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# School of Education Masters in Counselling

MA • Diploma • Certificate

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It is our view that awareness is the basic prerequisite of an effective counsellor. Our counselling courses have a humanistic orientation and are taught, primarily, experientially.

Looking out for other people is the hallmark of a caring society.

The School of Education's Counselling programmes have been running since 1993 and attract students either working as counsellors, in a paid or voluntary capacity, or in other helping professions (eg teaching, nursing, social work, the prison service) who do counselling as part of their role.

The humanistic approach assumes that given the right conditions, people will become more aware and in touch with their inner wisdom. They will learn, for example, to discriminate between what is healthy and what is damaging for them. With

enhanced awareness and acceptance they become more fluid and flexible in their responses to others and are able to make decisions based on self-knowledge and consideration of choices rather than on habit or people pleasing.

Our course tutors strive to create a safe and secure teaching and learning environment in which members feel able to be themselves and to learn through and from their participation in experiential activities designed to develop awareness of self and understanding of self in relationship with others. The theory is taught in context, with issues arising in the 'here and now' within the group.

See **page 10** for information on Accreditation of Prior Learning **AP(E)L**.

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## Programme Information

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The Counselling programme can provide three units towards British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) accreditation.

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The School of Education currently offers the MAcate in Counselling which has been running since 1993, and the MA Counselling Children and Young People which has been running since September 2006.

### Routes

The Counselling programme has two routes of entry and study: **the practice route** and **the applied route**.

**Practice Route:** This route is for students with previous qualifications in counselling and at least 100 hours experience of supervised counselling practice, who wish to gain a Masters level qualification in counselling. You will normally be working as a counsellor, whether paid or in a voluntary capacity. You will be working towards, or have achieved professional accreditation prior to commencing the course. The Masters programme offers you the opportunity to deepen your knowledge and understanding of counselling theory and practice and values your professional practice commitments.

**Applied Route:** This route is for students who work in the helping professions (e.g. teaching, nursing, social work, youth work, prison service) with counselling as part of the role, but who do not necessarily wish to become a full-time counselling professional. However, you recognize that by enhancing your knowledge of counselling theory and practice you could attend to your own personal growth needs, find your work more rewarding and offer your 'clients' a more effective service.

The course welcomes both home students and international students from across the globe. Recent students have come from Brazil, the United States, Australia, Taiwan, China, Saudi Arabia, Greece and Cyprus. These students are either qualified, experienced counsellors or offer counselling as part of their role in the helping professions in their own country. They are interested in achieving a Masters level qualification in counselling and enhancing their knowledge of humanistic counselling theory and practice. However, they do not necessarily intend to seek professional accreditation in the UK.

This mix of home and international students is something we are particularly proud of, and provides course members with an invaluable opportunity to develop their knowledge and

understanding of diversity issues, and their skills in multicultural counselling. It also equips them for work within a global context.

### Duration

This course is for one year full-time or two to four years' part-time study starting in September. Modules are taught on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for full-time students. First year part-time students will attend from 1.30 - 5.30pm on Tuesdays in the 2012-13 academic year.

### Awards

For the **MA** in Counselling you will need to successfully complete modules and associated assignments to the value of 120 credits, together with a case study or research based dissertation in a subject approved by your tutor (Total 180 credits).

For the **PG Diploma** you will need to successfully complete modules and associated assignments to the value of 120 credits. There is no dissertation requirement.

For the **PG Certificate** you will need to successfully complete modules and associated assignments to the value of 60 credits.

### Assessment

Unless otherwise stated, each 30-credit module is assessed by a **written assignment** of 5,000-6,000 words on a theme of your choice related to the module aims. Each assignment is graded numerically. To complete the masters programme successfully, a Pass of 50 must be achieved on each assignment. To complete the postgraduate certificate and diploma programmes, a Pass of 40 must be achieved in each assignment.

The **dissertation** is an original piece of work and should be of 8,000-9,000 words (or their equivalent) on the practice route and 12,000-15,000 words (or their equivalent) on the studies route, in one of the selected modules on an approved topic.

