

BSc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy

Programme Specification



1. Programme title	BSc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy
2. Awarding institution	Middlesex University
3. Teaching institution	PCI College
4. Details of accreditation by professional/statutory/regulatory body	Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy
5. Final qualification(s) available	BSc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy Diploma of Higher Education Counselling Studies & Interpersonal Skills Certificate of Higher Education Counselling Studies & Interpersonal Skills
6. Year of validation / last review Year of amendment	2020
7. Language of study	English
8. Mode of study	Class based, Part-Time. Teaching and learning will be delivered initially through online sessions. Face-to-face sessions will resume when it is safe to do so.

9. Criteria for admission to the programme	
Applicants are assessed at interview stage to ensure they possess a maturity to reflect on their own development as a person and have successfully completed one of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate Course in Counselling & Psychotherapy - level 4 UK (QQI level 6) or equivalent. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show evidence of personal development /substantial life experience (for e.g., proof of volunteer work, community work, experience of counselling and/or portfolio of prior learning). <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 5 UK (QQI level 7) or higher course in psychology, social care/social work, psychiatric nursing or equivalent. 	
Entry is by application form interview and submission of relevant certificates/transcripts	
Students are required to have sufficient IT skills to complete the course.	
All candidates are required to satisfy the English language requirement. Candidates whose first language is not English and who are presenting qualifications other than the Leaving Certificate may satisfy the	

requirement through the completion of the IELTS (International English Language Testing System), or equivalent, on the basis that they obtain a minimum band score of 6, which denotes a very good skill level of English. It should be noted that these are the minimum requirements in English and PCI College may set higher requirements in each case.

Each application will be considered on an individual basis at the discretion of the Programme Leader whose decision is final.

10. Aims of the programme

This course is designed to provide comprehensive training within the field of counselling and psychotherapy. The integrative training programme, resting on a humanistic framework, emphasises the importance of the therapeutic relationship as a medium through which healing can occur. The key aims of the course is to provide students with an integrative repertoire of professional counselling and psychotherapeutic skills and theoretical perspectives which can be employed in a wide variety of clinical settings. Students learning will focus on their personal and professional development to enable them to facilitate competent practice within the profession. Throughout the course students will develop a personal style and philosophy of counselling and psychotherapy that will underpin this work.

On completion of this course, students will qualify as a skilled, competent and creative therapist, who is ready to meet with confidence the needs of a fast-evolving society and are equipped to work in a variety of settings with a wide range of presenting issues. The programme conforms to Irish Association/British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP/BACP) standards and ethical codes.

11. Programme outcomes

A. Knowledge and understanding

On completion of this programme the successful student will have knowledge and understanding of:

1. Humanistic and Existential approaches to Counselling and Psychotherapy, including psychodynamic psychotherapy, CBT and how interventions are applied to presenting issues.
2. Philosophical concepts underpinning key therapeutic approaches.
3. The value of feedback, both giving and receiving, individually and in groups.
4. Influences on the development of self, including personal values, prejudices and blind spots, and the manifestations of these in the world.
5. Theoretical underpinnings of attachment and loss, family dynamics and sexuality.

Teaching/learning methods

Students gain knowledge and understanding through

- Lecturer led teaching sessions
- Independent research
- Oral and written lecturer feedback
- Peer presentations,
- Group discussions,
- Reflexive practice,
- Dyads and triad work in group
- Journaling.
- Research webinars.

