

# Counselling Psychology

This programme is no longer recruiting. Please refer to the updated programme specification of the same name.

<b>Final award</b>	Professional Doctorate
<b>Intermediate awards available</b>	PGDip, MSc
<b>UCAS code</b>	N/A
<b>Details of professional body accreditation</b>	Accreditation by the British Psychological Society
<b>Relevant QAA Benchmark statements</b>	N/A
<b>Date specification last up-dated</b>	July 2011

## Profile

### The summary - programme advertising leaflet

#### Programme content

Counselling Psychology is embedded in the discipline of psychology and concerns itself with applied areas of psychological work, which overlap with the provinces of psychotherapy, clinical psychology, counselling and psychiatry. The Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology is therefore designed to provide opportunities for professional and personal development as a Counselling Psychologist. This is achieved by facilitating the development of a flexible, reflective and critical approach to Counselling Psychology theory, research, and practice. The programme objective is to produce graduates with a solid grounding in the theory, research and clinical skills relevant to Counselling Psychology. The clinical focus of the training is Cognitive Behaviour Therapy with core skills drawn also from Humanistic Therapy. In the third and fourth year of the training trainees will consider Psychodynamic approaches and will be introduced to Cognitive Analytic therapy (CAT). We aim to equip our trainees to meet the unique needs of their clients, they will be able to work while holding ideas in tension and embracing dilemmas within their therapeutic practice.

#### Counselling Psychology at UEL

- An innovative and large school of psychology which contains doctoral programmes in most of the major areas of psychology, i.e. Clinical, Educational & Organisational
- The School of Psychology contains a range of national and international experts within their research specialisms.
- Support with finding clinical training placements
- Graduate with high quality research aimed at publication

#### Admission requirements

**The admissions procedure involves a written application; short listing is conducted by the admissions team. At least two members of academic staff will review each application before a decision is made.**

Successful applicants are invited for an interview.

Admissions criteria:

Essential:

- A good honours degree in psychology conferring the Graduate Basis for Registration with the British Psychological Society.
- Competencies in oral and written English which should satisfy the University's entrance requirements. In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, then IELTS 7.5 (or equivalent) is required which incorporates a minimum of 7.5 in writing and speaking, together with a minimum of 7.5 in listening and reading. International qualifications will be checked for appropriate matriculation to UK Higher Education postgraduate programmes.
- Appropriate personal qualities including, empathy, warmth, genuineness; an awareness of the nature of prejudice and oppression; commitment to self development
- Prior training in counselling skills/relevant work (voluntary or otherwise) of working in helping relationships
- Previous experience of supervised counselling practice
- Good research skills

The admissions policy strives to provide equal opportunities to all applicants and does not discriminate on the grounds of age, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Applicants are invited for interview on the basis of relevant experience and academic excellence.

