

# Postgraduate Diploma in CBT for Severe Mental Health Problems Commissioned by NHS England



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# Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for Severe Mental Health Problems (SMHP) commissioned by NHS England

The NHS in England considers it a priority to provide high-quality evidence-based psychological interventions to individuals diagnosed with severe mental illnesses such as psychosis bipolar disorder eating disorders and personality disorders.

The postgraduate diploma and certificate programmes offered provide practitioners with the skills necessary to deliver high-quality CBT interventions to individuals experiencing severe mental health problems. These programmes are Level 2 accredited with the British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) which means that graduates receive a recognised high-quality qualification allowing them to practice and deliver CBT.

This postgraduate diploma provides training in cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) for people with severe mental health problems (SMHP) and is designed for mental health and social care staff who have no or limited training in delivering formal CBT interventions. The programme consists of three pathways and students follow just one of these routes:

- CBT for Psychosis and Bipolar Disorder (CBT-PBP)
- CBT for Eating Disorders (CBT-ED)
- CBT for Personality Disorders (CBT-PD)



# Curriculum



## First year core modules:

### **PSY0074 Fundamentals of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**

**(30 credits)**

This module covers theoretical and research literature on central concepts and methods of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and practical teaching of fundamental skills for the application of CBT. Skills based competencies are developed through small group experiential work and role-plays in workshops, linked to group supervision by programme members and individual/group supervision in the place of work.

### **PSYC0079 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Depression (Behavioural Activation)**

**(15 credits)**

The module aims to develop critical knowledge of the theoretical concepts, methods, and associated research literature for behavioural activation, as well as practical competency in implementing this technique with service-users with severe mental health problems. This module provides trainees with knowledge and understanding of the ways in which depression presents, along with the knowledge and skills required for its assessment, and for the development of cognitive behavioural formulations that guide behavioural activation. It introduces trainees to the behavioural activation model and equips them with the skills to implement this intervention, and to evaluate its outcome. Skills based competencies are developed through small group experiential work and role-plays.

### **PSYC0075 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Anxiety Disorders**

**(15 credits)**

The module provides students with a strong foundation in the clinical procedures of CBT for a broad range of anxiety disorders (including social phobia, PTSD, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and mixed anxiety-disorder presentations), incorporating current research and innovative developments in clinical practice. Skills-based competencies are developed through small group experiential work and role-plays in workshops, linked to group supervision by programme members and individual/group supervision in the place of work.

## Second year core modules:

In the second year, trainees begin their specialist training in either CBT for Eating Disorders, CBT for Personality Disorders or CBT for Psychosis and Bipolar Disorder.

Each stream is comprised of two modules. The first is a fundamentals module in which the key aspects of assessment, formulation and treatment for each specialism are introduced.

The second module is an implementation module which takes trainees further into specialist treatments and interventions.

These modules are designed to build on the first-year modules to give trainees an in-depth experience of the latest evidence-based techniques and models of each specialism. Experts in the field who are experienced clinicians teach these modules, helping trainees build their skills to become competent CBT practitioners.

View our Certificate prospectus [here](#)



# What our trainees say



## What our trainees say:

- ▶ *'Supervision has been robust and my supervisor has been great at building my confidence in a constructive and human manner'*  
**Fiona Hunnisett, Eating Disorders Practitioner**
- ▶ *'The course has really helped me look at my clients from a therapy and formulation perspective which is really helpful when working with people when severe mental health problems. I've developed as a practitioner and in my role and look forward to what future holds'*  
**Jonathan Talsma, Mental Health Nurse**
- ▶ *'Working with clients from diverse backgrounds, CBT has enabled me to adopt an open minded and flexible approach by taking in to account each individuals unique experiences, beliefs and values'*  
**Anita Kwapong, Mental Health Nurse**
- ▶ *'Supervision has been fantastic and it has helped me reflect on my own learning, developing my skills and to think about difficulties that come up in the therapeutic relationship'*  
**Katy Dow, Clinical Practitioner**



# Trust and service requirements



## Trust and service requirements

Trust and services will need to:

- ▶ Release staff member from duties for 1 day for UCL academic teaching plus an additional approximately 2 days to see clients within the staff member's service. The service requirement is somewhat flexible throughout the year and will vary from 1 to 2 days depending on the stage of the course and the staff member's academic and clinical requirements. The time seeing CBT training cases is part of the NHS England specification for the CBT training. For some staff this time seeing CBT training cases may not be a major change (they may continue to see the same type of clients, but now in CBT under supervision rather than in another type of psychological intervention). For many staff this may require backfilling their previous work at least for the first year where they may need to be seeing different types of clients (with depression and anxiety disorders) than they normally do and/or delivery of CBT being very different from their previous role (for, example as a care coordinator).
- ▶ Ensure the staff member has suitable CBT training cases; in the first year suitable CBT training cases with depression and anxiety disorders. Ideally, these would be people presenting with depression and anxiety and no other mental health issues. However, when this is not possible, cases may include more complex presentations where CBT for anxiety or depression is indicated. In the second year suitable CBT training cases with the disorder of the route the staff member is training in (psychosis and bipolar, eating disorders or personality disorders). In the first year this may require the staff member to source some or all of their cases from a different service in the Trust (e.g. from an IAPT service) if suitable cases cannot be found from within their current service.
- ▶ Arrange regular (at least) monthly CBT supervision from a Trust supervisor of the staff member's CBT training cases for the duration of the programme. Supervisors need to be competent and experienced in supervision of CBT trainees and competent in the relevant area (First Year: Anxiety and Depression; Second Year: Psychosis and Bipolar, Eating Disorders or Personality Disorders). Supervisors need to be BABCP accreditable.
- ▶ Provision of encrypted memory devices for staff member to store and transport recordings of CBT sessions. Agreement for staff member to submit recordings of CBT sessions to UCL for assessment using a secure electronic platform, such as OneDrive.

