

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP) Postgraduate Certificate Programme Specification

Academic Year:	2021/22
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Delivery Support Partner:	<u>NHS Health Education England</u> for the provision of delivery of IAPT Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner education across Yorkshire & the Humber
Target Certificate Award:	Postgraduate Certificate Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PGC) [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level 7]
Module Credit Recognition:	Not applicable
Programme Admission:	March
Programme Modes of Study:	Full time in-work (45 days study over 45 weeks)

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Minor Modification Schedule

1. April 2021: Specification reformatted
2. November 2022: Specification made accessible and published. Amended title.

INTRODUCTION

The IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) programme was developed from a governmental white paper that discussed the devastating effect that depression and anxiety disorders have on individuals, their families and society. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) was instrumental in the creation of specific training programmes through the NHS that would train and employ clinicians who would work in IAPT services and directly make an impact on these serious mental health issues: Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWP).

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners are trained to assess and support people with common mental health problems – principally anxiety disorders and depression – in the self-management of their recovery. Interventions are designed to aid clinical improvement and social inclusion, including return to work, meaningful activity or other occupational activities. PWPs do this through the provision of information and support for evidence-based low-intensity psychological treatments, mainly informed by cognitive-behavioural principles, but also include physical exercise and supporting medication adherence. Behaviour change theory and models provide the framework which support an integrated approach to the choice and delivery of the interventions that PWPs provide.

Programme Overview

The IAPT PWP has an external framework that was designed to train CBT competences for depression and anxiety disorders. The IAPT programme was established across England in 2008 with the aim of establishing psychological therapy services to enable 900,000 extra people to receive evidence based NICE approved psychological therapies and interventions for common mental health problems.

PWPs operate within the IAPT service delivery model. Considerable progress has been made in developing effective psychological therapies. This progress has been recognized by NICE which now recommends particular psychological therapies as first choice interventions for depression and anxiety disorders. However, in most countries few members of the public benefit from these advances as there are insufficient appropriately trained therapists. England is an exception. Starting in 2008, the NHS has trained and employed an increasing number of clinicians who work in IAPT services. Individuals who are seen within those services can expect to receive a course of NICE-recommended psychological therapy from an appropriately trained individual and to have their clinical outcomes monitored and reported.

The IAPT programme has grown so that it now sees more than one million people a year. 1.2 million accessed a course of psychological therapy with the IAPT programme in the last year alone. The others receive an assessment, advice and signposting (if appropriate). The IAPT programme is a unique outcome monitoring system ensures over 98% of treated individuals have their depression and anxiety assessed at the beginning and end of treatment.

The PWP programme has been instrumental in achieving the clinical outcome and access targets of the IAPT programme. Currently IAPT sees a minimum of 50% recovery for all individuals completing treatment. One in two people who have a course of treatment in IAPT recover and two out of three people show reliable improvement in their mental health. The effort to secure such impressive outcomes has generated very substantial learning.

The PWP programme is fully funded by the NHS HEE. All places on the programme are tied to a trainee job in an IAPT service. Applicants must apply for and secure a PWP trainee post within the NHS or specified Third Sector organization. Trainees subsequently selected for the programme in addition to academic fees paid are also paid a stipend at band 4 which is approximately £22,549 for the one-year training contract. After successfully completing the programme trainees are eligible to register with the British Psychological Society or the British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies as Qualified Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners and can be employed on a permanent contract with the IAPT programme or other suitable stepped care psychological therapies service.

The success of the IAPT programme has been recognized and the NHS has committed to further expanding IAPT services so 1.6 million people per year will be seen by 2021/22. This represents over a quarter of the community prevalence of depression and anxiety disorders.

The PWP Postgraduate Certificate programme is aimed at individuals who are interested in providing support for adults with depression and anxiety disorders that can be managed

in the NHS context. The right workforce, appropriately trained, with the right capacity and skills mix is essential to ensuring the delivery of NICE recommended care. The IAPT workforce consists of low-intensity practitioners and high-intensity therapists who together deliver the full range of NICE recommended interventions for people with mild, moderate and severe depression and anxiety disorders, operating within a stepped-care model. National guidance suggests that 40% of IAPT services be staffed by PWPs.

Programme Aims

The postgraduate course aims to provide professional level academic training in evidence based Low-intensity psychological interventions as practiced by Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners within the IAPT programme. The course is designed for any individuals who have completed a degree with a 2:2 or higher result and who demonstrate the necessary aptitude in interpersonal rapport building and reflective ability with an interest in delivering effective psychological care in their communities.

The curriculum is designed so that it can be available at both undergraduate (level 6) and postgraduate certificate level (level 7), based on modules typically delivered 1 day a week over 45 weeks – 45 days in total. This number of days is essential to meet the learning objectives specified within the curriculum. Although each module has a specific set of learning outcomes, the clinical competencies build on each other and courses are expected to focus the majority of their teaching activity on clinical competence development through clinical simulation/role play.

