

MSc Psychotherapeutic
Counselling

Postgraduate Diploma
Psychotherapeutic Counselling

Professional Diploma
Psychotherapeutic Counselling

Student
Handbook
September 2011

Welcome to the Postgraduate/ Professional Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling

We are delighted that you have chosen Staffordshire University for your Postgraduate/Professional Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling. Our programme offers a unique opportunity to gain your experience and develop your professional knowledge and skills in Counselling under the guidance of highly qualified and committed staff. Staffordshire University has an excellent national and international reputation. The Psychology Department is committed to strengthening our already strong base in Counselling through the development of this programme.

In this handbook, we have put together all the information that you will need while you are on the programme. We have included information about the award itself, and also about the staff who will guide you and the learning resources that will be helpful to you on the programme. Keep this handbook for reference to check points of detail as you move through the programme. Also, feel free to ask staff about anything that is unclear. We have provided e-mail addresses of all the Counselling staff in the handbook so that you can contact all of us easily.

We hope that you find your Counselling studies at Staffordshire University valuable, challenging and enjoyable.

Course Directors
Cressida Minister & Doreen Fleet

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Appendices (available from Blackboard)

- Appendix 1: BACP Ethical Framework
- Appendix 2: Essay Writing Guide
- Appendix 3 :Referencing Guide
- Appendix 4: Counsellor Accreditation
- Appendix 5: Academic Misconduct

Placement Handbook – available from Blackboard

Departmental Staff and Term Dates

Head of Psychology Department	Judy David
Directors of Postgrad/Prof Diploma.	Cressida Minister & Doreen Fleet
Module Leader for MSc Research Year	Anja Rutten
Other Counselling Staff	Bev Meakin Belinda Priestley Karen Price
Technical Support	Paul Gallimore Kathryn Booth
Administrative Support	Cynthia Adams Karen Simpson Anne-Marie Thorley-Walchester

Staffordshire University Contacts

Subject & Learning Support Librarians	Kathleen Morgan	x 4770
Student Counsellor	Student Support 4/5 Winton Square	x 4975
Nurseries	College Road Winton Square	x 4970
Residential Services	Winton Chambers	x 2732

Term Dates for Psychotherapeutic Counselling Awards 2011/12

Year 1

Autumn Term	w/c 21 Sept 2011 --	w/c 14 Dec 2011 (inclusive)
Weekend Residential (yr 1)	14-16 Oct 2011	
Spring Term	w/c 4 Jan 2012 --	w/c 28 March 2012
Summer Term	w/c 18 April 2012 --	w/c 9 May 2012

Year 2

Autumn Term	w/c 26 Sept 2011 --	w/c 19 Dec 2011 (inclusive)
Spring Term	w/c 9 Jan 2012 --	26 March 2012
Summer Term	w/c 16 April 2012 --	21 May 2012

Enrolment	w/c 20 Sept 2011
Teaching starts	w/c 21 Sept 2011 -- year 1 w/c 26 Sept 2011 -- year 2
Teaching ends	w/c 9 May 2012 -- year 1 w/c 21 May 2012 -- year 2

Staff Profiles and Contact Details

Cressida Minister

email c.m.minister@staffs.ac.uk

Cressida is a BACP accredited counsellor with over 15 years of counselling experience, focusing on a wide range of client issues. She has an independent counselling and supervision practice, which alongside working with private clients provides brief therapy for a number of Employee Assistance Programmes. She joined Staffordshire University in 2001 and is currently Programme Director for the psychotherapeutic counselling awards at Staffordshire University. Cressida's teaching areas include Counselling and Counselling Psychology at undergraduate and postgraduate level. She is also involved in teaching both core and optional modules on undergraduate psychology programmes, including exploring psychology, individual differences in personality and understanding relationships. Her research interests involve spirituality in counselling.

Doreen Fleet

email d.fleet@staffs.ac.uk

Doreen has taught counselling at H.E and F.E levels prior to joining the team as a Senior Lecturer at Staffordshire University in September 08. She is a BACP accredited counsellor and a graduate member of the BPS. Her counselling experience involves working in organisations specialising in the areas of bereavement and loss and abuse. She currently has a private practice offering both counselling and supervision. Her research interests include the issue of intentional self-harm and more currently exploring creative modalities within counselling. In her spare time, she practices Aikido as she considers self-care to be essential for any counsellor/tutor. Through this she aims to achieve a balance between work and relaxation.

Bev Meakin

email b.j.meakin@staffs.ac.uk

Bev is a qualified Relate counsellor and supervisor, with 15yrs experience of working with couples, individuals and families. She currently works as a senior supervisor for Relate Cheshire and Merseyside and in private practice. Bev's counselling approach is an integration of Attachment, Object Relations and Systemic ideas valuing the importance of reflexivity within this. Bev is award leader for the Certificate in Counselling and teaches on the Psychotherapeutic Diploma and supervises MSc Students. She is also a reflective practice group facilitator for trainee clinical psychologists. Other interests include membership of a book group over the last 10yrs, cycling, walking and gardening.

Anja Rutten

email a.h.rutten@staffs.ac.uk

Anja joined Staffordshire University in 2006 as a Senior Lecturer in Psychology. She is a qualified and practising counsellor and psychotherapist with over 10 years' experience and has worked for several years in the voluntary sector. Her main areas

of expertise are Asperger syndrome and counselling adults who have been abused in childhood. Anja is Co-director for counselling awards and also lectures on a variety of psychology modules. She is module leader for the psychology undergraduate module Autistic Spectrum Conditions. Anja's research interests centre on 'counselling at the difficult edge'. One of her interests' lies in developing theoretical understanding around counselling for people with Asperger syndrome and extending this into better service provision.

Belinda Priestley.

Email b.priestley@staffs.ac.uk

Belinda is a BACP accredited counsellor who has worked with Relate for 20 years with couples and families..She teaches on the psychotherapeutic counselling courses at Staffordshire and the Masters in Relationship Counselling at the Relate Institute. Her clinical work at Relate is on the community violence prevention programme where she works with men individually and in group work. She is also a trained sex therapist. In her independent counselling practice she has an additional interest in working with chronic stress and pain using mindfulness based CBT approaches.

Karen Price

Karen has many years experience as a trained counsellor and currently works both as a counsellor and supervisor with a local run charitable organisation, she also has an independent counselling and supervision practise. Karen joined Staffordshire University in 2006 as a facilitator for our counsellor training personal development groups and also facilitates our introductory course in basic counselling skills. Her research interests lie in developing counsellor training and integrating complementary therapies into counselling.

About the theoretical framework of the course

An integrative model which takes a holistic view of the person incorporating aspects of phenomenological experience, emotional and thought processes, developmental aspects and family context with an emphasis on social and cultural influences. The combination of theories supporting these aims includes Person-centred, Attachment, Systemic and Cognitive Behavioural. The overall objective is to facilitate development of reflexive counsellors who value the significance of the therapeutic relationship. Who can engage with flexibility in response to a diverse range of client issues and to facilitate client change.

Programme Structure

All modules on the Postgraduate/Professional Diploma routes are core and compulsory to the particular award.

Students attend on a part-time basis. Teaching takes place on Mondays or Wednesdays, depending on the cohort.

Students normally complete Stage 1 (Postgraduate/Professional Certificate) in Year 1, Stage 2 (Postgraduate/Profession Diploma) in Year 2, and Stage 3 (MSc) in Year 3.

In exceptional circumstances additional time may be allowed for completion of the counselling practice hours.

Students may progress to the MSc Psychotherapeutic Counselling on successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma. The MSc will be awarded on successful completion of the Research Proposal module (15 credits) and the Dissertation module (45 credits).

MSc Dissertation students will attend on a day to be arranged. This will be flexible and will include group meetings when appropriate as well as individual meetings with their designated dissertation supervisor. The MSc route applies only to students who meet Postgraduate requirements.

All routes include a compulsory residential weekend in year 1 and attendance at Saturday workshops (usually two per year).

The Postgraduate award operates within the general framework for the University Modular Programme (Level 7).

PG Certificate	60 Credits
PG Diploma	120 Credits
MSc	180 Credits

The Professional Diploma award operates within the general framework for the University Graduate Diploma Awards (level 6)

Professional Certificate	60 Credits
Professional Diploma	120 Credits

It is the hope of the course team that most students will choose to complete their

studies to the Professional/Postgraduate Diploma and MSc level . However, we do understand that some students may decide to leave after the first or second stage, therefore the award has been designed to possess a degree of coherence and each stage up to diploma level can be considered as a stand alone qualification. The Postgraduate/Professional Certificate is regarded as an introductory level and therefore the exit point for those students is **not** a practising qualification.

Students need to complete all stage 1 modules to be eligible for the Postgraduate/Professional Certificate Psychotherapeutic Counselling.

The designated routes for the award(s) are presented diagrammatically below.

**MSc/Postgraduate/Professional/Diploma Psychotherapeutic Counselling
Part-time route**

<p>Year One:</p> <p>PG Certificate/Professional Certificate Psychotherapeutic Counselling</p>	<p>Year Two:</p> <p>PG Diploma/Professional Diploma Psychotherapeutic Counselling</p>	
Counselling Theory & Research 1 15 Credits	Counselling Theory & Research 2 15 Credits	
Counselling Skills, Practice & Development 1 15 Credits	Counselling Skills, Practice & Development 2 15 Credits	<p>Year Three:</p> <p>MSc Psychotherapeutic Counselling</p>
Professional, Legal & Ethical Studies 1 15 Credits	Professional, Legal & Ethical Studies 2 15 Credits	
Personal & Professional Development 1 15 Credits	Personal & Professional Development 2 15 Credits	Research Proposal 15 Credits
Exit points: Postgraduate Certificate: 60 Credits at Level 7; Professional Certificate: 60 credit at Level 6	Exit points: Postgraduate Diploma: 120 Credits at Level 7; Professional Diploma: 120 Credits at Level 6	Dissertation 45 Credits
60 Credits		Exit point: MSc Psychotherapeutic Counselling: 180 Credits at Level 7
	120 Credits	
		180 Credits

The modules and learning outcomes for these awards emphasise the amalgamation of the essentials of counsellor training (theory, research, professional and ethical issues, continuing professional and personal development and counselling practice). The modules and hence learning outcomes are mutually dependent of each other and do not stand in isolation.

Learning Outcomes for Awards

The Learning Outcomes for both awards allow students to be proficient and able to evaluate their knowledge and understanding of counselling theory, demonstrating competent, safe, reflective and effective counselling practice within the BACP Ethical Framework for good practice. Further progression on the award enables the student to show an awareness of problems and issues in the interrelation of theory and research, taking into account socio-cultural factors in human problems alleviated by counselling.