## On Course Requirements

**You are required to engage in personal therapy with a qualified, experienced and supervised counsellor. MA and PG Diploma students need 40 hours personal therapy and PG Certificate students 20 hours. Previous experience of therapy will not be counted towards this. You will need to pay the cost of the therapy.**

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# Entry Requirements

## Practice Route

A candidate for the degree must normally:

- (a) be a graduate of an approved university or other institution of higher education with at least a second-class honours degree or holders of an approved professional qualification deemed equivalent to a second-class honours degree
- (b) hold a counselling qualification at level 3 (NQF or equivalent)
- (c) have evidence of 100 hours (minimum) supervised clinical practice

**or**

- (a) hold a counselling qualification at level 4 (NQF or equivalent)
- (b) have evidence of two years post qualification clinical experience
- (c) submit an essay of approximately 3,000 words to demonstrate suitability for postgraduate study
- (d) exceptionally, have been approved by Senate on the recommendation of the School of Education, as to their general education qualifications, and as to their competence for the course of study proposed.

## Applied Route

A candidate for the degree must normally:

- (a) be a graduate of an approved university or other institution of higher education with at least a second-class honours degree or holders of an approved professional qualification deemed equivalent to a second-class honours degree
- (b) have one year's experience in a helping role (or the equivalent intensive experience e.g. an internship)

**or**

- (a) have evidence of professional training equivalent to level 4 (NQF or equivalent)
- (b) have two year's experience in a helping role to be evidenced via portfolio
- (c) submit an essay of approximately 3,000 words to demonstrate suitability for postgraduate study
- (d) exceptionally, have been approved by Senate on the recommendation of the School of Education, as to their general education qualifications, and as to their competence for the course of study proposed.



### Please note:

Applicants to higher degrees whose native language is not English must, as a minimum, fulfil one of the following conditions:

- (a) have a British Council IELTS score of 6.5 (with no less than 6.0 in any element), achieved no more than 2 years prior to admission
- (b) have obtained a TOEFL iBT score of 87 (with no less than 21 in listening and writing, 22 in reading and 23 in speaking), achieved no more than 2 years prior to admission
- (c) (for those students who do not reach the standard prescribed in (a) or (b), where appropriate) have passed with merit a full-time intensive English language and academic preparation course of appropriate length in the Centre for English Language Education
- (d) have been educated through the medium of English in secondary and tertiary education in approved contexts.

### Important note for all applicants:

Many combinations of experience, qualifications and non-accredited training are possible. You are encouraged to give as much detail as possible about your qualifications, other training (e.g. like that provided by Childline, Place2Be) and relevant experience in the form of a letter or CV attached to the standard university form.

References are taken very seriously and it is important that referees are able to comment on intellectual abilities, counselling and helping skills and on potential for postgraduate study. References written by counselling supervisors or counselling tutors are particularly welcome. References from friends or family are not normally acceptable. All home students who meet these requirements will be invited to attend for interview. Here you will have the opportunity to meet with other potential students and staff in order to decide whether the Nottingham course is right for you.

Unfortunately it is not normally possible to invite international students to interview. Instead, course tutors rely on IELTS scores or equivalent. The experiential nature of the course makes particular demands on students and therefore special attention is paid to your verbal and aural scores.

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## Course Structure

All modules in each route are compulsory and entry onto each module is dependent on the completion of the two modules in the previous semester for full-time students and the one module in the previous semester for part-time students. The dissertation and Theory and Research in Counselling module complete the research elements of the Masters programme.

### Practice Route

Module name	Credits	Potential award
Personal and Interpersonal Development	30	<b>PG Cert</b> (60 credits)
Individual and Group Counselling	30	
Supervised Counselling Placement	30	<b>PG Dip</b> (120 credits)
Therapeutic Models	30	
Theory and Research in Counselling	30	<b>MA</b> (180 credits)
Dissertation	30	

Where it is deemed that the placement element has not been satisfactorily completed this will be recorded on the examinations schedule and the award of the qualification withheld. You will be permitted one opportunity to repeat and satisfactorily complete the placement element.

### Applied Route

Module name	Credits	Potential award
Personal and Interpersonal Development	30	<b>PG Cert</b> (60 credits)
Individual and Group Counselling	30	
Therapeutic Models	30	<b>PG Dip</b> (120 credits)
Theory and Research in Counselling	30	
Dissertation	60	<b>MA</b> (180 credits)



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## Module Outlines

### Personal and Interpersonal Development

(30 credits, both routes)

Central to the role of the counsellor is a highly developed self-awareness and emotional and intellectual maturity. The continuous process of self reflection and critical self-analysis by the counsellor in training or practice is fundamental to developing authentic and effective therapeutic relationships. This module sets out to create a working environment in which participants are able to work with others to develop their self-awareness and self-knowledge. This process is facilitated through an in-depth exploration of the nature and effect of difference on self, other and relationship. Particular attention will be paid to the social and cultural components of self-concept formation and the application of advanced interpersonal skills to support the intrapersonal and interpersonal development of self and others. The relationship between self-concept and here-and-now interactions will be critically examined. The notion of personal growth and development is considered and its relationship to 'effectiveness' in counselling is critically examined. The Interpersonal Process Recall model of self-supervision will be introduced as a practice tool and explored in small study groups using VTR. The skills of journal and assignment writing will be explored. Personal work will be undertaken through group process, working in sub-groups with a staff facilitator.