# Trainee requirements



# Trainee Requirements:

## Time and travel

- ▶ Dedicate time CBT training for 2 years: a day per week taught university days and approximately 2 days or the equivalent thereof per week seeing people receiving CBT. This is a requirement of the CBT for Severe Mental Health Problems (CBT-SMHP) national curriculum and NHS England.
- ▶ Attendance will be online. In addition, we aim to have several short blocks of up to a week of face-to-face teaching in which trainees will be required to attend the UCL Bloomsbury campus.

## Academic and clinical

- ▶ Dedicate one day a week to university teaching and assignments. Attend all formal teaching sessions including lectures, workshops and course supervision groups over the two-year duration of the programme. On course days when formal teaching sessions are not being held (for example in summer and Christmas breaks), the expectation is that course participants will devote any non-teaching days to completing academic requirements.
- ▶ Complete and submit approximately 10 formal university assignments throughout the program to assess academic and clinical competencies. These include case reports, reflections on clinical work and submission of audio recordings of CBT assessment and treatment sessions.
- ▶ For 2 days/week over the two years, see clients for direct CBT assessment and treatment including audio-recording sessions and making appropriate clinical notes and attending regular at least monthly CBT supervision with an experienced Trust CBT supervisor. See 12-15 clients in CBT to completion over the duration of the course and complete a total of 200 CBT clinical contact hours, which is approximately 5 client contacts per week. These requirements are set in the national curriculum and NHS England specification for CBT-Severe Mental Health Problems courses.

# How to Apply



# How to apply:

View this course online [here](#)

Intake for NHS England funded places on the Post Graduate Diploma Programme take place every autumn. Trainees cannot self-fund.

Applicants for a UCL postgraduate programme are normally expected to hold at least a 2.2 in a UK undergraduate degree (or equivalent overseas qualification). But other academic qualifications of an equivalent standard, including professional mental health qualifications, and substantial work experience and achievements at work demonstrating ability to study successfully at a postgraduate level can be taken into account.

In addition, applicants for this programme are required to have:

- ▶ A core mental health practitioner qualification (e.g. in mental health nursing, occupational therapy, social work, psychiatry, clinical psychology) or can demonstrate you have equivalent training and experience (via the Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (KSA) route)
- ▶ Post qualification experience of working with people with the severe mental health problems of the specialist route the applicant will follow (psychosis and bipolar disorder, eating disorders or personality disorders)
- ▶ Post Qualification experience of working with people with psychosis and bipolar disorders, eating disorders or personality disorders, depending on the specific SMHP route chosen
- ▶ Interest in and enthusiasm for psychological approaches to working with people with severe mental health problems.

- ▶ Evidence of secondment to a funded place on the programme by their employer and evidence of agreement from their employer to see people in CBT under supervision for at least 2-days a week under supervision and access to a suitable experience local site CBT supervisor for this supervision

What we are looking for from your personal statement?

- ▶ Which specific PG Cert CBT route you are applying for (CBT-PBP, CBT-ED, CBT-PD)
- ▶ Why you are interested in CBT training in this specialist route
- ▶ Your previous training in CBT
- ▶ Whether you are committed to attending and completing all course assignments over the year of the programme
- ▶ How you would be able to carry out the required two days a week CBT practice with people with the mental health problems in your current employment or work context
- ▶ Whether your employer has agreed to release you for a day/week on to the programme and to support you seeing people in CBT for at least 2 days a week and making available a local experienced CBT supervisor who could supervise your work
- ▶ Together with the essential academic and core mental health professional qualification requirements, the personal statement is your opportunity to illustrate whether your reasons for applying to this programme match what the programme will deliver.

# Key members of the team:

For all enquiries please contact:  
[pals.cbtenquiries@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:pals.cbtenquiries@ucl.ac.uk)



Overall Programme Director  
Dr Joe Oliver



Diploma 1st Year  
Programme Lead  
Dr Fergus Kane



Diploma 1st Year  
Lecturer  
Helena Colodro-Sola



Eating Disorders Programme Leads  
Dr Lucy Serpell & Dr Matthew Pugh



Psychosis Bipolar Programme Leads  
Dr Rebecca Kelly & Dr Sophie Fyfe



Personality Disorder Programme Lead  
Dr Janet Feigenbaum



Programme Administrators  
Hollie White & Adam Gudalajty



# Glossary

**CBT:** cognitive behavioural therapy

**SMHP:** severe mental health problems

**PBP:** psychosis and bipolar disorder

**ED:** eating disorder

**PD:** personality disorder

**Clinical Supervisor:** a qualified CBT therapist whose role is to support and guide trainees in their clinical work

**Intervention:** a therapy skill or procedure that is used to help a client in therapy

**KSA:** knowledge, skills and attitudes

**Client/Service user/ Patient:** We recognise that there is not a current consensus agreement about which term is most appropriate, but we aim to use the term to refer to a person who is actively receiving psychological therapy and may themselves have their own views about which is the most appropriate term.





# BABCP Accreditation

As of the end of 2022 PG Dip CBT-SMHP programmes were successfully Level 2 accredited with BABCP. This means that when trainees pass the course, they are guaranteed to become an accredited BABCP CBT Therapist. Trainees finishing the programme will need to wait until their marks have been ratified at the exam board, which takes place end of February/March the following year. Once this has been completed, they can make their application to BABCP. All details are on the BABCP website.

The programme has also received Level 1 accreditation for the PG Certificates, which means that the course meets BABCP's quality of training criteria ie. the quality of the training delivered and CBT qualifications of the trainers.



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