Postgraduate Certificate

1. An in-depth and analytical understanding of the core counselling approaches and application to counselling (SU: Knowledge and Understanding, Communication)
2. Extensive critical and in-depth insight into the relationship between counselling theory, research and practice with some evidence of original thinking (SU: Knowledge and Understanding, Analysis)
3. An extensive ability to reflect critically on their professional and practical skills, including self-management; time management; maintaining boundaries; anti-discriminatory practice and how to incorporate these into counselling practice (SU: Communication, Enquiry, Reflection)
4. An extensive ability to reflect critically on personal, group and societal experiences in a self-accepting way, and an ability and willingness to act on identified areas for development (SU: Communication, Enquiry, Reflection)
5. Extensive critical awareness of and commitment to working within ethical and legal frameworks and codes for professional practice (SU: Application, Learning, Problem Solving).

Postgraduate Diploma

1. An in-depth critical analysis of how research and theories of counselling are applied to client problems including in-depth awareness of limitations and some evidence of original thinking (SU: Knowledge and understanding, Analysis, Application).
2. Demonstrate understanding of critical evaluation and in-depth analysis of the key psychological and practice based assumptions within a variety of counselling approaches, through critical analysis of research papers used in the counselling field (SU: Knowledge and Understanding, Analysis, Enquiry).
3. An extensive critical ability to reflect in-depth on counselling practice, in counselling supervision and during self-reflection (SU: Problem Solving, Communication, Reflection)
4. Extensive critical ability to analyse in-depth how counselling interventions impact

on client groups in different types of settings (SU: Knowledge and Understanding, Analysis).

5. Extensive development and demonstration of transferable skills and in-depth practical understanding of how established methods of research, enquiry and evaluation contribute to skilled, competent, safe, evaluative and self-reflective counselling practice (SU: Learning, Application, Reflection).

Masters graduates will possess the above competencies and capacities and, in addition, will have undertaken and completed an appropriate counselling-related research project. At the end of this period of learning, students will have a:

1. Critical awareness of the research process and be able to critically evaluate and apply a range of research methods (SU: Knowledge and understanding, Learning, Enquiry, Analysis, Communication)
2. Design, conduct, and analyse the results of an ethically approved and methodologically sound study to address a pertinent research question in counselling (SU: Knowledge and understanding, Enquiry, Analysis, Problem Solving, Application, Reflection)

Table 1: SU Learning Outcomes and Award Outcomes MSc Route

		University Learning Outcomes							
		KU	LE	EN	AN	PS	AP	CO	RE
Postgraduate Certificate Level 7	Counselling theory and research 1	✓			✓			✓	
	Counselling practice and skills development 1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
	Personal and Professional Development 1		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 1	✓	✓			✓	✓		
		KU	LE	EN	AN	PS	AP	CO	RE
Postgraduate Diploma Level 7	Counselling theory and research 2	✓		✓	✓		✓		
	Counselling practice and skills development 2	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Personal and Professional Development 2	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
	Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 2		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
		KU	LE	EN	AN	PS	AP	CO	RE
MSc Level 7	Research Proposal	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
	Dissertation	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Key:	KU	Knowledge & Understanding	PS	Problem Solving
	AP	Application	CO	Communication
	RE	Reflection	LE	Learning
	EN	Enquiry	AN	Analysis

Professional Certificate

1. A comprehensive understanding of the core counselling theories, their application to practice and their limitations (SU: Knowledge and Understanding, Communication)
2. A critical insight into the relationship between counselling theory, research and practice (SU: Knowledge and Understanding, Analysis).
3. An ability to reflect critically on personal, group and societal experiences in a self-accepting way, and an ability and willingness to act on identified areas for development (SU: Enquiry, Communication, Reflection)
4. Critical awareness of and commitment to working within ethical and legal frameworks and codes for professional practice (SU: Knowledge and Understanding. Problem solving, Application).
5. Demonstrate critical awareness of required professional counselling skills, including self management; time management; maintaining boundaries; anti-discriminatory practice and how they relate to own counselling practice (SU: Learning, Problem Solving, Application).

Professional Diploma

1. A critical evaluation of how research and theories of counselling are applied to client problems including analytic awareness of limitations (SU: Knowledge & understanding, Analysis, Application).
2. Demonstrate critical understanding and analysis of the key psychological and practice based assumptions within a variety of counselling approaches, through analysis of research papers used in the counselling field (SU: Knowledge & Understanding, Enquiry, Analysis).
3. A critical ability to reflect in-depth on counselling practice in counselling supervision and self-reflection. (SU: Problem Solving, Communication, Reflection)
4. Ability to analyse in depth how counselling interventions impact on client groups in different types of settings. (SU: Knowledge & Understanding, Analysis).
5. Development and demonstration of transferable skills and practical understanding of how established methods of research, enquiry and evaluation contribute to skilled, competent, safe, evaluative, reflective counselling practice (SU: Learning, Application, Reflection).

Table 2: SU Learning Outcomes and Award Outcomes Professional Route

		University Learning Outcomes							
		KU	LE	EN	AN	PS	AP	CO	RE
Professional Certificate Level 6	Counselling theory and research 1	✓			✓			✓	
	Counselling practice and skills development 1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
	Personal and Professional Development 1		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 1	✓	✓			✓	✓		
		KU	LE	EN	AN	PS	AP	CO	RE
Professional Diploma Level 6	Counselling theory and research 2	✓		✓	✓		✓		
	Counselling practice and skills development 2	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Personal and Professional Development 2	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
	Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 2		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

Key:

KU	Knowledge & Understanding	PS	Problem Solving
AP	Application	CO	Communication
RE	Reflection	LE	Learning
EN	Enquiry	AN	Analysis

Award level outcomes are linked to outcomes for specific modules and learning outcomes are linked to course assessments.

Module summaries

The Postgraduate Certificate/ Postgraduate Diploma/ Professional Certificate/ Professional Diploma elements of this course all have four threads running continuously throughout the programme:

- Counselling Theory and Research
- Personal and Professional Development
- Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies
- Counselling Skills Practice and Development

The course is held on one day per week (part-time). All four strands are entwined, as they cannot be developed in isolation from each other. Throughout the duration of the course, we will be making explicit connections between the modules. More details about the content of the module, learning outcomes and assessments can be found in Appendix 1 for the Postgraduate Route and Appendix 2 for the Professional Route.

Counselling Theory and Research

The Postgraduate/Professional Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling is an Integrative course. We will study in-depth some of the most influential counselling theories, in particular Person-centred, Attachment, Systemic and Cognitive Behavioural theories. The overall objective is to facilitate development of reflexive counsellors who value the significance of the therapeutic relationship, who can engage with flexibility in response to a diverse range of client issues and to facilitate client change. Similarities and differences will be explored in depth. Of course theories are grounded in historical and social contexts and current and past research also influences the present state of the counselling profession. We encourage students to develop their own integrated model of counselling theory and practice to prepare them for their practice post-qualification.

Personal and Professional Development

The focus in these modules is on the personal development of the student in light of their training to become a fully qualified counsellor. Students will work on increasing their self-awareness and self-acceptance. The emphasis is on personal learning within the group. The module does not involve taught material. A personal development group will be facilitated by a staff member. Students will keep a personal and professional development log to help track their learning and development. Continuing personal and professional development is of prime importance for both counselling students and qualified practitioners. This module will allow students to develop their own ways of continuing this development throughout their professional career.

Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies

Counsellors are in a powerful position and have access to privileged information. Because of this, counsellors need to have strong awareness of ethical and moral dilemmas and need to be able to set and maintain appropriate boundaries. They are also required to comply with legal obligations. We encourage students to critically evaluate their own moral and ethical principles. Issues of confidentiality, therapeutic boundaries, ethical dilemmas and clinical supervision are all important areas for exploration. We are committed to help students ground their practical and theoretical knowledge and skills in the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy's (BACP) ethical framework (see Appendix 3). We will also compare this framework with those of other professions and regulatory bodies, for example, the British Psychological Society (BPS).

Counselling Skills Practice and Development

Counselling students will spend a significant amount of time practising and developing their skills, both during course time, in triad work, as well as external to the university during their placement. This module focuses on, initially consolidation of skills that students need to counsel ethically and safely. The ability to negotiate appropriate contracts with clients and to use consultative support in the form of counselling supervision is also key. When students are deemed safe to practice, they will also commence a placement. Further development of skills to an advanced level will continue throughout. The module links closely with the other modules. Skills

development is grounded in theoretical traditions and supported by research evidence, set in the context of professional/ethical/legal frameworks, and requires both personal and professional development.

Transfer between Awards

The MSc/Postgraduate/Professional Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling is designed to cater for a variety of counselling students with a diverse experience of further and higher education. The programmes provide a common educational experience with the undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study defined by different learning outcomes and different assessment criteria. Students applying for the awards will normally choose the Professional Diploma or Postgraduate route as the one most relevant to their previous educational experience and the admissions requirements.

The admissions to the awards will be flexible in that, for example, a university graduate may make a decision that they would prefer the Professional Diploma route and, as they meet all the criteria, they could register for the Professional Diploma. Other candidates may not have the prerequisite undergraduate degree but have exceptionally relevant experience that may allow them to register for the Postgraduate Diploma.

Given the commonality of the routes, it will also be possible for students to apply to transfer between the awards. Any decision to allow a student transfer from the Professional Diploma to the MSc/Postgraduate route (or the other way around) would be considered by the course team and the Award leaders for the professional and postgraduate awards. If a transfer was thought appropriate, the students completed assessment work would then be reassessed in the light of their new Professional or MSc/Postgraduate route using the appropriate learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Such requests for transfer would normally be expected to take place within six months of the commencement of the course.

Where students have had their work reassessed in a transfer between awards, they might wish to submit a new piece of work – in place of the reassessed work - following the appropriate learning outcomes and assessment criteria. This would be treated as a further assessment opportunity (FAO).

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

To maximise students' potential, a varied teaching and learning approach is adopted, involving:

- Interactive Lectures
- Seminars
- Tutorials
- Counselling Skills Training
- Student-Led Individual And Group Presentations
- Supervision Groups
- A Counselling Placement
- An Experiential Personal Development Group
- Independent Study

- A Reflective Journal

The MSc/Postgraduate and Professional strands of the Counselling courses will be taught together, as the tutor team believe that graduates and non-graduates have much to offer to each other and will complement each others' strengths. The assessments for both strands are identical, whilst differentiation in levels will be evident in the marking of the assessments, which will be at level 7 for those on the MSc/Postgraduate strand, and at level 6 for those on the Professional strand. The course team, via the personal and academic tutorial system, will provide frequent formative feedback on student performance, including whether the student is meeting the requirements for the level of study they have enrolled on.

