

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

MSc



THE UNIVERSITY OF
BUCKINGHAM



MSc

The master's in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is a two year course, consisting of eight modules (180 credits) with the first 120 credits deriving from the postgraduate diploma. The second year of the master's in acute medicine starts with an initial 10 week online module that will develop skills in critical appraisal and knowledge of research methodologies. Students then complete the professional project module, which consists of a 1,500 word proposal and 10,500 word professional project (dissertation).

Why Study Cognitive Behavioural Therapy with us?

Across healthcare settings, psychological factors influence how patients interpret symptoms, respond to treatment, and engage with care. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) provides a recognised theoretical approach for examining these interactions through structured reflection and evidence-informed reasoning.

At Learn | Diploma MSc, our MSc in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy focuses on advancing postgraduate understanding through research-led discussion, formulation-based analysis, and independent academic exploration. Our online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy MSc is validated by the University of Buckingham, and enables learners to extend their knowledge while continuing to work full-time.

Our Cognitive Behavioural Therapy MSc begins with six structured modules that develop a comprehensive understanding of CBT theory, formulation, and evidence-informed practice. Learners explore foundational principles, therapeutic reasoning, and the application of CBT across mood disorders, anxiety presentations, and more complex psychological contexts.

Upon completion of these modules, our MSc in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy progresses to a supervised dissertation. This extended research project allows learners to explore a chosen area of CBT in depth and produce a substantial piece of supervised academic work.

MSc in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Course Modules

Module 1 - Foundations of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Aims of the module:

To introduce the fundamental principles, theoretical models, and evidence base of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), establishing a solid foundation for clinical application.

Module Content:

- Introduction to CBT
- Core Theoretical Models
- Structure of CBT Practice
- Assessment and Case Formulation
- Professional Reflection Practice in CBT: Conduct, Ethics and Performance
- CBT in Context

Learning outcomes:

- Critically evaluate the theoretical foundations, core models, and evidence base of cognitive behavioural therapy, including the structural components of CBT in practice, in order to explain the interaction between cognition, emotion, behaviour, and physiology in psychological distress across healthcare contexts.
- Construct and justify CBT case formulations using assessment data and recognised CBT frameworks to conceptualise clinical presentations within the learner's professional scope of practice.

Module 2 - Core Clinical Skills in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Aims of the module:

To develop learners' understanding of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in clinical practice, building on Module 1.

Module Content:

- Engagement and Developing the Therapeutic Rationale
- Assessment of Suitability and Readiness to Change
- Risk Assessment, Management, and Safety Planning
- Socratic Questioning and Guided Discovery
- Collaborative Case Formulation
- Integration: Formulation and Treatment Planning

Learning outcomes:

- Critically apply the principles and processes of CBT, including Socratic dialogue and guided discovery, to consolidate professional socialisation to the model and inform clinical reasoning.
- Design, justify, and adapt comprehensive, evidence-informed treatment plans that link formulation, risk assessment, therapeutic goals, and intervention strategies, demonstrating advanced professional judgement and safe practice within the CBT framework.

Module 3 - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Depression and Mood Disorders

Aims of the module:

To learn and apply Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) principles and techniques to depressive and related mood disorders, enabling students to competently assess, formulate, and intervene in cases of depression.

Module Content:

- Understanding Depression
- Assessment and Case Conceptualisation in Depression
- Cognitive Techniques for Depression
- Behavioural Activation in Practice
- Advanced Applications
- Case-Based Synthesis and Reflection

Learning outcomes:

- Synthesise CBT theory, assessment findings, and clinical guidance to formulate and justify CBT-based intervention strategies for depressive and mood-related presentations.
- Critically apply behavioural activation, cognitive restructuring, and relapse-prevention approaches to support ethical, recovery-focused practice within multidisciplinary settings.

Module 4 - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Anxiety and Related Disorders

Aims of the module:

To equip students with the knowledge and skills to apply Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approaches to common anxiety and stress-related disorders.

