and the OU.

The role involves administering ethics approvals, annual monitoring forms, extension requests, supervisory changes, exam panel nominations, approvals and payments, thesis submissions, viva preparations, viva day management, post-viva processes, amendments timetables and communications, resubmissions and review of corrections, award certification processes, British Library (EThOS) submissions, HCPC registrations, and internal communications about graduation ceremonies. The RAOO is responsible for the secretariat of the Research Degree Committee meetings, three times a year, in

accordance with the terms of reference. For more information about the doctoral research degree component of the programme, see the *Research Handbook*.

#### **1.5.10 Lecturer**

A member of the team or wider academic staff who teaches on the programme. A visiting lecturer is a member of staff who visits to offer occasional teaching or research supervision.

#### **1.5.11 Module leader**

The member of the team who is the first port of call for queries about a module and who leads the running, content, processes and assessment on a module.

#### **1.5.12 Placement manager**

A placement manager is the member of staff on a placement responsible for the general running and operation of the placement.

#### **1.5.13 Placement supervisor**

A placement supervisor is the member of staff on your placement with primarily responsibility for the supervision of practice work with clients.

#### **1.5.14 External supervisor**

An external supervisor is a supervisor who may be contracted for additional supervision in support of reaching the required ratio of supervision to client hours (1:6) and/or in order to meet the requirement for 25 hours of supervision by an HCPC registered Counselling Psychologist during the programme. For further information about placement personnel, see the *Placement Handbook*.

### **1.6 A summary of who to go to for what**

If you have a question, the best place to begin is to look in the relevant handbook, and you are expected to gain and maintain a thorough knowledge of all the programme handbooks (this *Programme Handbook*, the *Assessment Handbook*, the *Placement Handbook*, the *Research Handbook*, and the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*) while on the programme. If you cannot find your answer in one of the handbooks, and for other circumstances, here is a summary of who to go to for what – that is, who is your first “port of call” for different areas:

- For queries about a module – check the *Assessment Handbook*; if you cannot find the answer there, ask the module leader.
- If you are unable to access a book or article that is *required* reading for the module – let the module leader know.
- For practice supervision on placement, your primary supervisor will most likely be your placement supervisor; in rare instances, primary clinical responsibility lies with an external supervisor.
- For issues or concerns about your placement, approach your placement supervisor or the placement manager (as appropriate, dependent on the nature of the query) in the first instance.
- If you are unsure how to approach your placement with an issue or concern, or for placement issues or concerns that cannot be resolved locally, consult your personal tutor.
- For pastoral issues or if you would like a reference for a new placement – your personal tutor.
- For general placement queries (e.g., number of hours accruals per year) – check the *Placement Handbook*; if you can't find the answer, ask your personal tutor.

- For individual placement matters (e.g., choosing your next placement) and training supervision issues – your personal tutor
- For the individual development of your research proposal (from Year 1 Spring term) – your research tutor.
- For the individual development of your doctoral research project (from Year 2 onwards) – your research supervisory team.
- For a practical query about research degree component (how to submit your thesis etc.) – consult the *Research Handbook*. If you cannot find your answer there, contact the Research Officer (researchdegrees@regents.ac.uk).
- If you have a query about progression, or are considering a break in studies, consult this *Programme Handbook*, and approach the Programme Director.

The following are primarily staff-facing / administrative roles:

- Academic Operations Officer (programme-related work)
- Placement Coordinator
- Professional Practice Lead
- Research Lead
- Academic Lead
- Programme Director

## **1.7 Learning and teaching on the programme**

### **1.7.1 Our pedagogical ethos**

The DPpsych prides itself on its creative, experiential and dialogical approach to learning and teaching. Our pedagogical ethos, that is our ethos of being in classrooms, groups, and one-to-one sessions together, to learn and to teach, reflects the ethos of the programme as a whole.

We aim to offer each of you a bespoke and individual network support (and challenge) throughout the programme through working with from research tutors, personal tutors and research supervisors.

Teaching primarily involves seminars and tutorials, and aims to promote a maximally collegial, democratic and collaborative atmosphere, in which learning and teaching take place bidirectionally between you as a trainee and the team, through flipped learning, and experiential and reflective as well as didactic activities.

Teaching is not considered to be purely didactic, that is purely related to the transfer of content or the delivery of information from the programme to you. You are expected to participate fully, to contribute in class, to ask questions and to be questioning; an attitude that befits a practitioner psychologist in training and supports the development of your future identity in workplace contexts designed to help others.

From our perspective, critical thinking and the capacity to see knowledge as pluralistic and contextual is considered a core master's level capability and is emphasised and explored particularly in Year 1 of the programme. Critical thinking is the foundation for doctoral level capability, which translates into creativity, the ability to generate original ideas, and to negotiate complexity and uncertainty in order to make independent decisions. For further information see **Section 2.6**.

Our cohorts are deliberately small – generally no more than 16 in any given year, to facilitate experiential and practice-based learning, and the development of independent doctoral-level engagement in learning and scholarship.

### **1.7.2 Regent's learning, teaching and assessment strategy**

Regent's learning, teaching and assessment strategy reflects and supports the programme's pedagogical ethos. The strategy is based upon personalised student experience; interactive and inclusive learning; assessments designed for learning; a focus on student skills and attributes; the development of cultural agility, flexibility and the ability of graduates to compete strongly in their employment market; and professional development for staff.

### **1.7.3 Accessing Blackboard, modules and assessment dates**

Every module is housed on Blackboard, a web-based virtual learning environment (VLE) through which learning materials are delivered, assessments are submitted, and feedback is returned.

Module leaders and lecturers place a wide variety of learning materials on Blackboard, including readings, links and videos, making it a rich learning resource with which you can engage at any time on or off campus.

Additionally, modules house interactive reading lists, a very quick and efficient way to source the readings you need for the module from the library or elsewhere.

Comprehensive details for all module-related learning, including module outlines (specifications) containing codes, credits, aims, rationales, learning outcomes, and assessment details can be found in the *Assessment Handbook*, Section 5. The *Assessment Handbook* also includes a wealth of other information to guide your submission of assessments. See also **Section 1.6** and **Section 2.11**.

Please visit your personalised Blackboard modules page for access to all module specifications: <https://blackboard.regents.ac.uk/ultra/course>.

### **1.8 Programme statement of commitment to anti-exclusionary practice**

As a team we wish to state clearly that we oppose all forms of racism, systemic oppression and exclusionary practice, and are fully committed to all forms of inclusivity and diversity.

We continue to understand we have much to do in terms of self-reflecting, addressing our own biases, having difficult conversations and taking action against institutional racism and under-representation within the profession. As practitioners, we all need to address race within our client work and understand the very real mental health impacts of racism and systemic oppression and the way that the mental health industry has historically harmed black people and communities.

The BPS Black and Asian Counselling Psychologists' Group (BACPG) have called on training programmes to highlight the issues faced by minority ethnic communities in their training, and how these issues can be tackled effectively. We are proud that as a programme we focus on non-pathologising, non-medicalised approaches to counselling psychology, and that we have a module specifically dedicated to addressing issues of difference and discrimination.

As trainers, we need to continuously monitor how attuned we are to these issues, how we can support the team to deliver appropriate training and how we can support our ethnic minority colleagues. We also need to commit to opening up the profession to more minority ethnic trainees. We have set up an anti-exclusion steering group (AESG) to which everyone on the programme (team and trainees) is invited. The group has a two-fold agenda:

1. To focus on actions we must take to ensure the programme fully demonstrates and puts into practice its commitment to inclusivity and diversity, and discuss how we can participate to influence the wider organisational culture;
2. To reflect on our feelings and positions and consider ways to encourage further reflection in all parts of the programme - modules, professional practice groups, and other reflective spaces - to process, reflect and have difficult conversations.

## **1.9 Regent's equality, diversity and inclusion policies**

Regent's is committed to creating a responsive educational setting that is culturally diverse and inclusive, in which everyone is treated equally and with dignity and respect.

Regent's aims to continuously support its student community in a way that values diversity and promotes equality and inclusion in all aspects of its environment.

The University strives to protect students against unlawful treatment based on protected characteristics by ensuring all students are aware of their responsibilities relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. Discrimination, harassment and bullying is taken seriously, and the University will ensure that any student's concerns are resolved as quickly as possible.

Regent's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy can be found here: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/diversity>. This policy applies to students, prospective students, associated visitors and guests.

### **1.9.1 The Equality Act**

The Equality Act (2010) for England, Scotland and Wales includes regulations affecting education, as well as employment, the provision of services, and accessibility of buildings, websites and transport. The Act defines several "protected characteristics" and broadly extends the same rights and protections to members of all protected groups.

According to the Equality Act, the discrimination, harassment and victimisation of a person, or group of people, who identify with any of the below protected characteristics is unlawful. This includes institutional discrimination and failure to provide fair access through negligence:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment (transgender/transsexual)
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief (including no belief)
- Sexual orientation

### **1.9.2 Religion and belief**

As a multicultural community, there are many religions, faiths and beliefs represented among the University's staff and students, which contribute to the rich environment that we enjoy. People are supported and encouraged to express their beliefs openly and with understanding of others, who may have complimentary or contrasting beliefs. The University also recognises a person's right to not hold a religious belief or faith. For those who practice prayer, there are facilities provided on campus. The

Prayer and Quiet Room, for prayer and reflection, is in the Darwin Basement. For local places of worship and useful contacts, see: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/diversity>.

### **1.9.3 LGBT+**

Regent's is committed to providing a supportive and safe environment for all students to study in, including any student who identifies as LGBTQIAAP (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Allies, Asexual, Pansexual). For further information and contacts of relevant organisations, see <https://www.regents.ac.uk/diversity>.

### **1.9.4 Pregnancy, maternity, new parenthood and adoption**

Regent's student support service can be contacted at [hub@regents.ac.uk](mailto:hub@regents.ac.uk). This service will work with you to identify support needs and relevant adjustments in relation to pregnancy, maternity, new parenthood or adoption. This might include:

- Helping you plan a break in studies;
- If you are pregnant, a risk assessment to ensure the safety of yourself and your child.

For Regent's policy on pregnancy, maternity, new parenthood and adoption, you can follow the link on this page: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/diversity>.

### **1.10 Support for disabilities and mental health**

The University is committed to developing an environment in which all students are given the opportunity to demonstrate and realise their full potential.

Disability is defined under the Equality Act 2010 as a physical, neurological, developmental or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. For a student, normal day-to-day activities might include taking notes, writing, researching, reading large amounts of text and moving between multiple locations.

This may include people who (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Have a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia
- Have a hearing impairment
- Have a visual impairment
- Have a physical disability, and/or mobility difficulties
- Have a long-term health condition, such as epilepsy, HIV
- Have an autism spectrum condition, such as Asperger's
- Have a mental health condition, such as depression

Information can be found about the University's support for disabilities and mental health here: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/information/for-current-students/disability-mental-health>. The Disability and Mental Health team can be contacted at [disability@regents.ac.uk](mailto:disability@regents.ac.uk). This team offers advice and support to current and prospective students improve access and navigate any barriers to learning. If a disability affects your ability to participate in your learning or on campus, you should consider contacting the team as soon as possible to discuss setting up a Student Support Agreement (SSA).

### 1.10.1 Specific learning difficulties

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) are defined as conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and ADD/ADHD. SpLDs are considered to be on a spectrum and range from mild to moderate through to severe. They are independent of intellectual ability, socio-economic or language background and do not predict academic success.

