

# Diploma in Integrative Counselling

## Course Overview

**Start Date:** Tuesday 21st September 2021

**Highlights:** On successful completion of this course you will be qualified to practice as an Integrative counsellor. It is the first step to obtaining BACP registered membership and, with further work, accreditation. The course provides for an intensive development of counselling skills and a deep understanding of the theoretical frameworks and concepts underpinning different counselling approaches. It is taught through a mixture of academic theory, experiential learning, group discussion, practical application and microskills exercises. This course is BACP Accredited.

**Course Length:** 3 years, part-time.

**Fees 2021-22\*:** *\*Fees are currently TBC. Fees from 2020-21 are included below for guidance only and are liable to rise for 2021-22. Final fees will be made available to applicants before interview and will be updated on the website.*

Fees from 2020-21:

First Year: £5,670\*

Second Year: £5,770\*

Third Year: £3,820\*

*Course fees are subject to annual inflation. Once you have started a course we will endeavour to keep fee increases in subsequent years as low as possible. Increases may occur to reflect changes to the course, changes in the requirements of accrediting organisations, inflation, staff pay rises or other increases to the cost of providing the course. For more details see the **Fees & Funding** page on our website.*

## About the Course

Successful completion of the Diploma in Integrative Counselling qualifies students to practice as an Integrative counsellor, supports BACP Registered Membership and is the first step to obtaining BACP accreditation. If students successfully complete the first two years of training they can also apply to continue to do the MA/Advanced Diploma.

The course provides for an intensive development of counselling skills and a deeper understanding of the theoretical frameworks and concepts underpinning different counselling approaches, leading to an integration of these into sound counselling practice. The Integrative approach encourages people to find their own voice and identity as counsellors. The Minster Centre has a long tradition of social commitment and our training syllabus reflects this, with students encouraged to reflect on issues of diversity and society as part of their work. The course will cover humanistic, existential, psychodynamic and body work approaches to counselling. Over three years students mix teaching, experiential learning, group discussion, practical application and microskills exercises with relevant theory. As well as being grounded in the traditional approaches to psychotherapy and counselling, our tutors also have experience and expertise in contemporary understandings, such as neurobiology, relational and embodied work.



# Course Content Summary

- Four core academic modules exploring theoretical traditions from a range of therapeutic approaches: *Humanistic and Existential models of Psychotherapy and Counselling; Object Relations and the Psychoanalytic Tradition; The Body in Psychotherapy and Diversity*.
- Weekend Workshops: Students participate in experiential weekend workshops during the course to extend their learning. They offer specific experiential exploration or give more time to cover specific areas in more depth. Topics covered include: *Jung: Family and Belonging; Skills for working with trauma; Working with the impact of childhood sexual abuse; Severe presentations and medication*.
- Experiential Training Group (ETG): Focuses on the personal and emotional development of the students, their sensitivity towards/awareness of themselves, others, and the interactions within the group of students.
- Intensive Skills and Supervision groups: Sessions may include presentation and discussion of work with training clients, role plays, practice sessions and discussion of issues related to practice.
- Support from your Head of Year.
- It is also a requirement for all students to be in individual psychotherapy at least once weekly throughout the course.

## Detailed Course Content

### FIRST YEAR

#### 1. Humanistic and Existential Models of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

A weekly two and a half hour seminar over 15 weeks where students are introduced to the key concepts that humanistic and existential thinking offers the practicing therapist and how these link to, and differ from, the psychoanalytic tradition. Topics covered include Phenomenology, Existential Philosophy and Its Implications for Individual Existence, Self-Actualization and Person-Centred Therapy, Gestalt psychotherapy, Dialogic Relating, Embodiment and Transpersonal Perspectives. Students are supported to gain an intellectual, emotional and practical appreciation of these models integrating them into their personal understanding of themselves and other people. Students will be prepared to apply the basic elements and attitudes in their own practice through participation in experiential work. Modes of learning include tutor introductions to the ideas, experiential exercises, student presentations and reflective discussion.

One written paper of 4,000 words.

#### 2. Object Relations and the Psychoanalytic Tradition

A weekly two and a half hour seminar over 15 weeks exploring the evolution of psychoanalytic theory throughout the twentieth century to today. Starting with Freud's ideas about the unconscious and biologically-based drives as the primary motivating forces in human behaviour, we track the conceptual development of psychodynamic thinking to an emphasis on relationship and the environment as central in shaping the human experience. Theorists covered include Freud, Klein, Fairbairn, Winnicott, Bowlby, Kohut and Stern. The aim of the module is for students develop an understanding of key Object Relations concepts: an awareness of the significance for practice of phenomenon such as transference and counter – transference: a critical understanding of the historical development



of psychodynamic theory and practice including the cultural contexts in which it has developed; and a developing capacity to integrate theory with personal and clinical experience.

