

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	Postgraduate Certificate
4	Programme Title	Postgraduate Certificate in Low Intensity Psychological Therapies
5	UCAS/Programme Code	3196F*, 3197F * Suspended for 25/26 entry (Self-funded route)
6	Programme Accreditation	BPS
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Date written/revised	May 2026

10 Programme Aims

The programme aims to provide the academic foundations and clinical training in low intensity psychological methods to assess and treat patients with mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. It is part of the NHS Talking Therapies programme which trains Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWP) for NHS employment.

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 be able to:

- A1. Describe and distinguish between mental health and illness systems/categories including diagnosis and psychological models
- A2. Have knowledge of the theoretical underpinnings of a range of psychological assessments utilised in NHS talking therapy services
- A3. Describe a range of developmental and maintenance frameworks for mental health, specifically cognitive and behavioural therapy frameworks
- A4. Describe the ethical and professional frameworks for which clinical practice and care is bound
- A5. Describe the range of low intensity, evidence-based psychological interventions for common mental health problems and the underlying principles of these
- A6. Critically appraise community resources/agencies which may directly or indirectly promote mental health
- A7. Describe the impact of power, culture and diversity on mental health and psychotherapeutic processes; and how to positively accommodate these within a therapeutic setting
- A8. Discuss issues associated with the delivery of a non-discriminatory and accessible mental health services
- A9. Describe a range of other psychological treatments within the stepped care model, and have knowledge of patient factors (diagnosis, severity and chronicity) which would demand treatment beyond a low intensity scope
- A.10 Describe knowledge and understanding of clinical supervision and its relevance to treatment outcomes and professional role

Teaching and Learning Methods

Knowledge and Understanding are developed through:

- Didactic sessions used to establish a learning framework for the development of the students' understanding of complex concepts, and to provide insight into the relationship between theory and practice
- Small group work, to provide opportunities for interaction, discussion, clinical skills practice and clarification in support of learning in relevant areas
- Seminars to enable the real world application of theory to practice
- Guided self-study, supported by the provision of targets and direction within the module handbooks and assignments posted within the University setting, to expand knowledge and understanding through active and task-based learning. These are specified as 'practice based learning' days in the national curriculum
- Individual and group tutorials, to develop individual and collective understanding and to plan for practical tasks. Experiential and skills-based workshops
- Developed and embedded by supervised practice within a clinical placement

Assessment Strategy

Assessment of the underpinning knowledge base is achieved through a combination of:

- Written examination (A1-A3),
- Standardised role-play scenario assessment (A1A5)
- Reflective commentaries (essays; A1-A10).
- Oral presentation of a diverse case (A5-A8)
- Knowledge and skill development is also collated within a workplace portfolio and signed off by a workplace supervisor (A1 – A10)

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

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

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intellectual skills are developed through:

- Critical engagement with the evidence base is taught in didactic teaching as well as in participation in teaching sessions. It is also embedded within practice based learning days
- Interpretation of the literature is also facilitated within tutorials and also through the supervision which the student receive whilst on placement;
- Likewise, service related issues and processes (e.g., the stepped care service model) will be explored 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 intellectual skills are achieved through a combination of:

- Essays which requires the student to engage in a reflective model of clinical practice, and embed reflections in empirical literature (B1-B4)
- Practice portfolios which is verified by the placement supervisor. (B1-B4)

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1. engage 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. utilise 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 (including liaison across agencies and team membership)
- C7. elicit 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
- C8. undertake the above, whilst making appropriate adaptations to accommodate and facilitate equality, diversity and inclusion
- C9. develop and deliver coherent, persuasive arguments concerning patients' care to other professionals and community agents

Teaching and Learning Methods

Practical skills are developed through:

- Experiential and skills-based workshops
- Video simulations and demonstrations and role play
- Clinical skills training and supervision in clinical placement
- Small group activities i.e. role play of clinical skills
- Seminars

Assessment Strategy

Assessments of practical skills is achieved through:

- A standardised role play assessment, marked to a clinical competence scale (C1, C2, C5, C7)
- Clinical recording with a real NHS patient, marked to a clinical competence scale (C1-C8)
- Oral presentation on adapted practice to accommodate diversity (C1-C8)
- Practice Portfolio, verified by the placement supervisor that clinical skills have been achieved (C1-C9)

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1. utilise independent self-study skills and originality
- D2. communicate effectively in both written and oral form
- D3. use ICT effectively in practice
- D4. execute organisational skills
- D5. utilise self-reflective abilities in regard to supervision and professional growth within their role as a PWP

Teaching and Learning Methods

Transferrable skills are developed through:

- planning and preparation of assignments which involve computer-based activities (e.g., word processing and literature searching)
- shared learning through group activities and practice
- group-based exercises and team working
- workshops, lectures and simulation/role play

Assessment Strategy

Core competencies (e.g., generic communication skills; study skills) are assessed within these various assessment techniques. It should also be noted that formative assessment, evaluation and feedback will occur within the training workshops. These 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 receive regular feedback on their performance from their manager/supervisor.

Assessment of transferable skills is achieved through:

- Reflective commentaries (essays) (D1-D5)
- Oral presentation (D1-D5)
- Practice portfolio (D2-D5)

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is 1 year in duration on the full time route to be undertaken in conjunction with a low-intensity post or placement. Students will attend the University, or, engage in the practice based learning day tasks (university led) for 0.4 WTE over two semesters. For the remaining time, trainees are working within post / placement (0.6 WTE). The post/placement will become 1 WTE at the end of semester two, and for the duration of semester 3 until the exam board. The WTE of the full time route is 1. As these are NHS 'recruit to train' employment contracts, the WTE is 37.5 hours per week, including university time.

There are 3 (20 credit) compulsory modules Candidates must pass all assessments to be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate and must have also achieved the minimum clinical and supervision hours.

Candidates whose academic work does not meet the criteria for a Postgraduate Certificate award but does meet the standard for undergraduate study may exit with a Graduate Certificate in Low Intensity Psychological Therapies (stipulated within the programme regulations).

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)

[-R3196F, 3197F 2627 vFinal.pdf](#)

14 Support for Student Learning

[Generic Information](#)

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

[Generic Information](#)

16 Regulation of assessment

[Generic Information](#)

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

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/degrees/>

The University Regulations <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations>

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

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Intended Learning Outcome	Module codes (Compulsory in Bold)
A1	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
A2	PSY8084, PSY8086
A3	PSY8084
A4	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
A5	PSY8085, PSY8086
A6	PSY8086
A7	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
A8	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
A9	PSY8086
A10	PSY8085, PSY8086
B1	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
B2	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
B3	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
B4	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
C1	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
C2	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
C3	PSY8085, PSY8086
C4	PSY8085, PSY8086
C5	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
C6	PSY8085, PSY8086
C7	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
C8	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
C9	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
D1	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
D2	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
D3	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
D4	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086
D5	PSY8084, PSY8085, PSY8086