

BRITISH PSYCHOANALYTIC COUNCIL

TRAINING STANDARDS

The qualifying courses are assessed, and re-accredited regularly, by the Registration Committee of the BPC. The BPC examines and monitors –

- the structure of the institution offering the qualification,
- the qualifications and experience of the staff providing the training,
- the academic syllabus,
- the clinical requirements,
- the standard of clinical work, [including reading clinical papers written by students]
- the arrangements for CPD, and its effective monitoring.

The Registration Committee is comprised of senior professionals in the BPC, and is chaired by the Registrar. Individuals interested in becoming members of the Committee must be sponsored by their own member Institution, and may not participate in the assessment of their own training institution.

Structure of Training Institutions

Many training institutions are voluntary organisations, and some, for example the Tavistock Institute, are statutory.

Training institutions wishing to join BPC should have been in existence for at least five years, and have a minimum of twenty members.

Training institutions must have an active and effective professional association which can offer graduates support and CPD.

Training institutions must have a policy of non-discrimination, and be able to monitor it.

Training institutions must be able to select candidates solely on the basis of suitability, and not to meet financial, or other, targets.

Training institutions send BPC copies of their annual reports and accounts.

Standards of Training

1] Selection of suitable candidates.

Training institutions evaluate the applicants in terms of moral integrity and psychological health.

Applicants generally, although not always, have a background in allied professions, and usually have degrees in medicine, psychology or social work.

Applicants must have experience in the field of psychiatry, as it is essential for practitioners to be able to recognise mental illness, and to know about the treatments available. If a suitable applicant does not have this experience, the training institutions require that the applicant undertake a psychiatric placement. All courses have teaching on psychiatry.

2] Training course.

There are three main components of the training, as follows-

i] Academic Teaching

This includes seminars, workshops and clinical presentations, of not less than 360 hours.

The theory and technique of psychoanalytic psychotherapy is taught by experienced and knowledgeable practitioners. It encompasses a thorough grounding in theory and

psychoanalytic thought, using the current, extensive, published literature. A wide range of psychoanalytic approaches is also taught, to enable students to develop a flexible but thorough understanding of the theory base, and to encourage critical appraisal of theory.

Clinical presentations expose the students to different clinical approaches in the field from the ones offered by their supervisors and training therapists. In clinical seminars students take turns to present their clinical work to the seminar leader and other students, in conditions of strict confidentiality of any identifying features.

ii] Supervision

Each student sees a minimum of two training patients, one for a minimum of 2 years and one for a minimum of one year. The patients are one of each sex, and are treated intensively [minimum 3x weekly]. Students are supervised weekly, for about one hour each time, by an experienced psychoanalytic psychotherapist, on an individual basis, and have a different supervisor for each case - again, usually one of each sex. This supervision continues until qualification. The cases are selected in different ways in Training Institutions, but are accepted as suitable cases for intensive treatment by a student under careful supervision.

The supervision consists of a detailed discussion of the clinical material presented by the student about the treatment sessions. The student usually brings comprehensive notes detailing the interactions and dialogue of the treatment session; the supervisor is informed of all the details about the patient in order to safeguard the treatment and the patient's best interests.

Selection of Supervisors

All training institutions have stringent criteria for the selection and appointment of supervisors

iii] Personal Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy [Training Therapy]

Students must have intensive [min 3x weekly] personal psychoanalytic psychotherapy for at least one year before starting their academic seminars [thus 2 years before taking their first patient], and continue for the duration of the training- i.e. until qualification.

Selection of Training Therapists.

All training institutions have stringent criteria for the selection and appointment of training therapists.

Assessment of Students

Students are assessed throughout their training, and are given written feedback at least once per year.

The assessment involves feedback from all staff involved with the student, with the exception of the training therapist. The students' regular reports on their patients, and their contribution to theoretical and clinical seminars are discussed and critically evaluated by the staff who know the student well, and by experienced colleagues who do not know the student well but can provide a more distanced assessment of the clinical standard of the student as shown in their clinical reports and their clinical discussions in seminars.

In order to qualify, students must show sufficient competence in all areas outlined in the training institution's standards of proficiency.