

# Counselling Psychology (Conversion Programme)

**This programme is no longer recruiting.**

Conversion programme for those who already have been awarded Chartered Counselling Psychologist status by the BPS

<b>Final award</b>	Professional Doctorate
<b>Intermediate awards available</b>	
<b>UCAS code</b>	N/A
<b>Details of professional body accreditation</b>	Accreditation by the British Psychological Society
<b>Relevant QAA Benchmark statements</b>	N/A
<b>Date specification last up-dated</b>	July 2012

## Profile

### The summary - programme advertising leaflet

#### Programme content

Counselling Psychology is embedded in the discipline of psychology and concerns itself with applied areas of psychological work, which overlap with the provinces of psychotherapy, clinical psychology, counselling and psychiatry. The Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology is therefore designed to provide opportunities for professional and personal development as a Counselling Psychologist. This is achieved by facilitating the development of a flexible, reflective and critical approach to Counselling Psychology theory, research, and practice. The programme objective is to produce graduates with a solid grounding in the theory, research and clinical skills relevant to Counselling Psychology. The clinical focus of the training is Cognitive Behaviour Therapy with core skills drawn also from Humanistic Therapy. In the third and fourth year of the training trainees will consider Psychodynamic approaches and will be introduced to Cognitive Analytic therapy (CAT). We aim to equip our trainees to meet the unique needs of their clients, they will be able to work while holding ideas in tension and embracing dilemmas within their therapeutic practice.

#### Counselling Psychology at UEL

- An innovative and large school of psychology which contains doctoral programmes in most of the major areas of psychology, i.e. Clinical, Educational & Organisational
- The School of Psychology contains a range of national and international experts within their research specialisms.
- Support with finding clinical training placements
- Graduate with high quality research aimed at publication

#### Entry requirements

The admissions procedure involves a written application, an interview and a research proposal; short listing is conducted by the admissions team. At least two members of academic staff will review each application before a decision is made.

As someone who has already been awarded Chartered Counselling Psychologist status by the BPS, you will be awarded AEL/ advanced standing for the clinical and practice elements of the programme and the time component of taking these studies. No exemption can be claimed against the research part of the programme or in situations where a professional body excludes it. If successful in achieving a place trainees will have to attend the research skills training elements, individual research supervision, annual reviews of progress and fulfil the research requirements of the programme which will include submitting and subsequently defending at an oral viva examination a dissertation of 30,000 (+ 10%) words.

Applicants would also be expected to have fulfilled all the admissions criteria detailed below and to have fulfilled the intended learning objectives in operation by the BPS at the time of them being awarded chartership. In addition applicants must normally have been awarded chartered Counselling Psychologist status with the BPS in the preceding 6 years. Any applicants who obtained Chartered status before that time are advised to contact the research co-ordinator tutor to discuss their application.

#### **Essential criteria:**

- Chartered Counselling psychologist status.
- Competencies in oral and written English which should satisfy the University's entrance requirements
- A high quality research proposal document of 5000 words proposing research which has the capacity to advance the discipline and profession of Counselling Psychology and which the trainee can discuss appropriately at the interview/registration panel
- Evidence that the applicant is capable of Doctoral work (i.e. that the applicant obtained a merit or comparable award for their MSc dissertation) and will complete in the given timescale
- Evidence of ongoing personal and professional development; currently engaging in supervised clinical or research work

In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, then IELTS 7.5 (or equivalent) is required which incorporates a minimum of 7.5 in writing and speaking, together with a minimum of 7.5 in listening and reading. International qualifications will be checked for appropriate matriculation to UK Higher Education postgraduate programmes.

The research proposal will be scrutinised carefully by the programme team for viability before candidates are permitted to proceed with their research as a student on the Conversion Professional Doctorate (PsychD) in Counselling Psychology.

The admissions policy strives to provide equal opportunities to all applicants and does not discriminate on the grounds of age, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Applicants are invited for interview on the basis of relevant experience and academic excellence.

#### **Programme structure**

##### **Conversion Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (PsychD)**

The structure of the Conversion Professional Doctorate Programme for trainees who have been granted entry with advanced standing and been awarded Chartered Counselling Psychologist status from the BPS is as follows: on a part time basis, trainees will attend research skills training sessions, research support groups and individual research supervision over a two year academic period and during this time will submit the doctoral epistemological essay, research progress reviews and attend annual monitoring reviews. They will subsequently submit a 30, 000 word length doctoral thesis and attend the oral viva examination. Professional doctorate programmes can be either 'taught' or 'research' in their emphasis (that is, when measured by student effort). Both have equal status and share the same learning outcomes. You should check with the relevant school to find out where the emphasis is for this particular programme.

### **Learning environment**

The teaching methods used are varied and include: workshops, lectures, discussions, experiential group work, skills work in small groups, dissertation supervision, practical work and self-directed private study. Assessment is ongoing and includes one essay, annual monitoring reviews, doctoral progress assignments and the submission of a doctoral thesis.