One written paper of 4,000 words.

### **3. Intensive Skills group**

Attendance at a weekly two and a half Skills Group is required. The Skills Group in the first year focuses upon skills practice at an intensive level and is a preparation for Clinical Supervision Groups in later years. This module aims to provide a thorough grounding in the skills needed to begin practice as a counsellor in a placement, and to explore and practice different styles of facilitation. The syllabus includes active listening skills, boundaries, beginnings, breaks and endings, working with transference and countertransference, diversity and difference, ethics and ethical frameworks, self care. Taught sessions and group discussions on weekly topics will be combined with experiential exercises. From an early stage students will practice therapeutic skills with their peers working initially in triads and then moving onto goldfish bowls.

Assessment is ongoing and draws on student contributions and participation in group discussions, exercises and practice sessions. Students write a detailed self-assessment mid-year and at the end of the year, to which tutors will respond. Students are assessed individually for readiness to begin working with clients in the third term based on the level of competence in counselling skills observed by tutors, the development of self-awareness as evidenced in class and responses to clinical scenarios emphasizing ethical decision making and risk awareness.

### **4. Experiential Training Group**

This is a weekly one and a half hour session in which the focus is the personal and emotional development of the students. This module aims to provide a group experience which supports the development of self-awareness and awareness of others (including transference, counter-transference and projection, introduces students to group processes and provides a space for the processing of material raised by the course. There is an ETG facilitator who is a qualified therapist and in many cases is also a tutor or supervisor on other parts of the course, but will not otherwise teach you this year. Sessions are entirely experiential and have no set agenda. Each group meets at the end of each training day.

There is continuous peer, self and tutor assessment of interactions and self-disclosure within the group. The criteria for assessment include willingness to be part of the group, contribute to it and respond to others, sensitivity to the needs of others, ability to be open and authentic, ability to express emotion appropriately, willingness and ability to explore own process into unknown areas, and ability to explore and develop relationships within the group. Towards the end of the year students will be assessed on the basis of the ETG facilitator's observations. This assessment will form part of the overall assessment of whether a student is ready to progress to the next year of training.

### **5. Weekend Workshops**

Students participate in three experiential weekend workshops during the year on *Family and Belonging*, *Transference and Counter-transference* and *Introduction to Jung*.

## **SECOND YEAR**

### **1. The Body in Psychotherapy**

This is a three-hour weekly module for 10 weeks. The module aims to extend your understanding of the place of the body in psychotherapy. The seminars provide the



opportunity to explore embodiment: as who we take ourselves to be is experienced in our bodies. Our bodies are sites of pleasure and pain, they are also the containers of trauma; they have been shaped by early attachment relationships and life experience. Developing embodied awareness is about learning to be present to our somatic experience and to use this experience as a resource in the therapeutic relationship (we need to be at home to receive visitors). The syllabus covers the role breathing plays in the expression and suppression of our feelings, the role of the Autonomic Nervous System in our emotional process and traumatic response, life in the uterus, birth and early days of development, including attachment, intersubjectivity and self - regulation, understanding the power of touch and its importance at the pre-verbal stages of development, the pros and cons of working with touch therapeutically, how to help clients connect with their own feelings through their body awareness. You will be introduced to breathing and meditation practices to support this development. You will be introduced to a range of theories that underpin the practice of body psychotherapy, the aim being to integrate your learning into 'embodied practice'. There is an experiential focus to this module given that it is our experience, alongside knowledge and understanding that becomes embodied and serves us in the role of therapist.

One written paper of 4,000 words. Students will also prepare a weekly learning journal.

## **2. Diversity**

A three-hour weekly module for 10 weeks. The aim of the module is to enable students to develop a critical understanding of diversity and difference, in society at large, in the counselling/psychotherapy profession and practice and in their personal development. This module supplements consideration of power and difference throughout all other modules. In the early seminars the tutor will present a broad framework for examining diversity or human difference and the implications of the many dimensions of difference for psychotherapy and counselling, including the impact of culture and environment on mental health. The group then looks explicitly at ethnicity and culture, gender, sexuality, old age, religion, disability and class. Students will develop their understanding of current thinking about working with difference in a counselling /therapy relationship, critical awareness of theories behind power and difference, ability to understand, and own and reflect on their own political, social and cultural values and assumptions.

