

DEFINITIVE COURSE RECORD

Course Title	MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling
Awarding Bodies	University of Suffolk
Level of Award ¹	FHEQ Level 7
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies Recognition	None, however students may use classroom hours and placement hours towards individual accreditation with British Association of Psychotherapy & Counselling and British Association of Behavioural & Cognitive Therapies
Credit Structure ²	180 Credits at level 7
Mode of Attendance	Part-time
Standard Length of Course ³	2 years part-time
Intended Award	MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling
Named Exit Awards	Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling (60 credits)
Entry Requirements ⁴	Typical Offer: Bachelors Honours degree 2:2 (or equivalent) Optional Modules* require BACP registration DBS check
Delivering Institution	University of Suffolk

This definitive record sets out the essential features and characteristics of the MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling course. The information provided is accurate for students entering level 7 in the 2024-25 academic year⁵.

Course Summary

This Master's course in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling has been devised to provide a postgraduate level training in counselling and psychotherapy in both CBT and Counselling. Students will usually complete the course in two years, which includes 150 clinical placement hours enabling application towards registration or accreditation with professional bodies such as the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and/or the British Association for Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies (BABCP).

The course is designed for students from core disciplines, for example, counselling, nursing, social work or psychology graduates from any discipline may have the foundational skills required, depending on their prior experience of supportive one to one work in voluntary or work settings. This will be considered at interview and students will be guided, and helped to consider the possible routes to accreditation.

Course Aims

¹ For an explanation of the levels of higher education study, see the [QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(2014\)](#)

² All academic credit awarded as a result of study at the University adheres to the [Higher education credit framework for England](#).

³ Where the course is delivered both full-time and part-time, the standard length of course is provided for the full-time mode of attendance only. The length of the part-time course is variable and dependent upon the intensity of study. Further information about mode of study and maximum registration periods can be found in the [Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards](#).

⁴ Details of standard entry requirements can be found in the [Admissions Policy](#) and further details about Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS) can be found on the [University's DBS webpage](#).

⁵ The University reserves the right to make changes to course content, structure, teaching and assessment as outlined in the [Admissions Policy](#)

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- To promote the development of the student as a reflective, flexible, independent learner with transferable skills for employment in the counselling at work and freelance sector and provide a forum where counsellors from a variety of theoretical orientations and backgrounds are able to share knowledge and experience to their mutual advantage;
- To prepare students towards individual registration and accreditation by the BACP and/or the BABCP and supporting them in the process of planning for and gathering the evidence needed for their applications.
- To prepare postgraduates to undertake counselling roles that require autonomy and assume responsibility – e.g. for appropriate disclosure or referral.
- To provide graduates with appropriate knowledge and skills that are relevant to the regional counselling provision across service user groups and in Local Authority, NHS (both GP Practice and Hospital settings), and independent (private and voluntary) organisations, to meet local, regional, and national employment needs.
- To enable development of an understanding of the significance of community engagement, national guidelines, the NHS structure and inter-professional practice, enabling you to be able to apply this within an operational context.
- To promote an understanding of the work sector and the part that counselling has to play in that and take opportunities for promotion and progression within the sector of workplace and freelance counselling.
- To enable students to meet the growing need for qualified counsellors in colleges, charity organisations and medical settings.
- To become an influential and effective specialist in your field of practice and support students to gain the confidence to practice in a range of settings
- To enable students to develop their understanding and practice and develop their professional integrative perspective.
- To widen participation and promote access to and further progression within higher education to professional and other awards, by individuals who are under-represented in H.E.
- To develop a student's range of intellectual skills reflecting both the ethos of lifelong learning and the rigour required at Masters level.
- To develop a high level of autonomy and self-direction in order to facilitate your ability to demonstrate initiative, originality alongside integrity and ethical judgement in your advanced scholarship.

Course Learning Outcomes

The following statements define what students graduating from the MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling course will have been judged to have demonstrated in order to achieve the award. These statements, known as learning outcomes, have been formally approved as aligned with the generic qualification descriptor for level 7 awards as set out by the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)⁶.

⁶ As set out in the [QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(2014\)](#)

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Knowledge and Understanding	
1	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of complex knowledge and critical understanding of a range of theoretical and methodological approaches to counselling and psychotherapy, and how this can be applied to therapeutic practice including CBT formulation and response to assessment and risk, operationalised with a high standard of skill using a competency-based evaluation to evaluate practice.
2	Exercise initiative to explore the principles of research method, both qualitative and quantitative and its application in counselling and psychotherapy research to appreciate a range of contemporary issues in counselling. Use evidence-based approaches to interventions.
3	Recognise the role of individual differences in psychological functioning and human behaviour and understand how different therapeutic approaches have different relevance for people in a variety of contexts.
4	Produce appropriately informed decisions making in the context of real world issues in working with clients from a diverse range of backgrounds (reflecting the demographic characteristics of the population), as well as having individual differences (e.g. challenging behaviour, intellectual difficulties, disability). Understand ethical, policy and legal issues and justify chosen solutions and associated decisions to address this complexity.
Intellectual skills	
5	Show good critical thinking skills and a notable ability to critically evaluate and interpret a range of information, theories and evidence within a professional context, demonstrating an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge.
6	Demonstrate high levels of critical thinking skills relating to clinical reasoning and the importance of observational and evidence based data.
7	Adopt multiple perspectives and show an integrative approach to understanding counselling in a variety of settings detecting meaningful patterns in behaviour and experience to generate and operationalise clinical questions relating to the therapeutic understanding of human behaviour.
8	Demonstration of in-depth critical evaluation and consideration of the interventions therapists may use whilst implementing research and/or mediations in complex and uncertain environments
Professional Practice/Subject Specific Skills	
9	Manage their own learning effectively, and recognise, find and make good use of academic literature towards the development of an individual professional approach to working with clients as a counsellor and exercise a capacity for independent judgement, thought and action demonstrating self-management.

