

## Programme specification

### 1. Overview/ factual information

<b>Programme/award title(s)</b>	MA in Psychotherapy Studies
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Bishop Auckland College
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Open University (OU)
<b>Date of first OU validation</b>	March 2023
<b>Date of latest OU (re)validation</b>	N/A
<b>Next revalidation</b>	
<b>Credit points for the award</b>	180 credits
<b>UCAS Code</b>	4357
<b>HECoS Code</b>	100495
<b>LDCS Code (FE Colleges)</b>	00304178
<b>Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.</b>	September 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, etc.
<b>Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	QAA Counselling & Psychotherapy 2022
<b>Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.</b>	British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP)
<b>Professional/statutory recognition</b>	Organisational member of BACP
<b>For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.</b>	N/A
<b>Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL &amp; Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship</b>	Part-time
<b>Duration of the programme for each mode of study</b>	2 years
<b>Dual accreditation (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>Date of production/revision of this specification</b>	November 2022

**Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.**

**More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the students handbook.**

**The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.**

### 2.1 Educational aims and objectives

**Educational Aim:** For students to successfully achieve the MA in Psychotherapy Studies and be able to engage in authentic and competent therapeutic practice on completing the programme.

**Educational Objectives of the MA in Psychotherapy Studies:**

- To elicit in students a tangible understanding of the intent and purpose of psychotherapy, counselling and therapeutic practice.
- To instil in students a comprehensive philosophical and theoretical knowledge of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy and counselling.
- To encourage students to become authentic, dynamic, responsive practitioners.
- To develop and maintain in students a high standard of professional competency which manifests in consistent ethical and safe therapeutic practice.
- To facilitate and maintain the skilful development of therapeutic practice to a professionally competent standard, including, where appropriate, counselling placement and supervision or ongoing professional practice.
- To prepare and equip students for work (employed, voluntary and/or self-employed) in the current counselling/psychotherapeutic sector by providing them with relevant up to date knowledge and awareness.
- To ensure that students are aware of the intrinsic role of self-awareness and personal development and can demonstrate an ongoing commitment to being a reflective practitioner and monitor their fitness to practice.
- To facilitate students' membership and potential accreditation to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).
- To enable students to gain knowledge and understanding of critical and contemporary issues including mental health and equality and diversity issues and considerations.
- To promote and develop key transferable skills in students which include: effective communication, being able to work on own initiative as well as in co-operation with others, creating effective relationships, ability to make decisions in complex situations, ability to tolerate the process of change and growth, relevant IT skills, the capacity to understand and critically evaluate research, the capacity to acquire new knowledge and skills.
- To widen participation and promote access to and further progression in higher education to individuals who are underrepresented in HE.

- To create a strong foundation for lifelong learning and continuing professional and personal development.
- To provide the opportunity to develop research skills and evidence-based practice.

## 2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

The MA in Psychotherapy Studies is the ultimate qualification offered by Bishop Auckland college in its portfolio of counselling courses. Students can progress if they demonstrate appropriate academic ability, personal and professional capacity, from a short introduction to counselling course, through NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills, NCFE Level 3 Diploma in Counselling Skills onto the BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice and then finally onto the Masters programme.

Progression is not always necessary through each level, some students may start at Level 2, 3, 4 or 7 (this is considered at interview stage). However, in order to gain access at a higher entry point, students must demonstrate previous learning, qualifications and life experience equivalent to the entry criteria for that level. For example, some students might seek direct entry to Level 7 if they have already completed a BA (Hons) degree, to do this, they will need to demonstrate they have appropriate knowledge and awareness, by presenting their previous degree qualification with a 2.1 or above classification, completing Level 3 and undertaking at least 50 hours of counselling skills practice.

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.

N/A

## 2.4 List of all exit awards

Full award if 180 credits successfully completed: MA in Psychotherapy Studies.  
If 70 credits are successfully completed: Postgraduate Certificate in Psychotherapy Studies.  
If 120 credits are successfully completed: Postgraduate Diploma in Psychotherapy Studies.

