

Psychological Therapies: Supervised Clinical Work Placement

What is supervised clinical work?

The Psychological Therapies pathway requires you to undertake some supervised clinical work. You will need to find a placement where you can undertake supervised clinical work involving psychological practice. The amount of sessions required will be either of the following: with one client (25-40 sessions), with two different clients (12-20 sessions each), a group of clients (25-40 sessions). A combination of individual and group sessions combined (totalling to 25-40 sessions). Students are expected to complete their placement sessions by the following May.

Note: You must organise the supervised clinical work placement yourself, as part of this assignment is to develop your skills in independently researching information and contacting different organisations. Because of the nature of the work and commitment involved, some organisations may require you to attend for longer each week or to make a longer commitment than necessary just for the purposes of your assignments. This is for you to negotiate, but do bear in mind that placements will only provide training and supervision to individuals where it is also beneficial to the service, so a longer commitment may be required by some services and will be useful for you to gain further skills and experience.

At the end of Module 1, you are expected to provide a written account detailing your supervised clinical work and your work plan. We recommend that students plan to start their placements before you hand in your first written account, so that you have enough time to complete up to 40 sessions. At the end of your placement you must provide a report of your supervised clinical work with clients, reflecting on the processes, challenges and successes and what you would do differently later in the course.

If you are already working in a clinical setting (e.g. the NHS) or a setting where you offer help or advice to people (e.g. a social care or voluntary organisation), it is likely that you will be able to organise a supervised clinical placement with that organisation. *Crucially the placement needs to be clearly defined and different from your usual work role.*

Note: Because of the time taken to organise placements, we recommend that you organise this and contact relevant organisations as soon as possible from the start of term in September.

Suggestions for Supervised Clinical Work

The aim of the supervised clinical work is to provide experience of developing a helpful and supportive relationship with individuals in distress. Although some of you will be in contact with psychological therapy services and have some prior experience, and so will take up CBT, or group work, CAT or a similar therapy, some of you may not have this previous experience. However, our definition of “therapy” is very broad and does not just apply to psychotherapy or psychology services treating people with disorders. It could also include:

- Working as a befriender or mentor with an individual that you meet once per week.
- Working as a support worker to help vulnerable individuals or families to address social problems they experience.
- Doing behavioural activation or exposure work with clients who experience anxiety or need assistance in building up confidence in an area of their life.

The clinical work must be supervised so that you develop some reflective understanding of therapeutic processes. Your placement must therefore include a named supervisor. The course does not provide any clinical supervision to students, nor does it stipulate any formal processes for clinical supervision.

Your choice of supervised clinical work placement will partly depend on your own skills, experience and interests. If you are already a practicing counsellor or therapist you may want to choose a more

demanding placement than if you have very little therapy experience. Previous placements have included:

- Conducting assessments and interventions for a substance use charity.
- Working as a support worker in a community domestic violence project.
- Providing motivational interviewing in an NHS substance misuse service.
- Providing Cognitive Analytic Therapy in an NHS psychotherapy department.

You will provide a written statement of the placement plan by the end of Module 1, although you may already have started if you are a full-time student. At the end of Module 2, you must submit reports of your supervised clinical work with clients, showing your experiential and theoretical learning. These reports will be marked.

Students will require a letter signed by their placement supervisor confirming that they have undertaken the Clinical Work Placement; this needs to be submitted with the placement report.