To access support, you will need to provide evidence. This should be a full diagnostic assessment carried out at age 16 +, by a suitably qualified professional. This needs to be in English or translated by an official translator.

Staff and students who feel they may have an SpLD should contact the Disability and Mental Health team to arrange a screening. Screenings last about one hour and will indicate whether it is worthwhile your seeking a full diagnostic assessment.

### 1.10.2 Disclosing a disability or mental health issue

You are encouraged to disclose any disability on application, so that the Disability and Mental Health team can send you relevant information in advance. If you have not disclosed a disability on application, please contact the Disability and Mental Health team on arrival at [disability@regents.ac.uk](mailto:disability@regents.ac.uk). Please be aware that non-disclosure of a disability may affect the level of support that the University may be able to provide.

### 1.10.3 Student support agreements

A student support agreement (SSA) is the communication mechanism through which additional support is implemented at Regent's. Where possible, SSAs should be agreed within three weeks of classes starting. To arrange an SSA, you will need to meet with the Disability and Mental Health team to complete the relevant form.

You will need to bring appropriate supporting documentation to the meeting. This could be, for example, an educational psychologist's report or, in some cases, a doctor's letter. Documentation must give enough detail to allow for an assessment of your needs. It should clearly state the relevant issue and any resulting recommendations for academic study. It should be signed and dated, on letter-headed paper. Both the letter and associated documentation should be written in English or an authorised translation provided.

Once you have an approved SSA, it is your responsibility to send it to relevant module leaders each and every term, even if you have sent it to this lecturer previously. This supports maximum clarity for module leaders and marking teams. It is also appropriate given that an SSA represents your personal and sensitive data, and that this data may occasionally be subject to change.

Please note that 100% attendance is expected and a minimum of 75% attendance is required on the DPpsych (see **Section 3.4**). These levels of attendance are in place because the programme is a practitioner psychologist training accredited by the BPS and the HCPC; your attendance supports you in fulfilling all the programme learning outcomes and practitioner competencies to the level required over the course of the training. It has therefore been agreed with the Student Support team that DPpsych SSAs will not sanction missing more than 25% of any module.

#### **1.10.4 Disabled students allowance**

Disabled students allowance (DSA) is only available to UK nationals or those with settled status, and not applicable to EU and International Students. Depending on your needs, DSA could help with the cost of:

- Computer equipment (in part).
- Specialist assistive software to help with reading, writing, planning and organising work.
- One-to-one support with a specialist mentor.
- One to one support from a study skills tutor.

For further information, see: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/information/for-current-students/disability-mental-health>.

#### **1.10.5 Disability services committee and disability policy**

The disability services committee was launched in October 2008 and meets twice a year to discuss disability related issues at Regent's. The Committee subscribes to the social model of disability. Terms of reference, membership, and agendas and minutes of meetings are available to staff and students. The disability policy describes the University's commitment to embedding a culture of inclusion for students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties, mental health conditions or long-term health conditions. For further information, see: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/information/for-current-students/disability-mental-health>.

#### **1.10.6 Recommended resources**

The following resources are recommended by Regent's and can be viewed on this page: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/information/for-current-students/disability-mental-health>.

- My Study Bar helps with studying, organisation, reading and writing. Although it is designed to support learners with literacy-related difficulties such as dyslexia, the toolbar can offer potential benefits to all learners. It is designed to run on a Windows PC.
- Adobe Acrobat's Read Out Loud for pdfs.
- Dictation (Mac) provides instructions on how to enable the dictation feature on a Mac.
- Ginger Proofreading is an online tool that checks and corrects grammar and spelling mistakes.
- Natural Reader is a professional text to speech program that converts any written text into spoken words. There are paid versions of Natural Reader that have more features.
- Power Talk automatically speaks any presentation or slide show running in PowerPoint for Windows. It can speak text as it appears and also hidden text attached to images.
- Speak it text to speech software for emails, Word documents and pdfs. This can be purchased as an app.
- Grammarly.com checks that your writing is easy to read, effective, and mistake-free. It is free on Chrome, Safari, and Firefox browsers.
- Brain.he is a website offering advice and resources for students with SpLDs.
- Beatingdyslexia.com is a website offering learning, memory and concentration tips.
- ATbar is an open-source, cross-browser toolbar to help users customise the way they view and interact with web pages.
- Otter Voice Notes provides automated meeting notetaking as an app that can be used for meetings, calls, video conferences, interviews, or lectures.
- XMind is a mind mapping and brainstorming tool, designed to generate ideas and inspire creativity.

## **1.10.7 Emergency evacuation if you have a physical disability**

If you may need some extra help evacuating a University building in an emergency, please let the Disability and Mental Health team know. This team will put you in touch with the fire officer so that a personal emergency evacuation plan can be drawn up.

## **1.11 The student hub**

The student hub ([hub@regents.ac.uk](mailto:hub@regents.ac.uk)) is the first port of call for a range of Regent's support services, including:

- Help and advice about general University matters
- FAQs - <https://hub.regents.ac.uk/students/questions/>
- Confirmation of enrolment, transcripts, and digital copies of documents
- A digital Regent's stamp for loan applications

Achievement officers (bookable via [hub@regents.ac.uk](mailto:hub@regents.ac.uk)) are also available if you feel you are getting behind in your studies and for advice on managing workload.

Student support officers (also bookable via [hub@regents.ac.uk](mailto:hub@regents.ac.uk)) provide support on pastoral issues affecting your study and can offer further advice about breaks in studies or appeals.

## **1.12 Library services and resources**

### **1.12.1 Overview**

Regent's library consists of the Tate Library silent reading room, an open study area on the ground floor, and a modern first floor that is a flexible study space arranged for you to work in a way that suits you. Bookable study rooms enable you to work together on projects and presentations, while you will also find other spaces to work quietly with others.

The library has wi-fi and power points on both floors. There are PCs and networked full-colour printer-copiers for producing work. A resource room with adjustable working space and a computer fitted with assistive software is available for students needing greater accessibility, and dedicated Librarians are on hand to assist you with any study needs you may have.

You can search and borrow from extensive book collections across the range of subjects taught at Regent's - business and management, psychotherapy and psychology, film and performing arts, fashion and design, and the humanities. RUL Discovery is a one-stop portal for searching the library's resources.

The library's DVD collection of classic and modern feature films, documentaries and box sets is also available for everyone to borrow. There are print journals and newspapers in a range of languages and theses by previous students for when you start to plan your own. The library houses approximately:

- 40,000 print books
- 59,000 eBooks
- 60,000 ejournals
- 3,500 DVDs
- 100 print journals and magazines
- 50 databases

For further information, contact [library@regents.ac.uk](mailto:library@regents.ac.uk).

### **1.12.2 Subject specific resources**

The Library has an extensive collection (over 6,000 volumes) of books in the fields of psychology, psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, as well as hard copy subscriptions to a wide number of journals in these fields. There are, however, an increasing number of e-resources including full-text books.

Online subscriptions include to the Psychological and Behavioural Sciences database, the PsycINFO suite of journal databases published by the American Psychological Association, PEP web (online access to books and journal articles in the field of psychoanalysis) and PsycTherapy (an APA database containing more than 300 therapy demonstration videos).

Postgraduate students can make use of the Citrix portal, an online gateway giving full access to all the Library resources from students' home computers. Additionally, in recognition of the specialist nature of postgraduate study and the potentially esoteric sources you may need to consult, postgraduate students are entitled to ten free inter-library loans per annum.

### **1.12.3 Facilities for PhD and DPsych students**

A new facility has been created for PhD and DPsych students in Tuke 123a and T124b. This includes a seating area and study rooms.

### **1.12.4 Group study rooms**

Within the library itself, there are further bookable group study rooms available as follows:

- Ground floor group study room (up to eight people)
- First floor group study room (up to eight people)
- Resource room (up to two people)

Group study rooms are ideally intended for groups of three or more people. They can be booked at the library desk, by calling 020 7487 7449 or via [library@regents.ac.uk](mailto:library@regents.ac.uk). Bookings are for maximum three hours, with only one booking per group per day. Rooms can be booked up to two weeks in advance.

### **1.12.5 Senate House Library**

Graduate and chartered members of the BPS are entitled to join Senate House Library (SHL) in central London (<https://london.ac.uk/senate-house-library>).

The BPS Library is fully integrated with the psychology collection in SHL, providing a leading, national, resource in psychology. The BPS library contains a collection of:

- books and journals published by the Society
- a large collection of subscribed journal titles
- periodicals received in exchange for the Society's publications
- extensive runs of historical journals
- various historical book donations
- miscellaneous Society publications

The SHL's own collection consists of volumes on animal behaviour; biological, child and adolescent psychology and psychiatry; cognitive, developmental, and forensic psychology; health psychology; hypnosis; mental health; methodological literature; occupational psychology; parapsychology; psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and psychotherapy; and social psychology.

The collection is complemented by historic collections holding early psychological texts dating back to the nineteenth century and earlier. The periodicals collection is especially strong, both in print and electronic. There is a collection of psychological tests and manuals.

Membership of SHL allows you borrowing access to 10 books (renewable online) and reference-only access (no charge) as follows:

- Onsite access to the BPS Library collections
- Onsite access to the entire Psychology Collection in Senate House Library
- Onsite access to all Research Collections and Special Collections in Senate House Library
- Onsite access to all Senate House Library e-resources
- General and bibliographic enquiries
- Laptop loans

The Library also hosts a series of open access databases, available to all with no log in required - some of these contain extensive online content:

<https://senatehouselibrary.libguides.com/az.php?a=all&t=26433>.

### **1.12.6 The British Library and ETHoS**

If you would like to gain Reading Room privileges at the British Library, you can write to the Programme Director to request a letter.

However, please note that the British Library is not offering new reader registrations at the time of writing, only renewing expired registrations. You might like to check in at [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk) again for further information later on in the academic year if you wish.

<https://ethos.bl.uk/> is the British Library's catalogue of theses open for access and to download.

### **1.12.7 The Open University's library**

The Open University provides a number of free resources including access to its publicly available library resources, see: <https://www.open.ac.uk/about/validation-partnerships/students/free-ou-resources>.

## **1.13 Key dates for 2021-22**

### **1.13.1 Term dates**

The programme is delivered on Mondays and Tuesdays. Year 2s attend on Mondays; and Year 3s attend on Tuesdays.

2021-22 term dates are as follows:

Autumn term

Monday 4th October 2021 – Tuesday 7th December 2021

Reading week: w/c 25th October 2021 (Week 4)

Spring term

Monday 24th January 2022 – Tuesday 29th March 2022

Reading week: w/c 14th February 2022 (Week 4)

Summer term

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022 – Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Reading week: w/c 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (Week 5).

Module timetables for the year are confirmed and disseminated to trainees in September. Any updates to staffing of modules or changes to the module timetable confirmed in good time before the start of each term by the Programme Director.

### **1.13.2 Assessment dates**

Dates for module assessments in 2021-22 can all be found in the Assessment Handbook, Section 2. Assessment dates will be reconfirmed at the beginning of each term by the Module Leader.

### **1.13.3 Subject board dates**

2021-22 examination board dates are as follows:

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 DPpsych Subsidiary Subject Board

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021 DPpsych Subject Progression and Finalist Board

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 DPpsych Subject and Finalist Board

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 DPpsych Subject and Finalist Board.