### 3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

<b>Programme Structure - LEVEL 7</b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Research Methodologies	20			Yes	Year 1
Research Thesis	60			No	Year 2
Contemporary Approaches in Psychotherapy 1	15			Yes	Year 1
Contemporary Approaches in Psychotherapy 2	15			Yes	Year 2
Personal & Professional Development 1	20			Yes	Year 1
Personal & Professional Development 2	20			Yes	Year 2
Working Creatively	15			No	Year 1
Working Wildly	15			No	Year 2

Intended learning outcomes at Level 7 are listed below:

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>A1. Delineate a critical understanding of the importance of research to psychotherapy studies and therapeutic practice.</p> <p>A2. Demonstrate cognizance and mastery of the research process.</p> <p>A3. Identify and offer an erudite discussion on a range of contemporary approaches in psychotherapy.</p> <p>A4. Convey critical discernment of the many current factors which might effect the therapeutic frame and professional practice.</p> <p>A5. Reveal a deep understanding and critical awareness of own beliefs, values, practices and philosophy.</p> <p>A6. Critically reflect on innovative and creative ways of working therapeutically.</p>	<p>Lectures, seminars, workshops, independent learning, group work, debates, discussion, presentations, skills practice, activities, tutorials, supervision, guest lectures, off-site visits, residential.</p> <p>Research thesis, poster, proposal, negotiated assessment, case study, creative piece, reflective journaling, assignment, reflection, formative and summative feedback and assessment.</p>
<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>B1. Critically assess and appraise the relationship between the research topic and the research method/methodology chosen.</p> <p>B2. Critical evaluate and reflect on all aspects of the research process.</p> <p>B3. Analyse, synthesise and evaluate contemporary approaches in psychotherapy in relation to the broader field of therapeutic theory and practice.</p>	<p>Lectures, seminars, workshops, independent learning, group work, debates, discussion, presentations, skills practice, activities, tutorials, supervision, guest lectures, off-site visits, residential.</p> <p>Research thesis, poster, proposal, negotiated assessment, case study, creative piece, reflective journaling, assignment, reflection, formative and summative feedback and assessment.</p>

<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
<p>B4. Offer critical consideration of the socio/economic/political/professional/ethical/cultural/social factors which impact, shape and influence the therapeutic frame.</p> <p>B5 Critically examine own reflexivity and assess the impact of this on current therapeutic position and practice.</p> <p>B6. Critically conceptualise own therapeutic practice.</p> <p>B7. Critically analyse and reflect on creative and innovative ways of working therapeutically.</p>	
<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>C1. Apply methodological understanding to research process.</p> <p>C2. Plan, conduct, report and evaluate a sustained piece of novel research that addresses an important academic or professional practice issue.</p> <p>C3. Demonstrate the ability to apply and evaluate the use of contemporary approaches, theories, research, methodology, techniques and strategies in therapeutic situations.</p> <p>C4. Maintain and articulate reflective and reflexive practice which draw on continuous and ongoing engagement with personal awareness and professional developments.</p> <p>C5. Explore and report on innovative ways of working therapeutically which create novel outcomes.</p> <p>C6. Demonstrate the capacity to work authentically and creatively with different forms of therapeutic intervention appropriate to the client's needs and in accordance with relevant theory, research and practice approaches.</p>	<p>Lectures, seminars, workshops, independent learning, group work, debates, discussion, presentations, skills practice, activities, tutorials, supervision, guest lectures, off-site visits, residentials.</p> <p>Research thesis, poster, proposal, negotiated assessment, case study, creative piece, reflective journalling, assignment, reflection, formative and summative feedback and assessment.</p>

<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<p>C7. Competently synthesise philosophical understanding, theoretical knowledge, professional development and personal awareness into therapeutic practice.</p> <p>C8. Facilitate the therapeutic relationship and process within a range of settings in which the surrounding environment is used to support the therapeutic experience.</p> <p>C9. Critically evaluate own ethical awareness in relation to all aspects of the therapeutic frame and process.</p>	
<b>3D. Key/transferrable skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>D1. Identify appropriate topic for research, offer rationale, set and meet own aim, objectives and deadlines, undertake information gathering, plan design and method, negotiate research process, conduct project in an ethical and professional manner.</p> <p>D2. Demonstrate professional qualities: working collaboratively, working independently, communicating effectively, problem solving, time management, an awareness and understanding of laws, policies and procedures such as: confidentiality, GDPR, Equality &amp; Diversity, Health &amp; Safety, Safeguarding, assessment and outcome methods.</p> <p>D3. Demonstrate personal attributes: empathy, authenticity, originality, respect, wisdom, fairness, autonomy, resilience, tenacity, courage, honesty, curiosity.</p> <p>D4. Apply and effectively use information technology and multi media to support own learning and development: for communication, presentations, research, resources.</p>	<p>Lectures, seminars, workshops, independent learning, group work, debates, discussion, presentations, skills practice, activities, tutorials, supervision, guest lectures, off-site visits, residentials.</p> <p>Research thesis, poster, proposal, negotiated assessment, case study, creative piece, reflective journalling, assignment, reflection, formative and summative feedback and assessment.</p>