One written paper of 4,000 words. Students also prepare a weekly learning journal.

## **3. Embodied Relationship**

A three-hour weekly module for 10 weeks. In this module students will develop their capacity to make use of theories and experiences related to embodiment and diversity in integrative clinical practice and reflection. They will begin to develop an informed understanding and clinical application of inter-subjectivity, difference, the erotic, touch, working with interruptions to 'going on being' via the super ego and the self-care system. The syllabus will cover working clinically with the embodied super ego and the 'self-care system' of both client and therapist: embodiment and 'the other' - an exploration of relations of power, diversity, discrimination and the 'other'; touch - an exploration of the place of touch in psychotherapy; Eros and sexuality in the therapeutic relationship.

## **4. Supervision Group**

Students also attend a two hour, in house, weekly supervision group during term time and for five sessions during the holiday breaks. Supervision groups consist of 4-5 students working with a training supervisor. During the second year most students will begin to see training and placement clients. The supervision group will initially support students as they prepare to start working with clients using



presentations, role plays, practice sessions and discussion. As students in each group begin their clinical work they will bring audio recordings and transcripts for discussion in their supervision group and reflect on and develop their clinical practice with the support of their supervisor and peers.

Students will be expected to submit a weekly supervision log to their supervisor.

### **5. Clinical Practice and Placement**

Students will start working with one or more training clients, and may start an external placement when deemed appropriate by both supervisor and student. A total of 150 supervised clinical hours is also required for completion of the Diploma in Counselling.

### **6. Experiential Training Group**

Students continue to attend a weekly one and a half hour evening experiential group. Further information on the experiential training group can be found under the first year description.

### **7. Weekend workshops**

Students will attend 11 training days at weekends on *Time-Limited Work, Trauma Skills, Childhood Sexual Abuse, Introduction to Research, Research Methods and Ethics* and *Introduction to CBT Skills*. There are also some optional support sessions running over the summer for the Small-scale Research Project.

## **COMPLETION OF THE DIPLOMA**

Students will continue into a third year when they will continue with their clinical practice and attending a weekly in-house supervision group.

They will also attend:

### **1. Integration and process group**

A weekly two and a half hour group to support students to develop their own integrated approach to work with clients that draws on their theoretical understanding and their reflexive awareness of their own subjectivity and level of skill; to prepare for final submissions; and to practice post-qualification through increasing their capacity to work confidently in a range of contexts, to use supervision non-defensively and to identify their own learning and support needs so that they can organise and use on-going supervision and CPD. It will also offer a reflective group space for students to process their experiences during training.

### **2. Weekend workshops**

Students will attend nine days of training at weekends covering *Severe Presentations and the use of Medication, Integrative Diagnosis and Treatment, Death and Bereavement, Working with Erotic and Sexual Charge* and *Running a Successful Practice*.

### **Assessments**

To complete the Counselling Diploma students must also produce and pass the assessment of:

1. An essay of 5000 words.
2. A small-scale research project of between 4500-5500 words.
3. Five supervision journals submitted throughout the academic year.
4. A Process Report based on ten minutes of recorded material from one client session (5000 words) which is assessed at a viva.



Students also need to ensure they attend at least 80% of each module or group and achieve 80% attendance overall. In addition to the taught hours, significant private study will be required for weekly reading as well as for the preparation and writing of the essays.

## Clinical Practice and Placements

When both the student and their supervisor agree they are ready, usually in the second year, students start working with one or more training clients, and may start an external placement. A total of 150 supervised clinical hours is required to qualify.

In most cases, we are able to refer 'training clients' to our students via the Minster Centre Psychotherapy and Counselling Service (MCPCS) our affordable therapy service. You will usually work with one or two long term training clients. In addition, you will need work in an external placement. Placement experience accelerates and deepens your professional learning and understanding and increases your employability. Placements are an opportunity to learn about working within therapeutic services and to make contacts with others in the field. Both training clients and placements will help you accrue the necessary client hours for qualification.

You will be responsible for securing a placement but will receive advice and guidance from the Placement Coordinator. You will need an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. One DBS check is included within your course fees and will be organised with you in the second year. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent you from becoming a counsellor or psychotherapist each case is considered on an individual basis. You will be given an opportunity at your selection interview to discuss this with your interviewers. For more information about DBS checks see the website.

## Accreditation

The Diploma is accredited by the BACP. BACP reviews the course accreditation every five years. The accreditation was last reviewed in 2018.



