

MSc Mental Health: Psychological Therapies

Notes for applicants

Who is this course for?

This course is designed for people who currently work, or plan to work, in mental health services in the UK and/or internationally. It focuses on the role of psychological therapy – the “talking cure” as Freud called it – as an efficient and effective alternative to medication and inpatient stays for people with mental disorders. The teaching covers a wide range of psychological therapies, ranging from psychoanalysis to acceptance and commitment therapy, from both a biomedical and a psychosocial perspectives, and there is considerable overlap with our sister course on Cultural and Global Perspectives on Mental Healthcare. This means that the course has an intercultural focus and seeks to develop cultural competency and an awareness of the importance of culturally-aware mental healthcare within students.

Is this course accredited?

This is an academic course, not a clinical training course, and is particularly suited towards students either interested in extending their existing practice, or intending to undertake further clinical training such as a DPsych or a DClinPsy in clinical or counselling psychology. In the UK there are no MSc programmes accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) or any other body that will confer full clinical registration within one or two years of study. Rather, this course is intended to provide students with a bridge between their current learning and the current practice and evidence base of the delivery of psychological therapies.

What are the study hours?

For both full and part-time onsite students, the contact hours for the course are one 9-hour day per week, meaning that it is suitable for those who wish to combine their studies with an existing clinical workload. Part-time students take two 60-credit modules in the first year of study, with the third module and the dissertation deferred to the second year. This means that the experience is less ‘intense’ but that there is still a significant commitment in the first two semesters of the first year. For distance learning students, contact hours are reduced to one four-hour seminar per week, but students are also expected to put aside sufficient time to watch the pre-recorded lectures and complete course reading.

Clinical Placements

All students will undertake a clinical placement as part of their studies, and two written assignments are based on this placement. Students are expected to source their own placement with a provider, undertake the relevant background checks (in the UK this is the ‘DBS’ – disclosure and barring service check) and arrange the placement independently: we believe this is very important preparation and experience for the competitive world of mental health work. However, the department can assist in cases where a student is ‘stuck’, and no student to date has failed completely to locate and undertake a placement. The format is the same for Distance Learning students who typically arrange their placements locally.

I am an international student, should I take this course?

A high proportion of our students on this course are overseas. As long as you have a good undergraduate degree (equivalent to a UK 2:2 or higher) and a demonstrable interest in mental health services, you should feel confident in making an application to study. We recognise that it can be

harder for international students who are new to the UK to locate a placement in/around London; however we have a number of partners (including the QMUL international office) who help support students in this respect. One thing to note however is that DBS checks often take longer for international students so we encourage you to start thinking about placements as soon as you are accepted onto the course.