Independent study is an important part of the course, and the course team will support the development and enhancement of independent study skills through academic tutorials. Whilst the emphasis for non-graduates would initially fall on the development of these skills, where required, for graduates the course team would expect to see enhancement of these skills through a greater level of independence. These general principles are not, however, intended to stop students who are showing skills beyond the level at which they are registered, as they can be supported to seek additional challenges. Nor are they intended to stop students from seeking support to attain appropriate levels of achievement if they are struggling to attain the level of work required. The advantage of the joint delivery programme lies in the fact that students can be supported in a more individual way.

Students are given ongoing, constructive feedback from tutors, peers and supervisors, and are constantly required to self-appraise their work and development. Formative methods of assessment are used to provide feedback on progress and to assist in preparation for some summative assessments. For example, feedback is provided for counselling practice.

Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment methods, including analysing quantitative and qualitative data, giving oral presentations, analysing and critiquing case studies, both through coursework and exam and analysing counselling process reports. These are designed in each case to enable the course team to assess the extent to which each student is able to demonstrate the required learning outcomes.

The Module Descriptors indicate the direct link between learning outcomes and assessments; and are designed so as to most appropriately assess knowledge of core content of each module.

Assessment Requirements for Modules

Professional Certificate

Counselling: Theory and Research 1(15 Credits)

- Critical/evaluative essay of **no more than** 3000 words (50%)
- Individual PowerPoint presentation. Notes to be submitted (50%)

Counselling Skills, Practice & Development 1 (15 Credits)

- A Video tape with transcription (20 minutes or 2 ten minute sections) (0%)
- A critique of the transcribed video tape of **no more than** 2000 words

(100%)

Both elements of assessment must be passed.

Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 1 (15 Credits)

- Class Test - Short answers to unseen case vignettes (100%)

Personal & Professional Development 1 (15 Credits) (100%)

A reflexive summary of no more than 2500 words, of the personal development log to be submitted, weighted at 100%. To pass this module the student must also submit all parts of the personal and professional development PORTFOLIO, which includes:

- An on-going personal development log to be kept throughout the year
- A record of client hours and dates (where applicable as some students may not start placement until year 2) (150+ client contact hours)
- A record of supervision hours and dates (supervision hours at a ratio of at least 1.6, and no less than 2 hours per month – 1 hour per fortnight, regardless of contact hours). (where applicable as some students may not start placement until year 2)
- A record of any training relating to counselling outside the University (e.g. at placement)
- A contract between Staffordshire University counselling tutor team, placement counselling organisation, supervisor and student (where applicable as some students may not start placement until year 2)
- Two supervision reports, one once 75 hours have been completed, one after 150 hours of client contact
- A statement signed by personal therapist of the student as evidence of attendance of personal therapy (at least 20 hours over 2 years)
- Evidence of BACP Membership
- Evidence of CRB clearance

Professional Diploma

Counselling Theory and Research 2 (15 Credits)

- Unseen case scenario drawing on research into psychopathology, client issues and theory and apply to case scenario using their experience from counselling practice (100%)

Counselling Skills, Practice & Development 2 (15 Credits)

1. An audiotape of a counselling session (client 1) (0%)
2. A 3000 word case study critiquing 20 minutes of counselling practice with this client (client 1) (80%)
3. An INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION related to case study 1, (20%)
4. A second audiotape of a counselling session (with a different client) (0%)

All elements of assessment must be passed (including zero-rated elements).

Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 2 (15 Credits)

- An essay of 3500 words (max), conceptualising moral and ethical issues in counselling drawing on both theory and experience from your counselling practice (100%)

Personal & Professional Development 2 (15 Credits) (100%)

A reflexive summary of no more than 2500 words, of the personal development log to be submitted, weighted at 100%. To pass this module the student must also submit all parts of the personal and professional development PORTFOLIO, which includes:

- An on-going personal development log to be kept throughout the year
- A record of client hours and dates (150+ client contact hours)
- A record of supervision hours and dates (supervision hours at a ratio of at least 1:6, and no less than 2 hours per month – 1 hour per fortnight, regardless of contact hours).
- A record of any training relating to counselling outside the University (e.g. at placement)
- A contract between Staffordshire University counselling tutor team, placement counselling organisation, supervisor and student
- Two supervision reports, one once 75 hours have been completed, one after 150 hours of client contact
- A statement signed by personal therapist of the student as evidence of attendance of personal therapy (at least 20 hours over 2 years)
- Evidence of BACP Membership
- Evidence of CRB clearance

Post-graduate Certificate

Counselling: Theory and Research 1(15 Credits)

- Critical/evaluative essay of **not more than** 3000 words (50%)
- Individual PowerPoint presentation. Notes to be submitted (50%)

Counselling Skills, Practice & Development 1 (15 Credits)

- A Video tape with transcription (20 minutes or 2 ten minute sections) (0%)
- A critique of the transcribed video tape of **no more than** 2000 words (100%)

Both elements of assessment must be passed.

Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 1 (15 Credits)

- Class Test - Short answers to unseen case vignettes (100%)

Personal & Professional Development 1 (15 Credits) (100%)

A reflexive summary of no more than 2500 words, of the personal development log to be submitted, weighted at 100%. To pass this module the student must also submit all parts of the personal and professional development PORTFOLIO, which includes:

- An on-going personal development log to be kept throughout the year
- A record of client hours and dates (where applicable as some students may not start placement until year 2) (150+ client contact hours)
- A record of hours and dates (supervision hours at a ratio of at least 1:6, and no less than 2 hours per month – 1 hour per fortnight, regardless of contact hours). (where applicable as some students may not start placement until year 2)
- A record of any training relating to counselling outside the University (e.g. at placement)

- A contract between Staffordshire University counselling tutor team, placement counselling organisation, supervisor and student (where applicable as some students may not start placement until year 2)
- Two supervision reports, one once 75 hours have been completed, one after 150 hours of client contact
- A statement signed by personal therapist of the student as evidence of attendance of personal therapy (at least 20 hours over 2 years)
- Evidence of BACP Membership
- Evidence of CRB clearance

Post-graduate Diploma

Counselling Theory and Research 2 (15 Credits)

- Unseen case scenario drawing on research into psychopathology, client issues and theory and apply to case scenario using their experience from counselling practice (100%)

Counselling Skills, Practice & Development 2 (15 Credits)

1. An audiotape of a counselling session (0%)
2. A 3000 (max) word case study (client 1) critiquing 20 minutes of this counselling session with this client (80%)
3. An INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION related to case study 1 (20%)
4. A second audiotape of a counselling session with a different client. (0%)

All elements of assessment must be passed (including zero-rated).

Professional, Legal and Ethical Studies 2 (15 Credits)

- 3500 word (max) essay conceptualising moral and ethical issues in counselling drawing on both theory and experience from your counselling practice (100%)

Personal & Professional Development 2 (15 Credits) (100%)

2500 word (max) reflexive summary of the personal development log to be submitted, weighted at 100%. To pass this module the student must also submit all parts of the personal and professional development PORTFOLIO, which includes:

- An on-going personal development log to be kept throughout the year
- A record of client hours and dates (150+ client contact hours)
- A record of supervision hours and dates (supervision hours at a ratio of at least 1:6, and no less than 2 hours per month – 1 hour per fortnight, regardless of contact hours).
- A record of any training relating to counselling outside the University (e.g. at placement)
- A contract between Staffordshire University counselling tutor team, placement counselling organisation, supervisor and student
- Two supervision reports, one once 75 hours have been completed, one after 150 hours of client contact
- A statement signed by personal therapist of the student as evidence of attendance of personal therapy (at least 20 hours over 2 years)
- Evidence of BACP Membership

- Evidence of CRB clearance

MSc

Research Proposal (15 Credits)

- A written report of no more than 3000 words, outlining the research proposal (50%)
- Verbal Presentation and discussion of research proposal (50%)

Dissertation (45 Credits)

(100%)

- A 15,000 word dissertation

Assessment Criteria

The Level 7 (Postgraduate) and 6 (Honours) level criteria are applied to determine grade level for each piece of work submitted.

Draft Assessments

At University, you are expected to be able to demonstrate your ability to produce work independently. **We are therefore unable to comment on full drafts of assessed coursework in advance of a deadline date.** However, all modules provide opportunities for formative learning and often you will be invited to submit plans or outlines of coursework for comment. The vast majority of modules will also allocate class time specifically to discuss the assessments and assessment criteria. Although we can't read full drafts of your work, we will, wherever possible, be happy to discuss your assignment with you in advance of the deadline.

Attempting ALL Assessments

It is important that you attempt ALL assessments for all your modules. You should ensure that the appropriate coursework is submitted on time and required timed assessments (including exams, class-tests, presentations, vivas) are attended. The University has changed its regulations to minimise the number of students who do not complete modules. Now, **your right to a second (referral) attempt at a failed assessment(s) will be conditional on whether you have or have not made a first attempt (unless a successful claim for extenuating circumstances has been made) at the assessment(s).** What does that mean? It means that in most cases, unless a successful claim for extenuation is made, students who have not attempted assessments will not be allowed a referral for the module and, will therefore fail the module and if a core module, fail the award! **Attempting all assessments is therefore ESSENTIAL.**

This re-enforces the fact that it is always better **to submit a half-finished assignment than not submit anything or attempt an examination you are not confident about than not attend** – you may gain sufficient marks to pass the module or at least allow the possibility for compensation between modules (if allowed by your award).

If there are **extenuating circumstances** that prevent you from submitting / attending assessments then **ensure you gather evidence to support an extenuating claim**. Again, submitting a draft assignment by the required deadline is better than nothing and if the extenuation claim is successful a further assessment opportunity can always be offered. If you are unable to attend a timed-assessment due to an extenuating circumstance you should also **inform the Faculty at the earliest opportunity** and then make an extenuation claim.

Summative Assessment Feedback Return Period

The University's Academic Board has been considering the outcomes of the last National Student Survey and discussing how it can provide quicker feedback to students. It has agreed that, from September 2010, you will receive feedback on your coursework and class test summative assessments normally within 20 working days (this was previously 25 days) following the coursework submission date or date of the class test. For some assessments the feedback period will be less than 20 working days. However, it may be the case that the 20 day rule for some assessments cannot be met for justified reasons (for example, modules on which a large number of students are enrolled). However, it is anticipated that this will apply to only a small number of modules on your award and, in those cases, the feedback return period will not exceed 25 days. The anticipated feedback return times for all assessments will be published in your Module handbooks.