### Individual and Group Counselling

(30 credits, both routes)

This module will develop the skills of counselling to an advanced level, exploring issues that frequently present in helping situations such as bereavement, self-harm, eating disorders, addictions and suicide. Small study groups will continue to use Interpersonal Process Recall as a tool for self-evaluation. In this way you will explore your own capacity to work effectively with a range of presenting issues and understand where referral may be ethically preferable. The themes of counselling will be further developed in group process format in which subgroups work with a staff facilitator to enable in-depth exploration of the effects of self and others on group functioning.

### Supervised professional placement module

(30 credits, practice route only)

This module focuses on developing sound professional practice in the counselling placement through 100 hours placement experience and 25 hours supervised practice. There will be an exploration of personal and professional development with particular reference to issues raised in the clinical supervisor's report on the student placement. A key focus will be the supervisory relationship and its importance as a source of support, education and challenge for the counselling practitioner.

Areas covered will include:

- risk assessment;
- the impact of context on the counselling process;
- managing obstacles in counselling;
- evaluating effectiveness.

### Therapeutic Models

(30 credits, both routes)

In this module you will examine and evaluate a range of models and techniques for therapeutic change. In critically examining these, you will reflect on how they position themselves as counsellors. The module provides a structured opportunity for the production of an assessed video, which will enable you to evaluate the relationship between your theoretical stance and your clinical practice. Interpersonal Process Recall will be used as a tool for self-supervision. You will also be encouraged to engage in a study and thorough on-going critical discussion of the ethical, moral and professional considerations necessary to undertake the study and practice of counselling. The effective counsellor is not only skilled but fully conversant with professional ethics and codes of practice. The module will address issues of ending with clients and supervisors and encourage a longer term view of the counsellor's professional development needs.

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# Module Outlines

## Theory and Research in Counselling

(30 credits, both routes)

This module explores the relationship between research and its contribution to counselling practice. Although both main research paradigms are examined, the emphasis in the module is on qualitative research methods as a medium for revealing the detail in human interactions. Examples of process and outcome research will be critically examined, as will issues in counselling research such as researcher positioning, how to write critical literature reviews and effective case studies, how to construct research designs and how to analyse, present and interpret data. Ethical issues also receive consideration together with the question of how to assess the usefulness of research in terms of validity and/or trustworthiness. You will be given the opportunity to familiarize yourself with less conventional methods of presenting data such as narrative and visual formats. Group process will also be continued, this time with an introduction to working in a large group setting with the support of staff facilitators.

## Dissertation

(Practice route - 30 credits, Studies Route - 60 credits)

Students are encouraged to research an issue of their choice relating to the theory and/or practice of counselling. This is an opportunity to conduct a supervised, in-depth investigation.

## Other elements

Throughout the course you will participate in different group formats in order to work on the integration of personal and professional practice issues.

These include:

- large group process
- personal development groups
- video practice groups

All assessed written work is negotiated with the course tutors to meet the individual needs and interests of the participants – there are no set essay titles.

## Note on Assessment

A requirement for the written assignment for the Individual and Group Counselling module is the inclusion of an unreferenced report on your learning from the group process element of the module as well as the essay that forms the main element of the assessment. For the Therapeutic Models module, the assessment is composed of a personal philosophy of counselling element and a 30-minute edited video tape of your counselling with a peer, accompanied by a critical analysis. Please note that this may form some of the source material for subsequent application to BACP for individual accreditation.