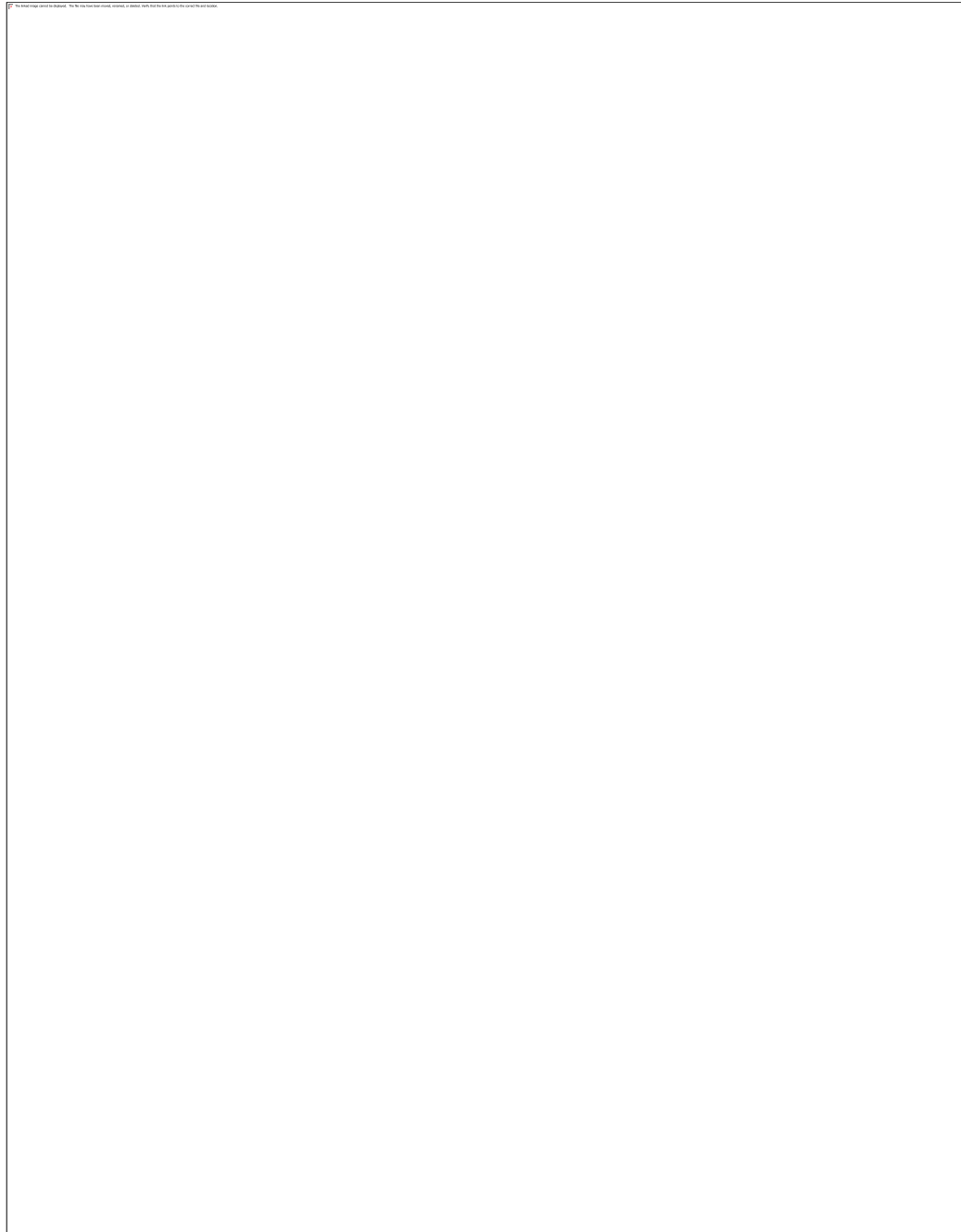
Applicants with either prior-certified learning or prior-experiential learning that closely matches the specified learning outcomes of the taught part of the programme may be able to claim exemption via agreed university procedures. No exemption can be claimed against the research part of the programme or in situations where a professional body excludes it.

The School of Psychology runs a 5 day short course entitled An Introduction to Counselling Psychology, applicants to this programme may after interview be offered a place conditional on attending and passing this short course. Further details of this course can be located at [www.uel.ac.uk](http://www.uel.ac.uk).

## **Programme structure**

### **Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (PsychD)**

Please note:. All components of the four year part time programme need to be completed to achieve Doctoral status and to become eligible for Chartership with the British Psychological Society. There are two exit points, namely Post Graduate Diploma in Counselling Psychology and MSc in Counselling Psychology. These are available for those students who do not choose to progress or are not permitted to upgrade to the Doctoral research components of the programme.



The structure of the Professional Doctorate Programme is four years part time (attending for one day a week, with at least one day on a clinical placement). Trainees will be offered two pathways, these are;

1. If they successfully complete module PYM304 they will progress on to the Professional Doctorate. They will complete all of module PYM305 in year 2 and show evidence of progress of their Doctoral Research Project, to progress towards the award of PsychD. They will subsequently submit a 30, 000 word length doctoral thesis and attend the oral viva examination.
2. If trainees do not successfully complete module PYM304 they will progress on to the MSc programme. They will need to pass PYM305 along with the Professional Doctorate trainees in year 2 and will submit an empirical research dissertation of

7,000 words. Successful completion of modules PYM301, 302, 303, 304, 305 and 306 will lead to the award of an MSc and exiting the programme.