The NHS provides an IAPT service delivery model that is predicated on a stepped care model with PWPs supporting low-intensity interventions. The IAPT programme was developed as a systematic way to organize and improve the delivery of, and access to, evidence-based psychological therapies within the NHS. These evidence-based treatments for people with depression and anxiety disorders and comorbid long-term physical health conditions with the basic principles that the PWP programme at the University of Bradford will follow.

- **Evidence-based psychological therapies at the appropriate dose:** where NICE recommended therapies are matched to the mental health problem and the intensity and duration of delivery is designed to optimize outcomes.
- **Appropriately trained and supervised workforce:** where high quality care is provided by clinicians who are trained to an agreed level of competence and registered or accredited in the specific therapies they deliver, and who receive weekly outcomes-focused supervision by senior clinical practitioners with the relevant competences who can support them to continuously improve
- **Routine outcome monitoring on a session-by-session basis,** so that the person having therapy and the clinician offering it have up-to-date information on the person's progress. This helps guide the course of each person's treatment and provides a resource for service improvement, transparency and public accountability.
- **Services are delivered using a stepped-care model,** which works according to the principle that people should be offered the least burdensome intervention appropriate for their needs first.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance for common mental health disorders and for each of the anxiety disorders and depression sets out the range of different types of low-intensity evidence-based interventions appropriate for delivery by PWP. Principal among these are support for low-intensity self-help interventions informed by cognitive-behavioural principles.

Typically these are supported by the use of self-help materials which can be provided in written or digital form (e.g., computerised cognitive behavioural therapy (cCBT)). Treatment is provided to groups of people as well as one-to-one to individual patients and is provided by telephone and increasingly through electronic media as well as face-to-face. Low-intensity psychological treatments place a greater emphasis on patient self-management and are less burdensome than traditional psychological treatments. Support is specifically designed to enable patients to optimise their use of self-management recovery information. PWP also provide information on common pharmacological treatments and support patients in decisions that optimise their use of such treatments. They also provide information on and support for the promotion of physical activity.

The PWP programme is delivered within a competency-based framework. Core competencies for the PWP role include generic therapeutic competencies, the ability to use a collaborative approach, the ability to structure sessions, generic metacompetencies, as well as competence in the specific Low-Intensity interventions that are recommended for depression and anxiety disorders. The design of the academic programme reflects the IAPT stepped care service context in which trainees work during their training year. The University of Bradford programme contains 3 core modules and is structured to follow the national PWP curriculum guidance. The IAPT initiative was developed to train workers to support the delivery of treatment for depression and anxiety disorders in line with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance. The programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society and follows the curriculum commissioned by the Department of Health.

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner training programmes provide the knowledge and professional skills for people to work as Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWPs) with people with common mental health problems. PWP normally operate within a stepped care service delivery model, such as Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services in England, or similar service delivery models elsewhere. PWP training programmes in other nations may prepare people to work in analogous roles in primary care mental health services.

External Frameworks and Reference Points:

- Health Education England Improving Access to Psychological Therapies:
<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/mental-health/improving-access-psychological-therapies>
- NHS Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner Role:
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles/psychological-wellbeing-practitioner>

PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

The outcomes of the PWP programme aligns with the relevant level descriptors for FHEQ and the accreditation body the BPS as well as the NHS-HEE guidance and the NICE guidelines for common mental health problems.

To be eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate, students will be able to:

Subject Knowledge and Skills

1. Engagement and assessment of patients with common mental health problems.
2. Knowledge, understanding and critical awareness of concepts of mental health and mental illness.
3. Knowledge, understanding and critical awareness of diagnostic category systems in mental health.
4. Demonstrate a range of social, medical and psychological explanatory models.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in applying the principles, purposes and different types of assessment undertaken with people with common mental health disorders.

Practical and Transferable Skills

6. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in using, 'common factors' to engage patients, gather information, build a therapeutic alliance with people with common mental health problems, manage the emotional content of sessions and grasp the patient's perspective or 'worldview'.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in, 'patient-centred' information gathering to arrive at a succinct and collaborative definition of the person's main mental health difficulties and the impact this has on their daily living.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in recognizing, patterns of symptoms consistent with diagnostic categories of mental disorder from a patient-centred interview.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in, accurate risk assessment and management of patients or others.
10. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in the use of, standardized assessment tools including symptom and other psychometric instruments to aid problem recognition and definition and subsequent decision making.

Professional Behaviours

11. Demonstrate knowledge of, and commitment to, a non-discriminatory, recovery orientated values base to mental healthcare and to equal opportunities for all and encourage people's active participation in every aspect of care and treatment.

12. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in responding to, people's needs sensitively with regard to all aspects of diversity, including working with older people, the use of interpretation services and taking into account any physical and sensory difficulties patients may experience in accessing services.
13. Demonstrate competence in managing a caseload of people with common mental health problems efficiently and safely.
14. Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence in gathering, patient-centred information on employment needs, wellbeing and social inclusion and in liaison and signposting to other agencies delivering employment, occupational and other advice and services.
15. Appreciate the worker's own level of competence and boundaries of competence and role, and understand how to work within a team and with other agencies with additional specific roles which cannot be fulfilled by the worker alone.

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Programme Structure

The programme does not follow traditional stages of learning and is a 45-week taught programme that concludes with certification. The curriculum includes both theoretical learning and skills practice and practice-based learning directed by the University of Bradford academic staff that extends learning into practice.

The national curriculum defines the academic contribution as 45 days of academic instruction, 25-30 days delivered as theoretical learning and skills practice and 15-20 days as directed practice-based learning. Directed practice-based learning tasks include shadowing/observation, role play/practice with peers/colleagues of assessment and interventions, and directed problem-based learning. Engagement with a formal programme of self-practice, self-reflection (for example, applying techniques to issues from own life) is facilitated by the teaching team and is a requirement of this programme,

Students at the University of Bradford PWP programme will typically attend 3 modules for 1 full day per week and the remaining 4 days per week working at their IAPT service placement. At times the course might provide intensive teaching blocks to make the essential theoretical knowledge available to trainees for use in practice. The programme is 45 days in total with 30 days being at the University and the additional 15 days spent in directed study.

For the clinical aspect the training programme requires trainees to learn from observation and skills practice under supervision within their IAPT service, as well as through the theoretical teaching, skills practice and practice-based learning directed by the Higher Education Institute. Students will have a compulsory placement for 4 days of week. Trainees should complete a minimum of 80 clinical contact hours with patients (face-to-face or on the telephone) within an IAPT service as a requirement of their training and should undertake a minimum of 40 hours of supervision of which at least 20 hours should be case management supervision and at least 20 hours should be clinical skills supervision. These 80 clinical contact hours and 40 supervision hours are in addition to the 15-20 practice-based learning days directed by education providers.

Assessment

Assessment focuses primarily on trainees' practical demonstration of competencies. Clinical competency assessments are independent of academic level and must be passed. Trainees may not necessarily possess previous clinical or professional expertise in mental health and can undertake academic assessments at either undergraduate or postgraduate level, depending on their prior academic attainment.

Student Support

Not all students arrive at the university fully prepared and able to deal with the balance required between university life, working life and personal life. Many students, no matter their age, find that they need some assistance, guidance or reassurance at some point during their studies. All students will be assigned a Personal Academic tutor to support them during their academic studies. A student's PAT will take an active interest in their academic progress and personal well-being. The Personal Tutoring programme consists of regular, scheduled meetings with their personal tutor. Students will be encouraged to contact their PAT to be in contact as soon as a concern or issue arises.

Evidence shows that nurturing a student's "sense of belonging" improves their engagement, retention and success. Providing students with regular opportunities to meet with their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) to discuss and enhance their personal, academic and professional development throughout their time at University increases academic achievement. If a student finds themselves in difficult personal circumstance that require in-depth support, they will be advised by their Personal Academic Tutor/Programme Leader to seek counselling support either from the University's Student Services or from another appropriate agent or agency (for example, their GP, a professional Counsellor, or a Charity/Self-help Group) of their choosing. The University Counselling support service is free for them to use as students at the University of Bradford and is completely confidential.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum Overview

The course has been established to meet the demands of the national IAPT educational agenda and therefore follows the PWP National Curriculum, which was reviewed in 2014/15. The overall purpose of the course is to train PWPs to deliver safe, effective and competent Low Intensity Interventions at step 2 of the stepped care model (for clients with common mental health problems). This is in order to meet the service needs of various IAPT service providers across Yorkshire and Humber. The course is funded by the NHS-HEE. Trainees completing the Certificate will hold posts as IAPT PWP trainees in their Trusts and work in the IAPT services. Course accreditation standards for the PWP programme have been developed and are linked to the national PWP curriculum. Each module has a specific set of foci and learning outcomes. The training programme requires students to learn from observation and skills practice in small group teacher-facilitated learning environments on the teaching days. Trainees also hold a caseload of patients and

deliver assessment and treatment under supervision while working in an IAPT service during training.

One module of the programme is focussed on diversity, inclusivity and equality; however these values are also built into the other two modules. Definitions of diverse characteristics are provided in the Equality Act (2010), along with the injunction to provide equitable and non-discriminatory services. Diversity also represents the range of cultural norms including personal, family, social and spiritual values held by the many diverse communities served by the service within which the worker is operating. It is vital that trainees respect and value individual differences and take into account any physical, sensory or cultural barriers people may experience in accessing services. Trainees must be able to respond to people's needs sensitively with regard to all aspects of diversity.