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10	To develop skills to work in a therapeutically helpful way with individuals with approach specific skills including CBT & TLDT, basing decision making about clients' needs and welfare through evidence-based reasoning
11	Exhibit awareness of ethical principles and procedures and demonstrate these during placement. Development of original knowledge of the governance, ethical and organisational issues of working in psychological practice, and reflecting subsequently on own practice in a work based setting
12	Use competency-based evaluation to monitor own delivery of therapeutic skills in a counselling or psychotherapeutic role. Including the development and maintenance of effective working alliances with clients, such as making assessment, formulation, contracts, and working with endings, with reflection of in-depth learning and development as a practitioner, evaluating the importance of supervision, and utilisation of supervision to further development as well as applying gained knowledge to client work as appropriate;
13	Development of psychological formulations for presenting problems or situations, integrating information from assessments within coherent frameworks. Based on such formulation, implementing psychological interventions appropriate to the presenting problem and to the psychological, cultural and social circumstances of the client(s)

Course Design

The design of this course has been guided by the following QAA Benchmarks / Professional Standards:

- Framework for Higher Education (2014)

Course Structure

The MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling comprises seven modules at level 7. Students with a prior counselling qualification and registration with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) may apply to replace Clinical Practice Skills and Personal and Professional Development in Counselling by taking Bereavement, Loss & Change and Supervision and Continuing Professional Development. These latter two modules may not be available every year depending on student numbers.

Module Specifications for each of these modules is included within the course handbook, available to students on-line at the beginning of each academic year.

	Module	Credits	Module Type ⁷
Level 7			
	Clinical Practice Skills	20	Optional *
	Personal and Professional Development in Counselling	20	Optional *
	Evidence Based Practice and Research Methods	20	Mandatory

⁷ Modules are designated as either mandatory (M), requisite (R) or optional (O). For definitions, see the [Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards](#)

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	Psychodynamic Counselling and Time Limited Practice	20	Mandatory
	Clinical Practice Advanced	20	Mandatory
	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy	40	Mandatory
	Dissertation	40	Mandatory
	Bereavement, Loss and Change	20	Optional **
	Supervision and Continuing Professional Development	20	Optional **

** Optional for students with prior BACP registration

Please note that a DBS is a requirement of the year 1 mandatory module Personal and Professional Development.

Optional modules available in any year will be communicated to you prior to your enrolment to facilitate module choice. Some optional modules may not run in every year of study, and the availability of optional modules depends on the level of student demand, the availability of specialist staff and timetabling constraints. In addition, we regularly review our curriculum to ensure it is up-to-date, relevant, draws on the latest research and addresses contemporary issues. As a result, the modules we offer may change over the course of your degree.

Awards

On successful completion of the course, students will be awarded a MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling. Students who leave the course early may be eligible for a Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling on successful completion of least 60 credits.

Course Delivery

The course is delivered at Ipswich. Students studying part-time on MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling are likely to have approximately 200 hours of tutor-structured learning in each year. The contact hours will be a mix of online lectures, classroom based lecture, seminar, practical activity and guided learning activities through our online learning environment. Students can expect approximately 70% of their tutor-structured learning to be classroom based, with approximately 30% delivered online. Students will also be required to participate in 150 hours/days of work placement in an approved counselling organisation with additional clinical supervision and personal therapy.

Students will be expected to find their own placements with course support. To increase their opportunity to secure a placement, applicants that do not have a core profession are advised to have prior practical voluntary or work experience in a supportive role with individuals.

Students will normally be expected to undertake 12 hours of independent study in an average week but should be prepared for this to vary based on assignment deadlines and class exercises.

Course Assessment

A variety of assessments will be used on the course to enable students to experience and adapt to different assessment styles. The assessment methods used will be appropriate to assess each module's intended learning outcomes. Assessment on the course overall will be approximately 80% coursework (including essays, clinical reports, presentations, group work, reflective learning journals and research projects) and 20% clinical assessments of counselling role play or work that has been recorded. There are no examinations.

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Course Team

The academic staff delivering this course are drawn from a team that includes teaching specialists and current practitioners. All staff are qualified in their subjects with their own specialist knowledge to contribute and are accredited with the appropriate professional body (i.e. BACP, UKCP or BABCP).

Course Costs

Students undertaking MSc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Counselling will be charged tuition fees as detailed below.

Student Group	Tuition Fees
Full-time UK	Not applicable
Part-time UK	£1,010 per 20 credit module
Full-time EU/International	Not applicable
Part-time EU/International	£1,625 per 20 credit module

Payment of tuition fees is due at the time of enrolment and is managed in accordance with the Tuition Fee Policy.

Students are likely to incur other costs for Clinical Supervision and Personal Therapy while on Placement as Trainee Counsellors, amounting to approximately £2,500 per year.

Academic Framework and Regulations

This course is delivered according to the Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards and other academic policies and procedures of the University and published on the [website](#).