

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MA Couple Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Diploma in Couple Psychodynamic Studies (120 Credits) PG Certificate in Couple Psychodynamic Studies (60 Credits) <i>Nb. These are not clinical qualifications</i>
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London and Tavistock Relationships
Home School/other teaching departments	Birkbeck Centre for Counselling
Location of delivery	Central London (in person)
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Part-time (4 years or minimum of 2 years with APEL) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	British Psychoanalytic Council: https://www.bpc.org.uk
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	Not applicable.
Birkbeck Course Code	TMACOPPY_C
HECoS Code	(100495) counselling (100254) psychotherapy (100249) occupational therapy
Start date of programme	September 2023
Date of programme approval	February 2023
Date of last programme amendment approval	N/A
Valid for academic entry year	2023-24
Date of last revision to document	November 2022

Admissions requirements

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

Several years of post-qualifying experience in a helping profession such as counselling, psychology, social work or psychiatry.

We also have a popular two-year **advanced standing** programme for qualified psychoanalytic psychotherapists (child, adult or group).

A requirement of the course is that all students undertake **personal psychoanalytic psychotherapy of at least 3 times a week** usually commencing at least 1 year before starting the course. This requirement may be modified for entrants with Advanced Standing. Psychotherapists must be experienced members of the British Psychoanalytic Council and will need to be approved by the Training Committee. The current cost of personal psychoanalytic psychotherapy is likely to range between £50 to £90 per session. Fees are negotiated directly between the student and the therapist.

Course aims

Academic

- To provide students with the advanced theoretical knowledge required to become professional couple psychoanalytic psychotherapists
- To provide the academic requirements of the training leading towards accreditation with the British Psychoanalytic Council (BPC)

Clinical/Professional

- To develop the ability to practice couple psychoanalytic psychotherapy with sufficient self-reflexive capacity to take account of unconscious processes
- To respond appropriately to matters of risk and safeguarding

Self-development

- To develop an analytical understanding of self and other, and relational dynamics, via students' own experience of intensive (three times a week or more) personal analytic psychotherapy

Course structure

Year 1

In year 1 students study the development of psychoanalytic thought and attend a clinical skills seminar where they practice the techniques needed to work psychoanalytically with couples. Personal development happens in their own personal therapy. Tutorials enable learning to be embedded. In addition, students begin clinical work in person at TR's premises in the City of London and attend weekly individual supervision and a clinical seminar where they discuss each other's work. Students often undertake their Infant Observation in this year, attending a weekly seminar to support this. They also undertake their psychiatric placement, if needed.

Years 2 & 3

In years 2 and 3 the clinical work with couples continues under weekly individual supervision. They attend Couple Theory seminars and Clinical Seminars in both years. Tutorials and personal therapy continue as before. There are also a series of Essentials workshops that focus on particular aspects of the work such as sexuality, race and diversity, clinical technique, and research.

Year 4

Year 4 is the MA dissertation year where students identify a clinical topic of interest and address it through an extended case study, a theoretical study, or a piece of small-scale research. Student's clinical work, supervision, clinical seminars, tutorials, and personal therapy all continue until qualification.

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Part-time – 4 years					
Year 1					
7	SSPA166S7	Couple and individual and counselling and psychotherapy: Skills	30	Core	Terms 1-3
7	SSPA167S7	Couple and Individual Counselling and Psychotherapy: The Development of Psychoanalytic Thought	30	Core	Terms 1-3
Year 2					
7	SSPA168S7	Couple and Individual Counselling and Psychotherapy: Couple Theory 1	30	Core	Terms 1-3
Year 3					
7	SSPA169S7	Couple and Individual Counselling and Psychotherapy: Couple Theory 2	30	Core	Terms 1-3
Year 4					
7	SSPA171D7	Theory, Practice and Research of Couple Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy	60	Core	Terms 1-3

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Lectures, seminars, group work, self-directed study, assessed written work, presentation of cases, assessed group presentations, tutorials, presentation of seminar papers workshops, experiential work, and seminar papers. Reading of key texts for each week. Lectures/seminars introducing psychoanalytic thinkers and key theoretical developments. Critical discussion of key texts.