### Group Size

We aim for 24 students in each course group to maximise the opportunities for working in relationship with others in combinations of 2's, 3's, 4's, 6's, 8's and 12's

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## Course Tutors

### Dr Max Biddulph

Dr Max Biddulph is course leader of the MA Counselling and a lecturer in the Centre for Research in Schools and Communities. Max has a background in Education working both in schools and Higher Education where he has acquired extensive experience of helping and supporting in a pastoral care role together with volunteering as a telephone helpline counsellor in a number of community-based agencies. Some themes that weave through his career are performance, community, and empowerment and he has a strong interest in the field of sexuality and sex and relationships education for all people as a lifelong process. In this role he has worked at a national level with agencies such as fpa, Sheffield Centre for Sexual Health, Barnardos and the National Children's Bureau. As an activist-researcher he has also been involved in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans (LGBT) politics and in 1997 he was one of the founder members of SWAN - the National Association of Assertiveness Trainers of Gay/Bisexual Men. His current research interests focus on methods within the qualitative paradigm including autoethnography, narrative, and arts-based approaches to articulating voice.

### Lindsay Cooper

Lindsay Cooper is a member of the Centre for Research in Schools and Communities and Director of Undergraduate Taught Courses. He is a practising counsellor and supervisor in private practice. He has been actively involved in the training of counsellors for several years. In the counselling and psychotherapy field he is particularly interested in sexuality, shame, narcissism, solution-focused therapy and narrative. His teaching in the Centre covers the whole range of undergraduate and postgraduate counselling programmes. Lindsay was involved in the development of the Postgraduate Certificate in Trauma Studies in collaboration with the University's School of Sociology and Social Policy and currently contributes to the Business School's MBA programme where he teaches Interpersonal Skills for Managers. Lindsay is a qualified teacher and has 14 years experience of working in the further education sector. He is still actively involved in education for post-16 through his involvement in Open College Networks. He is chair of the Board of Trustees at OCN East Midlands Region and a member of the Board of the National Open College Network. His research interests are in looking at the way counsellors can best intervene in the coming out process and the use of both eCounselling and eLearning

### Dr Belinda Harris

Dr Belinda Harris is a UKCP registered gestalt psychotherapist and experienced counselling supervisor with a long history of involvement in the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, through the Counselling in Education and RACE Divisions as well as through her funded research. Before joining the Centre for Research in Schools and Communities, she held a range of posts in the education sector, both at local and national levels, where she developed a keen interest and involvement in managing the emotional effects of working with diversity. Her other interests include promoting emotional development in education, working with groups and the emotional aspects of organisational development. She is the author of two books Harris B. with Pattison, S.(2004) *Counselling Children and Young People: A systematic scoping search of the research evidence* Rugby BACP and Harris, B (2007) *Supporting the Emotional Work of School Leaders* London: Paul Chapman Press. She has also published widely in both education and counselling journals. In addition to teaching on counselling courses in the School, Belinda contributes to Masters programmes in Educational Leadership and Management and Special Needs, as well as the Postgraduate Certificate in Trauma Studies. She holds a Lord Dearing Award for excellence in teaching.

### Dr Gary Winship

Dr Gary Winship is a UKCP registered psychotherapist and NMC MHN registered. He is an Associate Professor in the School of Education and a member of the Centre for Research in Schools and Communities. He formerly lectured at the Universities of Sheffield & Reading alongside being a Senior Adult Psychotherapist for Berkshire NHS Trust and the Broadmoor & Maudsley Hospitals. He has 25 years clinical experience in the NHS and was appointed as a clinical governance reviewer for CHIA in 2000. Gary is currently Associate Editor of the Journal of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing and a member of the editorial board. He has published over 60 research papers and book chapters. His paper 'Further Thoughts on the Process of Restraint' (2006) has been cited by Amnesty International and was Blackwell's 3rd most downloaded JPMHN paper in 2006-7. He is currently the chair of the appointments panel for the Annual Eileen Skellern Lecture & Blackwell's Lifetime Achievement Award, which this year celebrated the contributions of Cath Gamble and Jo Brand. He is external

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## Course Tutors continued

examiner for the Cassel Hospital MA in Psychosocial Practice. Since 2005 he has been ESRC grant holder looking at the psychosocial aspects of malicious fire starting. Gary has acted as a policy advisor for both the Labour party and the Conservative Party on substance misuse. He is Treasurer for the Association of Therapeutic Communities (ATC) and a full member of the Association of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy in the NHS (APP) and member of ISPS.

