

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	Post-Graduate Certificate
4	Programme Title	Post-Graduate Certificate in Low Intensity Psychological Therapies
5	UCAS/Programme Code	3042F, 3046F
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Date written/revised	February 2009

10 Programme Aims

The purpose of the certificate is to instruct candidates in:

1. Assessment: the psychological assessment of patients with common mental health problems;
2. Interventions: evidence-based, low-intensity psychological treatments & socially supportive arrangements for common mental health problems;
3. Value-based practice: exhibit the values, and have an effective grasp of policy, culture and diversity dimensions of working with people with common mental health problems; &
4. Organisational effectiveness: students will be able to work within a social, work and healthcare context.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1. have knowledge and understanding of mental health and illness including diagnostic systems and psychological models.
- A2. have knowledge of a range of low intensity, evidence-based psychological interventions for common mental health problems
- A3. have critical appreciation of community resources/agencies which may directly or indirectly promote mental health
- A4. have knowledge regarding the impact of power, culture and diversity; and how to positively accommodate these within a therapeutic setting.
- A5. have an awareness of issues associated with the delivery of a non-discriminatory and accessible service

Teaching and Learning Methods

- Clinical placement in the workplace
- Didactic sessions used to establish a learning framework for the development of understanding, to explain complex concepts, and to provide insight into the relationship between theory and practice.
- Small group work, to provide opportunities for interaction, discussion and clarification in support of learning in selected areas.
- Guided self-study, supported by the provision of targets and direction in Module Guides, to expand knowledge and understanding through active and task-based learning.
- Individual and group tutorials, to develop individual and collective understanding and to plan for practical tasks. Students will obtain knowledge of community resources through teaching sessions and also through supervision of case-work whilst on placement.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment of the underpinning knowledge base is achieved through a combination of clinical planning scenarios and a standardised role-play scenarios plus reflective commentaries.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1. comprehend and interpret the literature.
- B2. be able to evaluate critically the appropriate evidence-based interventions and delivery models
- B3 use abstraction to develop a coherent argument from their readings.
- B4. use reflective and planning skills to translate these into practical skills development

Teaching and Learning Methods

- Critical engagement with the evidence base is taught in didactic teaching as well as in participation in teaching sessions and the delivery of assignments.
- Interpretation of the literature is also facilitated within tutorials and also through the supervision which the student will receive whilst on placement
- Likewise, service related issues will be taught within the teaching sessions and also experienced through placement experience
- Personal development skills will be taught within teaching and supported within tutorials and placement supervision.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment of the underpinning knowledge base is achieved through a combination of written exams, clinical planning scenarios and a standardised role-play scenarios plus reflective commentaries.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1. demonstrate competence in engaging collaboratively with patients, in order to assess and diagnose relevant psychological difficulties
- C2. communicate assessment information effectively, facilitating patients' understanding and participation in decision making
- C3. have competence in a range of low intensity, evidence-based psychological interventions (and social support arrangements) for common mental health problems
- C4. appropriately record these activities
- C5. respond to patients sensitively, promoting their empowerment
- C6. manage caseload efficiently and effectively, drawing on clinical supervision to work effectively (inc. liaison across agencies and team membership)

C7. elicit and understand the patient 'world-view' (which might vary according to culture/diversity) in regard to the cause and their understanding of their difficulties, as well as a range of mental health treatments to facilitate engagement and support. undertake the above, whilst compensating for differences in economic, social or ethnic background

C8. demonstrate the ability to develop and deliver coherent, persuasive arguments concerning patients' care to other professionals and community agents

Teaching and Learning Methods

- Problem-oriented learning opportunities, to develop problem-solving, critical reasoning and clinical decision-making skills through evidence-based activities.
- Video simulations and demonstrations and role play, to teach communication skills.
- Clinical skills training in the supportive environment of the clinical placements.
- Small group activities, to encourage team work and involvement.
- Written assignments to promote investigative and exploratory study, and to provide the opportunities for self-expression and choice.
- Workshop based preparation for participation in formal activities.

Assessment Strategy

Assessments are also used to evaluate the acquisition of competence in relation to clinical experience in particular. This includes clinical planning scenarios and standardised role play scenarios and reflective commentaries, as well as the supervisor's evaluation of the achievement of practice competencies whilst on clinical placement.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

D1. demonstrate independent self study skills

D2. communicate effectively in both written and oral form

D3. demonstrate effective use of ICT

D4. demonstrate organisational skills

D5. demonstrate the ability to reflect on their learning and plan for their future development needs

Teaching and Learning Methods

Skills such as communication, team working, planning, computer literacy and learning how to learn are addressed through an equally wide range of strategies. Modules exist within the syllabus and competencies are defined within placement experience to focus attention on these key skills. In the conduct of the assignments, students will also develop competence in computer literacy, etc. Workshops, formal didactic teaching sessions, experiential exercises, simulations, and other methods are used to facilitate the acquisition of these key skills. Cutting across all of these strategies are case-work related methods of assessment which encourage students to demonstrate competence in an area. Study and professional development skills will be taught and developed through personal tutorials.