Professional doctorate programmes can be either 'taught' or 'research' in their emphasis (that is, when measured by student effort). Both have equal status and share the same learning outcomes. You should check with the relevant school to find out where the emphasis is for this particular programme.

### **Learning environment**

The teaching methods used are varied and include: workshops, lectures, discussions, experiential group work, skills work in small groups, clinical discussion groups, personal therapy/development work, seminars, feedback on recorded sessions, dissertation supervision, practical work and self-directed private study. There is the additional facility of a web based learning tool for student directed learning.

### **Assessment**

The assessment approaches considered most appropriate for this subject area are those of continuous assessment. It is our view that the method of assessment is central to the learning process

The aim of our approach is two-fold; it seeks not only to assess students' progress but also to encourage and foster achievement of high standards of performance in both practice and theory. Accordingly, it seeks to promote and evaluate both students' academic development and their practical ability to react positively and proactively to the needs of clients in a variety of settings and to respond constructively to societal change within the framework of professional requirements.

Assessment is designed to test student progress in developing powers of perception, recall, critical analysis, reflection, flexibility, and creative imagination and to assess personal growth. It is intended to be progressive, both encouraging and reflecting an increasing depth of critical understanding and the continuing development of essential professional expertise and attitudes. Assessment is ongoing and includes, one exam, essays, clinical papers and a professional and personal log. In line with professional requirements we expect trainees to attend all organised classes, if your attendance drops below 80% of attendance you will have deemed to have withdrawn from the programme.

### **Relevance to work/profession**

- This is an applied professional programme, completion of which leads to eligibility for chartered psychologist status with the British Psychological Society (BPS). The programme is accredited by the BPS. Many trainees use their work place as one of their clinical placements
- The programme enables graduates to apply for paid work as counsellors or trainee Counselling Psychologists as they continue to work towards full chartered Counselling Psychologist status.

Successful applicants must ensure they have professional indemnity insurance as this is a condition of enrolment on all parts of the programme. Trainees are also expected to have

training membership of the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology for the duration of their training.

### **Research/project work**

Trainees are given the opportunity in the first year to develop individual research ideas and receive individual and group tutorials to assist in this process and to produce a research proposal. Registration of the research component can only take place following a recommendation from the relevant School Research Degrees Sub-Committee to the university PGR Review Sub-Committee on the suitability of the candidate to undertake the programme of research, of the supervision arrangements and of the research environment. These approvals require appropriate academic judgement to be brought to bear on the viability of each research proposal. Trainees submit a research proposal and must attend a registration research panel at the beginning of their second year. The results of the Registration Panel are submitted to our Research Degrees Sub Committee for consideration and thence to the PGR Review Sub-Committee for approval.

Candidates for a Professional Doctorate must, prior to the submission of the research derived assessment, successfully complete all assessed elements from the taught part of the programme. Once the research stage of the programme is reached progression will be formally reviewed annually by a Panel comprised of staff with appropriate academic and professional expertise who are independent of the candidate's supervisory team. The doctoral thesis has a word count of 30,000 words. The School's Research Degrees Sub-Committee and the PGR Review Sub-Committee monitor the reports from these Panels.

The examination of the research component of the Professional Doctorate has two stages: firstly the submission and preliminary assessment of the research; and secondly its defence by oral examination.

### **Added value**

- Good links with NHS trusts, specialist projects, preparation for conference presentations, opportunity to be taught by a range of experts.
- We view our trainees as professionals in training and encourage their active participation in, and ownership of their training.
- Regular reviews and feedback mirrors the programme philosophy of openness, regular review, trainee centred learning and critical analysis
- A programme team with extensive and varied training and clinical experience who are both clinicians and active contributors to the research literature and to developing Counselling Psychology as speciality
- Multi-cultural composition of trainee group, location in a vibrant multi-cultural community and staff and trainee expertise in this area
- The programme prides itself on the time for personal attention and support given to our trainees, (this is detailed further in the section below).