### Dr David Murphy

David joined the Centre for Trauma, Resilience and Growth in 2008 after spending a number of years practicing as a psychologist. Prior to joining the University of Nottingham David's work interests have been in the field of psychotherapy for those people affected by trauma. This includes helping people affected by some of the more common everyday traumatic events that might occur, such as road traffic accidents or industrial accidents, through to more significant traumatic events such as child sexual abuse, rape or torture. A significant part of his work in the field of trauma has been in assisting and providing support for police officers and staff following traumatic incidents. Following the South East Asia Tsunami David developed and provided therapeutic support designed to promote psychological wellbeing in those involved in the disaster victim identification process. As a result of which he was awarded an Association of Chief police Officers (ACPO) certificate of recognition for this contribution.

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## Reading List

- Claringbull, N (2010) *What is counselling and psychotherapy?* Exeter: Learning Matters
- De Young, P. (2003) *Relational Psychotherapy: A Primer*. Brunner Routledge
- Dryden, Windy. (Ed) (2002) (4th Edition) *Handbook of Individual Therapy* London: Sage.
- Feltham, C. (2002) *What's the Good of Counselling and Psychotherapy?* London Sage
- Holly, M.L. (1989) *Writing to Grow - Keeping a Personal - Professional Journal*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann.
- Masson, Jeffrey. (1990) *Against Therapy*. London: Fontana
- Mcleod, John. (2009) (4th Edition) *An Introduction to Counselling*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Pilgrim, D. (1997) *Psychotherapy and Society*. London: Sage.
- Proctor, G., Cooper, M., Sanders, P. and Malcolm, B. eds. (2006) *Politicizing the Person-Centred Approach: An agenda for social change* Ross on Wye: PCCS Books
- Sanders, P. (ed). (2004). *The Tribes of the Person-Centred Nation: A Guide to the Schools of Therapy related to the Person-Centred Approach*. PCCS Books: Ross on Wye
- Scott Peck, M. (1985) *The Road Less Travelled*. Guernsey: Ryder and Co
- West, J.D., Osborn, C.J. & Bubbenzer, D.L. (eds) (2003) *Leaders and Legacies: Contributions to the Profession of Counselling*. Brunner. Routledge
- Yalom, I.D. (2001) *The Gift of Therapy: Reflections on being a therapist* London: Piatkus

*A full reading list will be provided at the start of the course*

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## Alumni Comments

**A survey of graduates of the MA in Counselling course elicited comments such as:**

“Increased self awareness, self confidence, self esteem.”

“Assisted my one-to-one counselling skills with offenders at Wellingborough Prison.”

“Helped with a more analytical and problem-solving perspective in my relationships with staff at work.”

“In depth knowledge of theory and practice.”

“I feel more in control; I think I have become more empathic generally, better able to reach out and make contact, better able to ‘be there’ for myself and others.”

“The course gave me the confidence to pursue a research study with the NHS on the efficacy of counselling versus anti-depressants.”

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## Further Information

### Fees

For up to date fee information please visit the University of Nottingham finance website.

[www.nottingham.ac.uk/fees/tuitionfees/postgraduatetaughtcourses.aspx](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/fees/tuitionfees/postgraduatetaughtcourses.aspx)

Funding opportunities for International Students can be viewed via [www.nottingham.ac.uk/international](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/international)

### Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

If you have a first degree or equivalent in counselling or psychology, plus two years subsequent counselling training and professional experience as a counsellor, you may be eligible for exemption from some credit requirement. You need to make known your intention to apply for APL at interview stage and if, the course leader supports your proposal you will need to complete the requisite forms. It is important to note that, if successful, applicants will be expected to attend the whole course even though they will have remission from fees and assessment requirements for one or two modules. All APL applications for this programme are processed free of charge.

If after reading this course information you would like any professional advice, please contact:

**Dr Max Biddulph**

Course Leader

MA Counselling

T: +44 (0)115 951 4457 E: [max.biddulph@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:max.biddulph@nottingham.ac.uk)

If you have any administrative queries, please contact:

**Sian Coles**

Taught Courses Administrative Assistant

T: +44 (0)115 951 3705 E: [sian.coles@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:sian.coles@nottingham.ac.uk)

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#### Disclaimer:

Please note that all our MA programmes are subject to minimum recruitment numbers. We reserve the right to cancel a course if our minimum numbers are not met. If we need to cancel a course we will make you an alternative offer.

Decisions on course viability are usually made in April and any affected applicants are contacted by the end of May for October entry.

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#### How to apply

Applications are accepted throughout the year at <http://pgapps.nottingham.ac.uk>

We encourage early applications for this course.

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