## Assessment

There is a formal or 'summative' assessment at the end of each module. Assessment methods are primarily coursework assessments including essays, portfolios, presentations and live assessment of a recorded piece of clinical work. Support and guidance is given for each assessment. Assessment is by course tutors, except for the Live Assessment, which is assessed by examiners not teaching on this course. In addition to formal assessment of written work, tutors and supervisors assess students' experiential and clinical work. All marking is moderated and we also have an external examiner to ensure that marking is fair and consistent. You will receive feedback on all formal assessments to support your learning. Students are assessed each year and given specific recommendations on areas they need to work on and whether they are ready to progress to the next year. Students can be asked to repeat modules or take time out of training.



# Course Leaders

Heads of Year 1: Nancy Browner and Jenny Clark

Heads of Year 2: Anne Marie-Keary and Reena Shah

Head of Year 3: TBC

## Attendance

The Counselling Diploma is a three-year course. Each year is taught over three ten-week terms. Training takes place one day a week, on Tuesdays 12-8 in the first year, Thursdays 10-6 or 11-7 in the second year, and Wednesdays usually 1.30-6.30 in the third year plus 26 days study at weekends over the three years. From the second year onwards students will also need to allow time for clinical practice (you are likely to be seeing up to four clients a week).

Because of the experiential nature of learning required to become a counsellor there is a 80% minimum attendance requirement for all components of the course i.e. 80% attendance of each module (including ETGs and supervision and weekend teaching).

The Term dates for the year starting September 2021 are:

### **First-term**

Compulsory Induction: 14th September 2021 (Time TBC)

Monday 20th September to Friday 3rd December 2021

Half-term – Monday 25th October to Friday 29th October

### **Second-term**

Monday 10th January to Friday 25th March 2022

Half-term – Monday 14th February to Friday 18th February

### **Third-term**

Monday 25th April to \*Friday 8th July 2022

Half-term – Monday 30th May to Friday 3rd June

### **Bank Holidays/Closure:**

Christmas closure: 23rd December 2021 to re-open 3rd January 2022

Good Friday – 15th April 2022

Easter Monday – 18th April 2022

May Day - Monday 2nd May 2022

Spring B/H - Thursday 2nd June (within half-term)

Queen's Platinum Jubilee B/H – Friday 3rd June 2022 (within half-term)

\*This date may include weekend teaching (2/3 July)

Term dates for following years will normally be available in July each year; timings for seminars will normally be released in early September.

## Who is it For?

This course is for people who want to train as counsellors and have completed Foundation level training and/or have equivalent relevant experience.

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**Email** [admissions@minstercentre.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@minstercentre.ac.uk) **Web** [minstercentre.ac.uk](http://minstercentre.ac.uk) **Tel** 020 7644 6240



Students come from all walks of life including people already working in caring and related professions such as nursing and social work and people coming from very different backgrounds including creative professions, teaching, practical or technical careers.

## Entry Requirements

Students must have successfully completed the Minster Centre Foundation course or had training and/or experience to a similar level before beginning the Diploma. Any Foundation course undertaken elsewhere should be at least 90 contact hours, covering theory and skills.

Applicants must have completed a minimum of 20 hours of ongoing personal individual therapy within the year prior to the start of the course. It is essential for all students to be in individual psychotherapy at least once weekly throughout the course. Choice of therapist is made with flexibility subject to Minster Centre approval.

Training is open to those with a first degree or with previous training in non-degree courses e.g. in social work or health care or those without formal qualification who have equivalent and suitable life experience and can demonstrate the capacity to complete the academic aspects of the course (including through successful completion of a Minster Centre Foundation Course).

If English is not your first language you will need to demonstrate a capacity to study in English either through your written and practical work during previous training at the Minster Centre, or in your application and interview and through qualifications such as IELTS 6.0 (with minimum 5.5 in all four components).

You will need a satisfactory DBS report to undertake clinical practice which is an essential component of the course – see section on Clinical practice and placements above.

Practicing as a counsellor or psychotherapist, and training to be one, is a psychologically, as well as intellectually, demanding process. Personal qualities we are looking for in trainees include:

- Openness to forming and maintaining therapeutic relationships with others.
- The ability to engage in experiential learning.
- The ability to reflect on experiences.
- Openness to feedback from tutors and peers.

This requires a degree of psychological robustness and a capacity for self reflection. Having had a mental health diagnosis or difficulty in the past is not necessarily a barrier to training; however we do need to consider whether there is a danger of the training exacerbating mental health problems in applicants.