### **1.13.4 Programme committee meeting (PCM) dates**

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 (Week 6, T1)

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 (Week 5, T2)

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022 (Week 6, T3)

### **1.13.5 Academic calendars**

Academic calendars for 2021-22 can be viewed here: <https://www.regents.ac.uk/admissions/academic-calendars/academic-calendar-for-regents-school-of-psychotherapy-psychology>.

Please note that the DPpsych calendars are towards the bottom of this page.

## SECTION 2: PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### 2.1 Award title

DPsych Counselling Psychology

### 2.2 Programme name

Doctorate in Counselling Psychology

### 2.3 Programme type

Modular

### 2.4 Programme management

The Programme Director is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the delivery of the programme, and ensuring compliance with the regulations of The Open University (OU); the standards of training set by the programme's statutory regulator, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC); the standards and learning outcomes of the programme's professional accreditory body, the British Psychological Society (BPS); and Regent's *Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy*.

### 2.5 Programme admissions

In accordance with the BPS and HCPC standards and criteria for entry, applicants are required to meet the below entry requirements, which are assessed during the interview and selection procedure.

#### 2.5.1 Specific admissions criteria

- A minimum of 2:1 psychology degree or above (in exceptional circumstances, such as for individuals who hold a master's or a PhD degree, we will consider a 2:2 award). *Evaluated via transcripts or certificates.*
- Reasonably substantive experience with face-to-face counselling work or other formal helping roles (e.g., one year's full-time equivalent). *Evaluated through CV and letters of reference, one of which should preferably be from someone familiar with applicant's counselling work.*
- OR In cases where the applicant has less clinical experience and/or does not have a letter of reference speaking directly to the applicant's clinical skills, the applicant must have successfully completed a Certificate or Foundation course in counselling skills, or an alternative introduction to psychotherapy and counselling. *Evaluated through transcripts or certificates.*
- Capacity to undertake doctoral-level research in counselling psychology, as demonstrated through research experience and/or knowledge and/or previously completed work. *Evaluated through personal statement, and submission of research work or academic essay. One letter of reference should be from someone familiar with applicant's academic work.*
- High level of interpersonal skills and self-reflective capacities. *Evaluated through interaction in individual interview and group exercise.*

- References. *References should, between them, speak to academic abilities; clinical experience; and personal or professional skills and qualities.*
- Graduate basis for chartered membership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society (BPS). *Evaluated through submitted evidence of GBC, such as an email from BPS, copy of a GBC letter, or copy of a membership card.*
- Clear understanding/expression of why training in counselling psychology is being sought. *Evaluated through personal statement and interview.*

### **2.5.2 Level of English**

We are keen to welcome trainees from a variety of backgrounds and cultures; for those applicants for whom English is not a first language, we require a minimum IELTS score of 7.0, with a minimum of 7.0 scored in each sub-category for EU/EEA and overseas trainees. Applicants whose first language is English are required to show evidence of a minimum grade C in GCSE English or equivalent.

### **2.5.3 Declaration of criminal convictions**

In line with the HCPC requirements with regards to safe practice, all applicants are asked to declare “any criminal convictions, excluding spent sentences (as defined by the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*) or motoring offences for which a fine and/or three penalty points were imposed” on the application form. Such declaration will be discussed at interview, in consideration of the potential ethical and professional issues relating to the nature of the practice-based aspects of the training.

In the event of such declaration by the applicant, the team will discuss the potential difficulties in securing a practice placement and advise the applicant to read the HCPC and BPS guidelines and registration procedures to understand information with regards to eligibility of future registration. In such cases, decisions about offers will be taken following discussion with the HCPC and BPS.

### **2.5.4 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)**

The DPsych programme does not currently accept applications involving Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) and this is the RPL policy for the programme.

This is because, although there are many similarities between counselling psychology programmes, there are also significant differences. While all counselling psychology programmes must confirm to subject benchmarks set out by the BPS and the HCPC, the way that programmes interpret those subject benchmarks in order to formulate their programme learning outcomes are different.

One key area of difference is in the therapeutic modalities that are offered by different programmes. The BPS requires that all programmes offer one primary modality and one working modality but does not specify what these modalities are.

This means that, for example, a trainee wishing to join Year 2 of the DPsych, having successfully completed Year 1 of another programme, might have received training in (e.g.), person-centred and psychodynamic modalities in their first year of training at the other programme. However, this would not match with the learning outcomes of Year 1 of the DPsych, which include reference to learning about existential and phenomenological and CBT approaches.

Another area of difference is that some trainings involve different proportions of “levels” of credits (that is M level and D level credits). This also creates complexities in terms of compatibility with the DPsych,

which is subject to The Open University's regulations around the maximum number of M level credits within professional doctorates (120 M level credits).

For these reasons, the DPsych does not currently allow RPL, although this may be subject to change in the future. This regulation supersedes the generic regulations in the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*.

### **2.5.5 Re-entry onto the programme**

According to the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University* (20.2), a trainee may apply to re-enter the validated programme, if they had previously left with an exit award, and in order to upgrade their award.

If a trainee has elected to withdraw from the validated programme, they may be permitted to apply to re-enter in order to resume their studies. In this instance, the normal and maximum registration periods would need to include their previous time on the programme; in other words, there would be no new registration period initiated.

However, a trainee may not be permitted to apply to re-enter the validated programme if they have exhausted all permissible attempts at a core module, and therefore been withdrawn from the programme by the Registry. This is because compensation for modules is not permitted, and because all modules are core modules required for progression. It will not be possible for a trainee to start afresh on the validated programme for the same reasons.

Applications to re-enter the programme will be considered by the Programme Director, and the applicant may be counselled against re-entry if there are other circumstances relevant to their previous withdrawal or exit that would suggest that re-entry were inadvisable. If this is the case, the applicant will be advised as to other possible study or career pathways.

## **2.6 Relevant quality benchmarks**

To meet the requirements of a doctoral degree, the programme must meet nationally agreed standards, otherwise known as quality benchmarks.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) outlines the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications* (FHEQ). A summary of the relevant benchmarks from this framework has been reproduced below. You are also advised to visit the QAA website ([qaa.ac.uk](http://qaa.ac.uk)).

During Year 1 of the DPsych, most coursework (120 credits) is assessed at master's (M) level (level 7). The critical literature review and research proposal (EPC725, 60 credits) is assessed at doctoral (D) level (level 8). During the second two years of training, all coursework is evaluated at D level.

### **2.6.1 Doctoral level benchmarks**

Institutions award doctoral degrees to trainees who have demonstrated the following:

- The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
- A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
- The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new

- knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- Make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- Continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches.

and will have:

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

### **2.6.2 Master's level benchmarks**

Work at this level needs to show originality in the application of existing knowledge around the chosen topic or area, as well as a critical understanding of how this knowledge has been generated.

The work should also demonstrate critical and systematic understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches and how these affect the interpretation of knowledge, as well as critical responses to existing theoretical discourses and practices.

Work needs to be written in a coherent, structured, and clear manner with well-referenced argumentation, as well as to show awareness of how the boundaries of knowledge can be advanced through future research.

Master's level work should demonstrate the capacity for tackling complex ideas both systematically and creatively, and the qualities needed for employment in academic and professional disciplines (e.g., demonstration of personal judgement, responsibility and initiative).

### **2.6.3 Practitioner doctorates and PhD degrees**

Both PhDs and professional or practitioner doctorates such as the DPsych necessitate advanced research training, which culminates in the submission of a doctoral research thesis. Such a project should warrant wider dissemination of research of a publishable standard.

However, unlike PhD degrees, professional doctorates are modular, taught degrees with credit-rated levels. They are also designed with cohorts rather than individuals in mind, and have a multi-dimensional spectrum that includes theory, practice, research, and personal and professional development.

Although both forms of doctoral degree require originality and innovation, professional doctorates are practice-orientated and require a demonstration of close links between theory, research and practice.

The findings of the research project should not only generate "new" knowledge but also knowledge that is relevant to the profession and necessary to address a relevant real-world problem. In other words, this knowledge generated needs to contribute to the field of counselling psychology practice, to the candidate's own practice, and potentially beyond (QAA, 2014).

The same integration of theory, research and practice should be reflected across the entire doctoral portfolio and in final *viva voce* examination; as such this final stage of the degree is designed to assess doctoral-level standards across all aspects of the training.

## **2.7 The programme's professional and statutory regulatory bodies**

The programme has relationships with two Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

It is professionally accredited by the BPS. This means it meets the standards the BPS sets for counselling psychology training in the UK. Upon completion of their training, graduates are eligible to apply for chartered membership of the Society (enabling them to use the designation CPsychol), and for full membership of the Society's Division of Counselling Psychology.

The BPS ([www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)) is a registered charity, which acts as the representative body for psychology and psychologists in the UK and is responsible for the promotion of excellence and ethical practice in the science, education, and application of the discipline. It aims to support and enhance the development and application of psychology for the greater public good, setting high standards for research, education, and knowledge, and disseminating our knowledge to increase public awareness.

The programme is also legally regulated and approved by the HCPC, the statutory regulator for practitioner psychologists in the United Kingdom (UK). This means that it meets the HCPC's standards of education and training (SETs). Upon completion of their training, graduates will have attained the HCPC standards of Proficiency (SoPs). They will be eligible to apply to register with the HCPC, and upon registration, will be able to practise using the legally protected title of "Registered Counselling Psychologist."

Regulation of practitioner psychologists by the HCPC ([www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org)) was established in July 2009. The Health and Care Professions Council is a statutory regulator of over 280,000 professionals from 15 health and care professions in the UK. The Council's main purpose is to set standards that ensure the protection of the public in the UK.

### **2.7.1 Accreditation and approval**

Procedures for re-accreditation and re-approval by the BPS and the HCPC occur on a regular basis.

The BPS conduct a re-accreditation visit to the programme every five years. It uses a partnership approach to accreditation, aiming to ensure collaborative working with education providers to ensure that the required standards are achieved. The outcome of an accreditation visit is reflected in a report, which comments on all aspects of the programme and make recommendations about areas requiring improvement or amendment.

The HCPC confirms its ongoing approval of the programme via a substantive biennial paper audit of the way in which the programme continues to meet its standards of education and training (SETs). In alternate years, a short declaration form is approved.

### **2.7.2 Legally protected titles**

The HCPC regulates the use of the title "Counselling Psychologist." This means that the use of this title in the UK is legally restricted to individuals who are on the HCPC register of practitioner psychologists. Any practitioner who wishes to use the title "Counselling Psychologist" needs to be registered with the HCPC. Prior to registration, you must use the title "Counselling Psychologist in Training" or "Trainee Counselling Psychologist," without exception. For further information, see the *Placement Handbook*.

### **2.7.3 Key HCPC documents**

You will need to know and understand HCPC procedures with regards to registration, regulation and standards, and are encouraged to familiarise and regularly update themselves with the information on the HCPC website (<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/>).

The following documents are relevant across the training and will need to be consulted for many of the training's assessments.

*Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics*

*Standards of Proficiency*

*Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students*

*Guidance on Health and Character*

*Standards of Education and Training*

Upon applying for registration with the HCPC registration, you are required to provide evidence of good health and character and, if accepted, to abide by the HCPC's *Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics* on an ongoing basis.

### **2.7.4 Key BPS documents**

The BPS regularly produces and updates a range of essential guidelines for practitioner psychologists, which can be accessed by following this link: <https://www.bps.org.uk/article-types/guidelines>.

