

CE358-30 Working with Mental Health and Different Client Groups

26/27

Department

Centre for Lifelong Learning

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Cathryn MacLeod

Credit value

30

Module duration

30 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module will build on your understanding of the context of the professional practice of counselling and psychotherapy, continuing to explore ethical, legal and procedural issues in practice, and focusing particularly on mental health, the ways we conceptualise, categorise and treat mental health and how the practice of counselling intersects with other services and provision regionally and nationally. You will explore different ways mental health has been conceptualised historically, culturally and with reference to different theories of counselling, and to evaluate the impact that these conceptualisations have had on people from different groups and backgrounds. You will critically appraise the impact that your own understanding, assumptions and experiences of mental health and ill health could have on your clients and your practice, aligning with QAA benchmark statement 3.8

Your understanding of the procedural and organisational systems around mental health in the UK will equip you for working professionally at a high level in counselling and psychotherapy, and to be able to work effectively within a multi-disciplinary team.

You will explore your own experiences and develop your self awareness, in line with QAA requirement 3.8, in small facilitated professional development groups.

Module aims

- To understand some definitions, categorisations, diagnoses and treatments currently used in the mental health system in the UK
- To articulate different ways in which mental health has been defined and conceptualised historically, culturally and theoretically
- To explore in depth the potential unequal impact of conceptualisations of mental health on different client groups
- To reflect on own experience, perception and conceptualisation of mental health and its impact on life and practice
- To demonstrate ability to work ethically and safely with clients who may be experiencing mental ill health
- To understand how to make appropriate assessments, to manage risk, and to follow referral pathways if necessary
- To develop professional ability to work in multi-disciplinary teams and share information appropriately
- To evaluate and explore own practice through a case study

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

- Mental health services in the UK and beyond, categorisations, diagnoses and potential treatments
- Medical, bio-psycho-social and non-diagnostic models of conceptualising mental health
- Working with clients with a mental health diagnosis, or who may be prescribed psychiatric medication
- Working affirmatively within neurodiversity
- Making professional decisions around working ethically and safely with mental health - assessing suitability for counselling, managing risk, and understanding potential referral pathways
- Theoretical, historical and cultural ways of conceptualising mental health and an understanding of how these conceptualisations have unequally impacted different client groups
- Reflection on own attitudes to and experience of mental health and how it impacts the therapeutic process
- Reflection on and evaluation of own professional practice and relational processes

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Critically appraise ways in which mental health has been conceptualised historically, theoretically and culturally
- Explain how conceptualisations of mental health have impacted on different client groups
- Reflect upon own experiences of, and attitudes towards, mental health systems and therapeutic processes
- Demonstrate ability to work ethically and safely with clients who may be experiencing mental

ill health

- Evaluate own professional practice

Indicative reading list

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

Interdisciplinary

Conceptualisations of mental health and disability from various sociological perspectives and models.

Working in multi-disciplinary teams - understanding roles and perspectives of other professionals.

Subject specific skills

The module aligns with QAA Counselling and Psychotherapy Subject Benchmarks (2022) Section 3 as it relates to understanding and working with mental health and well being:

3.9 Professional development

- maintaining the ethical principles that underpin counselling and psychotherapy
- integrating into practice legal, professional and organisational requirements pertaining to equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion
- recognising the social, political and cultural context of their practice
- ensuring a consistent commitment to continuing professional and personal development, including self-awareness and fitness to practice
- recognising their own professional strengths and limitations that may affect therapeutic practice, and developing appropriate self-support and self-care strategies
- recognising and coping with uncertainty, responding therapeutically while maintaining firm boundaries
- ensuring that the method of delivery and approach of therapy used is consistent with the client's needs
- recognising responsibilities to the client, employers, the counselling and psychotherapy professions, and to society at large
- being competent in the use of process and outcome measures to critically reflect on and evaluate their work as counsellors and psychotherapists

3.8 Personal development

- the ability to identify personal triggers in the work with clients
- the awareness of the experience of being a client
- an awareness of how the trainee's own experiences (past and present) can impact the therapeutic process and can be affected by factors such as age, family position, culture, disadvantage, gender, race, sexuality and social position
- to understand needs of self as differentiated from those of the client
recognising the need for, and engaging with, their own personal support and therapy, as appropriate

- recognising limitations, power and strength
- ### 3.7 Professional practice skills
- assessment and therapeutic exploration
 - contracting and maintaining boundaries
 - formulation and client conceptualisation
 - psychotherapeutic strategies and interventions
 - monitoring, evaluation, and research
 - professional administration for employed and self-employed practice (record keeping, note-taking, letter and report-writing)

3.10 Research

- Integrating and consistently applying a comprehensive, in-depth and research informed body of knowledge in their practice with clients and in supervision
- drawing on the full extent of international research to engage with diversity and inclusion

The module aligns with BACP Accreditation requirements B3.5 - 3.7

(B3.5) Introduce students to the concept of a continuum of mental wellbeing through severe psychological and emotional stress that integrates an awareness of the influence and impact of social identities, discrimination, oppression and cultural factors on mental health and the interrelatedness of psychological and physical symptoms and/or expressions.

