

# SECTION 1:

## Doctoral Course in Clinical Psychology

### Core Purpose, Values and Philosophy

#### Core purpose

The core purpose of the training course is to produce clinical psychologists trained to a high standard in academic, clinical and research domains, enabling them to meet the standards described by the HCPC Standards of Education and Training and Standards of Proficiency and the accreditation criteria of the British Psychological Society for Chartered status, and to qualify them for work within the National Health Service (NHS) and in other clinical settings.

#### Values

The values of the Course are aligned with those set out in the following codes, all of which can be found on the Course website:

- the HCPC Standards of Conduct
- the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct
- UCL Student Disciplinary Code
- the NHS Constitution
- Health Education England's (2021) Position Paper on Aligning Clinical Psychology Training to the Priorities of the NHS Long-Term Plan

The values embodied in these codes are reflected at all stages and in all domains of the programme – in its application processes, in the content and delivery of the teaching programme, in clinical placements and in the professional and personal support offered to trainees.

The NHS constitution sets out some core values which can be summarised as follows:

- putting clients first and involving everyone who is relevant to their care
- speaking up in the client's interests when things go wrong
- affording respect and dignity to clients, their families and fellow professionals, valuing them as individuals and respecting their aspirations and commitments
- offering resources to the benefit of the whole community and ensuring that people are not excluded or discriminated against
- offering high-quality, safe and effective care
- offering care that is compassionate and responsive to the needs of clients, their families and carers
- improving health and well-being and people's experience of the NHS

#### Philosophy

1. The Course has a pluralistic ethos: it aims to expose trainees to a variety of approaches within clinical psychology rather than just one. This is designed to ensure

that trainees can respond flexibly to the demands that will be made of them in a rapidly changing NHS.

2. The Course aims to promote strong links between theory and practice and is organised to ensure that the clinical, academic and research components of training are well integrated. Reflecting this concern:

- a) Diversity in teaching methods is encouraged, matching the method to the material to be taught.
- b) Skills teaching is integrated within the academic programme, along with the use of experiential teaching methods.
- c) Trainees are encouraged to adopt a hypothesis-testing approach to their work and to adopt a thoughtful and critical approach to the use of research evidence concerning the effectiveness of therapeutic techniques.

3. The Course endeavors to enable trainees to achieve high standards of clinical competence. To ensure high quality and relevance to the field, teaching is organised by a mixture of academic staff and clinical psychologist practitioners, many of whom have a national reputation in their fields.

4. The course aims to prepare trainees for systemic leadership, helping students develop a range of capacities that will enable them to drive service improvement in their clinical careers.

5. The Course aims to promote good practice in teaching and research across a wide range of specialties, and to ensure that teaching of specialties with recruitment difficulties is of the highest quality.

6. The Course tries to ensure that trainees can practice effectively and equitably in the context of the diversity that characterises clinical populations in London and the UK more widely. The promotion of equal opportunities in the selection of trainees and in teaching is an important feature of the Course philosophy, and a theme of the programme. Further, the development of our trainees' cultural competence is a crucial element of the programme, to foster their development as practitioners who can understand and help address cultural and social inequalities.

7. The Course aims to ensure that trainees develop a professional role that is both active and collegial, and hence a capacity to understand the roles and approaches of professional colleagues, and an ability to maintain good working relationships which promote the psychological well-being of clients.

8. The Course aims to foster an awareness of, and a responsiveness to, the needs of service users and carers, both through its teaching and by encouraging trainees routinely to consult with service users in order to understand their perspectives and needs.

9. As is consistent with the learner-led model of teaching appropriate for students at this level of training, the Course aims to be responsive to feedback at all levels of its organisation. The Course aims to ensure that its systems of assessment and evaluation of trainees also accord with best practice in this area and that trainees are involved in the assessment process.

10. The Course aims to foster an enthusiasm for learning and an openness to questioning, in teaching, in clinical practice and in research. Trainees are encouraged to follow up their interests and to develop personally over the three years of training.

11. The Course aims to make research an integral part of training by developing trainees' capacity actively to make use of available research, and equipping them with the skills to contribute to the evidence-base of the profession. The Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology has an internationally recognised research programme and trainees are encouraged to work with members of staff to maintain the same high standards for their own research

12. The Course aims to be responsive to its purchasers (Health Education North Central and East London) and to Clinical Psychology services in the London region who offer supervision to trainees and employment to graduates from the course.

14. It is widely recognised that clinical psychology training can be stressful and the course endeavours to ensure that good sources of support are available to trainees. As is consistent with the general course philosophy, no one approach is favoured, but rather a variety of systems (including access to personal therapy) are offered.

The standards set out above are those by which the Course wishes to be judged. The measure of our success is our capacity to enable trainees to develop personal and professional competences congruent with our aspirations, and to become effective practitioners who can apply their skills for the benefit of service users and carers and go on to shape clinical practice and research in the future.