Assessment Strategy

Core competencies (e.g., generic communication skills; study skills) are assessed within these various assessment techniques. It should also be noted that informal assessment, evaluation and feedback will occur within the training workshops. These will involve students demonstrating their competencies in relation to different topic areas (effective communication) in a way that facilitates the teacher in providing corrective feedback. Similarly, on placement, students will receive regular feedback on their performance from their manager/supervisor.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is 1 year to be undertaken in conjunction with a low-intensity worker (or equivalent) post. Students will attend the University on 1 day per week over two semesters, with work-based study being carried out on the remaining days within the post.

There are 4 (15 credit) modules within the programme as follows:

1. Engagement and assessment of patients with common mental health problems
2. Evidence-based low-intensity treatment for common mental health disorders
3. Values, policy, diversity and culture
4. Working within a social, work and healthcare context

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

This course offers training in the delivery of low intensity psychological treatments (e.g., guided self-help) within a multi-dimensional context (e.g., NHS, community, diverse groups).

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/>

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

Entry is open to those who are successful in obtaining a low-intensity worker post (the course and post are integrated) or a sufficiently relevant assistant psychologist post. The post will be recruited to on a competitive basis via a joint university and NHS selection process. The aim would be to select on the basis of attributes related to adequate academic performance and effective practice for the post – the course providing training for this post above and beyond the appropriate work-based induction and work-based supervision/complementary training.

IAPT services are encouraged to recruit people from diverse backgrounds into the low intensity workforce. The intention is that the vast majority of people recruited to the programme will be graduates with Degree level qualifications.

In order to accommodate the training of people who may come forward with different academic starting points, particularly people who are non-graduates, training may be offered to suitably experienced candidates (e.g. candidates achieving “advanced standing”, as shown through a portfolio of evidence, supporting their claim that their previous education and experience is at graduate level).

Admissions policy/selection tools

See above: These reflect nationally agreed admission criteria

Non-standard Entry Requirements

See above

Additional Requirements

See above

Level of English Language capability

A minimum score of International English Language Testing System (IELTS) band 7 is required for speaking and listening, band 8 for academic reading, and band 6 for academic writing. Evidence of this should be provided and appended to the trainee's application.

14 Support for Student Learning

The Student Services portal provides links to key services and other information and is available at: www.ncl.ac.uk/students/

Induction

During the first week of the first semester students attend an induction programme. New students will be given a general introduction to University life and the University's principle support services and general information about the School and their programme, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. New will be given detailed programme information and the timetable of lectures/ tutorials etc.

Study skills support

Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification. Some of this material, e.g. time management is covered in the appropriate Induction Programme. Students are explicitly tutored on their approach to both group and individual projects.

Academic support

The initial point of contact for a student is with a lecturer or module leader, or their tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies. Contact outside of teaching days will be maintained via Blackboard and email.

Pastoral support

All students are assigned a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees.

In addition the University offers a range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Counselling and Wellbeing team, the Mature Student Support Officer, and a Childcare Support Officer.

Support for students with disabilities

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with: advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies.

Learning resources

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports campus-wide computing facilities.

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language Proficiency Test. This is administered by INTO Newcastle University Centre on behalf of Newcastle University. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The INTO Newcastle University Centre houses a range of resources which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchange.

15 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Module reviews

All modules are subject to review by questionnaires which are considered by the Board of Studies. Changes to, or the introduction of new, modules are considered at the School Teaching and Learning Committee and at the Board of Studies. Student opinion is sought at the Staff-Student Committee and/or the Board of Studies (Note: the Graduate School Committee acts as the Board). New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Programme reviews

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

External Examiner reports

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Staff-Student Committee.

Student evaluations

All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Staff-Student Committee, and the Board of Studies...

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback

Feedback is channelled via the Staff-Student Committee and the Board of Studies.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms

The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process.

Accreditation reports

Additional mechanisms

16 Regulation of assessment

Every assessed part of the course has to be passed for the student to gain the award. Similarly, all modules must be attended and completed.

Pass mark

Assessed material will be graded as a pass, pass with merit, pass with distinction or fail, benchmarked against the normal percentage mark ranges used within the University. It will therefore be possible to pass the Certificate with Merit or Distinction.

The pass mark is 50 (Postgraduate programmes)

Students will need to pass a placement (work-place) report to gain the award, as certain learning outcomes are placement-based (e.g., caseload management skills). Should a student fail this latter element, they will re-assessed for a second time 8 weeks following the initial assessment using the same practice-based outcomes.

Course requirements

Progression is subject to University regulations <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/regulations>. All students must pass all assessed work. There is no compensation across items of assessed work. One resit is permitted per item.

Weighting of stages

Modules one and two (semester one) are worth 15 credits; modules three and four (semester two) are also worth 15 credits.

Common Marking Scheme

All assessed work will be graded in relation to topic specific marking grids. Each grid sets out qualitatively the criteria for each grade against a number of relevant dimensions for that assessed work.

Role of the External Examiner

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, after recommendation from the Board of Studies.

The External Examiner is expected to:

See and approve examination papers

Moderate examination and coursework marking

Attend the Board of Examiners

Report to the University on the standards of the programme

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The School Brochure

The University Regulations (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>)

The Degree Programme Handbook