<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
D5. Show capacity for creativity, innovation and the ability to be aware, adapt and respond dynamically to changing circumstances and to tolerate uncertainty. D6. Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate, self-reflect, receive and respond effectively to feedback.	

MA in Psychotherapy Studies



#### 4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:**
  - where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression
  - any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules
  - where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route
- **Additional considerations for apprenticeships:**
  - how the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship
  - the integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training
  - how the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship

N/A

#### 5. Support for students and their learning.

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how student learning is supported in the work place)*

Programme team including personal tutor and research supervisor.  
HE Academic & Pastoral Support Mentor: Luke Smith.  
Counselling supervisors and placement co-ordinators.

#### 6. Criteria for admission

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how the criteria will be used with employers who will be recruiting apprentices.)*

BA (Hons) degree with 2.1 classification in counselling/psychotherapy with 100 hours therapeutic placement.

#### 7. Language of study

English.

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8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)

This MA programme has been developed in line with QAA Counselling and Psychotherapy Benchmark 2022 and British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) guidelines.

9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).

*(Summary of the approved assessment plan and how the academic award fits within this and the EPA)*

N/A

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

End of module feedback, student surveys, student voice forums, specific bespoke HE T&L sessions, lecturer observations, CPD training and events, engaging with mentor and academic reviewer, team meetings.

10. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

N/A

## Annexe 1: Curriculum map



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Annexe 2: Notes on completing the OU programme specification template

Annexe 3: Dual Role protocol.

### Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
7	Research Methodologies	x	x					x	x						x		x						x	x	x		x		x
	Research Thesis	x	x		x			x	x						x	x							x	x	x	x			
	Contemporary Approaches 1			x						x	x		x				x											x	
	Contemporary Approaches 2			x						x				x			x	x											x
	Personal & Professional Development 1				x	x						x											x			x	x		x
	Personal & Professional Development 2	x									x							x		x	x	x	x		x				
	Working Creatively					x	x					x	x	x					x	x	x					x		x	
	Working Wildly					x	x						x						x	x		x	x			x		x	

**Annexe 2: Notes on completing programme specification templates**

- 1 - This programme specification should be mapped against the learning outcomes detailed in module specifications.
- 2 – The expectations regarding student achievement and attributes described by the learning outcome in section 3 must be appropriate to the level of the award within the **QAA frameworks for HE qualifications**: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/default.aspx>
- 3 – Learning outcomes must also reflect the detailed statements of graduate attributes set out in **QAA subject benchmark statements** that are relevant to the programme/award: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>
- 4 – In section 3, the learning and teaching methods deployed should enable the achievement of the full range of intended learning outcomes. Similarly, the choice of assessment methods in section 3 should enable students to demonstrate the achievement of related learning outcomes. Overall, assessment should cover the full range of learning outcomes.
- 5 - Where the programme contains validated **exit awards** (e.g. CertHE, DipHE, PGDip), learning outcomes must be clearly specified for each award.
- 6 - For programmes with distinctive study **routes or pathways** the specific rationale and learning outcomes for each route must be provided.
- 7 – Validated programmes delivered in **languages other than English** must have programme specifications both in English and the language of delivery.

### Annexe 3 - Dual Roles Protocol

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#### 1.0 Protocol Intent

- 1.1 To explicitly identify and acknowledge the existence of dual roles within the College Counselling Service, and address this with ethical consideration and transparency. To ensure all involved are aware and informed of this situation.

#### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This protocol concerns BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice students on placement within the College Counselling Service and staff involved with the programme.

