

Knowledge of range of presenting and diagnostic issues in individuals with personality disorder

Knowledge of factors relevant to the development of personality disorders

An ability to draw on knowledge of the social, psychological, family and biological factors associated with the development and maintenance of mental health problems, and specifically the development and maintenance of personality disorders

An ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which mental health problems can impact on functioning and individual development (e.g. maintaining intimate, family and social relationships, or the capacity to maintain employment and study)

an ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which the problems of people with personality disorder can impact on family functioning.

An ability to draw on knowledge of factors that promote well-being and emotional resilience (e.g. good physical health, high self-esteem, secure attachment to caregiver, higher levels of social support)

An ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which mental health problems can manifest interpersonally, so as to avoid escalating or compounding difficult or problematic behaviour that is directly attributable to the client's mental health condition

Knowledge of presenting issues

An ability to draw on knowledge that the individuals with personality disorder have enduring difficulties in areas such as:

interpersonal functioning

ways of perceiving and interpreting self, other people and events

the range, intensity, lability, and appropriateness of emotional responses

impulse control

Knowledge of diagnostic criteria

An ability to draw on knowledge that to meet diagnostic criteria the client's difficulties should:

be long-standing and pervasive

be present from adolescence or early adulthood

be apparent across a broad range of personal and social situations

lead to significant distress or impairment in social, occupational or other important areas of functioning

An ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which personality disorders are classified and clustered in major classification systems (i.e. the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) or the International Classification of Diseases (ICD)) and the specific criteria for establishing a diagnosis

An ability to draw on knowledge of the advantages and limitations of categorical approaches to the classification of personality disorders, e.g.:

that personality disorders can be viewed as lying on a continuum with one another, with other mental health disorders and with normal personality functioning

that comorbidity both with other Axis II presentations and with Axis I disorders is common

that the reliability of diagnosis of specific personality disorders can be low, particularly from episode to episode

An ability to draw on knowledge that specifying the thresholds at which problematic personality traits become clinically significant can represent a clinical challenge, and is a judgement based both on:

the degree to which these traits are inflexible and maladaptive

the degree to which these traits have a significant impact on functioning