### **Your future career**

Chartered Counselling Psychologist status enables people to work as Counselling Psychologists within the NHS, private practice and other relevant agencies.

## **How we support you**

Each trainee has a personal tutor whom they meet formally twice a term but whom they can make an appointment to meet at any time. We have a placement tutor to support the process of finding, monitoring and completing a clinical placement.

Each trainee has a clinical skills tutor whom they meet weekly in some parts of the programme and fortnightly at others. Weekly programme meetings are held where any relevant issues can be raised and dealt with quickly and efficiently. Each year group has a programme representative who represents the trainees at programme committee meetings and can represent the trainee group to the programme team. Each year group has a year tutor who is responsible for the smooth running of that year. Trainees are encouraged to set up peer support groups. Each trainee is supported in their research by their dissertation supervisory team who will meet with them regularly

Trainees also have access to relevant learning materials available through the learning resource centre which has excellent data bases on line providing many full text articles accessible from UEL or trainees own homes. The learning resource centre also has a range of relevant book and journals and inter-library loans are available. The Graduate School is responsible for providing a focus to the support of our postgraduate research students and for our institution's research and scholarly strategy.

Professional Doctorate students will have at least two and not normally more than three supervisors, who together demonstrate an appropriate range of academic and professional experience. One supervisor shall be the Director of Studies with responsibility to supervise the candidate on a regular basis.

## **Outcomes**

### **Programme aims and learning outcomes**

#### **What is this programme designed to achieve?**

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

Successful completion of this programme is designed to enable you to;

- Become a responsible, safe and effective practitioner and to maintain high standards of professional and ethical behaviour.
- Develop a competency in one clinical model (Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy) and to have working knowledge of a second model (Psychodynamic Therapy) and to be able to analyse the relevance of these for the needs of their clients in the context of considering other theories and research.
- Show the ability to design, complete and to continue developing research and publications relevant to the development of a knowledge base relevant to Counselling Psychology
- Be eligible for Chartered Counselling Psychologist status with the British Psychological Society

## **What will you learn?**

A candidate who is awarded a Professional Doctorate will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes:

Created and interpreted new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, which extends the forefront of the discipline and merits publication;

Systematically acquired an understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;

The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, application or understanding at the forefront of the discipline and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;

A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry;

Ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audience;

Ability to continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches;

The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

All modules are core and each must be passed. This is to ensure that trainees are safe and well trained practitioners able to offer high quality services to the public through the NHS or other agencies when their programme is completed

## **Knowledge Skills**

- A detailed understanding of a range of psychological theories and psychotherapeutic theory
- Ability to integrate psychological and psychotherapeutic theory into clinical practice.
- Possess a high level of professional and ethical behaviour, to not work beyond level of competence and to abide by BPS code of ethics

## **Thinking skills**

- The development of an open, flexible and critical approach to Counselling Psychology theory, research and practice
- Trainees will take responsibility for their own learning and self development when they are trainees at UEL and afterwards for their continuing professional

development, this may include research, scholarship and contributions to the profession

- Developed skills in critical analysis and be able to apply this to a range of psychological and psychotherapeutic theory
- Adoption of an open and flexible approach to the critique of theory and research

### **Subject-Based Practical skills**

Will have developed;

- a competency in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and to have a working knowledge of psychodynamic principles and develop an individual synthesis of these models during training and to be able to evaluate and engage with this appropriately in relation to the individual needs of clients
- an understanding of the principles of ethics, value systems, difference and diversity and to be able to reflect upon this as integral to clinical practice
- interpersonal sensitivities, qualities, abilities and competencies required to establish, maintain and conclude professional helping relationships with clients
- Presentation of clinical, academic and research topics

### **Skills for life and work (general skills)**

Will have developed;

- Critical and analytical skills
- Recognition of the need for ongoing professional and personal development and the ability to reflect on their own learning process
- The ability to work, safely, effectively autonomously and as part of a team
- Good communication and presentation skills

## **Structure**

### **The programme structure**

#### **Introduction**

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme



- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

### **Credit rating**

- Professional Doctorate programmes are not credit rated although the taught elements within them can be.