Core BPS documents relevant to training are:

*Code of Ethics and Conduct*

*Practice Guidelines*

*Standards for the Accreditation of Doctoral Programmes in Counselling Psychology*

## **2.8 Our philosophy and aims**

The DPsych programme promotes a relational and pluralistic stance to therapeutic work, supporting the embracing of difference and diversity between people, and anti-discriminatory practice. Trainees gain theory and practice understandings from counselling psychology and a number of allied fields, including existentialism and phenomenology (the programme's core theoretical models), second-wave and third-wave cognitive-behavioural therapies (the programme secondary theoretical models), psychoanalysis and psychodynamic therapy (the programme's tertiary theoretical models), together with for example, critical psychology, art and literature, postmodernism, and philosophy.

We promote informed and critical understandings of relationships between theory, practice and research, inclusive of critical consideration of concepts such as evidence-based practice, the scientist-practitioner, and practice-based research. We encourage the development of critical, reflexive practitioners who are informed by theory, research, experience and reflective practice, and able to work with relational and intersubjective processes arising within the therapeutic relationship with clients and within other

professional relationships. The nuances of “between spaces” in encounters with others, and between fields of knowledge and ontology, and the ethics of intersubjectivity are primary concerns on the programme.

An important dialectic within the wider field of counselling psychology is that of « being » and « doing. » It has been argued that if alienated from the being qualities of the counselling psychologist, the doing of counselling psychology becomes “technologised” to such an extent that it distorts the therapeutic encounter, not least with regard to the power relationship between the counselling psychologist and his or her client. Instead, doing is viewed as an extension of, and not a substitute for 'being-in-relation. What counselling psychologists do, needs always to be understood within, and as an expression of, their attempts to acknowledge and to enter into the client’s worldview, to the extent that this is possible, and not aimed at directing the therapeutic encounter.

While these ideas are central to the profession, it is important to attend to split understandings of these positions, given that being and doing may not be entirely separable in practice, in the same way as process and content, support and challenge, or relationship and intervention may not be separable. The grounding of therapeutic work in the client’s experiences, language and understandings, and how the therapist hears and responds to these with what they have to offer, means that every piece of work will inevitably be idiographically co-constructed or generated between those involved, and may involve uniquely integrated working.

Through our training, we aim to develop counselling psychologists who will be:

- Able to reflect the programme’s core philosophy and theoretical working models and use these to guide and influence their practice.
- Committed to professional practice in accordance with the HCPC and BPS professional and ethical codes.
- Both informed and critically questioning of theories of psychopathology and diagnostic categories.
- Able to work with assessment, formulation, and diagnosis in ways that are appropriate to the practice of counselling psychology.
- Able to understand and effectively communicate the role of counselling psychology in a variety of social, cultural, and organisational settings.
- Able to effectively communicate psychological knowledge to peers and professionals in various contexts.
- Able to integrate a reflective practitioner approach into their practice.
- Able to conduct and critically evaluate research to inform their practice and in the context of services in which they may work.
- Able to manage professional relationships and power dynamics effectively and appropriately.
- Demonstrate creativity, sensitivity, and responsiveness to clients’ needs, while taking into account organisational parameters and contextual demands.
- Able to show awareness and understanding of cultural differences and diversity in client needs across the lifespan.
- Able to show commitment to personal and professional development, self-care, and reflective and ethical practice.

## **2.9 Rationale for the programme**

Counselling psychology is a discipline with “a pluralistic and interdisciplinary attitude [that] overlaps with other applied psychologies, counselling, psychotherapy, psychiatry, and the political and economic systems that sustain them” (BPS, 2017). It is unique among the applied psychologies in that counselling psychologists are defined by neither their work setting nor their specific roles; counselling psychologists can be found in the NHS, private practice, schools, prisons, organisations, and multiple other contexts.

While all counselling psychologists acquire core competencies, the nature of an individual counselling psychologist's training programme and their practice placements means that each practitioner brings different strengths and specialisms.

The DPsych abides by the standards set by both the HCPC and by the BPS and aims to facilitate dialogue between different disciplines whilst preserving its counselling psychology identity and philosophy. The programme prepares trainees for their working life through a combination of academic, research, practical, and personal and professional development components. In line with the philosophy of counselling psychology, we believe that these aspects are always interconnected and cannot be taught in isolation.

Upon successful graduation, trainees will have acquired in-depth knowledge of counselling psychology and its application to therapeutic practice; practice-based and practical skills informed by a number of psychotherapeutic approaches; a thorough understanding of doctoral research processes and a variety of research paradigms; and a firm commitment to ethical practice, which will enable them to work within a wide variety of settings.

## **2.10 Programme design**

The DPsych is divided into three terms per year. The teaching runs over two days a week during Year 1. During Years 2 and 3, when placement activities increase, and the doctoral research project begins, teaching occurs on one day per week. In the Summer term of Year 3, there is no teaching to enable you to concentrate on completing placement activity and writing up your doctoral thesis.

During the days you are not on campus, you will undertake placement(s) and placement supervision; attend personal therapy; pursue self-directed learning; undertake research; and involve yourself in the field of counselling psychology through conference attendance or other development activities.

Each year aims to achieve a balance and an integration of all aspects of the programme as well as achievement of the learning outcomes for each year. In recognition of the demands of the programme, a reading week is included during each term. Reading weeks also provide opportunities for independent study as well as a pause to reflect on progress and learning so far in the term.

### **2.10.1 Year 1**

The first year provides a solid foundation in theory, practice and research. You will learn how different perspectives conceptualise the nature of distress, the role of assessment and formulation, and different ways of working in different settings with different difficulties or client groups.

The year is also dedicated to the development of core ethical, professional and therapeutic skills. Each term features a combination of theoretical input, experiential work, reflection on client material, and modules to help you develop as a safe and ethical practitioner. Group and individual tutorials provide mentorship of personal and professional development.

**Theory and practice:** The first day-long theory and practice module in Year 1 provides a general grasp of counselling psychology's philosophy and values and introduces practical therapeutic skills. A second day-long module is devoted to existential and phenomenological theories and ways of practicing, the programme's primary modality. To facilitate early competence in cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) the programme's secondary modality, as well as the acquisition of an NHS placement, a third day-long module in second-wave CBT also takes place in the first year. Practice skills are assessed through placement supervisors' reports; personal tutor and programme team feedback; a process report and further practice-based coursework.

**Doctoral research:** The Year 1 counselling psychology research module is the foundation for the development of critical and doctoral level research skills, understanding of quantitative and qualitative methods, and knowledge of counselling psychology research concepts and values. During the first year, you are assigned a research tutor to help you develop your doctoral research ideas. Year 1 culminates in the submission of a critical literature review and doctoral research proposal, which is assessed at doctoral level.

**Personal and professional development:** The Year 1 professional practice module consists of regular group and individual tutorials with personal tutors to support you in starting on placements and developing your practice skills. You are required to undertake 100 client hours, at a supervision ratio of 1:6 during the first year, and to complete a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 40 hours of personal therapy, and are encouraged to continue to keep an ongoing reflective journal. An end of year collaborative evaluation of progress (CEP) evaluates and reflects on all aspects of development and confirms Year 1 requirements have been met.

### 2.10.2 Year 2

Year 2 begins the doctoral stage of training, and expectations of academic assessments are heightened accordingly. Consistent with the expectations of a professional doctorate, a greater proportion of the learning moves outside of the classroom and into placements, supervision, research activity, and self-directed learning.

**Theory and practice:** In the second year, third-wave approaches to CBT, focusing on acceptance, mindfulness, compassion, patterns of relating, values, and the role of context in behaviour, are introduced as a day-long module. A further day-long module in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, the programme's third working modality is introduced. A third day-long module develops advanced existential understandings of human development and phenomenological working further. Practice skills continue to be assessed through placement supervisors' reports; personal tutor and programme team feedback; formative experiential work in class; a process report and further practice-based coursework.

**Doctoral research:** At the beginning of Year 2, you are allocated a Director of Studies and second research supervisor to support you with your doctoral research project. Following the incorporation of feedback from your EPC725 assignment, and supervisory advice, you will submit your research proposal for ethical clearance by the DPsych Ethics panel, following which you can begin collecting research data, ideally during or towards the end of the second year.

**Personal and professional development:** The Year 2 professional practice module continues, with regular group and individual tutorials with personal tutors to support your progress on placements and the further development of practice skills. You are required to undertake 150 client hours, at a supervision ratio of 1:6, and to complete a minimum of 40 hours of personal therapy in Year 2, and are encouraged to continue to keep an ongoing reflective journal. An end of year collaborative evaluation of progress (CEP) evaluates and reflects on all aspects of development and confirms that Year 2 requirements have been met.

### 2.10.3 Year 3

By Year 3, you will have gained significantly in experience and ability and will have been exposed to multiple approaches to theory, practice, and research. Year 3 continues the emphasis on learning acquired in the real world of placements and supervision; you will also be working towards the completion of your doctoral research project. A significant focus throughout the year is on advanced

counselling psychology skills and engagement in the wider field, through for example, conferencing, and the delivery of an externally or internally facing workshop or activity.

**Theory, practice, research and employability:** Year 3 modules prepare you to enter the workplace as a qualified counselling psychologist. An advanced counselling psychology module explores leadership, outcome measurement and psychometrics, service evaluation and audit, practice-based research, employability, and avenues of specialisation. This module explores the development of a plan for the transition to qualified practice, and culminates in the delivery of a workshop based on your professional experience or interest. Practice skills continue to be assessed through placement supervisors' reports; personal tutor and programme team feedback; formative experiential work in class; a process report and practice-based coursework. A clinical seminar module is assessed via a pluralistic or integrative client study, process report, and reflective statement, which is included in the doctoral portfolio.

**Doctoral research:** You will aim to complete your doctoral research by the end of Year 3. There is a Doctoral Research Clinic module during the year, to support you in this task. This module is a peer group research supervision module, supporting the development of doctoral research skills in a bespoke way based around your cohort's individual needs. In the Summer term, there is additional time allocated for meetings with research supervisors, the receiving of feedback from supervisors, independent writing and study, and preparation for the viva examination.

**Personal and professional development:** The Year 3 professional practice module continues, with regular group and individual tutorials with personal tutors to support your progress on placements and the further development of practice skills. Having undertaken 250 hours over Years 1 and 2, you must complete the remaining 200 hours during Year 3 at a supervision ratio of 1:6. You are also required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of personal therapy and encouraged to continue to keep an ongoing reflective journal. The final year end of year CEP is an opportunity for you to reflect on your achievements on the programme and your hopes for your future careers. The HCPC Standards of Proficiency log, which has been kept throughout the programme, is signed off by your personal tutor. Personal tutors and programme team feedback for the last time on your development and achievements on the programme.

#### **2.10.4 Doctoral portfolio**

The culmination of the programme is the submission of the doctoral portfolio.

The doctoral portfolio demonstrates your abilities and competence in practice, research and professional development. It consists of three parts: (i) Introduction to the Portfolio, (ii) Clinical Practice Dossier, and (iii) Research Dossier (commonly referred to as the "thesis").

The doctoral portfolio is formally assessed by an internal examiner and an external examiner and subsequently examined orally by viva voce in accordance with academic regulations.

A successful doctoral portfolio and viva voce examination is considered the final demonstration that you have met all the required BPS learning outcomes and HCPC standards of proficiency.

For further details, see the *Research Handbook*.

#### **2.10.5 Doctoral research supervision**

Undertaking a doctoral research project is an intensive and time-consuming task, and requires the development of commitment, knowledge and skills, since the research must reach a doctoral level of scholarship and a publishable standard.