In order to ensure that feedback is provided within 20 days, in some cases, the marks for your work will be provisional and will be subject to final ratification by the appropriate Assessment Board in due course.

The University hopes that you will also play your part by ensuring that you collect feedback from your module tutor as soon as it is available.

Postgraduate Route (M Level 7)

Indicative Grade Point Criteria

Grade Point	
15, 14, 13 Distinction	Demonstrates an excellent awareness and understanding of the subject matter. Assignments are well argued and excellently organised. Work is academically excellent, evidencing perceptiveness, insight and demonstrating creativity and originality. There is evidence of excellent reading and systematic review. Work at this level is very likely to be publishable.
12,11,10 Merit	Demonstrates a very good awareness and understanding of the subject matter. Assignments are expressed cogently and lucidly. Work is of good quality academically, evidencing well-focused observations and addressing all of the obvious key questions. All conclusions follow logically from premises. There is evidence of sound reading and a thorough critical analysis of the available literature, leading to an output which may have potential for wider use.
9, 8, 7 Pass	Demonstrates a sound awareness and understanding of the subject matter. Assignments are expressed reasonably and coherently. Work is academically sound, evidencing focused observations and acknowledging key questions. There is evidence of sound reading and thorough critical analysis of the available literature.
6, 5, 4 Non-compensatable Fail	Demonstrates some awareness of theoretical perspectives and context. There is partial articulation of key questions. There is limited awareness of issues involved. Conclusions are present but do not always follow from premises. Lines of thought are discernable but weak.
3, 2, 1 Non-compensatable Fail	Demonstrates some errors of fact. Facts are scant, anecdotal, confused or poorly expressed. Some necessary material is omitted. There is little coherence and only sporadic evidence of understanding. Supporting references are missing. There is no sense of direction and no conclusions.

Criteria for Award Classification

Examination Boards have the discretion to make awards at Pass, Merit and Distinction at the Certificate, Diploma and Masters stages.

Your eligibility for awards with Pass, Merit or Distinction will be determined using the average grade point per 15 credits studied.

Postgraduate Certificate in Psychotherapeutic Counselling

You will be eligible for a Pass at Certificate level if you have completed the requirements of your award; you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 9.49 or lower.

You will be eligible for a Merit at Certificate level if you have completed the requirements of your award; you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 9.5 to 12.49.

You will be eligible for a Distinction at Certificate level if you have completed the requirements of your award, you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 12.5 or above.

Postgraduate Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling

You will be eligible for a Pass at Diploma level if you have completed the requirements of your award, you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 9.49 or lower.

You will be eligible for a Merit at Diploma level if you have completed the requirements of your award; you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 9.5 to 12.49.

You will be eligible for a Distinction at Diploma level if you have completed the requirements of your award, you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 12.5 or above.

MSc Psychotherapeutic Counselling

You will be eligible for a Pass at Masters level if you have completed the requirements of your award; you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 9.49 or lower.

You will be eligible for a Merit at Masters level if you have completed the requirements of your award; you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 9.5 to 12.49.

You will be eligible for a Distinction at Masters level if you have completed the requirements of your award, you have achieved a Grade Point 7 or above in all your modules and your average grade point is 12.5 or above.

Module Failure and Referral

In modules comprising more than one assessment students will be required to gain a pass on all assessment elements to satisfactorily complete the module.

If a module, or any element of the assessment of that module, is failed, students will be permitted only one opportunity for referral. If the student successfully completes the required assessment(s) on referral the mark of 7R will normally be recorded, equivalent to the minimum pass mark.

No compensation is allowed within or across modules. All assessments must be passed. Because of the integrated nature of counselling training, all modules required for the postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma levels must be studied concurrently and it will therefore not be possible for students to retake individual modules after their referral opportunity if they fail.

In exceptional circumstances where an individual has not been able to complete a postgraduate certificate or diploma year, they may, with the approval of the Board of Examiners be allowed to retake the whole year with all the required modules.

Disagreements about marks for assessed work

The mark you receive for your assessed work comes at the end of a rigorous marking and moderation system. Some of you, but not all of you, will notice that your work has been marked by more than one person. This is because, in accordance with University policy, we double mark a proportion of all assessments to ensure that the standard is consistent across the module. In assessment boards, we also compare marks across modules to make sure that no one module is seriously out of line in terms of marks with others. Samples of all marked work on the Psychotherapeutic Counselling awards are sent to an external examiner (an academic in another University) who will confirm that marking and standards are appropriate and comparable to those in other Universities.

If you are not happy with the mark you receive for assessed work, you should first ensure that you read the feedback for that work. If you then want to talk more about it, you should contact the module tutor and request an appointment. **Because of the rigorous system we have in place to ensure standards, unfortunately it is not possible for you to appeal against the academic judgement that has led to you being awarded a particular mark.** If however, you believe a genuine error has been made with your mark, you should contact the module leader in the first instance.

Professional Diploma Route (H Level 6)

Indicative Grade Point Criteria

Grade Point	Knowledge	Communication	Analysis
15, 14, 13 Distinction	Subject/discipline-specific knowledge is used to illuminate the task and to make links with related issues/tasks i.e. a capability of extending particular analysis to other issues/tasks; where appropriate discipline/ paradigm boundaries are recognised and critical awareness demonstrated.	The structure is clear; the form of communication/medium selected is appropriate to the task; the argument is clear and coherently developed; appropriate technical and/or conceptual language or set of skills is used with confidence.	the focus of the question/problem/task is understood; related issues identified; theory and concepts are deployed in a manner which is critically self-aware; ability to deploy competing/ alternative/ analyses/ perspectives/ solutions is apparent
12, 11, 10 Merit	subject/discipline specific knowledge is used to illuminate the task	Structure is clear; the form of communication/medium selected is appropriate to the task, overall the argument is concise and coherently developed; an appropriate technical and/or conceptual language is used with reasonable confidence.	The focus of the question/problem/task is understood and one or two related issues identified; analytical techniques/ methods are theoretically informed; some awareness of competing/alternative analyses/perspectives/solutions is apparent.
9, 8, 7 Pass	there is evidence that subject specific knowledge related to the core issues or tasks has been selected	The structure is broadly appropriate, elements of development/progression and basic concepts are correctly used.	The focus of the question/ problem/ task is understood and key issues identified.

6, 5, 4 Pass	there is evidence of subject/ discipline/specific knowledge	One or two elements of an appropriate structure are present.	The focus of the question/problem/task is understood and one or two issues identified.
3, 2, 1 Fail Non-com- pensatable	Subject/discipline specific knowledge is present but is anecdotal, scant and/or confused.	Elements of an appropriate structure are present but overall the structure is partial and/or confused. Appropriate concepts are referred to but are poorly expressed.	The question/ problem/task is understood, but the key issues are ignored and there is no evidence of understanding concepts.

Criteria for Award Classification

Overall grade point scores are calculated by adding the grade points achieved in each 15 credit module to get a total grade point score.

Professional Certificate in Psychotherapeutic Counselling

Students will be eligible for a Pass at Certificate level by achieving a grade point score of at least 16 on required modules, with all modules achieved at Grade Point 4 or above.

Students will be eligible for a Distinction at Certificate level by achieving a grade point score of at least 50 on required modules, with all modules achieved at Grade Point 4 or above.

Professional Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling

Students will be eligible for a Pass at Diploma level by achieving a grade point score of at least 32 on required modules, with all modules achieved at Grade Point 4 or above.

Students will be eligible for a Merit at Diploma level by achieving a grade point score of at least 76 on required modules, with all modules achieved at Grade Point 4 or above.

Students will be eligible for a Distinction at Diploma level by achieving a grade point score of at least 100 on required modules, with all modules achieved at Grade Point 4 or above.

Module Failure and Referral

In modules comprising more than one assessment students will be required to gain a pass on all assessment elements to satisfactorily complete the module.

If a module, or any element of the assessment of that module, is failed, students will be permitted only one opportunity for referral. If the student successfully completes the required assessment(s) on referral the mark of 4R will normally be recorded, equivalent to the minimum pass mark.

No compensation is allowed within or across modules. All assessments must be passed. Because of the integrated nature of counselling training, all modules required for the professional certificate and professional diploma levels must be studied concurrently and it will therefore not be possible for students to retake individual modules after their referral opportunity if they fail.

In exceptional circumstances where an individual has not been able to complete a postgraduate certificate or diploma year, they may, with the approval of the Board of Examiners be allowed to retake the whole year with all the required modules.

. The Master's Year and Dissertation

The dissertation is the distinctive feature of the MSc award. It is a major piece of work (carrying 45 credits), and is carried out under the supervision of a dissertation supervisor. The aim of the dissertation is to demonstrate a logical, rational argument and an in-depth knowledge focused on a particular counselling issue. This knowledge should complement the learning that you have gained throughout the course. It is important that you select an area of interest to yourself as there may come a time when the work may seem arduous and perhaps never ending.

In establishing your chosen area or subject you must examine what has been written and researched in this area to date. This background reading will help you to shape your chosen topic.

The dissertation involves a critical and analytical review of the literature. Dissertations allow integration, a detailed description of the meaning, purpose and analysis of concepts and the synthesis of original ideas. It allows expression of originality while developing key academic skills of reasoning, organisation and rigour. It requires clear and effective organisation and requires a high degree of independent work, therefore your subject area must motivate you. This means that you must meet deadlines and organise a high quality piece of work within strict parameters; this requires a large amount of commitment from you. It allows you to develop your skills learned throughout your course. This process is carried out in conjunction with your supervisor, and it is most important that students are aware of this central relationship.

Teaching and Learning Activities

The dissertation requires students to effectively manage a major piece of independent research. In keeping with this approach, the quality of the experience gained by the student and the extent to which it effectively prepares them to initiate and manage future research work will largely be determined by the efforts of the student. The supervisor's role will be to guide the development of the student's research through restrained and well thought-out questioning. Ideally a minimum of 8 hours of contact should occur between the student and supervisor. On-line support via email with supervisor is also available.

Supervisors will provide a written report on your dissertation detailing any special circumstances that may have had a bearing on the quality of work (e.g. delays that are not the fault of the student, withdrawal of support from 'gate keepers'). The supervisor's report will also give an indication of the amount of help and guidance provided by the supervisor and the degree to which the dissertation reflects the independent efforts of the student. The dissertation will be marked by the supervisor and another member of the Department's academic staff and will then be sent to the External Examiner for comment and moderation.

Through researching and writing the dissertation emphasis will be placed on the development of a research culture that actively stimulates, promotes and disseminates its research findings and their implications for working practice in counselling. The dissertations may be on any topic related to counselling, subject to the approval of the programme team, and should be no more than 15,000 words in length. A member of academic staff with suitable research interests and experience will be appointed to supervise the student's dissertation.