Assessment Method

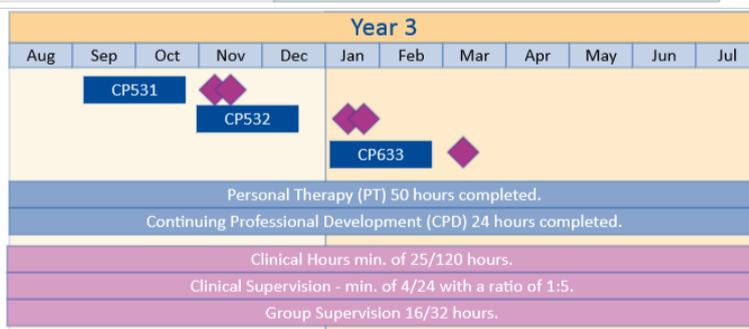
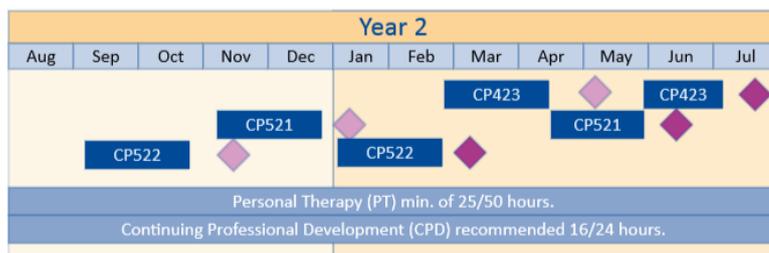
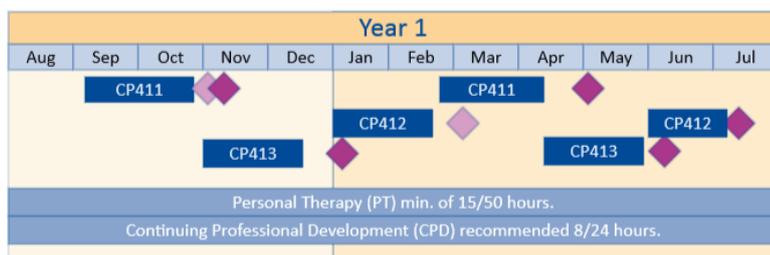
Students' knowledge and understanding is assessed by:

- Written assignments, varying in length at different stages of the programme, from 1,000 words to 6,000 words.
- Class Presentations.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Sensitivity around diversity and multicultural issues in the counselling room. 7. Practical casework management, legal obligations, ethics and use of Supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the assignments students are asked to demonstrate critical understanding and integration of key concepts, processes, techniques, strategies, strengths, limitations and developments of the various approaches; • Critical awareness of relevant literature and the student’s own thoughts on the issues under discussion should also be demonstrated. • Reflective self-assessment. • Learning portfolio.
<p>B. Skills</p> <p>On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply and integrate multiple perspectives and theoretical frameworks to diverse areas of Counselling and Psychotherapy. 2. Identify and evaluate patterns and relevant interventions in mental health, including the role of medication. 3. Establish an appropriate setting for counselling, including making a working contract, managing personal and professional boundaries and managing ethical responsibilities. 4. Demonstrate competency of base-line skills, therapeutic interventions and knowledge of the counselling process and profession, including case formulation, treatment planning and interventions where appropriate. 5. Demonstrate best practice including, writing and managing case notes, engaging in Supervision, both group and individual and the practice of professional well-being. 6. Demonstrate personal and professional integration, including the capacity to work at relational depth. 7. Skills related to group process; facilitation, self-evaluation and self-management. 8. Identify, evaluate and apply research methods, approaches and ethical issues, including the evaluation of peer-reviewed research and evidence-based practice. 	<p>Teaching/learning methods</p> <p>Students learn cognitive skills through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class discussions • Skills demonstration and practice. • Group work. • Reflexive practice. • Lecturer and peer feedback. • Research webinars. • Case studies. • Recorded presentations • Evaluation in small and plenary group settings. <p>Assessment Method</p> <p>Students’ cognitive skills are assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Essays. • Poster presentations. • Research plan, proposal timeline and thesis. • Class Presentations. • Literature review. • Reflexive Essays. • Feedback from lecturers regarding the student’s performance in group discussion, group presentation and dyad/triad work. • Case study. • Professional Learning portfolio. • Evaluation of casework