While the thesis must be your own achievement and is your responsibility to undertake, doctoral research supervision is integral to the support and guidance you will need in the process.

Having passed EPC725 Year 1 Counselling Psychology Research, including the submission of the critical literature review and research proposal assignment, you will be assigned a doctoral research supervisory team at the beginning of Year 2. Each team consists of a primary supervisor, known as a Director of Studies (DoS) and a second supervisor.

You are offered up to 30 direct contact hours of doctoral supervision. Additional preparatory hours are allocated for supervisors' reading of and commenting on drafts, emails, and reflections or discussions between supervisors. The total number of contact and preparatory hours is 75 hours. These 75 hours can be used flexibly between supervisors, and over the course of the registration period, that is, the period up until the first submission of the doctoral portfolio. For further information, see the *Research Handbook*.

Annual monitoring of your research progress takes place in Year 3 and in subsequent years of the programme, and is undertaken as a collaborative process with your DoS.

## **2.10.6 Research streaming**

Research streams are one means of creating a focus for research activity amongst a community of staff and trainees. Active research streams enhance the publication profile of staff and trainees and create greater integration and coherence of research activity. When deciding on the focus of your research, you can review the team's research interests, to see if there is a fit and a potential for collaborating with a member of the team in an area of their research interest.

## **2.11 Programme learning outcomes and assessment**

### **2.11.1 BPS learning outcomes and HCPC standards of proficiency**

BPS learning outcomes and HCPC standards of proficiency for counselling psychologists represent the subject benchmarks for the programme. The relevant documents are:

HCPC Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists (SoPs) (2015) <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/practitioner-psychologists/>. This document sets out the main professional standards all registrants must meet in order to become registered with the HCPC and to remain on the Register. This document includes generic standards of proficiency applicable to a range of psychology professions, together with standards of proficiency that are specific to counselling psychology.

HCPC Standards of Education and Training (SETs) (2017) [www.hcpc-uk.org/education/providers/setsresources/](http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/providers/setsresources/). This document outlines the revised standards against which the HCPC assesses all its education and training programmes. These standards relate to what programmes must do to prepare trainees for professional practice. It is assumed that a programme that meets the SETs, enables a trainee who successfully completes that programme to meet the HCPC's SoPs, and subsequently to be eligible to apply to the HCPC register.

BPS Standards for the Accreditation of Doctoral programmes in Counselling Psychology (2019) <https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologists/accreditation/education-providers>. This document sets out the BPS standards for the accreditation of programmes in counselling psychology. Accredited doctoral programmes meet the requirements for successful applicants to be eligible to apply to gain chartered membership of the Society (CPsychol) and likewise to be eligible to apply to gain full membership of the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology. The standards include general standards for the running of BPS

approved programmes in counselling psychology, as well as key educational aims and specific learning outcomes for all programmes that relate to these aims.

The DPsych's programme learning outcomes represent the programme's interpretation of the subject benchmarks within the HCPC *Standards of Proficiency* and the BPS *Standards for the Accreditation of Doctoral programmes in counselling psychology*. Programme learning outcomes are distributed across individual DPsych modules. Each module is also mapped onto HCPC standards of proficiency and BPS learning outcomes. Programme learning outcomes also address master's (level 7) and doctoral (level 8) descriptors, outlined by the QAA (See **Section 2.6**).

### 2.11.2 Key aims of doctoral programmes in counselling psychology (BPS, 2019)

The key aims of doctoral programmes in counselling psychology (BPS, 2019) and hence of the DPsych are to produce graduates who will:

1.	Be competent, reflective, ethically sound, resourceful and informed practitioners of counselling psychology able to work in therapeutic and non-therapeutic contexts
2.	Value the imaginative, interpretative, personal and collaborative aspects of the practice of counselling psychology
3.	Commit themselves to on-going personal and professional development and inquiry;
4.	Understand, develop and apply models of psychological inquiry for the creation of new knowledge which is appropriate to the multi-dimensional nature of relationships between people;
5.	Appreciate the significance of wider social, cultural, spiritual, political and economic domains within which counselling psychology operates;
6.	Adopt a questioning and evaluative approach to the philosophy, practice, research and theory, which constitutes counselling psychology; and
7.	Be able to develop and demonstrate communication, influencing, teaching and leadership skills by applying psychological knowledge and skills in a range of professional, clinical, organisational, and research contexts.

### 2.11.3 Programme learning outcomes

The DPsych's programme learning outcomes are organised by master's and doctoral levels and further into five domains of learning. The five domains of learning are:

- A. Knowledge and understanding
- B. Cognitive and intellectual capabilities
- C. Transferable and practical skills
- D. Subject domain or subject specific skills
- E. Personal and interpersonal skills

**Knowledge and understanding** learning outcomes reflect conceptual understanding of the subject matter and are acquired through lectures, seminars, presentations and tutorials, as well as through trainees' own reading and experiential learning. These learning experiences are supplemented by central University training in library, IT and study skills.

**Cognitive and intellectual capabilities** learning outcomes such as critical thinking or evaluation, problem solving, research, analysis, and creativity are acquired through engagement with group discussions, seminars, and lectures, both individually and in small groups. These learning experiences are supplemented by central University training in library, IT and study skills.

**Transferable and practical skills** learning outcomes reflect trainees' professional growth and are acquired through therapeutic training modules, practice supervision, practice at placements, group discussions and therapeutic skills assessment exercises in practice-based seminars, group tutorials, and elsewhere.

**Subject domain or specific skills** learning outcomes reflect competence within specific requirements, such as research projects and group facilitation, and are acquired through lectures, workshops, continuous professional development activities, and in hands-on project work both individually and in small groups.

**Personal and interpersonal skills** learning outcomes describe trainees' abilities to reflect upon themselves as well as interaction with others, as well as personal evaluation and development. Such skills are acquired across a range of learning experiences, to include all interactions within the cohort; within clinical seminars and group tutorials; and in one-to-one personal tutorials. Personal development also occurs in the 120 hours of personal therapy required while on the programme, approximating to 40 hours of personal therapy required per training year. These experiences are designed to equip trainees with relational skills, the ability to engage in self-reflection, autonomy, and awareness of workplace issues.

#### **2.11.4 Programme learning outcomes (master's level)**

##### **A Knowledge and understanding**

- A1 Ability to understand the importance of philosophical pluralism to the theory and practice of counselling psychology.
- A2 A systematic understanding of the theory and practice of counselling psychology.
- A3 Understanding of different models of psychopathology and the purpose of psychological assessment and formulation.
- A4 Sound understanding of the ethical and professional codes of practice as set by the BPS and HCPC.
- A5 Ability to critically understand and evaluate (a) existential phenomenological and (b) cognitive behavioural theories and their relation to therapeutic practice.
- A8 Ability to critically evaluate the political and socio-economic parameters upon which counselling psychology practice rests and explore alternative forms of knowledge and practice.

##### **B Cognitive and intellectual capabilities**

- B1 Thorough understanding of research epistemologies relevant to counselling psychology and psychotherapy research.
- B2 Ability to understand ethical issues relating to research.
- B3 Ability to understand a variety of research designs.

##### **C Transferable and practical skills**

- C1 Ability to understand the relevance of assessment and formulation to the theory and practice of counselling psychology.
- C2 Ability to form, maintain and end a purposeful therapeutic alliance.
- C3 Ability to maintain professional and therapeutic boundaries.
- C4 Ability to practice ethically and safely with regards to self and clients.
- C5 Ability to provide counselling based on psychological concepts.

**D Subject domain or subject specific skills**

- D1 Ability to present and communicate professional knowledge and information.
- D2 Understanding and management of professional relationships.
- D3 Commitment to best practice in the interests of their clients.
- D4 Knowledge and understanding of organisational settings and their contextual and legal frameworks.

**E Personal and interpersonal skills**

- E1 Capacity for self-reflection, understanding, and use of personal therapy in one's own development as a counselling psychologist.
- E2 Ability to reflect upon one's understanding of self and life experiences through therapy and training.
- E3 Ability to understand and evaluate the formation and impact of interpersonal dynamics in the therapeutic relationship and group settings.

**2.11.5 Programme learning outcomes (doctoral level)****A Knowledge and understanding**

- A6 Critical understanding and evaluation of philosophical pluralism and nature of professional knowledge.
- A7 Ability to critically evaluate different theories of lifespan development (including cognitive, emotional, and behavioural development).
- A9 Ability to generate new knowledge relevant to the theory and practice of counselling psychology.

**B Cognitive and intellectual capabilities**

- B4 Ability to critically reflect upon and apply ethical principles in reasoning and decision-making.
- B5 Ability to devise and evaluate research questions, select appropriate methodologies, and critically evaluate published research.
- B6 Ability to use creativity and flexibility in argumentation.
- B7 Ability to make informed decisions and independent judgements about pressing issues.

**C Transferable and practical skills**

- C6 Ability to conduct psychological (risk) assessments and formulations within the training's therapeutic modalities and to implement these into psychological practice.
- C7 Ability to work with content and process issues within the therapeutic relationship.
- C8 Ability to critically reflect upon alternative ways of working to respond to the complex demands of clients.
- C9 Ability to draw upon (a) existential phenomenological and (b) cognitive behaviour theoretical knowledge base and to apply this in clinical practice.
- C10 Ability to use supervision as a means of monitoring and evaluating therapeutic practice and use of self in a clinical context.

**D Subject domain or subject specific skills**

- D5 Ability to critically communicate and evaluate professional knowledge in ways that furthers the interest of clients and the profession.
- D6 Capacity to create and maintain professional relationships as part of managing complex situations, systems, and organisations.
- D7 Ability to work confidently with power dynamics and processes at individual, group, and systemic levels.
- D8 Promotion of ethical principle and best practice.

## E Personal and interpersonal skills

E4 Critical and deliberate use of self in therapeutic and group settings.

E5 Ability to constructively work with conflict and power dynamics.

E6 Demonstration of a counselling psychology identity including responsibility and accountability in relation to others.

### 2.11.6 Assessment of level 7 and level 8 assessments

During Year 1 of the DPsych, most coursework (120 credits) is assessed at master's (M) level (level 7). The critical literature review and research proposal (EPC725, 60 credits) is assessed at doctoral (D) level (level 8). During the second two years of training, all coursework is evaluated at D level.

Assessments evaluated at level 7 are given a percentage mark (equating to a grade descriptor). The pass mark for level 7 work is 50%. However, Year 1 Professional Practice (EPC721) is marked as pass/fail due to the nature of the assessment. All assessments evaluated at level 8 are marked on a pass/fail basis.

<b>Level 7</b>			
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Theoretical work</b>	<b>Practice-based work</b>	<b>Research work</b>
70% to 100% (Distinction)	Clear and logically developed structure and argumentation; originality on the application of existing knowledge around the chosen topic area; reference to and in depth understanding of ontological and epistemological issues; evidence of independent study on the topic; properly referenced in APA style.	As for theoretical work plus in depth understanding and formulation of client's psychological difficulties with reference to existential/phenomenological theory (and/or other psychological model); evidence of high level of skills and theory/practice links and clinical interventions; awareness of ethical issues and evidence of professional standards; v. good ability to reflect upon process issues, use of self, and therapeutic relationship; and v. good use of supervision.	As for theoretical work plus a thorough understanding of epistemological and methodological issues; originality in the application of research methods and design to your own research or existing literature; in depth understanding of statistical and analytical procedures; and evidence of awareness of ethical issues in relation to research.
60% to 69% (Merit)	Clear and logically developed structure; good standards of understanding ontological and epistemological issues; sound argumentation; some evidence of independent work; properly referenced in APA style.	As for theoretical work plus, comprehensive understanding and well-structured formulation of client's psychological difficulties with appropriate use of theoretical and clinical interventions; evidence of reflective practice and attention to the therapeutic relationship; awareness of ethical issues and good use of supervision.	As for theoretical work plus, standard understanding of statistical and analytical procedures; good epistemological awareness; evidence of good understanding of analysis; good reflection upon ethical issues.