For this reason, we ask about mental health during the application process, and the Centre reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants who we judge would not, at this time, be able to benefit from this course or for whom it might be too disturbing.

## Accredited Prior Experience and Learning (APEL)

There may be aspects of your course that you feel you have already covered as part of another training course or as a result of previous experience in employment or elsewhere. In some circumstances it is possible to have this prior learning recognized through the award of credit which will exempt you from identified elements of the course.



You can only apply for learning to be credited that relates to whole modules, weekend training sessions or other complete components of the course.

There is no APEL option for applications to the BACP Accredited Diploma in Counselling. This is because the first year includes more than a third of the teaching hours. Students who join the professional training beyond the first year or join at the start of the MA cannot opt to take the BACP Accredited Diploma in Counselling. Students who join in the second year of professional training or join the MA may be able to submit evidence to BACP of their previous successfully completed training courses and the training they undertake at the Centre as part of their submission for BACP Registration or Accreditation. Applicants in this situation are advised to look at the BACP website for information about accreditation and consult with BACP membership services.

## Qualification

Minster Centre Diploma in Integrative Counselling.

## Career Prospects

If students successfully complete the first two years of training they have the option to apply to continue to do the MA/Advanced Diploma. BACP will accept these ongoing studies as Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The Diploma supports BACP Registered Membership and is also the first step to obtaining BACP accreditation.

Graduates of the Minster Centre can be found working successfully all over the UK and abroad. As well as private practice, graduates often work with a variety of client groups in the NHS; in schools, colleges and universities; in organisations such as MIND and other charitable foundations; and as tutors in other training organisations.

## Fees\*

*\*Fees are currently TBC. Fees from 2020-21 are included below for guidance only and are liable to rise for 2021-22. Final fees will be made available to applicants before interview and will be updated on the website.*

Fees from 2020-21:

**First Year: £5,670\***

**Second Year: £5,770\***

**Third Year: £3,820\***

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A non-refundable deposit of £700 is payable to secure your place once you receive an offer. If you withdraw your place on the course after you have paid a deposit and within 28 days prior to the course start date, half of the deposit can be refunded to you as long as we can fill your place with another applicant. The other half of your deposit will be retained to cover administrative costs. If you withdraw after the course start date, fees are non-refundable and the full year's fees will be due. Fees are payable by bank transfer, cheque or card and may be paid in instalments.



Fees include supervision of training clients, one DBS check, common room facilities and refreshments, access to the library and on-line resources, insurance for seeing clients through the Minster Centre Psychotherapy and Counselling Service.

The following course related costs are not included in the fees:

Personal therapy, placement supervision (usually but not always provided by the placement, any additional costs associated with placements, the provision of consulting rooms for seeing training clients, assessment of resubmitted coursework. Personal therapy can cost from £50 per session upwards in London, sometimes less outside London. In addition, you will need to budget for the purchase of key books a year (these are texts you will need to refer to frequently and travel to the Centre, to placements and to therapy. Depending on the topics you choose for your written assessments you may need to buy books or internet access to articles, or access books, articles or other resources through the British Library or other specialist libraries. You will also need a secure means of audio recording client work, ideally this will be on a password protected and encrypted digital recorder, which cost around £400.

Accommodation and living costs are not included in fees and as all our students are part time we do not have on-site accommodation. The Centre has no parking available for students unless you have a blue badge. The Centre is close to public transport. We cannot guarantee that the timing of courses will not require peak time travel.

For more details on fees and financial terms and conditions please see the **Fees & Funding** pages on our website.

## Financial Support

Please see the **Fees & Funding** page on our website.

## Venue

The Minster Centre is at 20 Lonsdale Road, Queens Park, London NW6 6RD which is a 5 minute walk from Queens Park Tube (Bakerloo line and Rail Overground Station and a 10-15 minute walk from Brondesbury Park Station.

## How to Apply

You apply directly to the Minster Centre via the online application form on the website. Please note: we operate a rolling admission process.

**Round 1 application deadline:** 15th March, 2021 by 12 noon. Interviews will take place in April-May 2021.

We will open up a waiting list of applications for a possible Round 2 intake process, which might take place after 18th July 2021 depending on availability on the course. If applicable, Round 2 interviews will take place early August 2021.

If you have any further questions please see our FAQs page or email **[admissions@minstercentre.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@minstercentre.ac.uk)**

Applicants are offered an individual interview with two senior members of staff in order to assess suitability for training. The interview fee is £95.