The aim of our approach is two-fold; it seeks not only to assess students' progress but also to encourage and foster achievement of high standards of performance in both practice and theory.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is designed to test student progress in developing powers of perception, recall, critical analysis, reflection, flexibility, and creative imagination and to assess professional development. It is intended to be progressive, both encouraging and reflecting an increasing depth of critical understanding and the continuing development of essential professional skills and knowledge.

### **Relevance to work/profession**

Completion of the conversion Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology may enable graduates to enhance their career options.

Successful applicants must ensure they have professional indemnity insurance as this is a condition of enrolment on all parts of the programme.

### **Research/project work**

Candidates for a Professional Doctorate must, prior to the submission of the research derived assessment, successfully complete all assessed elements from the taught part of the programme. Once the research stage of the programme is reached progression will be formally reviewed annually by a Panel comprised of staff with appropriate academic and professional expertise who are independent of the candidate's supervisory team. The School's Research Degrees Sub-Committee and the PGR Review Sub-Committee monitor the reports from these Panels.

The examination of the research component of the Professional Doctorate has two stages: firstly the submission and preliminary assessment of the research; and secondly its defence by oral examination.

Registration of the research component can only take place following a recommendation from the relevant School Research Degrees Sub-Committee to the university PGR Review Sub-Committee of the suitability of the candidate to undertake research, of the programme of research, of the supervision arrangements and of the research environment. These approvals require appropriate academic judgement to be brought to bear on the viability of each research proposal.

### **Added value**

- Good links with NHS trusts, specialist projects, preparation for conference presentations, opportunity to be taught by a range of experts.
- We view our trainees as professionals in training and encourage their active participation in, and ownership of their training.
- Regular reviews and feedback mirrors the programme philosophy of openness, regular review, trainee centred learning and critical analysis
- A programme team with extensive and varied training and clinical experience who are both clinicians and active contributors to the research literature and to developing Counselling Psychology as speciality
- Multi-cultural composition of trainee group, location in a vibrant multi-cultural community and staff and trainee expertise in this area
- The programme prides itself on the time for personal attention and support given to our trainees, (this is detailed further in the section below).

### **Your future career**

Being awarded a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology should enhance opportunities for career advancement

### **How we support you**

Each year group has a programme representative who represents the trainees at programme committee meetings and can represent the trainee group to the programme team. Each year group has a year tutor who is responsible for the smooth running of that year. Trainees are allocated to small research groups. Each trainee is supported in their research by their Director of Studies, supported by the research supervisory team.

Trainees also have access to relevant learning materials available through the learning resource centre which has excellent data bases on line providing many full text articles accessible from UEL or trainees own homes. The learning resource centre also has a range of relevant book and journals and inter-library loans are available. The Graduate School is responsible for providing a focus to the support of our postgraduate research students and for our institution's research and scholarly strategy.

Professional Doctorate students will have at least two and not normally more than three supervisors, who together demonstrate an appropriate range of academic and professional

experience. One supervisor shall be the Director of Studies with responsibility to supervise the candidate on a regular basis.

## **Outcomes**

### **Programme aims and learning outcomes**

#### **What is this programme designed to achieve?**

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

Successful completion of this programme is designed to enable you to;

- Become a responsible, safe and effective practitioner and to maintain high standards of professional and ethical behaviour.
- Show the ability to design, complete and to continue developing research and publications relevant to the development of a knowledge base relevant to Counselling Psychology

#### **What will you learn?**

A candidate who is awarded a Professional Doctorate will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes:

Created and interpreted new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, which extends the forefront of the discipline and merits publication;

Systematically acquired an understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;

The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, application or understanding at the forefront of the discipline and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;

A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry;

Ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

Ability to continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches;

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

## **What is this programme designed to achieve?**

Successful completion of this programme is designed to enable you to obtain;

### **Knowledge Skills**

- A detailed understanding of a range of psychological theories and psychotherapeutic theory
- Ability to integrate psychological and psychotherapeutic theory into clinical and research practice.
- Possess a high level of professional and ethical behaviour, to not work beyond the appropriate level of competence and to abide by the BPS code of ethics

### **Thinking skills**

- The development of an open, flexible and critical approach to Counselling Psychology theory, research and practice
- Trainees will take responsibility for their own learning and self development when they are trainees at UEL and afterwards for their continuing professional development, this may include research, scholarship and contributions to the profession
- Developed skills in critical analysis and be able to apply this to a range of psychological and psychotherapeutic theories
- Adoption of an open and flexible approach to the critique of theory and research

### **Subject-Based Practical skills**

Will have developed;

- an understanding of the principles of ethics, value systems, difference and diversity and to be able to reflect upon this as integral to clinical and research practice
- interpersonal sensitivities, qualities, abilities and competencies required to establish, maintain and conclude professional relationships with research participants
- Presentation of clinical, academic and research topics

### **Skills for life and work (general skills)**

Will have developed;

- Critical and analytical skills
- Recognition of the need for ongoing professional and personal development and the ability to reflect on their own learning process
- The ability to work, safely, effectively autonomously and as part of a team
- Good communication and presentation skills

## **Structure**

### **The programme structure**

#### **Introduction**

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

### **Credit rating**

- Professional Doctorate programmes are not credit rated although the taught elements within them can be.