<b>Level 7</b>			
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Theoretical work</b>	<b>Practice-based work</b>	<b>Research work</b>
55% to 59% (Pass)	Coherent structure and development of arguments; attempt (with errors and omissions) to critically analyse epistemological issues; clear arguments but with little critical analysis; little evidence of independent work; some incomplete referencing or inconsistent adherence to APA style.	As for theoretical work plus, sufficient presentation of client's issues and formulation of psychological difficulties; adequate theory/practice links/interventions; awareness of process issues and relationship dynamics; some evidence of self-reflection and use of supervision.	As for theoretical work plus, sufficient understanding of statistical and analytical procedures; acceptable understanding of epistemological issues and analytical procedures; some reflection upon ethical issues.
50% to 54% (Borderline Pass)	Coherent structure and development of arguments; attempt (with some errors and omissions) to critically analyse epistemological issues; arguments but with critical analysis barely evident; little evidence of independent work; incomplete referencing or referencing that does not conform to APA style.	As for theoretical work plus some presentation of client's issues and formulation of psychological difficulties; theory/practice links/interventions but not as clear as they should be; some awareness of process issues and relationship dynamics; some evidence of self-reflection and use of supervision.	As for theoretical work plus understanding of statistical and analytical procedures; some understanding of epistemological issues and analytical procedures; some reflection upon ethical issues.
0% to 49% (Fail)	Lack of or unclear structure and development of arguments; poor understanding of epistemological issues and lack of critical analysis of arguments; no evidence of independent work and very poor referencing/complete lack of attention to APA style.	As for theoretical work plus, poor presentation of client's issues and no evidence of psychological formulation and/or theory/practice interventions; poor use of theory; little evidence of self-reflection and poor use of supervision.	As for theoretical work plus very poor understanding of epistemological issues; methodological awareness, and analytic procedures; over-reliance in supervisor's help; poor awareness of research process and ethical issues.

<b>Level 8</b>			
	<b>Theoretical Work</b>	<b>Practice-based work</b>	<b>Research work</b>
PASS	Coherent structure and development of arguments; understanding and critical analysis of epistemological and ontological issues; evidence of independent work; clear referencing and citation, in accordance with APA style	As for theoretical work, plus: sufficient presentation of client's issues and formulation of psychological difficulties; adequate theory/practice links/interventions; awareness of process issues and relationship dynamics; ethical and professional practice; good reflexivity; evidence of good use of supervision.	As for theoretical work plus: understanding of research design and processes; understanding of epistemology and methodology, and method, and links among these; ethical and professional conduct; good use of reflexivity/ability to critically appraise research.
FAIL	Lack of, or unclear, structure and development of arguments; poor understanding of epistemological issues; lack of critical analysis of arguments; insufficient evidence of independent work; poor referencing.	As for theoretical work, plus: poor presentation of client's issues; no evidence of psychological formulation and/or theory/practice interventions; poor use of theory; little evidence of reflexivity; and poor/absent use of supervision.	As for theoretical work plus: poor understanding of epistemology, methodology, and method and/or links among these; unethical/unprofessional conduct; over-reliance in supervisor's help; poor awareness of research process and ethical issues; inability to critically appraise research.

### **2.11.7 Retention of assessments**

Please note it is your responsibility to retain, until you have received an award, withdrawn or exited from the programme, copies of all submitted written work, all returned evaluations, and all submitted forms.

These documents may be needed when compiling your portfolio; to refer to when applying for posts; when applying for professional registration/s in the future; or when applying for further programmes of study. If you are moving out of the UK, these documents may be necessary within the documentation required for registrations abroad.

### **2.11.8 Marking and grades for resubmissions**

Markers of the resubmission will consider how well you have addressed the feedback from the first submission and/or demonstrated further learning and development. In the case of resubmissions, the maximum mark obtainable, if passed, is the pass mark for that module, that is, 50% for modules with percentage grades. Although your true mark will appear on your marksheet, your mark will be capped in Blackboard and on Evision.

### **2.11.9 Timing of resubmissions**

Assessments given a failing mark at the first submission are to be resubmitted within a maximum of four weeks of notification of the ratification of the first submission mark by the subject board.

In respect of first submissions of T3 modules given a failing mark, the mark will be considered by a subsidiary subject board during the Summer break. Provided the resit opportunity is approved, you will have an opportunity to resubmit before the subject board in the Autumn term, thus allowing for progression to the following year, in cases where the resubmission is passed.

### **2.11.10 Number of resubmissions and exceptional circumstances**

Under normal circumstances, the maximum allowable number of attempts at an assessment is two, in other words, one resit attempt is offered under normal circumstances. However, if an application under exceptional circumstances is approved by the subject board, a third attempt may be offered. See **Section 2.12.2**.

### **2.11.11 Programme credit summary**

The credits on the DPpsych degree are distributed as follows:

- Year 1: 180 credits (120 M level; 60 D level)
- Year 2: 90 credits (D level)
- Year 3: 90 credits (D level)
- Total academic credits: 270 credits
- Total professional practice credits: 90 credits
- Total academic and professional practice credits: 360 credits
- Doctoral portfolio: 180 credits
- Total DPpsych credits: 540 credits

For further details of module credits, see the module outlines in the *Assessment Handbook*, and the table below.

### **2.11.12 Summary of modules, assessments and credits**

The following table summarises the programme's modules and credits gained. The precise timings of modules will be published at the start of each term and may vary from the below. For further information about module outlines (specifications), please see the *Assessment Handbook*.

**DPSYCH COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY**

YEAR 1 (LEVEL 7 AND 8)			YEAR 2 (LEVEL 8)			YEAR 3 (LEVEL 8)		
11 Autumn	12 Spring	13 Summer	21 Autumn	22 Spring	23 Summer	31 Autumn	32 Spring	33 Summer
<b>EPC710</b> Counselling psychology theory and practice [20]	<b>EPC722</b> Existential phenomenological approaches in counselling psychology [20]	<b>EPC717</b> Cognitive behavioural approaches in counselling psychology [20]	<b>EPC853</b> Advanced existential approaches to human development and practice [20]	<b>EPC835</b> Cognitive behavioural approaches 2: Third wave [20]	<b>EPC837</b> Psycho-dynamic approaches in counselling psychology [20]	<b>EPC854</b> Advanced counselling psychology practice, research and employability [20]		
<b>EPC721</b> Year 1 Professional Practice [20]			<b>EPC851</b> Year 2 Professional Practice [30]			<b>EPC843</b> Doctoral research clinic [10]	<b>EPC845</b> Clinical seminar: Pluralistic and integrative working [20]	
<b>EPC723</b> Ethics, settings and professional Issues (11 AND 13 ONLY) [20]						<b>EPC852</b> Year 3 Professional Practice [40]		
	<b>EPC724</b> Working with distress, difference and discrimination [20]							<b>EPC850</b> Doctoral portfolio (not timetabled) [180]
<b>EPC725</b> Year 1 Counselling Psychology Research [60]								
<b>180 credits</b>			<b>90 credits</b>			<b>90 credits + 180 credits</b>		
<b>Total</b>						<b>540 credits</b>		

## 2.12 Progression and awards

### 2.12.1 Overview of progression

All modules on the DPpsych are core modules and therefore all modules must be passed in order to progress within the programme. Credits cannot be trailed from one academic year to the next. Additionally, passing all modules within one year of the programme is a prerequisite for progression to the next year of study. For further information, see the progression regulations in **Section 2.12.3**.

### 2.12.2 Exceptional third attempts

If you fail a resubmission, that is, a second attempt at a module's assessment component, in exceptional circumstances, and subject to the discretion of the subject board, a third attempt may be granted. The options relating to a third attempt are set out in Regulation 17.5 of the *Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University "Options for the retake of study"* and are also summarised as follows:

1. You may be permitted to retake the entire year – this would only be allowed if there were extenuating circumstances and may be particularly relevant if multiple resubmissions have been failed. This option is known as a full retake.
2. You may be permitted to retake the module(s) in which the resubmission(s) have been failed. This involves attending the classes of the module(s) again and attempting the assessment again. This is known as a partial retake.
3. You may be permitted to resubmit the assessment component(s) of a module(s) without being required to retake (re-attend) the whole module. This is known as a third resit.

Options 1 and 2 would mean you would not progress to the next year of the programme you're your original cohort but would either retake the whole or part of the year in which the relevant module was failed.

Option 3 may not affect progression if the option can be considered and potentially granted at the Spring or Summer subject board. However, for Summer term modules or year-long modules that are assessed at the end of the Summer term or during the Summer break, Option 3 would entail not progressing to the next year of the programme but sitting out for the next year in order to complete the third resit.

This is because the exceptional third attempt request would need to be considered at the Autumn subject board, which takes place after the next year of the programme has started. However, the programme's progression regulations require that a condition of progression from Year 1 to Year 2, and from Year 2 to Year 3 is that a pass is achieved on all the previous year's modules, given all modules are core modules and credits cannot be trailed from one year to the next. See **Section 2.12.3**.

Within all the exceptional third attempt options, there would be only one further attempt to pass the failed module(s) – in other words the assessment component would need to be passed at first attempt.

If an exceptional third attempt is not offered, you will be withdrawn from the programme. A range of exit awards may be available, depending on your credits obtained (see **Section 2.12.6**). There is further information about academic appeals at **Section 3.9**.

#### 2.12.2.1 Applying for an exceptional third attempt

In order to apply for one of the above exceptional third attempt options, you will need to provide a written statement to be considered at the subject board, setting out the following information:

1. Any exceptional circumstances that were relevant to the failed module(s)/resit(s);
2. Details of any claim for extenuating circumstances that was made at the time, the outcome of such application or, if no such claim was made, the reason why a claim was not made (See **Section 3.1**);
3. Evidence in support of any extenuating, exceptional, or relevant circumstances;
4. An argument for how the exceptional circumstances affected your ability to pass the module(s)/resubmission(s) and how you believe you would have passed in the absence of such circumstances;
5. Referring to feedback received on the assignment, actions you will take to address your learning and/or development needs in order to build your work up to a passing standard. This might include demonstrating how you understand the feedback and the way(s) in which you will take responsibility for addressing it.

The decision to apply to resit or retake may be discussed with the Programme Director prior to providing a written statement to be considered at the subject board. Decisions about whether to grant an exceptional third attempt, and about which option to grant, are at the discretion of the subject board, which will take the points above into account when reaching a decision, as well as consider your performance holistically in line with the programme's obligation to its professional and statutory regulatory bodies.

It is important to note that the above process is not the same as applying for extenuating circumstances for a module via the usual Regent's procedure (see **Section 3.1**). You may be successful in your application for extenuating circumstances in respect of a module, but this will not mean that you will also be successful in applying for any of the exceptional third attempt options referred to above.

### **2.12.3 Progression regulations**

Progression regulations are set to satisfy the subject board that trainees have achieved the relevant level before progression is possible.