Individual supervision of clinical work, Presentation of students' clinical work to a weekly group of students, led by a Senior Couple Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist, in order to focus on the detail of and reflection about interactive processes observed both in the consulting room and in the workshop. Clinical research seminar Self-directed learning Self-directed reading. Tutorials that integrate the learning from across Components.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

Process Recording/Recorded Session Analysis and evaluation, Couple Theory Paper, Clinical Practice and Theory Paper, Seminar review paper, Dissertation

This assessment goes alongside professional assessment of your clinical practice. To obtain the MA you must pass both the academic and clinical parts of the training/programme.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

Knowledge

Assess the core issues that can be presented by clients

Demonstrate an understanding of key psychoanalytic models of the mind

Demonstrate an understanding of the historical development of psychoanalytic thought

Demonstrate an understanding of theory that underpins couple psychoanalytic psychotherapy

Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of psychoanalytic theories of the couple relationship

Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of complex theoretical concepts, and their application to the couple relationship

Critically reflect upon an extended range of psychoanalytic thought/research findings and evaluate their relevance to the couple relationship and practice, including the sexual relationship

Demonstrate an understanding of psychosexual development and sexuality through the life cycle

Demonstrate theoretical knowledge of causes of violence and aggression within couple relationships

Demonstrate theoretical knowledge of issues around separation, divorce, conflict and the impact on family life.

Thinking skills

Identify common steps and stages in the therapeutic process

Identify and justify the choice of a particular style and approach for particular clients and presenting problems

Distinguish between different models of the mind

Make links between psychoanalytic theory of the individual and the couple

Critically evaluate a wide range of advanced psychoanalytic concepts and apply them to the couple relationship

Identify and evaluate how defence mechanisms develop and operate

Analyse the complex roots of troubled relationships and psychosexual problems

Subject-based practical skills

Demonstrate ability to plan and prepare work with clients

Represent couple and family of origin in a Genogram

Demonstrate capacity to discuss and critique different theoretical perspectives

Discuss the relevance of different psychoanalytic approaches to their clinical work or observations

Demonstrate an advanced ability to work with couples utilising appropriate theoretical frameworks

Demonstrate advanced critical evaluation and reflectiveness in relation to their own thinking and that of others.

Illustrate ability to work with couples and individuals in relationship and psychosexual therapy utilising applicable theoretical frameworks

Illustrate ability to work effectively as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist, including a level of reflexive functioning that takes account of unconscious processes

Illustrate ability to respond appropriately to matters of risk and safeguarding

Skills for life and work (general skills)

Demonstrate an understanding and awareness of students own impact on clients

Demonstrate integrated learning as preparation for work as therapist

Present and critically discuss their thinking with others

Demonstrate the independent and research minded capacity required for seminar presentations, written submissions and for their own development

Critically evaluate a wide range of theoretical concepts related to couple and psychosexual therapy, using examples from clinical practice

Careers and further study

- Professional couple psychoanalytic psychotherapists are qualified to work in either the Statutory or Voluntary Sector and as a private practitioner in the field of couple psychoanalytic psychotherapy
- You will be eligible to apply for registration with the British Psychoanalytic Council (BPC)
- You will be eligible for registration with the College of Sexual and Relationship Therapists (COSRT)
- Graduates are eligible for TR's training in Individual Psychodynamic Psychotherapy (BPC), for advanced standing into TR's Psychosexual Training (COSRT) as well as advanced standing into the Individual Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Training at the British Psychotherapy Foundation (BPC).
- You will become part of Tavistock relationships alumni group, and take advantage of their high quality CPD and conferences which will help you keep on top of recent developments in the field and to further develop your clinical practice

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Personal tutoring is offered throughout the training by Tavistock Relationships. TR offers a range of CPD events that students are able to attend. This links them to TR's wider learning community and gives them further exposure to cutting-edge ideas and clinical practice.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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