Research may be from either a qualitative or quantitative perspective, examples of topics for the counselling based dissertation may include issues such as:

- Client's/counsellors perceptions of counselling
- In-depth case studies from counsellor's practice,
- Research into the effects of counselling a particular client group,
- Aspects of counselling practice or theory
- Applied roles of counselling in particular areas, e.g., education, nursing etc.
- The use and understanding of self in counselling
- Cultural differences for client/counsellor in working with clients
- Stress in counsellor trainees
- Working at relational depth within the therapeutic relationship.

Students are welcome to discuss with us opportunities for developing MSc research projects that may be linked to existing, ongoing, research initiatives; or linked to partner organisations with which staff already have connections.

Students are also welcome to propose research on topics that do not fall within staff's current research interests, in which case we will discuss with you whether we are able to support your work. For more information on staff's counselling backgrounds and research interests, see staff profiles within the student handbook.

In order to formally progress to the dissertation, candidates must pass all core

modules leading to postgraduate level (120 credits, Level 7) or equivalent, as well as the Masters Research Proposal module (15 credits).

Students studying full-time should begin preparing for their dissertation by the beginning of semester 2, and it must be submitted by a specified date, which is to be confirmed.

In addition to supervision, students will be invited to attend monthly, three-hour group meetings. These meetings will provide a forum for students to exchange ideas, develop their understanding of research, and work together to maximise each others' learning opportunities on the Masters programme.

The assessment of the dissertation will particularly take into account:

- i. the clarity and power of the identification and specification of the chosen topic;
- ii. Evidence of the library skills necessary to research previous literature on the chosen topic;
- iii. The quality of the selection and analysis of appropriate methodology for the topic;
- iv. The quality of the analysis and interpretation of data;
- v. The quality of the presentation of the report.

The report should also be of a standard approximating to that required to publish in an academic journal in the field or to present as a conference paper.

All dissertations must be submitted in typescript, with two copies provided (at least one in hard binding).

Choosing your research topic

When you embark on your dissertation, it is important to choose a counselling topic that you are interested in. Doing something that is of no interest to you is going to make your research seem never-ending! Talk to your fellow students and your research supervisors, read around the subject and try to imagine whether this is something you will still be excited about in 6 months' time.

When you have thought about what kind of topics interest you, you need to start focusing in on what it is **exactly** that you want to find out. There are only 15,000 words in your dissertation, and good dissertations will usually need all those words for one research question. You risk skimming the surface or not answering questions if you are not specific enough.

Most research projects will be grounded in literature (though grounded theory, for example, takes a different approach). If there is an overwhelming amount of literature on the topic that you research, it may be that your question is too wide and you may need to narrow it down.

The opposite may also occur: the topic you're interested in does not have any literature written about it. In this case, it may help to extend your literature search to a wider field, and include the social sciences more generically.

You need to think practically:

- Are you realistic about your study? Too much literature may lead to feeling overwhelmed, too little to difficulties in limiting the scope of the research. Aim to do something that contributes to the furthering of knowledge in counselling research, without feeling that you have to change the world.
- Are you going to be able to study the topic that you have chosen with the methodology you'd like to use?
- Are you going to be able to find enough participants for your research?
- Are the ethical underpinnings of your study sound? If not, you may find that your proposal falls at the first hurdle, the Ethics Committee.

Writing your dissertation

There are as many ways to write a dissertation as there are students. Good dissertations, however, all have structure. Below are some points that may help you in getting started. They are not meant to be followed slavishly!

- The dissertation is 15,000 words, so you will probably need to divide it up into chapters. It may be necessary to use several sub-headings within chapters.
- Chapter 1, the Introduction, sets the scene. You outline why the topic of your dissertation is important. This is also the place to set out your main research questions. This chapter is all about signposting, so you can indicate briefly what method you will use, what you are hoping or thinking the result will be prior to carrying out the study, and you can signpost the literature review.
- Chapter 2 is usually a Literature Review. Many pieces of counselling research are situated in bodies of knowledge and your reader needs to be brought up to speed with the literature in the field.
- Chapter 3 focuses on what methods you used to conduct the study. You need to link this to the research questions that you are asking and the literature review. You need to give a rationale for choosing the method that you have adopted for your research.
- In Chapter 4 you can write about the results you obtained from your research.
- You need to analyse the results that you have reported so that your dissertation becomes a critical piece of work, rather than a repetition of other work, or research without 'grounding'. You could do this in Chapter 5.
- Chapter 6 forms the concluding chapter. You need to draw together the whole of your project, providing a summary of the research process. Your conclusions about your research, and possible further research ideas could go here.
- Don't forget to use the APA referencing system. You will also need to provide a reference list. Guidelines about writing can be found in the Appendices 4 and 5.

Ethical Issues in Research

When you carry out research you are bound by the BPS Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants and the BACP code of ethics. You will find these on www.bps.org.uk/documents/Code.pdf. And www.bacp.co.uk/research/publications.html#pub_ethguidelines. You must ensure that you have read and understood these Principles before engaging in research design and data collection. Your supervisor will discuss these Principles with you when you are at the planning stages.

The Psychology Department has approved a procedure to ensure that proposals for research are scrutinised carefully with regard to ethical and risk issues before either participants are recruited or data collection begins.

A Department ethics form must be attached to the dissertation plan when it is handed in. A draft consent form and a Project Checklist should also be attached to the plan. Your supervisor will pass the completed form to the Department Ethics Committee. The form should be submitted with the completed dissertation as one of the Appendices, along with any external ethics form approved by an outside agency (such as a hospital ethics form for instance).

The completed form will be submitted to the Departmental Ethics Committee for further comment and approval.

Where ethical approval has to be sought from an external Ethics Committee such as NHS Local Research Ethics Committee (LREC) or Multi-Centre Research Ethics Committee (MREC), you will require approval from the Independent Peer Review Panel. The submission to a LREC or MREC can only occur after the scrutiny and approval process within the University has been completed. For more information see the Faculty of Health and Sciences Research Ethics Procedures on: www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/health/researchethics/ .

Should any aspect of the design, methodology, materials etc change after granting of ethics approval (e.g. following piloting), you should discuss with your supervisor whether a revised Department ethics approval form then needs to be completed.

No data collection must be started before ethics approval has been obtained. Empirical work submitted on the basis of research conducted without ethics approval will not be accepted for marking.
Postgraduate/Professional Diploma

Other Requirements to pass the Course

Placements, Supervision and Personal therapy

It should also be noted that students must pass all the elements required for the Personal and Professional Development Modules which include:

- At least 150 hours of approved and supervised counselling placement practice
- Supervision requirements are at least 1 hour every two weeks with a ratio of at least 1 hour's supervision for 6 hours' client contact. **Nb this is a minimum and at various times depending on how many client hours you complete in a week or during an ethical dilemma it is expected that you contract for more with your supervisor.**
- At least 50 hours guided learning
- At least 50 hours of work-based learning activity
- A minimum of 20 hours approved personal therapy.

About counselling placements

The counselling placement is an important part of this course, where students practise to gain a professional skills-base so that when they qualify, they are solid, safe and effective practitioners. Whilst practising on peers during course time goes a long way to enhance counselling skills, it is only in practice, with real clients, that students can gain the fluency expected of professional counsellors. Therefore:

- Students need to find one or more suitable counselling placement(s) in order to fulfill the practice element of the course. The placement needs to be with **adult** clients who have voluntarily sought counselling and needs to take place in a formal counselling setting. It is not acceptable to work with clients outside the placement setting.
- It is usually not appropriate to use your place of work as your counselling placement.
- It is not acceptable for students to be the only counsellor in any particular setting (i.e. at least one qualified counsellor must be working in the placement setting).
- The placement must be approved by the course tutors **before** counselling begins. You must ensure that your tutors have confirmed that you are ready to commence placement work.
- The placement must provide students the opportunity to see a range of clients with varied presenting problems. In some instances it may be necessary for students to have more than one placement if they choose a placement agency that is too specialised.
- Students are required to conduct a minimum of 150 counselling sessions with clients to complete the course requirements. Cancelled sessions and non-attendance cannot be counted towards the 150 hours.
- Your placement organisation will need to agree to you tape-recording two of your client sessions. Students still need to obtain informed consent from clients for use in supervision as well as assessments. Tape recordings must be kept securely and be erased when they have been used for assessment or supervision. If the counselling placement does not allow taping of client sessions, you will need to find an additional placement where you can tape counselling sessions, as this is a requirement of the course and needed for some assessments.
- Students are responsible for ensuring they have adequate and appropriate supervision. Some placements offer supervision, others do not. Students are required to have a minimum of one hour a fortnight of **individual** supervision, at a ratio of no less than 1 hour supervision per 6 client contact hours. This may mean that you need to seek additional supervision. **Nb this is a minimum and at various times depending on how many client hours you complete in a week or during an ethical dilemma it is expected that you contract for more with your supervisor.** The supervisor should also be agreed by the course tutors regardless of whether this is a private supervision arrangement or supervision provided by the placement.
- Please see the Placement Handbook for sample contracts and agreements.

Attendance

It is expected that students will attend all classes, workshops, group meetings, day

schools and other sessions for the core modules. Students must meet a minimum of attendance requirement of 80% within each module in the Certificate and Diploma stages of this award. Attendance at any residential element of the course is also compulsory.

Submission of Assignments

You must hand in one copy of all your work to the Sciences Office (Mellor building) by 4.00pm on the hand in date. It is strongly recommended that you keep a copy of each assignment. Make sure that you complete the appropriate forms and attach one to each assignment, keeping the appropriate part of the form as a receipt to confirm that your work has been handed in.

Moderation of Marks

All pieces of work on the Postgraduate/Professional Diploma are moderated by members of staff to insure that our marking is consistent. This ensures that our marking procedures are fair. All work is then moderated by an External Examiner to ensure parity between markers and with markers on other Postgraduate/Professional Diploma courses.

Extenuating Circumstances

If there are factors beyond your control that have affected your work, you can apply for Extenuating Circumstances to be taken into account. Information about Extenuating Circumstances procedures may be found on http://www.staffs.ac.uk/images/extenuating_cir_tcm68-15855.pdf. A copy of this information is in Appendix 7 of the Student Handbook. Forms are available from the Sciences office on the ground floor of the Mellor Building. Where possible, you should discuss your Extenuating Circumstances with your Personal and Academic tutor before completing the forms.