### **Typical duration**

The normal minimum and maximum periods of registration for the Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology are as follows:

	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<b>Part Time</b>	33 months	72 months

Registration should take place within 18 calendar months of enrolment.

### **How the teaching year is divided**

The teaching year begins in September and ends in June. Trainees attend one day per week over 4 years and are expected to work within their clinical placement at least one day a week.

### **What you will study when**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	(PYM 301) Psychological Knowledge as Applied to Counselling Psychology	30	Core
1	(PYM302) Theoretical Models 1	30	Core
1	(PYM 303) Clinical Skills	30	Core
2	(PYM 304) Research Methods and Enquiry 1	30	Core
2	(PYM 305) Professional, Clinical and Ethical Issues	30	Core
2	(PYM 306) Research Methods and Enquiry 2	30	Core

The topics undertaken in years 3 and 4 will include advanced clinical skills, professional practice issues, theoretical models, research skills training, integrating theory, research and practice and will include the completion of a doctoral thesis in addition to other assignments. In year 3 trainees must submit Professional and Personal Development registration documents including a clinical supervisor's report, an essay on epistemological frameworks for undertaking Counselling Psychology research, a doctoral progress assignment, an academic paper, a process report embedded in a case study, an annual review of progress on doctoral thesis and a PPD log.

In year 4 trainees must submit PPD registration documents including a clinical supervisor's report, a Process report embedded in a Clinical Study, a PPD log including a clinical supervisor's report, a psychological rationales presentation and a 30,000 word Doctoral research thesis.

### **Requirements for gaining an award**

In order to gain a Postgraduate Certificate, you will need to obtain 60 credits at Level M.

In order to gain a Postgraduate Diploma, you will need to obtain 120 credits at Level M.

In order to obtain a Masters, you will need to obtain 180 credits at Level M. These credits will include 2 x 30 credit level M core modules of advanced independent research (On this programme this is successful completion of PYM 304 & PYM306).

### **Masters Award Classification**

Where a student is eligible for an Masters award then the award classification is determined by calculating the arithmetic mean of all marks and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

70% - 100% Distinction

60% - 69% Merit

50% - 59% Pass

0% - 49% Not Passed

## **Assessment**

### **Teaching, learning and assessment**

#### **Teaching and learning**

Knowledge is developed through

- A detailed understanding of a range of psychological theories and psychotherapeutic theory and their relevance to research
- Possess a high level of professional and ethical behaviour, to not work beyond their level of competence and to abide by the BPS codes of ethics

Thinking skills are developed through

- The development of an open, flexible and critical approach to Counselling Psychology theory, research and practice
- Trainees will take responsibility for their own learning and self development when they are trainees at UEL and afterwards for their continuing professional development, this may include research, scholarship and contributions to the profession

- Developed skills in critical analysis and be able to apply this to a range of psychological and psychotherapeutic theory
- Adoption of an open and flexible approach to the critique of theory and research

#### Practical skills

Trainees will have developed;

- an understanding of the principles of ethics, value systems, difference and diversity and to be able to reflect upon this as integral to clinical and research practice
- interpersonal sensitivities, qualities, abilities and competencies required to establish, maintain and conclude professional relationships with research participants

Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through

- Critical and analytical skills
- Recognition of the need for ongoing professional and personal development and the ability to reflect on their own learning process
- The ability to work, safely, effectively autonomously and as part of a team
- Good communication and presentation skills

#### Assessment

##### **Knowledge is developed by**

- Formal teaching sessions and experiential workshops, including small group work, to encourage the development of critical analysis and debate regarding theory and research
- Formal teaching and group work regarding research methods and epistemological relevance to Counselling Psychology
- The above knowledge will be further generated through additional independent study and student support group work