Clinical Work Placement

The IAPT service delivery model is predicated on a stepped care model with PWPs supporting low-intensity interventions and high-intensity workers delivering CBT or one of the other IAPT approved evidence-based modalities. The training programme requires trainees to learn from observation and skills practice under supervision while working in an IAPT service.

As well as through the theoretical teaching, skills practice and practice-based learning directed by the education provider, trainees must complete:

- a minimum of 80 clinical contact hours with patients (face-to-face or on the telephone) within an IAPT service (or equivalent stepped care service) as a requirement of their training, undertaking a range of activities during this time.
- a minimum of 40 hours of supervision of which at least 20 hours should be case management supervision and at least 20 hours should be clinical skills supervision.

Case management supervision is undertaken weekly for a minimum of one hour on a one-to-one basis with a suitably qualified member of staff. Case management supervision is supported by an IT system that enables outcomes to be effectively incorporated into clinical decision-making, often relating to the stepping-up of treatment intensity or offering alternative low-intensity treatments. Case management supervision is highly structured and will be a review of the current caseload held by the PWP, in which the PWP selects appropriate cases for supervision and presents the cases according to clinical and organizational criteria (for example, prioritising scheduled reviews or risk). The PWP should demonstrate the competencies of being able to present clinical and demographic information about each patient in a succinct manner to enable discussion of key points and shared decision-making to take place. Case management supervision is key to effective clinical governance and ensuring patient safety.

Clinical skills supervision for PWPs can be undertaken on a one-to-one basis or in a group, for a minimum of one hour per fortnight. Supervision is an accountable process which supports, assures and develops the knowledge, skills and values of the PWP. The purpose of clinical skills supervision is to provide a safe and confidential environment for PWPs to reflect on and discuss their work and their personal and professional development, providing an environment to enable reflection on their low-intensity practice and ensuring fidelity to the evidence base and clinical method.

Modules

Students join the programme in University of Bradford Semester 2 and complete the programme at the end of Semester 1 of the following academic year. The "third semester" covers the summer period of the academic year.

Table 1: Programme Core Modules (PGC IAPT PWP)

Code	Title	Credit	Study Period
PSY7023-B	Evidence-based low-intensity treatment for common mental health disorders	20	Semester 2
PSY7024-B	Engagement and assessment of patients with common mental health problems	20	Semester 3
PSY7025-B	Values, diversity and context	20	Semester 1

Students will be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Certificate if they have successfully completed 60 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

There are no interim or exit awards. Students who do not complete the programme may apply to have credit successfully completed as a Certificate of Continuing Education.

STUDY ABROAD

This programme is not eligible for Study Abroad opportunities.

REGULATIONS

The Postgraduate Certificate programme conforms to the standard University Postgraduate Assessment Regulations which can be accessed online at www.brad.ac.uk/regulations.

However, the following variation applies: Students must obtain a natural pass in all assessments. Condoned and compensated passes, such as where a fail is changed to a pass, are not permitted.

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

The programme is only open to students who are resident and employed within the United Kingdom. Recruitment is carried out jointly by the IAPT services and the University course team. All students must apply for and secure a PWP trainee post within the NHS. These posts are typically advertised on the NHS jobs website and all places on the programme are tied to a trainee job in an IAPT service. **The University of Bradford is unable to accept direct applications for the course.**

The PWP training is open to people with a range of experience. Those with a degree will typically undertake a Level 7 postgraduate certificate and those without a degree will normally undertake the Level 6 graduate certificate. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

- As the programme is taught in English, students must have English at GCSE Grade C (new Grade 4) or above, or a national equivalent Level 2 English qualification.
- We specifically require that applicants have an undergraduate (Bachelor's) degree with honours classified at lower second (2:2) or above, in any subject.

The programme is not eligible for prior learning recognition, but we welcome students who have non-traditional qualifications and backgrounds. Other academic qualifications of an equivalent standard and substantial work experience and achievements at work demonstrating ability to study successfully at a postgraduate level can be taken into account. Not demonstrating this does not bar you from studying towards the PWP qualification as you will be registered for the FHEQ Level 6 Graduate Certificate programme instead.

Students with a disability may wish to contact the Disability Office before applying by visiting the website <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before>.

As this programme is delivered partly online in a hybrid design, all students must have access to an internet connect, computer and devote one day a week to participating in educational activities. The programme is 45 weeks duration. The programme is comprised of three core modules, which are delivered according to the PWP National Curriculum: Delivery entails 30 days of face-to-face teaching and 15 days of practice-based learning.

The programme begins in March. The duration is slightly different than other programmes as the programme is required for a duration of 45 weeks of continuous enrolment (45 days - one day a week as the other 4 are spent in placement) over 3 terms (semesters).