Extenuating Circumstances for group work

If during assessed group work, some members of the group have been affected by illness or other extenuating circumstances then **all** members of the group would need to make a claim for the assessments which have been affected (should they wish to do so). If two out of three members of a group have had extenuating circumstances upheld this decision will not automatically be extended to the other member of the group without them submitting their own claim. They will not be offered a further assessment opportunity (or referral as if for the first time) without their own extenuating circumstances claim being upheld.

Late submission of Assessed Work

A student who fails to submit assessed work by the published deadline will normally be deemed to have failed that assessment. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, work submitted late will be treated as a second attempt and a minimum pass mark will be the maximum mark recorded.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct may be defined as any attempt by a student to gain an unfair advantage in any assessment. It may be demonstrated by behaviour such as collusion, falsification of date, misconduct in examinations and plagiarism.

Plagiarism may be defined as the representation of another person's work, without acknowledgement of the source, as the student's own for the purposes of satisfying formal assessment requirements. This is taken very seriously by the University and where plagiarism can be proved that work will be awarded a grade of zero. The University regulations concerning academic misconduct can be found under the Student Information section of the University Web http://www.staffs.ac.uk/assets/academic_dishonesty_tcm44-26770.pdf and are reproduced in the Appendix 13.

Fitness to practise

Counselling students are training to be in a profession where they have regular contact with often vulnerable members of the public. The counselling tutor team and Staffordshire University have a duty of care to these members of the public in addition to its duty of care to all our students.

All counselling tutors and students are bound by the Ethical Framework of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. Students will sign an undertaking at course registration to adhere to this ethical framework. For fitness to practice there are particularly relevant Sections of the Framework (See Appendix 3 of the Student Handbook) including 'Good quality of care', 'Maintaining competent practice', 'Keeping Trust', 'Fitness to practise' and 'Care of self as a practitioner'. All students and staff are required to adhere to the Ethical Framework.

In exceptional circumstances, it might be necessary to suspend a student's placement and/or their attendance on the course if the student is deemed to be unfit to practice. Such a course of action would need to be thoroughly discussed and investigated by the Course Leader and the Course team in consultation with the External Examiner and the Dean of Students (or her representative).

The University is considering more general regulations on fitness for practice across a range of awards including counselling, nursing and social work. Further regulations may be brought in as and when necessary.

Misconduct

Student Behaviour

Staffordshire University has a Student Behaviour Policy which outlines the behaviours considered unacceptable by the University. These include any forms of bullying or harassment, or anything that disturbs the learning experience for other students, including turning up late for meetings and classes, talking in classes (unless as part of a staff instigated discussion!), using mobiles and MP3 players in class. Breaches of the student behaviour policy may mean you are asked to leave a class, and ultimately can mean disciplinary action being taken against you. You can see the full policy, and

associated Disciplinary Procedure on the University website at:

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/images/gen_regs_app3_tcm68-12717.pdf

The Postgraduate/Professional Diploma Psychotherapeutic Counselling has specific behaviour requirements and therefore has additional and alternative processes for dealing with unprofessional behaviour. Where serious concerns about a student's professional suitability have emerged and the student has not responded positively to a plan of remediation, or where there is concern that a student's behaviour may pose serious risks to others or self, the Dean of the Faculty must be informed and the matter will be dealt with under section 5 of the University Student Disciplinary Procedures.

Fitness to start or continue a counselling placement

Students are encouraged to raise any issues in supervision, if they are already in placement. The counselling course tutors take the view that, in extreme cases, they may either contact the student's supervisor, or withdraw permission from the student to continue with the counselling placement.

If the student is not yet engaged in a counselling placement, the start of the placement will be postponed until student and the counselling tutor team (and supervisor if supervision has already been arranged) agrees that the student is fit to practise counselling.

Fitness to attend the course

In some instances, a student's difficulties may have an impact on their fellow students and on the safety of the learning environment. As our duty of care is to all our students, and the experience of being on a counselling course can be demanding, the course team feels that a student's fitness to attend the course is a vital factor in successful learning for all. Therefore, we will discuss any issues with the student in a supportive way. Wherever possible, we will endeavour to support the student or refer to more appropriate forms of assistance. In extreme cases, we may ask a student to intermit until they are fit to attend the course.

Accreditation and Professional Requirements

Accreditation of Counselling Courses

The precise shape of registration is as yet unknown and we have decided to follow the current BACP standard for accredited training courses as we believe that this will be best preparation for current trainees. We are intending to seek BACP accreditation for our courses. BACP course accreditation is not to be confused with independent accreditation, which is open to all practising BACP members who fulfil certain criteria (see below).

The content and structure of the Postgraduate/Professional Diploma is therefore shaped by the requirements for course accreditation by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. Their very explicit requirements are set out here.

BACP - Part A. Eligibility criteria for entry to the scheme These criteria must be met before an application can be accepted for assessment under part B of the course delivery criteria.

A1 The training provider must be an organisational member of the BACP and thus subject to the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy (the Ethical Framework).

A2 The course must have graduated at least one cohort of students before submitting an application (ie a group of students who were recruited at the same time and are graduating together).

A3 The training provider must deliver an in-depth course offering professional practitioner training. There must be a minimum of 450 hours of timetabled learning time, within which there must be 400 hours of direct teaching (+50 hours of guided learning).

NB Each course should refer to the explanation of terms for guidance on meeting A3 before embarking upon its application.

A4 The course must require all students to complete 50 hours of work-based learning or other duties related to service provision during the course.

A5 Students must undertake a minimum of 150 hours of supervised practice exclusive of missed sessions in addition to 50 hours of time spent in work-based learning and other duties related to service provision.

A6 The course must have at least two core members of staff who have substantive involvement in admission, assessment, course management and decision making, in addition to teaching.

A7 All course staff must be members of an appropriate professional body with a complaints procedure to which they are subject.

A8 The majority of the course staff should have current BACP counsellor /psychotherapist accreditation or be registered with an appropriate professional body to an equivalent level and should be in current, supervised practice.

A9 It must be demonstrated that the training provider is submitting a specific course for accreditation, rather than a network of courses.

Separate procedures exist for identical courses to be delivered at different venues by the same provider. Please contact the Professional Standards Department at BACP for information.

A10 The course must submit evidence to demonstrate the accountability of the training provider for the course. This will include published policy and procedures on:

- i. admission
- ii. fees
- iii. placements

- iv. assessments
- v. appeals
- vi. complaints
- vii. quality assurance and enhancement

The above list is the minimum requirement and is not necessarily exhaustive.

A11 The course must provide evidence of its staffing structure that clearly demonstrates lines of responsibility.

A12 If the course seeking accreditation admits students after the start of the course via Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) procedures, the procedure/s must be submitted for assessment as part of the application. Please see criterion B10. (BACP website, 2009)

As can be seen from the above all courses seeking accreditation must meet the specifications included in *Accreditation for Training Courses*. This specification is strictly followed in this proposed programme and most of its content has to be regarded as essential.

There are also requirements that individuals (as opposed to courses) must meet to be eligible for accreditation. These requirements include:

“Eligibility Criteria

1. Is a member of BACP
Undertakes to remain so for the accreditation period
Undertakes to meet the requirements, as they arise, for the maintenance of accreditation
2. Is covered by professional indemnity insurance.
3. Is in practice at the time of application.
4. Training and supervised practice

Routes to accreditation

EITHER

- 4.1 Has been awarded a qualification from a BACP accredited training Course.

and

Has had a minimum of 450 hours of supervised practice:
of which a minimum of 150 hours must be subsequent to the completion of training;
over a period of not less than three and not more than six years;
supervised to a minimum of 1.5 hours per month.

OR

- 4.2 Has successfully completed practitioner training:
 - 4.2.1 of a minimum of 400 taught contact hours (+50 guided learning);
 - 4.2.2 over not less than two years part time or one year full time;
 - 4.2.3 in addition to the 450 taught hours had a supervised placement;
 - 4.2.4 included theory, skills, professional issues and personal development.

and

Has had a minimum of 450 hours of supervised practice:

of which a minimum of 150 hours must be subsequent to the completion of training;
over a period of not less than three and not more than six years;
supervised to a minimum of 1.5 hours per month”
(BACP Website May 2007 – see full requirements listed in Appendix 6)

To meet professional requirements there need to be regulations in relation to attendance, placements, supervision, personal therapy and fitness to practice.

Attendance

100% attendance is expected. A minimum of 80% attendance within each module is necessary to pass the award. Attendance at Residential courses is required. Attendance requirements are standard across the counselling sector. Due to the practical aspects of these awards an attendance level below 80% per module would mean that the award could not be completed successfully.

Counselling Placements and Supervision

Students are required to find a counselling placement during the first year of their course, in order that they can commence practice as soon as course tutors are satisfied that the student can counsel safely and effectively. Although lecturers can provide information regarding suitable placements the responsibility for obtaining a placement does lie with the student. Students must receive the written agreement of their tutor and one of the course directors before they can begin their placement. They must also have approved supervision arrangements in place before the first client is seen.

The student's practice must be supervised and, in line with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) recommendations for trainees and accreditation criteria, students must source a minimum of 1 hour of individual supervision every two weeks, at a rate of one hour of individual supervision for every 6 hours of client contact time.

Where the supervisor has concerns about a student's practice and competence, they must discuss these with the student in the first instance and, if necessary, work with the student as to how these should be broached with the course team.

As part of good practice, students are encouraged to discuss any areas of concern with the course tutor with a view to make certain that any issues can be resolved in the area in question. If the supervisor's or supervisees concerns are serious, then it is an absolute necessity that the student's tutor is informed.

In addition to attending the supervision provided by your placement, you will also have opportunities to discuss your counselling work with your peers. This assists students in developing reflective practice, which is competent, culturally sensitive, ethical and informed by both theoretical understanding and the supervisory process.

Students need to gain a minimum of 150 supervised client hours in order to complete

their course; some trainees extend beyond the time frame of the taught course in order to complete their counselling hours.

Students are required to document their learning of each supervision session and keep these notes in their counselling practice log. Alongside this students must work with their supervisor to provide two supervision reports throughout the course – one for each seventy five hours of counselling practice. Forms related to the placement and supervision can be found in the Appendices.

Personal Counselling / Psychotherapy

By the end of the course students will also have to complete a minimum of 20 hours of their own personal counselling or psychotherapy. This is essential for personal development and for understanding of the counselling process. Each student will be responsible for organising their own personal therapy. Agreement of the course director must be received before any contract is entered into for counselling / psychotherapy. It is recommended that any counsellor / therapist should have at least three years practice, be an accredited member of the BACP or similar organisation and have a theoretical orientation similar to the course. Any counsellor chosen must agree to abide by the BACP code of ethics. A form for a counselling contract is in the Appendices.