##### **Thinking skills are developed by**

- Group discussions, development of personal and professional reflective practice
- Independent study evidence of this integrated into experiential workshops and assignments
- Clinical supervision, including development of individual learning through personal and professional log entries

##### **Practical skills are developed by**

- Experiential workshops
- Small group work, triads, role plays, DVD exercises to develop clinical skills
- Clinical placement supervision and case presentation workshops
- Personal therapy

##### **Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed by**

- Skills for applying theory to practice, understanding client problems, designing and delivering appropriate psychological services and ability to evaluate this from an evidence based perspective
- The integration of the BPS code of ethics as key in all aspects of the learning experience, to apply this consistently throughout training

The above developed through combination of learning opportunities from the programme and fellow students and placement learning.

Knowledge is assessed by

- Completion of essays, clinic papers, annual monitoring reviews, presentations and the submission of a doctoral thesis
- Evidence of critical analysis, will include the following: -
  - Demonstrated links between theory and practice
  - Demonstrated competencies in their chosen speciality

Thinking skills are assessed by

- Ability to demonstrate confidence in a growing professional ability to innovate and respond to practice demands and demonstrate recognition of their own role as co-operative and facilitative 'partners in care'.
- Ability to develop skills within programme work of critical analysis of theory and capacity for original thought and evidenced through all aspects of programme work.

Practical skills are assessed by

- Evidenced through all aspects of programme work
- Ability to make critical comparisons of practice in a variety of settings with a view to the formation of their own practice model
- Evidence of self motivation, reflective capacity and constructive self criticism
- As evidenced in the personal and profession log, skills in continued professional and personal development demonstrates core skills in reflective practice, demonstrated by identifying key learning areas, experiences of this, reflections on the process, including what they have learned and need to further develop, strengths and weakness, ethical knowledge

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by

- Evidence in personal and professional log book of an ability to co-operate with colleagues and other professionals in a multi-cultural setting, evidence of evidence based methods of evaluating their practice
- Evidence of ability to work independently
- Ability to demonstrate critical awareness of current professional and policy issues and their implications for clinical practice
- Insight and clear reflection on constructive criticism of their practice with a focus on what they need to learn
- Ability to show flexibility and adaptability in response to the requirements of Counselling Psychology practice

# Quality

## How we assure the quality of this programme

### Before this programme started

Before this programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

### How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the Quality and Standards Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

### The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the quality assurance procedures.

### The role of external examiners

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

### **Listening to the views of students**

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

In order to monitor and implement change on the programme, various feedback mechanisms have been implemented with staff, trainees and the University administration all involved in the changes.

In sum, any changes in the programme have been due to:

- Changes in the BPS requirements
- University requirements
- Trainee feedback
- Staff feedback
- Developments in the world of Counselling Psychology

To assess the programme we use;

- Module evaluations
- Student representation on programme committees
- Regular weekly staff : trainee meetings

Students are notified of the action taken through:

- circulating the minutes of the programme committee
- a weekly programme meeting

### **Listening to the views of others**

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Feedback from placements/ongoing liaison with placement supervisors
- Attending meetings/conferences with colleagues

# Further Information

## Where you can find further information

For further information about the programme please contact the Psychology Field Administration Team at [psychology@uel.ac.uk](mailto:psychology@uel.ac.uk)

Further information about this programme is available from:

- The UEL web site <http://www.uel.ac.uk>
- The student handbook (includes all regulations relevant to this programme)
- Module study guides
- UEL Manual of General Regulations <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/> (Part 3 Modular Regulations applies only to modules PYM301 to 306)
- UEL Quality Manual <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- Regulations for the Academic Framework <http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/>
- The Graduate School <http://www.uel.ac.uk/gradschool/index.htm/>
- School of Psychology web pages [www.uel.ac.uk/psychology](http://www.uel.ac.uk/psychology)
- British Psychological Society web site <http://www.bps.org.uk>
- British Psychological Society Training Committee in Counselling Psychology <http://www.bps.org.uk>