12. Programme structure (levels, modules, credits and progression requirements)

12.1 Overall structure of the programme



MODULE KEY

	Credits	Class Time	Independent Study
CP411 Contemporary Humanistic & Existential Perspectives in Counselling & Psychotherapy	30 CR	60 HRS	240 HRS
CP412 Professional Competence: Counselling Skills & Ethical Practice Supervision	30 CR	60 HRS	240 HRS
CP413 Personal Development: Self-awareness & the Reflective Practitioner	30 CR	60 HRS	240 HRS
CP423 Personal Development: The relational self	30 CR	60 HRS	240 HRS
CP521 Contemporary Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Theory & Practice	30 CR	60 HRS	240 HRS
CP522 Professional Competence: Advanced Skills & Ethical Practice	30 CR	60 HRS	240 HRS
CP531 Psychodynamic Approaches: The Role of the Unconscious in Psychotherapy	30 CR	30 HRS	270 HRS
CP532 Professional Competence: Research Methodologies in Counselling & Psychotherapy	30 CR	30 HRS	270 HRS
CP633 Professional Development: The integrative therapist	30 CR	30 HRS	270 HRS
CP641 Optional Module	30 CR	30 HRS	270 HRS
CP642 Professional Competence: Thesis	40 CR	14 HRS	386 HRS
CP643 Professional development: Clinical placement case study	20 CR	4 HRS	196 HRS

The course is studied over a period of four academic years part-time. It is offered in Dublin, Kilkenny, Athlone, Cork, Limerick and Belfast.

Students are required to attend a minimum of 50 hours of personal therapy (on a regular basis) whilst enrolled on the programme. Students are encouraged to begin personal therapy as soon as possible after they have accepted a place on the course, and at the latest they need to have started before the commencement of their second term. Students must attend a therapist that is IACP (Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy)/BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy)/IAHIP (Irish Association of Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy) accredited or equivalent.

Over the course of the programme students are required to attend four one-day workshops, or the equivalent (i.e. 24 hours in total) in courses/lectures relating to personal and/or professional development. These may be provided by PCI College or any other appropriate CPD workshop provider as recognised by IACP/BACP. No more than half of these hours can come from one particular workshop/course. A maximum of 8 CPD hours can be on the topic of personal development with the remaining hours allocated to topics of professional development.

Approaching the end of the first semester of Second Year students may begin to look at their readiness to engage in client work under Supervision with a suitably qualified and accredited Supervisor. Students are supported by the College in sourcing such a supervisor in their local area. This Supervision is external to the College and takes place on a one to one basis. Group supervision is also provided by the College. Students must be deemed ready to see clients by the end of Second Year in order to progress to the Third Year of the programme.

Students will need to achieve a minimum of 120 hours client work along with a minimum of 24 hours of supervision at a ratio of 1 supervision session for every 5 client hours completed. Completion of these hours in client work and related supervision is essential in order to receive the BSc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy. All client work undertaken must be within the 32 counties of Ireland.

Students are supported by the College to source suitable clients through the following:

1. A Low Cost Counselling Service in various venues throughout the country
2. A range of external Counselling Placements.

12.2 Levels and modules		
Level 4 (1)		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
Students must take all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP411 Contemporary Humanistic & Existential Perspectives in Counselling & Psychotherapy. • CP412 Professional Competence: Counselling Skills & Ethical Practice • CP413 Personal Development: Self-awareness & the Reflective Practitioner • CP423 Personal Development: The relational self 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85% Attendance. • Engagement in class. • Minimum of a pass grade in each assessment. • Engagement in Personal Therapy. • Successful completion of minimum 60 credits from modules CP411, CP412 & CP413 (or equivalent) to progress to Year 2. • 120 level 4 credits for CertHE exit award

Level 5 (2)		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
<p>Students must take all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP521 Contemporary Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Theory & Practice CP522 Professional Competence: Advanced Skills & Ethical Practice CP531 Psychodynamic Approaches: The Role of the Unconscious in Psychotherapy CP532 Professional Competence: Research Methodologies in Counselling & Psychotherapy 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% Attendance. Engagement in class. Minimum of a pass grade in each assessment. Engagement with Supervision. Commencement of Clinical Placement elements. Successful completion of minimum 150 credits from modules CP411, CP412, CP413, CP423, CP521 & CP523 (or equivalent) to progress to Year 3. 120 level 4 and 120 level 5 credits for DipHE exit award
Level 6 (3)		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
<p>Students must take all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP633 Professional Development: The integrative therapist CP642 Professional Competence: Thesis CP643 Professional development: Clinical placement case study 	<p>Students must also choose one module from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP641A Advanced Humanistic Psychotherapy CP641B Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy CP641C Advanced Psychodynamic Psychotherapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% Attendance. Engagement in class. Minimum of a pass grade in each assessment. Clinical elements underway or completed. Successful completion of minimum 240 credits from modules CP411, CP412, CP413, CP423, CP521, CP523, CP531, CP532 & CP633 (or equivalent) to progress to Year 4. 360 credits successfully completed for BSc (Hons) award (120 credits at level 4, 120 credits at level 5, 120 credits at level 6)
12.3 Non-compensatable modules (note statement in 12.2 regarding FHEQ levels)		
Module level	Module code	
4	CP411, CP412, CP413, CP423.	
5	CP521, CP522, CP531, CP532	
6	CP633, CP641, CP642, CP643	