Fitness to Practise

All students and tutors on the Counselling courses are required to work within the BACP Ethical Framework. This means that we are all responsible to ensure that damage to clients does not ensue because a student is not fit to practise.

Before commencing placements, tutors will discuss with students their readiness and level of skill, based on observed skills practice in student triads. No student is allowed to commence a placement without the agreement of their tutors. In addition, supervision arrangements need to be in place before the first scheduled counselling session with placement clients.

When undertaking placements, students are in the first instance responsible for monitoring their own fitness to practise, in collaboration with their supervisors. However, tutors continue their commitment to monitoring counselling skills and personal/professional development of students to ensure that no student is practising unsafely. Therefore if a student is deemed unfit to practice the Course Director may recommend to the Assessment Board that a student not be allowed to progress from the Certificate to the Diploma stage of either award and/or not be able to gain the relevant professional qualification. The procedure for this is outlined above.

Please also refer to the BACP Ethical Framework (Appendix 3) and BACP fact sheet on 'Fitness to Practise' for further guidance (Appendix 12).

University Support for Students

This section describes support for students in general and support for students with special needs. It also describes the process for student representation for the award.

Personal and Academic Tutors

Every student is allocated a Personal and Academic tutor. They should be your first point of contact at all times if you have any difficulty or questions.

For these awards your tutor will also be one of the course tutors, who you will be seeing on a weekly basis during class time. Outside of these sessions, you will be able to arrange a meeting with your Personal and Academic Tutor by signing up for an appointment slot on the notice board outside their office.

It is important that you feel comfortable with your Personal and Academic Tutor, since their role is an important one. Your Personal and Academic Tutor is responsible for offering information and advice about the award and is also there to help if you have any problems of a more personal nature.

Your Personal and Academic Tutor may refer you to a source of more expert advice, including for example, the Student Counselling service, for problems of a personal nature, and the Student Union Advice Centre for example financial problems. Section 6 of this handbook, Student Support, provides you with more details of some of these services.

Your relationship with your Personal and Academic Tutor is a two-way one, involving a commitment from you as well as from the tutor. You will be expected, in particular, to make the following commitments:-

- Respecting office hours.
- Responding to communications from your Personal and Academic Tutor – for example, requests for information to support reference writing.
- Understanding that the role and time of the Personal and Academic Tutor has its boundaries and that tutors will need to make a judgement about the reasonable use of their time for any single individual.
- Keeping the Personal and Academic Tutor fully informed regarding personal information.

Personal and Academic Tutors also offer academic guidance and it is a good idea to discuss issues such as assignment grades with them, especially if you are not getting the grades you want.

Personal and Academic Tutorials

Students will be offered a personal and academic tutorial at least once in each learning block. These are designed to:

- Provide you with supervision of some of the independent learning components of these modules.
- Facilitate the process of Personal Development.

This is consistent with Staffordshire University's Personal Tutor Code of Practice.

Staffordshire University has a Personal Development Planning (PDP) Policy, further details are given at:

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/current/student/pdp/>
http://www.staffs.ac.uk/images/pdp_policy_tcm45-10440.pdf

References

Many students apply for part-time jobs or placements during their course; this often means that formal applications need to be made. It is usual for potential employers to request a reference from an academic member of staff who knows you on a professional and personal level. Usually this is your Personal and Academic Tutor, but if you feel another member of staff knows you better, it could be another person on your award.

It is very important (and common courtesy) to approach the person you wish to be your referee and ask them if they are prepared to provide a reference for you before you write their name on an application form. You should provide your referee with a copy of your current C.V. and a description of the job or course you are applying for.

Student Representation

The award is managed by the Course Team which comprises the key teaching staff and student representatives from the course.

Staff meet informally every few weeks to discuss issues relating to the course and to review student progress. A Course Committee meets formally once per semester to discuss student issues and course management. Student representatives sit on this Committee to ensure student involvement in decision making.

Each module is organised by a module leader whose responsibility it is to ensure efficient delivery of the module, and evaluate feedback. Module leaders produce a yearly report on their module, including a report on student feedback on the module. This report is discussed at Course Committee.

Students are required to complete a feedback form for each module they study, or provide comments through alternative methods. The process also provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their own learning and evaluate their own approach to studying.

Each year a Course Monitoring Report is produced which is scrutinised at Department, Faculty and University level. Suggestions for changes are followed up on Course Committees and in subsequent Reports.

General Support Services.

Remember, if you are experiencing difficulties, be they academic or personal, your Personal and Academic Tutor should be your first port of call. However, there may be

things which your tutor feels that they cannot deal with. Or it may be that you do not wish to discuss certain problems with your Personal and Academic Tutor. In such cases, there are a wide variety of student support services which can provide expert advice. The University's policy on student support is stated below, followed by details of three of the main services available. For full details of these services visit the Student Support website at: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/services/student_support.

Note, though, that even if you decide you would prefer to approach one of these services directly, it is important that you keep your Personal and Academic Tutor informed at all times of the general nature of the problem (for example, that you are seeing the counselling service, or have been ill, or have had financial problems).

Staffordshire University's Mental Health Policy.

According to a report published by the World Health Organisation (2001) it is estimated that one in four people will experience mental health difficulties at some point in their lives. Despite such a significant number of people experiencing these difficulties there is still much stigma attached to these issues and those affected by them. Staffordshire University is keen to reduce this stigma and to create an environment for study in which students feel free to access support wherever it is needed. With this in mind the University has produced a Student Mental Health Policy, which it hopes will help raise awareness and understanding of these issues as well as providing a reference guide for staff and students who may be supporting students experiencing mental health difficulties. To complement this policy, the University offers ongoing training to its staff around the issues of mental health and also runs various promotions, such as World Mental Health Day, in order to raise awareness of these issues throughout the University community. You can read about the services that are available for support within the University by visiting the Student Support website at: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/services/student_support.

The Student Mental Health Policy can also be accessed on the web at: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/current/documents/stu_mental_health_pol.pdf.

Counselling Service

The Counselling Service offers support to all students and staff of the university. It provides individual counselling of short to medium term duration for any issue or difficulty that students or staff may be experiencing. At the Stoke campus, the service is available 9am-5pm Monday to Thursday (Friday 4.30pm), all year round excluding public holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year. Telephone: Stoke - (01782) 294977.

If you are having personal difficulties that may be affecting your academic work, it is advisable to at least inform your Personal and Academic tutor that you are having problems without necessarily going into the detail of the difficulties. A student consulting a counsellor should ensure that they are not involved in the delivery of the MSc/Professional Diploma award. While students on this award are welcome to use the Counselling Service in times of acute distress or emotional problems, the Counselling Service can not be used to fulfil the requirements for personal therapy.

Healthcare and Accommodation Services

The University also offers medical services and accommodation services. Given that many students for the MSc/Professional Diploma are going to be part-time students, such services may be little used, but they are available if you should wish to use them

The Students Advice Centre (SAC) and Information Centre

The Students' Union operates both a Students Advice Centre and Information Centre at Stoke and Stafford. Advice and Information is one of the core services provided by the Students Union. The Centre offers advice and information on a wide range of issues from immigration to grants as well as offering representation for students. Appointments can be made through the SAC reception, open Monday to Friday 9:30am - 4pm.

The SAC can be contacted at: Stoke - Staffordshire University Students Union, College Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2DE. Tel: (01782) 294469.

The Information Centre can be contacted during the following hours: Stoke - 9am – 7pm, Monday to Friday, Tel: (01782) 294629.

Money Doctors

Money Doctors is a facility within the Students' Union Student Advice Centre. It provides free, independent, impartial and confidential advice to help you to keep your finances healthy. They can:

- *Provide up to date and relevant information on student finance.*
- *check you're receiving everything you're entitled to financially.*
- *assess if you can reduce your expenditure or increase your income.*
- *show you key skills to help avoid pitfalls and keep track with cash.*
- *assist you with looking at how your attitudes and beliefs about money can affect how you use it.*
- *generally help you to become smarter with your money.*

Visit www.staffsunion.com/moneydoctors; email moneydoctors@staffs.ac.uk or call in to the SAC above the Ember Lounge.

Arrangements and support for students with special needs

The Disability Discrimination Act compels Higher Education Institutions (ie. This University!):

- not to treat disabled students less favourably, without justification, than students who are not disabled.
- to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people who are disabled are not put at a substantial disadvantage to people who are not disabled in accessing further, higher and LEA secured education.

A Code of Practice has been produced by the Disability Rights Commission. The Code deals with the implementation of the DDA and gives practical examples of what is

considered to be a reasonable adjustment and what is meant by treating students less favourably. It can be viewed at: <http://www.drc-gb.org/education.aspx>

Disabled Student Support works closely with new applicants who are coming to Staffordshire University or who are thinking about coming to a Higher Education course to help to ensure support arrangements are in place. To make an appointment to discuss your needs or for general queries, please contact us using our details below.

Open from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday with an answer machine service outside these hours.

DisabledStudentSupport
CadmanCourtyard
CadmanBuilding
CollegeRoad
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 2DE

t: 01782294977

e: disability@staffs.ac.uk

or

D001OneStopShop
GroundFloor
BeaconBuilding
Stafford

t: 01785353302

e: disability@staffs.ac.uk

Within Student Support Services, Disability Services provide help, support and information for students and prospective students with special needs. Disability Services can be found in the Student Support building in Winton Square, Station Road (to the right of the North Staffordshire Hotel opposite Stoke-on-Trent railway station). You can make an appointment with the receptionist or contact them by phone on 01782 294977 (internal extension: 4977). Open 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday, all year round (excluding public holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year).

Tel: 01782 294977

Visit: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/student_office/index.php

Access in the University

The University has invested considerable resources into a rolling programme of improvements to physical access, so that you will find easy lift or ramp access to almost all University buildings. Where the existence of some older buildings has presented access problems, positive steps are being taken to improve things. Talking lifts with low level Braille controls and accessible toilet facilities serve main buildings

and dropped kerbs and controlled pedestrian crossings make sure each site is user-friendly.

There are induction loops in main lecture theatres and there is a portable loop system available from Disability Services. Internal stair lifts have been installed in split level areas and fixed seating removed in some areas to allow easier access.

Marked car-parking spaces for disabled drivers are numerous and there is a large minibus with lift access for wheelchair users, which can be booked for a small charge to cover fuel costs through Disability Services.

Disability Services are always keen to hear comments about access to the University and will make every effort to address any difficulties the university environment presents.

Support for Studies

Disability Services may be able to support your studies in a variety of ways. The University is home to the Staffordshire Regional ACCESS Centre, which provides professional assessments of students' learning support and assistive technology needs, and enables you to establish entitlement to additional funding from the Disabled Students' Allowances.