Module Content:

- Transdiagnostic Foundations of Anxiety
- CBT for Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia
- CBT for Phobias and Social Anxiety
- CBT for Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- CBT for Obsessive–Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- CBT for Trauma and PTSD

Learning outcomes:

- Critically evaluate disorder-specific and transdiagnostic CBT models alongside assessment frameworks in order to differentiate anxiety, OCD, and trauma-related presentations, identify comorbidities, and justify the selection and adaptation of evidence-based interventions.
- Integrate cognitive, behavioural, and exposure-based strategies into coherent, formulation-driven CBT intervention plans within the learner's professional scope of practice.

Module 5 - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in Diverse Contexts and Special Populations

Aims of the module:

To broaden students' competence by exploring how Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is adapted and applied in a variety of contexts beyond standard adult outpatient therapy for depression/anxiety.

Module Content:

- CBT in Primary Care and General Health Settings
- CBT for Chronic Illness and Pain Management
- Working with Older Adults
- Cultural Adaptations of CBT
- Low-Intensity and Digital CBT Interventions
- Special Topics – CBT at the Interface of Physical and Mental Health, and Course Synthesis

Learning outcomes:

- Critically analyse how cultural, contextual, and population-specific factors influence CBT assessment, formulation, and intervention across global healthcare environments.
- Adapt and justify CBT-informed approaches for diverse populations and delivery formats to enhance inclusivity, accessibility, and ethical integrity.

Module 6 - Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Applications and Professional Integration

Aims of the module:

To consolidate the entire programme by tackling advanced topics in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and preparing students to integrate their CBT learning into their ongoing professional practice.

Module Content:

- Managing Comorbidity and Complexity
- Personality Factors and CBT
- Introduction to Third-Wave Therapies
- Emerging Trends and Specialised Applications
- Professional Practice Integration and Self-Care
- Capstone Case Presentations and Course Conclusion

Learning outcomes:

- Synthesise and evaluate advanced CBT, third-wave, and transdiagnostic approaches to inform formulation-driven responses to complex and comorbid presentations.
- Critically reflect upon and integrate CBT learning into ongoing professional practice to support ethical, sustainable, and evidence-informed career development, including sustained engagement in continuing professional development and the identification of future professional learning needs beyond the programme.

Module 7 - Research Methodologies and Critical Appraisal

Aims of the module:

To help students recognise, understand, interpret and apply methods used in healthcare research and critically appraise the various methodologies related to the specialty.

Module Content:

- Terminology used in epidemiology and research studies such as prevalence, incidence, sensitivity, specificity, false positive and false negatives.
- Interpreting graphical representation of epidemiological and statistical data such as Kaplan-Meier curves, forest plots and meta-analyses.
- Qualitative research methods.
- Fundamentals of evidence-based practice and its application into the clinical setting.
- Principles of health economics, audit and quality improvement/assurance systems.
- Establishing patient registers and the value of disease-specific registers.
- Research into educational principles for both healthcare practitioner and patient.

Learning outcomes:

- Select and apply different methodological perspectives and tools to answer research questions in the field.
- Critically analyse and interpret research in the subject area to assess its application to delivery/service development.

Module 8 - Professional Project

Aims of the module:

To develop students' ability to critically appraise specific areas of clinical, research and/or organisational practice and develop skills in independent research, study and writing for publication.

Module Content:

- Literature review and appraisal of the evidence.
- Audit of practice, including organisational or clinical.
- Review and implementation of evidence-based practice.
- Qualitative or quantitative research (formal research involving human subjects is not anticipated).
- Case(s)-based and quality of service review with critical appraisal.
- Case report, review of literature and organisational assessment.

Learning outcomes:

- Design and undertake a professional research/development project related to the field of practice in order to produce an extensive piece of literature which may be suitable for peer-reviewed publication.
- Critically evaluate practice and suggest improvements or change.
- Incorporate knowledge of the research process in developing services appropriately.