### **Typical duration**

The normal minimum and maximum periods of registration for the Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology are as follows:

#### **Minimum Maximum**

**Part Time** 33 months 72 months

Registration should take place within 18 calendar months of enrolment

### **How the teaching year is divided**

The conversion programme has two intakes a year one in September at the beginning of semester A and one in February at the beginning of semester B.

### **What you will study when**

Trainees on the Conversion programme, which is for those people who have already been awarded Chartered Counselling Psychologist status will undertake research skills training sessions, research support groups and individual research supervision.

### **Requirements for gaining an award**

### **Masters Award Classification**

Where a student is eligible for an Masters award then the award classification is determined by calculating the arithmetic mean of all marks and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

70% - 100% Distinction

60% - 69% Merit

50% - 59% Pass

0% - 49% Not Passed

## **Assessment**

### **Teaching, learning and assessment**

#### **Teaching and learning**

Knowledge is developed through

- Formal teaching sessions and data review workshops, including small group work, to encourage the development of critical analysis and debate regarding theory and research regarding research methods and epistemological relevance to Counselling Psychology
- The above knowledge will be further generated through additional independent study and student support group work

Thinking skills are developed through

- Group discussions, development of personal and professional reflective research practice
- Independent study and evidence of this integrated into assignments

Practical skills are developed through

- Annual monitoring reviews
- Assessed work

Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through

- Applying theory to practice, understanding research dilemmas and the ability to evaluate this from an evidence based perspective

The integration of the BPS code of ethics is key in all aspects of the learning experience and to apply this consistently throughout training

#### **Assessment**

##### **Knowledge is assessed by**

- Completion of an essay, annual monitoring reviews, research progress reports and submission of a doctoral thesis
- Evidence of critical analysis, will include the following:
- Demonstrated links between theory and practice
- Demonstrated competencies in their chosen speciality

### **Thinking skills are assessed by**

- Evidenced through all aspects of programme work:
- Ability to develop skills within programme work of critical analysis of theory and capacity for original thought
- Rigorous, high quality research

### **Practical skills are assessed by**

- Evidenced through all aspects of programme work
- Evidence of self motivation, reflective capacity and constructive self criticism
- Skills in continued professional and personal development demonstrates core skills in reflective research practice

### **Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by**

- Evidence of an ability to co-operate with colleagues and other professionals in a multi-cultural setting, evidence of using evidence based methods of evaluating their research
- Evidence of ability to work independently

The above are developed through combination of learning opportunities from the programme and fellow students and placement learning.

## **Quality**

### **How we assure the quality of this programme**

#### **Before this programme started**

Before this programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

## **How we monitor the quality of this programme**

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the Quality and Standards Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

## **The role of the programme committee**

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the quality assurance procedures.

## **The role of external examiners**

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

## **Listening to the views of students**

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

In order to monitor and implement change on the programme, various feedback mechanisms have been implemented with staff, trainees and the University administration all involved in the changes.

In sum, any changes in the programme have been due to:

- Changes in the BPS requirements
- University requirements
- Trainee feedback
- Staff feedback
- Developments in the world of Counselling Psychology

To assess the programme we use;

- Module evaluations
- Student representation on programme committees
- Regular weekly staff : trainee meetings

Students are notified of the action taken through:

- circulating the minutes of the programme committee
- a weekly programme meeting

### **Listening to the views of others**

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Feedback from placements/ongoing liaison with placement supervisors
- Attending meetings/conferences with colleagues

## **Further Information**

### **Where you can find further information**

For further information about the programme please contact the Psychology Field Administration Team at [psychology@uel.ac.uk](mailto:psychology@uel.ac.uk)

Further information about this programme is available from:

- The UEL web site <http://www.uel.ac.uk>
- The student handbook (includes all regulations relevant to this programme)
- UEL Manual of General Regulations <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/> (Part 3 Modular Regulations applies only to modules PYM301 to 306)
- UEL Quality Manual <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- Regulations for the Academic Framework <http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/>
- The Graduate School <http://www.uel.ac.uk/gradschool/index.htm/>
- School of Psychology web pages [www.uel.ac.uk/psychology](http://www.uel.ac.uk/psychology)
- British Psychological Society web site <http://www.bps.org.uk>