

Mental Health and Counselling

Introduction

Improving Scotland's mental health has been identified by the Scottish Executive as a major health priority potentially generating increased opportunities for work in this important area of healthcare. The BA Mental Health and Counselling offers an exciting opportunity to develop knowledge and skills that could help you contribute towards this goal and improve your career prospects in the area. The programme is designed around the increased need for interdisciplinary working and is relevant to anyone who wishes to begin a career in mental health and or counselling. It may be of particular interest to people who are already employed or aspire to work within fields such as:

- The voluntary sector (e.g. support worker; volunteer counsellor)
- Community education
- Social care

Programme Design

This challenging course invites you to examine your own beliefs and attitudes, develop your capacity to work effectively as a member of a team, and apply relevant theory and research from social science disciplines such as psychology and sociology.

The programme takes a socially oriented approach to mental health problems and seeks to help students to make sense of mental health problems in terms of a range of social factors, including responses to life events and life course crises, difficulties in relationships, and the impact of the individual's socio-cultural environment.

Key Features of this Programme

Special features of this degree include:

- Foundation level training in counselling skills as part of the degree programme, which contributes to eligibility to enter counselling training at postgraduate diploma/masters level. For example, the counselling skills modules on this programme are the equivalent of those that comprise the University's existing Graduate Certificate in Counselling Skills, which is an essential requirement for entry to the University's postgraduate counselling programme.
- A strong emphasis on the acquisition of both practical skills and theoretical knowledge. For instance, students undertake placements in mental health settings to gain practical knowledge and experience of working with people experiencing mental health problems.
- A commitment to working in collaboration with people who experience mental health problems.

What You Study

The Programme includes modules on mental health, counselling skills, research, psychology and health studies. Specific subjects are studied at different stages (i.e. years) in the programme. For example;

Stage 1: Skills for life long learning; Introductory Psychology; Basic Concepts for Mental Health Work; Health Studies and Health Promotion; Working with People - an introduction to skills and methods; Health and Lifestyle.

Course

BA (Hons) Mental Health and Counselling

UCAS Code

CL85 BA/MHC

Duration

Four years FT



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Stage 2: Introduction to Evidence Based Practice; Understanding Mental Distress; Social and Health Policy and Organisations; Cognitive Psychology; Third Wing – recovery in action; Health, Illness and Disease; Key readings in Mental Health; Biological Psychology.

Stage 3: Counselling skills in Healthcare Settings 1; Applied Health Psychology; Working with Older People; Research Methods for Health Professionals; Working with People with Persistent Mental Health Problems; Counselling skills in Healthcare Settings 2. Options modules include: Neurophysiology of Mental Health; Growth and Development Across the Lifespan; Work-based Learning; Personality and Social Psychology.

Stage 4: Research Project; Critical Issues in Public Health; Counselling skills in Healthcare Settings 3 & 4; Clinical Psychology; Critical Perspective on Mental Distress; Collaborative Working in Community Settings.

Career Opportunities

It is expected that graduates from this programme will be attractive to employers from a range of different areas including the health service, social care sector and especially voluntary organisations. One recent graduate found employment as a Project support worker in a voluntary sector Mental Health Association had this to say about her work in mental health:

"I love working in mental health, I am lucky to have a job that involves a lot of one-to-one support with clients, so although I may not have the status of being a qualified counsellor, I get to use my listening and empathy skills on a daily basis, which is a real pleasure." (Laura, 2007)

It should be noted that further study may be required to practice in the field of mental health in some settings. To achieve a qualification to practice as a professional counsellor, for example, additional training at post-graduate diploma/masters level would be required.

Course Accessibility

Students participating in this course may be involved in the following activities: team working, attending lectures and tutorials, undertaking practical work in IT and network laboratories, visits to external institutions and an optional placement. For advice on course accessibility, please contact John Petrie (Student Advisor) at j.petrie@abertay.ac.uk or telephone (01382) 308051.

Further Information

Details of the entrance requirements can be found on our website. If you would like more information on this course, please contact the Student Recruitment Office (details at the bottom of page).

In addition to the entrance requirements of the University, all applicants who choose a work placement option must satisfy a Disclosure Scotland check.

The information in this leaflet is correct at the time of going to print. As the University has a policy of regularly reviewing its courses, the course or content may be subject to change without prior notice.

1/08

Contact

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