#### **2.12.3.1 Year 1**

To progress to Year 2 of the training, trainees need to have achieved the following:

- A minimum of 50% (i.e., passing mark) or Pass for all modules
- A pass for Year 1 Professional Practice as assessed by the end-of-year Collaborative Evaluation of Progress, the criteria for which include a minimum of 100 hours of supervised practice, a minimum of 30 up to a maximum of 40 personal therapy hours, supervision at a ratio of 1:6, and maintenance of professional conduct – see the *Assessment Handbook* for all pass criteria for Year 1 Professional Practice.

#### **2.11.3.2 Year 2**

To progress to Year 3 of the training, trainees need to have achieved the following:

- A pass for all modules
- Ethical approval for the research proposal (see the *Research Handbook* for further details)
- A pass for Year 2 Professional Practice as assessed by the end-of-year Collaborative Evaluation of Progress, the criteria for which include a minimum of 250 hours aggregate of supervised practice across years 1 and 2, 70 to 80 aggregate hours of personal therapy across years 1 and 2, continued supervision at a ratio of 1:6, and maintenance of professional conduct – see the *Assessment Handbook* for all pass criteria for Year 2 Professional Practice.

#### **2.12.4 DPsych award criteria**

For the Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (DPsych) award, trainees will be required to have passed all programme modules, inclusive of placement hours as part of Year 3 Professional Practice; to have submitted a doctoral portfolio; and to have passed a final oral examination (viva voce).

Successful passing of Year 3 Professional Practice will entail, in part, the completion of a minimum aggregate of 450 hours of supervised practice in approved placements with suitably qualified supervisors, having maintained a supervision ratio of 1:6 continuously throughout; at least 25 hours of supervision from an HCPC registered Counselling Psychologist; and at least 120 hours of personal therapy. See the *Assessment Handbook* for all pass criteria for Year 3 Professional Practice.

You may continue working in placements until you have submitted your doctoral portfolio; until you have passed your doctoral portfolio; until you have received your award, and beyond. However, until you are registered with the HCPC as a Counselling Psychologist, your title must continue to reflect your trainee status. Please see **Section 2.7.2** and the *Placement Handbook* for further details.

All components of the degree will be submitted to and confirmed by the research degrees committee (RDC) and/or subject board, both of which entail the review of programme external examiners. Annual monitoring forms used to monitor research progress are reviewed and approved by the RDC.

The confirmation of an option A (pass) of the doctoral portfolio by the RDC is followed by the ratification of the pass of EPC850 Doctoral Portfolio at the Subject and Finalist board on the same day. However the final award is only confirmed upon subsequent ratification by the OU's Research Degrees Examination Result Approvals Committee (RDRAC). See the *Research Handbook*, Section 7.3 for further information.

#### **2.12.5 Aegrotat awards**

In highly exceptional circumstances, a final board of examiners decides that there is insufficient evidence of your performance to award a degree but is satisfied that you would have achieved the required standard but for certified and permanent illness/absence/other valid reason, then an aegrotat award may be awarded. See regulation 21.0 of *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*, Appendix B.

#### **2.12.6 Level 7 exit awards**

In certain circumstances, you may choose or need to exit the programme before fulfilling all requirements for the doctoral degree. Because "psychologist" and "counselling psychologist" are protected titles, for clarity with the HCPC, the programme prefers not to award sub-doctoral exit awards in "counselling psychology." Level 7 exit awards will not provide eligibility to apply for chartered membership of the BPS nor to apply for full membership of the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology, and will not provide eligibility to apply to register with the HCPC. Graduates will therefore not be able to practice using the title "counselling psychologist."

Application to exit with these awards must be made prior to the end of the current year of registration but can only be made once the requisite credits have been achieved (i.e., requisite modules passed).

All level 7 awards successfully gained will be recorded as a Pass. A transcript will be issued demonstrating grades on individual modules. If Level 7 exit awards include the passing of the 60 credit Critical Literature Review and Research Proposal (EPC725), which is assessed at doctoral level, these 60 doctoral credits will be "counted down" in order to make up the credits required for the Level 7 exit award. Any trainee that passes this module at D level, will receive an equivalent master's level grade of 70% on this module in recognition of the D level pass.

### **2.11.6.1 Postgraduate Certificate in Psychological Counselling (PGCert)**

An award for the gaining of any 60 credits within Year 1 of the programme; these credits must include Year 1 Professional Practice (20 credits).

### **2.11.6.2 Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Counselling (PGDip)**

An award for the gaining of any 120 credits within Year 1 of the programme; these credits must include Year 1 Professional Practice (20 credits).

### **2.11.6.3 Master's in Psychological Counselling (MSc)**

An award for the gaining of all 180 credits from the Year 1 of the programme. All modules must be passed. The MSc in Psychological Counselling will also be available to trainees who start but do not complete Year 2 or Year 3 of the training. It will also be available as a fall-back award in the event of Option (d) following the viva voce examination.

### **2.12.7 Breaks in study**

You may apply for a break in studies only under certain exceptional circumstances governed by Regent's academic regulations. See also Sections 7 and 8 of the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*.

If you would like to apply for a break in studies, you should discuss this with the Programme Director in the first instance; support may also be sought from the Student Hub.

You will be asked to supply supporting documentation (e.g., medical certificates) to substantiate your request. A break in studies will not be granted beyond the normal period of registration for the degree.

Following a break in studies, and as the break comes to an end, you are expected to initiate a review procedure with the Programme Director before re-commencing the programme.

## SECTION 3: FURTHER RELEVANT REGULATIONS

Programme regulations as outlined in this handbook, and in the *Assessment Handbook*, *Research Handbook* and *Placement Handbook* have been designed in accordance with PSRB and QAA standards. Additionally, the DPpsych conforms with the *Regulations for Validated Awards of The Open University* and *Regent's University London Academic Regulations*. This section outlines some further relevant regulations within these regulatory documents and other key policy documents thus far not referred to.

### 3.1 Extenuating circumstances

We are well aware of the demands of a full-time professional doctorate in counselling psychology; assessment deadlines have been set after careful consideration of these demands, together with institutional parameters. Meeting deadlines requires discipline and good time management. Submission dates are final, as they feed into marking schedules, subject boards and progression schedules. You are strongly advised not to leave coursework until the last minute.

Please note that there is no system for authorising "extensions" for assignments, unless you have a student support agreement (SSA) in place that allows a module leader to do so. For further information, see **Section 1.10.3**.

However, additionally, in circumstances such as a sudden illness or a serious and unforeseen event, you may apply for extenuating circumstances in relation to a particular module's assessment(s). The kinds of circumstances that may be accepted are governed by Section F of the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*, as well as by *Regent's University London Academic Regulations*. You may also contact the Student Hub for further guidance.

To apply for extenuating circumstances, you should complete the relevant form from the Student Hub, attach the required supporting documentation, and submit these by the stipulated deadline. If you are intending to apply for extenuating circumstances for a module, please let the module leader know at your earliest convenience. This is to assist with marking planning.

In terms of the deadline for applications for extenuating circumstances, Regent's regulations state that students have up to ten working days after the assessment deadline to submit an extenuating circumstances claim. However, the OU's regulations specify that "If a student cannot submit evidence by published deadlines, they must submit details of the extenuating circumstances with an indication that evidence will be submitted within seven calendar days." These regulations supersede Regent's regulations for DPpsych trainees. You must, therefore, submit the application and evidence within seven calendar days of the assessment deadline and should not follow any advice to the contrary.

Although within seven calendar days after the assessment deadline is the absolute deadline within which you must submit an extenuating circumstances claim, you are advised to submit your extenuating circumstances claim as soon as possible, and, if applicable, in advance of the assessment deadline.

This is because, were an extenuating circumstances claim to be rejected, a non-submission at the first submission deadline would be counted as an automatic fail, meaning that your subsequent first submission would be counted as a second submission. For more information about automatic fails, see Appendix B of the *Assessment Handbook*.

Please note that it is your responsibility to inform the University at the time of the extenuating circumstances and that not informing the University at the time can constitute grounds for the extenuating circumstances to be rejected.

Please also note, that although extenuating circumstances claims are not directly relevant to resit or retake opportunities, if you have submitted an extenuating circumstances claim at the relevant time in respect of an assignment or module that you subsequently fail, such an application may be helpful in supporting any future application to the subject board to grant an exceptional third resit or retake opportunity. In the case of an application to retake an entire year, an extenuating circumstances claim will be essential. For further information, see **Section 2.12.2**.

You will be informed by Registry of the approval of your extenuating circumstances application, and you can then agree a deadline appropriate to the circumstances and to the assessment with the module leader. The absolute deadline for extenuating circumstances submissions is by the Friday of Week 10 of the following term; however, where the following term is in the next academic year, it will be beneficial to agree an earlier deadline to avoid progression issues. See **Section 2.12**.

## **3.2 Relevant codes of conduct**

### **3.2.1 BPS and HCPC**

The programme has a duty of care towards its trainees and team members, as well as to service-users. The needs and protection of these various stakeholders are considered when addressing issues of conduct and behaviour during the programme. As a trainee counselling psychologist, you will be expected to abide by the HCPC and the BPS codes of conduct, as outlined in **Sections 2.7.3 and 2.7.4**. See also **Appendix A**.

### **3.2.2 Regent's policies**

As a Regent's student, you will be expected to behave appropriately, professionally and respectfully in your dealings with everyone in the academic community, to include team members, administrative staff, and fellow students. You are expected to abide by its *Student Disciplinary Policy* available on the intranet.

Regent's *Code of Conduct for Students* outlines the following expectations:

1. Students must abide by regulations as set by the University
2. Students must behave in a responsible manner that fosters mutual respect and understanding among all members of the University community
3. Students must register and pay their fees on time
4. Students must check their University email address regularly
5. Students must attend classes on time and be mentally and physically prepared to learn
6. Students must comply with all Home Office requirements with respect to student visas
7. Students must respect others regarding mobile phone and electronic equipment usage in class
8. Student should complete assignments on time and deliver them where and how instructed

### **3.2.3 Our training environment**

We consider classes, tutorials and other programme sessions as reflective spaces similar to a therapeutic space. As such, we ask you to consider the boundaries within and around these spaces and believe there is a collective value to this frame.

For example, if you have a query you think may take some time to talk through, it is best to make an appointment with the relevant staff member or send an email, rather than try to address it between, before or after a session.

We are empathic towards the many tasks involved in training, however for similar reasons we strongly discourage the doing of other activities while sessions are running, such as using phones or electronic devices for other tasks. One exception to this is that we do of course understand that meetings over the lunch break are likely to involve everyone concerned eating lunch.

Persistent concerns about behaviour in relation to any of the above policies or guidance will be addressed in the first instance by the relevant module leader or your personal tutor. The Programme Director may become involved if necessary.

### **3.3 Fitness to study**

It is understood that from time to time you may be experience issues that affect your fitness to study.

If you become aware of issues affecting your fitness to study, you are encouraged to seek support from personal tutors in the first instance. Your personal therapist may also be called upon to explore the issues you face, and additionally Regent's offers a range of support services (see **Section 1.11**).

Regent's *Fitness to Study* policy is available from the intranet. Fitness to Study processes may be initiated by yourself or any member of the team, in consultation with the Programme Director.

### **3.4 Attendance, absences and lateness**

Regent's values engagement, participation and preparedness, and as a programme, we see good attendance and timekeeping as appropriate attitudes for a counselling psychologist in training. Undertaking the programme requires commitment, responsibility, psychological maturity, and full involvement with all aspects of the programme.