13. Information about assessment regulations

Information on how the formal assessment regulations work, including details of how award classifications are determined, can be found in the Middlesex University Regulations at https://www.mdx.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/49228/Grade-Criteria-Guide.pdf

- Practical aspects of the programme are often assessed via coursework that may be carried out using in-class assessment.
- Theoretical material is assessed by coursework.
- Grades are awarded on the Middlesex University scale of 1–20, with Grade 1 being the highest. To pass a module all components, both coursework and examination, must be passed individually with a minimum grade of 16. Failure in one of the components will result in the failure of the module.

For additional information on assessment and how learning outcomes are assessed please refer to the individual module narratives for this programme.

14. Placement opportunities, requirements and support (if applicable)

Students must complete at least 120 hours of work with clients during the programme. Students have been approved by IACP to work remotely with clients and deliver therapy online until it is considered safe to resume face to face working.

Students are supported by the College to source suitable clients through the following:

PCI College Counselling Service

This service is a not-for-profit initiative. It is funded and operated by PCI College. The service has been established partly to provide all our students with a source of clients in order to facilitate completion of 120 hours client work. Clients are referred to students directly through the service. If you would like further information on PCI Counselling Service please consult the web site (<http://www.pcicollege.ie/counselling-service/lowcostcounselling>) and the Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pcicounsellingservice>) or in the Client Work Information section in the programme handbook.

College Approved Counselling Placements

As far as possible, students are assisted in finding suitable placement situations in their local area. PCI College approves a number of counselling placements in various organisations each academic year. These organisations include professional counselling services, community projects, health care services, medical health practices, community and family resource centres etc. The College establishes a 4-way placement agreement remains in contact with the organisation for the duration of the placement to ensure best practice is adhered to. All external Supervisors are required to be accredited with IACP/BACP/IAHIP.

Further details regarding client work and supervision can be found in appendix 2 of the programme handbook.

15. Future careers (if applicable)

On successful completion of this programme, graduates decide on the course of action most appropriate to their needs and ambitions. The following avenues are open to them:

Some graduates enter the world of counselling and psychotherapy as practitioners and attain accreditation as counsellors when they have completed the minimum number of hours of supervised counselling required by the accrediting body, namely the IACP/BACP, currently 450 hours.

Graduates may choose to work in employment settings where the care of people is a real concern and part of their job description. Graduates may offer their services as counsellors on a professional basis to bodies with a special focus.

Graduates may choose to specialise in an area of helping that appeals to them for their own particular reasons. Some will use this programme as a stepping-stone to further study in counselling and psychotherapy or the social sciences and participate in practice only insofar as they need to do so to fulfil requirements in more advanced studies.

16. Particular support for learning (if applicable)

Students have access to an Academic Writing guide to support them in the structure, content and referencing system to be used. Assignment writing guidance is also provided in class during the first module of each academic year. Academic writing tutorials are available to all students within the [Academic Writing Knowledge Base](#) on the Student Portal. This also contains a suite of academic writing tools, including videos, presentations, tools and templates.

Students who have specific learning disabilities are given extra support on an individual basis (e.g. allowances made for standard of written work, option to present assignments in the form of audio recordings, extra time allowed to complete assignments etc.). A formal diagnosis by a qualified psychologist is necessary in order for this support to be accessed. All learning support is assessed via the Disability Officer.