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Programme Leader - Professor Jaime G. Miralles

Jamie completed his undergraduate degree at Cardiff University and postgraduate Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) training at the University of Reading and the University of Exeter. Earlier in his career, he qualified and worked as a primary school teacher. He is an enthusiastic therapist and supervisor with experience across both private and public sectors. He is trained in EMDR, DBT, ACT and Mental Health First Aid (MHFA). He provides supervision for CBT therapists, counselling psychologists in training, trainee CBT therapists, nurses, social workers and other allied health professionals. Additionally, he supports trainees working towards BABCP accreditation and is currently working towards BABCP Supervision Accreditation.



Teaching Methods

Our courses are conducted entirely online through our online learning platform. However, you will receive guidance throughout with tutor-stimulated academic discussions, which are based on clinically-rich case scenarios. These usually occur within groups of 10-15 students, allowing you to clearly communicate with both your tutor and fellow students.

You will participate in a combination of group and individual activities, which are recorded in a reflective journal. This innovative teaching method enables you to envisage the translation of your studies into your everyday work and practice.

Our dedicated Student Support Team is also available to help with any problems you may face. From navigating our online platform to advising you on deadlines, our team can assist with any questions or challenges you may have along the way.

Study skills week

Once you have secured your place on the course, you will be required to attend our Study Skills week. This will give you the opportunity to participate in workshops on Harvard referencing, scientific and reflective writing, and levels of evidence in preparation for your studies. It is compulsory for you to attend this induction, as it will provide you with a sturdy introduction to the course.

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Entry Requirements

Since our courses are conducted entirely online, they are accessible to both UK and international registered healthcare professionals.

Applicants will typically hold a first degree or equivalent (including international qualifications) in a relevant professional healthcare field, such as a medical or nursing degree.

Registered healthcare professionals without these recognised qualifications will be considered on an individual basis and a wide range of prior experience may be taken into account. In some cases, applicants may be asked to submit a piece of work for assessment in order to confirm that they are able to work comfortably at postgraduate level, and demonstrate the requisite clinical and professional knowledge.



Documents Required

- A copy of your updated CV including your address and date of birth.
- A copy of your undergraduate degree certificate.
- The name and email address of someone who is able to provide a reference, this can be a work colleague, employer or former tutor.
- A detailed personal statement explaining why you would like to undertake the course.
- A copy of your proof of English competency (see English language requirements).

English Language Requirements

Proficiency in the English language is also essential to completing our courses. If English is NOT your first language, we ask for proof of competency during the application process. We are able to accept an IELTS overall score of 6.0 (with a minimum of 5.5 for each band) or an equivalent qualification.

If you do not meet these requirements, please don't worry. The University of South Wales run a number of English Language Programmes at the Centre for International English to prepare you for your academic studies. You can also contact our admissions team on admissions@diploma-msc.com for more information on the qualifications we accept.

Should you have already successfully completed the 1 year Postgraduate Diploma and wish to convert to the MSc and complete only the second year of the programme this is possible. Please contact our admissions department admissions@diploma-msc.com to find out more.



What do our students think?

Since 2010, over 6000 students have progressed their medical career by enrolling in one of our qualifications. We ourselves have learned a lot during this time and continually seek to improve the student learning experience. Here is what some of our previous students have said:

"I found the online learning very interesting. It enabled me to save money and time."

Dr Imad Eddin Rahamtalla, Doctor

"I found learning with Diploma MSc interesting, it helped to update my academic knowledge."

Dr Prasanth Kinattupurayil, Doctor

"I strongly recommend Diploma MSc to all those busy physicians who are working in remote areas and wish to upgrade their knowledge."

Dr Junaid Zaffar, Diabetologist

"I love that it was flexible and that I could log in at my convenience. I found this course to be very in-depth, informative, challenging and stimulating."

Kerri-Ann Best PGDip, RD

"The learning was fun and enjoyable. The course was awesome and it increased my confidence."

Dr Sankar Nath Jha, Assistant Professor



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