Attendance must be taken seriously on the programme in order to safeguard the attainment of PSRB related learning outcomes, and full 100% attendance is expected. However, it is recognised that occasionally we are confronted with events outside our control and we wish to be sympathetic to this. You are therefore allowed to miss a maximum of 25% of classes (per module) each term without penalty. As modules meet for nine weeks per trimester (excluding reading week), this means that you may miss no more than two days per module, although any absence is of course to be avoided.

Please notify the relevant module leader in advance wherever possible of all sessions for which you will be absent. If you anticipate absences in excess of the above, you must discuss this in advance with the module leader. For any trainees with Tier 4 visas, please contact your module leader cc a Student Achievement Officer, in advance, if you believe you may be approaching missing more than two days of a module. A pattern of routinely missing two days per term will be considered a professional issue, unless there are relevant circumstances.

In the event of missing more than 25% of a module, you may be expected to repeat the module. As the DPsych is a cohort-based programme with one intake a year, for many modules the chance to repeat will only be available during the following academic year, which has consequences for progression and will entail sitting out during this year (see **Section 2.12**).

In the event of missing three days of a module, depending on the circumstances and at the module leader's discretion, it may be possible to agree a compensatory learning task (such viewing a digital

lecture capture and writing a reflective commentary or writing an essay) to demonstrate learning relating to the missed sessions. This would effectively count as an additional assignment that would need to be passed. The module leader will contact you to discuss this. Further discussions may involve the Programme Director if necessary.

However, in the event of missing four or more days of a module, under normal circumstances the module would need to be re-taken the following academic year, and the Programme Director will become involved.

You are also expected to adhere to the attendance policies of your placements (see the *Placement Handbook*) and to participate fully in research supervision. Your research supervisors and personal tutor will work with you to identify and address any issues in the first instance; further discussions may involve the Programme Director if necessary.

### **3.4.1 The SEAtS tapping in system**

Regent's attendance monitoring system on campus uses SEAtS, a tapping in system. You are asked to tap into the classroom on arrival; you do not have to tap out. Your data is available from: regents.seatsuat.cloud.

If you have forgotten to tap in, please contact the module leader, who may be willing to amend your data, although this will be dependent on circumstances. If you have any queries about SEAtS, please contact the Student Hub.

### **3.4.2 Lateness and early departures**

If you arrive more than 10 minutes late to a class, an "unauthorised absence" will be recorded. This does not mean that you cannot attend the class and we would encourage you to do so, however it will count as an absence on your attendance record.

In terms of early departures, if you do not attend after a break in the middle of a class, or leave a class half-way through, your attendance will be marked as a "partial absence."

A partial absence does not count towards the number of admissible absences within a module; however, your number of partial absences may be subject to review by the module leader. If you leave before the break in the middle of a class or before half-time, despite being on time, your attendance will be recorded at the module leader's discretion.

### **3.5 Programme external examiners**

Programme external examiners (PEEs) are nominated by Regent's and approved by The Open University, and are appointed for a four-year period. PEEs oversee and monitor the programme to ensure its standards and quality processes are appropriate and of a standard comparable to those of other higher education institutions in the UK.

In particular, PEEs are responsible for the following areas:

- Reviewing samples of assessments prior to subject boards to confirm the quality, objective, fairness and consistency of marking, and to ratify the marks awarded;
- Reviewing and confirming annual monitoring reports and requests for extensions in writing up the doctoral thesis;
- Approving the appointment of the portfolio examiners (see **Section 3.6**);
- Ratifying outcomes of reports from the portfolio examiners after completion of the viva voce;

- Confirming the decision of the RDC to award the doctoral degree.

The DPsych's current PEEs are Dr Maggie Robson, Senior Teaching Fellow in Counselling at Keele University, and Professor Divine Charura, Programme Director, DCounsPsych at York St John University. Please note you are not permitted to contact programme external examiners under any circumstances.

### **3.6 Portfolio examiners**

The doctoral portfolio will be evaluated by an external examiner and an internal examiner; these examiners are referred to as portfolio examiners. External examiners are nominated by the supervisory team and are approved by the programme external examiners at the Research Degrees Committee (RDC). All nominations for external examiners must meet the criteria specified in the *Research Handbook*.

To make award decisions, the RDC receive reports from both the portfolio examiners (in writing) and the programme external examiners (in person). Please note you are not permitted to independently contact portfolio examiners about your research under any circumstances.

The duties of the portfolio examiners include:

- Assessing the portfolio;
- Conducting a viva voce;
- Deciding upon the outcome of the viva;
- Confirming any corrections to the doctoral portfolio are appropriate;
- Providing a signature to confirm the final outcome of the assessment of the portfolio.

For further information, see the *Research Handbook*.

### **3.7 Trainee representation and feedback**

As a trainee, you play a much-appreciated role in the quality monitoring of the University and the programme. There are several processes through which you will contribute to the enhancement of quality. These processes include:

- Representation on the Programme Committee Meetings (PCMs);
- Feedback at the module level;
- Representation from time to time on other University Committees such as Research Committees, Student Union/Council Meetings, or Senate committees.

Your cohort is asked each year to nominate a trainee representative. The role of the trainee representative is to canvas opinion among the cohort and to provide positive feedback and areas for further development, together with further questions or suggestions, in the relevant University and programme contexts.

The role of the representative is an important one, and it can take up a certain amount of time in the calendar. You are encouraged as a cohort to consider electing a different representative each year; and representatives should not feel obliged to stay in their role for more than one year.

Termly PCMs are held over lunch time during the middle of each term and attended by the programme team, together with representatives from each year group. Representatives are contacted by the PCM secretary at the start of term and given a proforma to complete, outlining perceived strengths of the programme and areas for development.

This may include feedback about any aspect of the programme, the University's services or resources, individual modules, and/or quality and standards of teaching. Trainees submit this proforma to the PCM secretary one week prior to the PCM, who submits it to the team for their consideration of responses prior to the meeting. Meetings are minuted and action plans drawn up, to be reviewed at the following meeting.

Informal feedback is also sought by or provided to module leaders within a module and responded to flexibly. Additionally, module evaluation forms are distributed towards the end of every term. These forms contain qualitative and quantitative feedback questions and are completed anonymously. They must be delivered to the Student Hub by representatives.

Collated results are reviewed by module leaders, the Programme Director, and where appropriate senior management representatives. Module leaders respond to results via response to student evaluation forms, posted on Blackboard. These data, together with student outcomes on the module, feed into module monitoring forms, including action plans for the following year, which are accessed by programme external examiners.

The Programme Director is available to orientate you to the different function of the other committees above if needed.

### **3.8 Quality assurance procedures**

The academic governance of the University is entrusted to the Senate and its committees, including the Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee. This committee oversees the application of the University academic framework, the monitoring of academic standards for all programmes, the promotion and improvement of the student learning experience, including in the key University areas of internationalism and professionalism, and the provision of an effective and consistent audit trail of all academic activity, as defined by the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The formal external referents in this context are:

- QAA FHEQ Framework
- QAA Code(s) of Practice
- Specialist external advisers
- Internal review panel/s
- OUVP validation panel/s
- BPS *Standards for the Accreditation of Doctoral Programmes in Counselling Psychology*
- HCPC *Standards of Education (SETs) and Standards of Proficiency (SoPs)*

### **3.9 Appeals and complaints**

Complaints related to the academic programme are governed by Regent's *Student Complaint Policy* available on the intranet, and by *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*.

Academic appeals are governed by both *Regent's University Academic Regulations* and the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*.

Registered trainees may appeal to the Regent's University Appeals Board in relation to the taught component of the degree. The only acceptable grounds for appealing the outcome of an assessment are as follows:

- i. The candidate's performance in the assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors which the candidate was unable, or for valid reason, unwilling to divulge before the subject board

or RDC reached its decision. The candidate's request must be supported by medical certificates or other documentary evidence acceptable to the Appeals Board;

- ii. Satisfactory evidence has been produced by the candidate or any other person that there has been a material administrative error, or that the assessments were not conducted in accordance with current regulations for the programme or special arrangements formally agreed, or that some material irregularity relevant to the procedures of the assessment has occurred.

Note: Disagreement with the academic judgement of the subject board or RDC in assessing the merits of an individual element or component of assessment cannot constitute grounds for an appeal, nor complaints about the delivery of management of a programme expressed only after assessment.

Registered Level 8 trainees on validated programmes of The Open University may also appeal to the Regent's University Appeals Board against the following academic decisions:

- i. The termination of registration due to failure to make academic progress;
- ii. Refusal of permission to submit a portfolio for examination;
- iii. The result of the oral examination.

No other appeals against academic decisions will be considered by the University.

Trainees who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal academic appeal or complaint, having exhausted the appropriate internal procedures, may further appeal to The Open University against a decision. Note that in relation to complaints, for further appeal to The Open University, the complaint must relate to academic matters and not to service-related matters, for example, catering.

The right of appeal is set out in the *Regulations for validated awards of The Open University*, Section H. Trainees may write to the Director of The Open University Validation Partnerships [ouvp-director@open.ac.uk](mailto:ouvp-director@open.ac.uk). Such a request should be submitted within 10 working days of the notification of the outcome of the decision of the Appeals Panel.

The Open University will review the case and decide upon it. The decision of the Validating University or awarding organisation will be final. The outcome of the review stage will be communicated to the student in writing via Completion of Procedures letter within 28 days.

Once the review stage has been completed, if the complaint or appeal has not been upheld by The Open University, the trainee is entitled to ask the Officer of Independent Adjudicator to review their complaint against the outcome of the provider's complaints or academic appeals process. The complaint should be submitted within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter.

## **APPENDIX A: DPSYCH PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONTRACT**

During induction week, you will be asked to review and sign the following DPsych Professional and Ethical Contract.

## DPSYCH PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONTRACT

Throughout your time on the programme, you will be expected to adhere to ethical and professional codes of practice and conduct as outlined by the BPS, HCPC, the OU and by Regent's.

The HCPC's *Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students* (2016) offers guidance on your personal conduct both outside of work as well as in work.

This guidance requires that you:

- act in the best interests of service users [and colleagues]
- respect the confidentiality of service users [and colleagues]
- keep high standards of personal conduct
- inform your education provider of changes in your conduct, competence or health
- limit or stop studying if your performance or judgment is affected by your health
- keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date
- act within the limits of your knowledge and skills
- communicate effectively with service users, your education provider and placements
- get informed consent to provide care or services
- keep accurate records on service users
- behave honestly and
- ensure your behaviour does not damage public confidence in the profession.

As well as professional and ethical conduct, the DPsych programme places additional emphasis on openness and transparency, reflexivity, dialogue, and the development of personal and interpersonal sensitivity.

In line with the above and throughout your training, you will be asked to:

- engage actively and regularly in personal therapy and personal development work to explore and understand your personal issues
- participate actively in group tutorials and experiential exercises
- engage in and complete a range of practice placements
- attend regular placement supervision
- abide by placement and supervision procedures
- engage actively in therapeutic skills training
- engage constructively with regular feedback on your personal and professional behaviour and development
- with informed consent, record client sessions
- to be aware that in certain modules, you may disclose to and receive disclosures from fellow trainees.

## DECLARATION

I have read and understood the information provided above and its relevance to the requirements of the field of counselling psychology and of the DPsych programme.

I agree to adhere to the above requirements and to participate in the above activities.

**Your name:**

**Your signature:**

**Date:**

You must return this signed contract to your personal tutor for inclusion in your trainee file and retain a copy for your own records.