(B3.6) Understand core issues relating to the role of psychiatric drugs, their effects and possible side effects, dependence and withdrawal, the implications these have for clients in counselling/psychotherapy and the potential impact on the therapeutic process.

(B3.7) An understanding of the work and roles of other professionals in the mental health field to prepare them for working effectively in multidisciplinary teams.

including:

- Carrying out initial and ongoing assessment of client's problems including the client's suitability for the therapy being offered and the skills of the student (including for OPT working).
- Conceptualise, evaluate and take account of a range of client issues, mental health problems, symptoms of psychological distress, functioning and coping styles (with due understanding of cultural norms), during initial assessment and throughout therapy.
- Review and evaluate initial assessment decisions and if necessary, modify the work with the client, or conduct a referral.
- Devise and use a comprehensive initial and ongoing risk assessment strategy of clients' and (or) others' safety, while complying with safeguarding guidelines appropriate to the therapy setting, whilst recognising own limits of competence.
- Collaborate with clients and (or) others to assess risks, needs and strengths when working with suicidal ideas and behaviour, self-harming ideas and behaviour and risk of harm from third parties e.g. situations of domestic abuse.
- Be aware of possible responses and meanings for the client if external action is required e.g. when implementing risk management procedures.

B4.9

- Recognise symptoms of trauma and acknowledge own limits of competence in this regard.
- Be aware of ethical and legal responsibilities when working with clients who are assessed as being at risk of self-harm or of harming others. This should take account of all relevant and current statutory and/or government guidance.
- Understand and work with suicidal ideation and self-harming behaviours, including 'unconscious' processes and perceptions.

I. Develop the ability to contain clients in crisis by offering self-care strategies and making clear arrangements for future contact.

B5 Professional context:

(B5.2) Awareness of the wider political, social, legal and organisational framework for therapeutic practice, to ensure they are able to work appropriately in different counselling and psychotherapy contexts, including the Equality Act and the Mental Health Act.

(B5.3) Understand the role boundaries and issues around communication and collaboration within a multidisciplinary team setting including

a. Using clear and appropriate communication and language when providing information which may be complex, sensitive and (or) contentious.

b. Team working skills and effective participation in inter-professional and multi-agency approaches to mental health where appropriate.

c. Working in multidisciplinary teams with other professionals to enhance therapeutic outcomes.

B6.11

c. Awareness of the nature and impact of prejudice, discrimination and systemic oppression on mental health

d. Ability to reflect with humility upon one's own identity, culture, values and worldview, and the influence of these on therapeutic work

f. Ability to make use of and reflect upon life experience

g. Capacity to cope with varying emotional demands

h. Ability to be emotionally prepared for intense and complex work, which requires sustained reflexivity

Transferable skills

The module develops key employability and academic skills linked to the Warwick Award Core Skills.

Working ethically and safely with others, applying knowledge of legal and professional guidelines to practice

Working effectively and appropriately sharing information in multi-disciplinary teams, with a developing understanding of complex organisational systems

Self reflection and evaluating own professional practice

Understanding of difference and diversity and systems of privilege and oppression

Developing self awareness through understanding of own mental health needs and exploring potential self-care responses

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	16 sessions of 1 hour 15 minutes (7%)
Total	300 hours

Type	Required
Supervised practical classes	23 sessions of 1 hour (8%)
Private study	177 hours (59%)
Assessment	80 hours (27%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Reading regarding ethical, legal and mental health considerations. Personal journalling.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

Assessment component	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Mental Health Reflective Assignment	40%	32 hours	Yes (extension)
Reflecting on own experience and conceptualisations of mental health systems and wellbeing, with reference to various theoretical understandings, considering implications for practice and self care.			

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Case Study	60%	48 hours	Yes (extension)
Write a clinical case study critically reflecting on your work with a client in placement, demonstrating your application of learning about mental health and wellbeing in the therapeutic setting.			

Weighting

Study time

**Eligible for self-
certification**

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Tutor feedback through in text comments, summative feedback on assignments

Availability

Pre-requisites

To take this module, you must have passed:

- All of
 - [CE1F1-30 Contextualising the Therapeutic Relationship](#)
 - [CE292-30 Ethics of Helping and the Therapeutic Relationship](#)

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 3 of UCEA-X1GB Undergraduate Counselling and the Psychotherapeutic Relationship