Disability supports:

<https://pcicollegestudents.sharepoint.com/Resources/Forms/Forms/AllItems.aspx?viewid=01f7ee89%2D2253%2D47b1%2Dbc01%2Db2a9d0a90848&id=%2FResources%2FForms%2FDisability%20Documents>

17. JACS code (or other relevant coding system)	B940
18. Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)	Counselling & Psychotherapy

19. Reference points

The following reference points were used in the design of this programme:

- The IACP Course Accreditation Process <http://www.iacp.ie/Course-Accreditation-Process>
- The BACP Course Accreditation Scheme <http://www.bacp.co.uk/accreditation/COURSE%20ACCREDITATION%20SCHEME/>
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Draft Awards Standards for Counselling & Psychotherapy <https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Counselling%20and%20Psychotherapy%20-%20QQI%20Award%20Standards%202014.pdf>

20. Other information

NA

Please note programme specifications provide a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information about the programme can be found in the student programme handbook and the University Regulations.

Curriculum map for BSc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy

This section shows the highest level at which programme outcomes are to be achieved by all graduates, and maps programme learning outcomes against the modules in which they are assessed.

Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding	
A1	Humanistic and Existential approaches to Counselling and Psychotherapy, including psychodynamic psychotherapy, CBT and how interventions are applied to presenting issues.
A2	Philosophical concepts underpinning key therapeutic approaches.
A3	The value of feedback, both giving and receiving, individually and in groups.
A4	Influences on the development of self, including personal values, prejudices and blind spots, and the manifestations of these in the world.
A5	Theoretical underpinnings of attachment and loss, family dynamics and sexuality.
A6	Sensitivity around diversity and multicultural issues in the counselling room.
A7	Practical casework management, legal obligations, ethics and use of Supervision.
Skills	
B1	Apply and integrate multiple perspectives and theoretical frameworks to diverse areas of Counselling and Psychotherapy.
B2	Identify and evaluate patterns and relevant interventions in mental health, including the role of medication.
B3	Establish an appropriate setting for counselling, including making a working contract, managing personal and professional boundaries and managing ethical responsibilities.
B4	Demonstrate competency of base-line skills, therapeutic interventions and knowledge of the counselling process and profession, including case formulation, treatment planning and interventions where appropriate.
B5	Demonstrate best practice including, writing and managing case notes, engaging in Supervision, both group and individual and the practice of professional well-being.
B6	Demonstrate personal and professional integration, including the capacity to work at relational depth.
B7	Skills related to group process; facilitation, self-evaluation and self-management.
B8	Identify, evaluate and apply research methods, approaches and ethical issues, including the evaluation of peer-reviewed research and evidence-based practice.

Programme outcomes														
A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8
Highest level achieved by all graduates														
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

BSc (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy Programme Specification

Module Title	Module Code by Level	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8
		Contemporary Humanistic & Existential Perspectives in Counselling & Psychotherapy	CP411, level 4	X	X						X			X		
Professional Competence: Counselling Skills & Ethical Practice	CP412, level 4	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X			
Personal Development: Self-awareness & the Reflective Practitioner	CP413, level 4			X	X	X					X			X	X	
Personal Development: The relational self	CP423, level 4			X	X	X	X				X			X	X	
Contemporary Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Theory & Practice	CP521, level 5	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X				
Professional Competence: Advanced Skills & Ethical Practice	CP522, level 5	X			X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	
Psychodynamic Approaches: The Role of the Unconscious in Psychotherapy	CP531, level 5	X	X	X					X			X				
Professional Competence: Research Methodologies in Counselling & Psychotherapy	CP532, level 5						X				X					X
Professional Development: Therapist integration	CP633, level 6				X		X	X			X		X	X	X	
Advanced Humanistic Psychotherapy	CP641a, level 6	X				X			X			X		X		
Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy	CP641b, level 6	X	X	X					X			X				
Advanced Psychodynamic Psychotherapy	CP641c, level 6	X	X			X			X			X				
Professional Competence: Thesis	CP642, level 6		X			X	X			X						X
Professional development: Clinical placement case study	CP643, level 6		X	X	X					X	X	X				