For academic and/or non-academic support, Disability Services can act on your behalf in liaising with LEAs and Social Services departments, who provide support workers. They also provide a management service for the payment of support workers.

They can also provide communication support for deaf and hearing impaired students, specialist dyslexia tuition and academic liaison.

Please note there may be a waiting list for some of these services.

Complaints

Please refer to Staffordshire University's complaints procedure which can be found at: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/images/complaints_tcm45-2021.pdf

Appeals Procedure

If you are unclear why you have not passed an assignment, you should discuss your assignment with one of the award tutors in the first instance. They will be able to explain why you have not reached the required standard. All work is moderated by the External Examiner, and the award tutors can alert them to specific cases when necessary. If you want to make a complaint, you may follow the University Appeals Procedure on: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/images/complaints_tcm45-2021.pdf

Study Skills

The use of study skills is an explicit part of the modules that make up your award. The University can help you develop key skills through their 'Key Skills Initiative'

This is an initiative which aims to gather together a range of resources for staff and for

students and to provide support for the learning and teaching of a wide range of key skills. <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/keyskills>

Information Services deliver learning opportunities in IT and Information Literacy skills, which equip learners with the ability to locate, critically evaluate and use information wisely.

There is guidance on essay writing in the Appendices.

National Student Learning Programme (NSLP): the Students Union runs NSLP to develop students' skills.

<http://www.staffsunion.com/DisplayPage.asp?pageid=3005>

Information Resources

Where to go for help

Subject guides, periodical lists plus links to major websites and other university pages are available from the Information Services web page. If you need any further help please contact Geoff Walton on ext. 4448 or via the electronic help desk.

During term-time the libraries are open Monday to Thursday - 9am - 8pm (staffed) and 8pm - 3am (self service opening), Friday - 9am - 5pm (staffed) and 5pm - 8pm (self service opening), Saturday - 1pm - 6pm (Library closes at 6pm), Sunday - 1pm - 6pm (staffed) and 6pm - 3am (self service opening)

If the University does not hold a title you may request an Interlibrary Loan (ILL). The inter-library lending service provides access to information resources throughout the rest of the country and the rest of the world, making available material that the LIS does not hold itself. There is a cost for this service. In addition an increasing amount of information is now available through internationally available on-line databases.

Further information regarding Information Services can be found at:
<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/infoservices/student/index.php>

Library and Electronic Resources

Outlined below are relevant resources available to you in the library. Most are available electronically (online via the web) some in hard copy. The Information Services (IS) Homepage also provides gateway access to a wealth of related information via the online library web page. Printed guides mentioned below will be available during the induction session in September.

When using these e-resources on campus you do not need a username and password to access them.

When accessing these resources off campus you will be prompted for your student logon details.

If you wish to obtain a guide to these e-resources please contact your Learning Support Librarian Geoff Walton (Room D112, Tel: 01782 294448, e-mail g.l.walton@staffs.ac.uk).

Web resources

Web resources are available on any University PC: electronic journals are available via PsycARTICLES (the 56 journals produced by the APA, ScienceDirect, SwetsWise AND databases such as, PsycINFO and CINAHL.

These can all be accessed on or off campus. (N.B. all relevant journals to which we have electronic access are available via these pages).

All relevant resources can be found via the Online Library IS Homepage at

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/infoservices/library/online/index.php>

This includes database links via the Online databases page and electronic links via the E-journals page.

The Library Catalogue for finding books and journals is also available via this page.

There is also a link to ebooks via this webpage

Full text (online) journals

PsycARTICLES

This database contains full-text access to the APA suite of journals. You can search across the whole list of journals or a selection and you can also browse selected journals too.

This service is currently available via *EBSCO*.

To find PsycArticles you will need to click on the online databases link (under E-resources on the library homepage). Scroll down the list and then click on the EBSCO icon. Click on the grey bar and then select PsycArticles.

SwetsWise (or IngentaConnect)

This is a gateway access to most of our e-journal full text subscriptions (this includes BPS title to which we subscribe but excludes APA titles which are available via PsycARTICLES). You can carry out a keyword search across the whole database (see the Help screens for more details – NB: An electronic resources workshop will be delivered later in the term as part of research methods).

Go to complete A-Z link select S in the alphabetical list and then select Swetswise.

OR

Browse the alphabetical list at via the e-journals A-Z list link:

<http://metalib.staffs.ac.uk/sfxlcl3/a-z/default>

IngentConnect is also available from this page (scroll down the screen to find the list of e-journal providers)

NB: The majority of Psychology journals to which we subscribe is available

electronically.

IS Learning Support Team pages

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/infoservices/library/learn/psyc.php>

This will take you to the psychology subject area

Databases

PsycINFO

An abstracting database of psychological literature dating from 1887 to the present (links are provided to full-text e-journals subscriptions where available). In addition to "core" psychology topics, there are references to health care, education, business, organisational behaviour, consumer behaviour, criminal justice, artificial intelligence, and much more. . Access available on and off campus.

Also accessible at: <http://www.bids.ac.uk>

Web of Knowledge

Access to high impact journal abstracts in the sciences and social sciences. It covers 22,000 journals and also provides seamless links from abstracts to our full-text e-journal content.

BHInet

British Humanities Index online (the Web version of British Humanities Index) provides abstracts from over 400 newspapers, magazines and academic journals. Dating back to 1984, it includes material on the arts, literature, cinema, economics, history, current affairs, popular science, religion, music, and many other areas. Available off campus using your student logon details

Social Care Online

National Institute of Social Work database, full text database of Department of Health circulars (1995 onwards), references from, social work, government and social welfare agencies – available on or off campus only. Ask at the Library Help Desk for a username and password.

Also accessible from the complete A-Z list at:

<http://eresources.staffs.ac.uk/eresources/alph.asp?alph=s>

CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature).

References from journals, books, pamphlets, dissertations in nursing and allied health disciplines (1982 onwards). This also has substantial full-text content

Accessible at:

<http://eresources.staffs.ac.uk/eresources/alph.asp?alph=c>

Select C in the alphabetical list

Medline

PubMed, a service of the National Library of Medicine, provides access to over 12

million MEDLINE citations back to the mid-1960's and additional life science journals. PubMed includes links to many sites providing full text articles and other related resources. Advanced search facility.

Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi>

Newspapers (e.g., UK Guardian and Times etc and international newspapers in full text) available via the Lexis- Nexis database. Also has a wealth of other full-text information across a broad range of subjects including counselling.

Available at: <http://eresources.staffs.ac.uk/eresources/alph.asp?alph=>

ZETOC

This service provides the table of contents to thousands of journals held by the British Library. It covers 15 million article and conference records in the subjects of science, technology, medicine, engineering, business, law, finance and the humanities. The database covers the years from 1993 to date and is updated daily.

Available at: <http://zetoc.mimas.ac.uk/> or from the Online library page

Bookstock

Psychology books are classified at 150 – 159 (located on level 1 Thompson Library).

Counselling books are mostly classified at 361 – 362.82 (located on level 2 Thompson Library) but do check carefully as many book closely related to counselling and psychotherapy are spread through a variety of classifications.

Printed abstracts and indexes

Thompson Library

These can be found on Level 2 adjacent to the Periodicals Collection. They are arranged alphabetically by title and are updated regularly.

Social Sciences Index

Covers 300 English language periodicals- contains references to community health, medicine, psychology and psychiatry (1974 – 2002).

Statistics collection

There is a substantial statistics collection on Level 2 adjacent to the Periodicals Collection. Works are arranged by subject, for example,

Health and Personal Social Services Statistics S362.10941

Information Technology Facilities

Information Services Student IT Learning Centres are fully accessible by wheelchair users. Centres have PCs designated for exclusive use by those students with sight/dyslexia problems. These PCs are equipped with 15" or 17" LCD screens and have specialist software installed. The PCs may be used any time that the IT Learning Centre is open and do not have to be booked. The IT Support Desk staff will provide any assistance needed.

There is specialist software available for dyslexic users and for blind or visually impaired users. The most popular user guides are available in large text format, and other guides can be produced in large text if required. Guides in Braille can be produced on request.

Career Opportunities & Employability

One of our fundamental aims is to provide you with the opportunity to develop your employability while at University - by gaining qualifications which are recognised by employers, and by developing your skills, work-related experience and ability to manage your career. The focus of the Professional Diploma / MSc in Psychotherapeutic Counselling is to allow you to work towards accredited counsellor practitioner status. Counsellors work in an increasingly wide variety of settings: educational establishments at all levels; organisations for people with disabilities; in the work place; youth work; for alcohol, drug and AIDS agencies; general medical practices and other NHS settings; and other counselling services across a wide variety of areas. Some of these jobs may be part-time or full time and may include another role such as welfare worker, teacher or nurse. Counsellors may set up in private practice and work for organisations such as insurance companies or organisational support services on a self-employed basis. The demand for trained counsellors has been increasing and, with regulation and accreditation coming into force in the near future, appropriately qualified counsellors can look forward to an interesting future.

Admissions Criteria

Postgraduate route

1. Applicants for the MSc/Postgraduate course should have a good Honours degree or postgraduate qualifications relevant to counselling, (e.g., Registered Mental Health Nurse, Qualified Social Worker, etc.) and with evidence of working at degree level via a post qualification portfolio.
2. Applicants for the Postgraduate route must have successfully completed a Certificate in Counselling or equivalent. All applicants must obtain a counselling placement whereby they can undertake a minimum of 150 hours of supervised counselling practice during the course.
3. Applicants must have emotional maturity.
4. Candidates should also have a good standard of written and spoken English (IELTS 6.0 or equivalent).
5. Progression onto Year 3 (MSc Year) requires satisfactory completion of the first two years of the programme (Postgraduate Diploma) or equivalent.

Professional route

1. Applications for the Professional Route must have successfully completed a Certificate in Counselling or equivalent. All applicants must obtain a counselling placement whereby they can undertake a minimum of 150 hours of supervised counselling practice during the course.

2. Applicants must have emotional maturity.
3. Candidates should also have a good standard of written and spoken English (IELTS 6.0 or equivalent).

Full-time applications will be considered from students in exceptional circumstances, from those who have substantial counselling experience and qualification.

Selection

Admission onto the Counselling programmes is by selection.

- All candidates are required to fill in a University application form and a Counselling Course application form.
- All prospective students are asked to provide two references of people who know them well and can comment on their helping skills (these must not be close relatives).
- Selection days will take place where the staff team and potential students engage in various activities, such as group exercises, individual interviews, written work.
- Candidates will be notified of the outcome of the application process in writing.