#### 3.0 Dual Roles Identified

- 3.1.1 Lindsey Moses undertake a dual role as follows:
- Programme Leader for BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice & MA in Psychotherapy Studies.
  - The co-ordinator of the College Counselling Service.
- 3.1.2 Some students undertake a dual role as follows:
- A student studying the BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice
  - A volunteer counsellor within the College Counselling Service

#### 4.0 Background and Rationale for Protocol

- 4.1 During the BA (Hons) integrative Counselling Practice Open University Revalidation (16th February 2022) the aforementioned dual role was identified, and the panel placed the following condition on the revalidation being approved: 'the college must create formal protocols to manage the relation between course placements and the college counselling service, to mitigate risks a round dual roles and relations'. The development of this protocol will ensure that all parties involved have clarity on this matter.

#### 5.0 Considerations

- 5.1 Guidance for this protocol was taken from the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy's (BACP) Good Practice in Action 077 Fact Sheet: Dual roles within the counselling professions (2020)  
<https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/10572/bacp-dual-roles-fs-gpia077-jan21.pdf>
- 5.2 Bishop Auckland College is a small educational establishment, in a semi-rural setting with a small Counselling programme team that are involved in the delivery of the BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice programme. In 2016 it was identified that an in-house Counselling Service would provide much needed support to students in the College, whilst simultaneously providing placement opportunities to students on the range of Counselling Learning Programmes. This provision is managed by Claire Smith; Student Services Manager - Pastoral & Welfare and co-ordinated by Lindsey Moses.
- 5.3 Lindsey Moses was approached to facilitate the co-ordination of the Counselling Service due to her expertise and skill set in this area. The Counselling Programme staff team are well placed to offer this specific expertise.
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- 5.4 Co-ordination of the Counselling Service includes: processing referrals, maintaining and ensuring protocols are followed such as assessment, GDPR, safeguarding,

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- recruiting counsellors, etc. An annual written report is produced by the Counselling Service including evaluation of effectiveness, and data. Co-ordination of the Counselling Service does not include any supervision duties (this is sourced externally for all Counsellors) or line management. Therefore, the reports that form part of the student counsellors' overall assessment are NOT written by the Co-ordinator, but the supervisor and the line manager.
- 5.5 All students who are enrolled onto the BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice are informed about the Counselling Service and the dual role held by Lindsey Moses as Programme Leader and Counselling Service Co-ordinator. Students who apply for a placement within this service are informed explicitly of the exact role of Co-ordinator, and what it comprises of. This ensures that they are fully informed about the situation and are aware that they will be line managed by the Student Services Manager - Pastoral & Welfare and supervised externally.
- 5.6 The 100 therapeutic placement hours for the majority of students are completed in Level 4 and 5. Lindsey Moses is not Level Lead or Personal Tutor for either, and therefore is not directly involved in monitoring these students' progress on placement. In the exceptional circumstances that a student may carry the completion of their therapeutic hours over to Level 6, their Level 5 Lead and Personal Tutor will continue monitoring their placement progress.
- 5.7 It is acknowledged that this dual role as described above as (A) could potentially cause a conflict of interest, with students potentially feeling inhibited about applying for or undertaking a placement in which their programme leader has some involvement, however potential conflict is minimal and everyone involved is explicitly aware.
- 5.8 The Counselling Service is used predominantly by students on other courses in the College and very rarely by students enrolled on the BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice. Students on the BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice programme receive £500 cashback for each year of the programme, part of which is to provide the means for students to access external personal therapy should they feel they need to or wish to. On the odd occasion BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Practice students wish to access the College Counselling Service they are made explicitly aware that they will be seeing a student counsellor from the degree programme. Volunteer Counsellors never receive a referral from a student on the same cohort as or higher cohort than themselves. If a student who falls into the categories, detailed above, refers into the counselling service, an external counsellor would be provided.
- 5.9 If students who are volunteer counsellors feel in any way that their position is compromised by dual roles as described above as (A) or (B) they can discuss this confidentially with their supervisor, line manager, personal tutor or Katy Dixon; HE Development Co-ordinator.
- 5.10 This protocol (and information) is shared with all students who become counselling volunteers on the College Counselling Service in their induction. Student counsellors are asked to sign to say they have read and understood this protocol.
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Volunteer Counsellor:	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 80%;"></div> <div style="margin: 0 5px;">  </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"><i>Name</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 80%;"></div> <div style="margin: 0 5px;">  </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"><i>Signature</i></p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 80%;"></div> <div style="margin: 0 5px;">  </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"><i>Date</i></p>
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Specification  
OU-PS-01 Issue 1 Rev 0**

