



**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX  
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**Clinical skills: Practitioner**

**Year: 2017/18**

**Code: 919C8**

**Credits:**

**Term 1 2017**

**Module Convenor: Mark Hayward**

**NOTE: Most of the questions you need answers to about this module are in this document. Please read it fully and carefully before your first seminar.**

NOTE: This document concerns the structure and content of the module. If you have questions about procedures, please consult the School of Psychology Office in Pev1 2A13 or via [psychology@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:psychology@sussex.ac.uk).

## MODULE INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

### Module Structure, Aims and Objectives

This module introduces the therapeutic practice of clinical psychology from two key perspectives - those of the clinical psychologists ('practitioner perspective') and their clients ('lived experience perspective').

The module will begin by exploring the experience of and the generic skills involved in talking to people about their mental health problems and facilitating recovery - and will do so from each of the two perspectives. This will be followed by a consideration of the therapeutic relationship, the skills involved in and the experience of assessment, and the skills involved in and the experience of formulations. We'll also consider the well-being of others who are involved with the therapeutic encounter - the practitioner and informal caregivers.

Each topic will draw extensively upon the experience of the practitioner and the client to reflect upon key issues for recovery from mental health problems. How does one talk and hear about experiences that are distressing? How important are the non-clinical and generic aspects of relationship-building? What should influence the pace of assessment and formulation? How does the practitioner use supervision to reflect upon the well-being of themselves and other caregivers?

Each topic will also be underpinned by a consideration of appropriate theories and models of therapeutic relationships, assessment and formulation, and well-being.

### Module Learning Outcomes.

By the end of the module a successful student will be able to:

Understand the key skills required by clinical psychologists to actively listen to clients talking about their mental health problems

Reflect on their listening skills and identify areas for development

Critically appraise the main theories and models that facilitate understanding of the therapeutic relationship, assessment, formulation and well-being

Demonstrate an awareness of the impact of the therapeutic encounter upon clinical psychologists, clients and informal caregivers

## Module Contact Information

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## Teaching and Learning

*The syllabus details for the module are available via links on the Psychology teaching web pages and via Sussex Direct.*

**Seminars.** Seminars for this module will last for two hours and will occur weekly. Please see your timetable in Sussex Direct for details of *when* and where *your* seminars will be held.

Seminars on this module are intended to perform several functions. First, they allow students to review material covered in associated lectures and essential reading. All students **must** do at least the essential reading before the seminar. In addition, there will usually be some additional readings that will be assigned to some of you each week by your seminar leader. These are designed to supplement the essential reading and to provoke lively discussion in the seminar.

A second function of seminars is 'interrogate' at least some of the material covered in associated lectures and essential reading. This will be done by use of particular exercises you will learn about on a week-by-week basis. Again, students **must** have done the essential reading and seminar quality will improve to the extent that each student has gone beyond this in areas of particular interest to them.

Third, seminars will be used to provide students with the means of developing oral and listening skills that will unarguably be of tremendous benefit to them throughout their university career and beyond. Through the exchange of ideas and perspectives, you will develop a deeper understanding of the issues covered in the module. This crucial function of seminars also provides a uniquely active way of learning which is not possible in lectures or by private study.

Fourth, seminars allow students a chance to get to know each other and to discuss material of mutual interest and relevance in a supportive social setting. Learning at university is not and should not be a competitive exercise. Your learning will benefit to the extent that you share your insights and problems with others and support and encourage them to do the same with you. This will often lead to collaborative learning opportunities *outside* formal teaching contexts.

**Independent study** The difference between studying at university and study you may have done previously is that at university the emphasis is on you finding out things for yourself. Just as fitness clubs attempt to foster and facilitate (but cannot impose) fitness, universities attempt to foster and facilitate (but cannot impose) academic excellence. Results will (and can only) come as a direct result of *you* making appropriate use of the facilities at your disposal. Lectures, seminars and the like are there to support and guide your independent learning – they are not there to “pass information from tutors’ heads to students’ notebooks without passing through the brains of either.” Not everything you will need or want to know will be covered in the lectures, seminars or essential readings. You need to become familiar with the material you are

guided towards, but you also need to learn to 'manipulate' that material: apply it to new domains, compare and contrast across topics, synthesise it, evaluate it, consider its relevance to issues of interest to you, supplement it, etc. This can only be done by being interested and working hard because you want to. As we shall learn below, an exclusive focus on passing exams will *undermine* that motivation and will make you perform less well as a result. Thus, study because you want to learn and stop when you have answers to your own satisfaction for the questions you care about. Finally, note that independent study is study you engage in outside of formal contact hours with faculty – it does not have to be solitary (see under 'seminars' above).

**Office Hours** Your module convenor will hold an office hours each week. Details can be found via Sussex Direct. Students may use these office hours (without appointment) to discuss or ask about anything module-related.

**Study Direct** You are encouraged to access module materials and use the module forum in Study Direct. This is the best way to share ideas amongst your fellow students and ask questions about the module. Module convenors and tutors would prefer to receive queries via the Study Direct module forum than by email.

## Books and Reading

- The module is closely modelled on the following texts and it is strongly recommended that you buy a copy as soon as possible:

Formulation in Psychology and Psychotherapy: Making Sense of People's Problems (Second Edition) by Lucy Johnstone and Rudi Dallos (Eds.) (2014)

Voicing Psychotic Experience: A reconsideration of recovery and diversity by Ruth Chandler and Mark Hayward (Eds.) (2009)

Relationship building, therapist assumptions and radical collaboration. Chapter 2 in Person-Based Cognitive Therapy for Distressing Psychosis by Paul Chadwick (2006)

You will need to go beyond this text in preparing for seminars and essays. Use it as a starting point to orient yourself to particular fields of interest, and then pursue other material that appears to you to be relevant. There are also extensive web-based materials associated with this text. Details on how to access these will be given at the induction meeting.

## Assessment

Assessment details for this module are shown in Sussex Direct. Submission deadlines are shown on your timetable.

How does assessment meet learning outcomes?

*Understand the key skills required by clinical psychologists to actively listen to clients talking about their mental health problems (assessed by group presentation)*

*Reflect on their listening skills and identify areas for development (assessed by group presentation)*

*Critically appraise the main theories and models that facilitate understanding of the therapeutic relationship, assessment, formulation and supervision (assessed by essay)*

*Demonstrate an awareness of the impact of the therapeutic encounter upon clinical psychologists, clients and informal caregivers (assessed by short term paper)*

Please note that there will be an alternative mode of assessment for V&E students who do not stay at Sussex for the whole academic year. V&E students should ensure that they discuss this with the module convenor and student support coordinator at the beginning of the module.

The assessment criteria for assessed essays and practical reports is displayed on the School teaching pages.[ <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/1-3.html>]

In line with University regulations, every effort will be made to ensure that one marked copy of each essay is returned with feedback within 15 working days of the relevant submission deadline. Feedback will be provided in hardcopy. You will be informed by the School Office when work is ready to collect.

### **Submission deadlines**

Assessment is via e-submission.

### **Student Evaluation**

All modules at Sussex are fully audited. The module convenor will let you know how feedback will be collected. We want the module be as good as it possibly can be so all and any feedback is gratefully received.

## SEMINAR TOPICS

<b>Week 1</b>	How to talk to people about their mental health problems – the contested nature of mental health problems and recovery
<b>Week 2</b>	The therapeutic relationship – radical collaboration
<b>Week 3</b>	The therapeutic relationship – managing uncertainty
<b>Week 4</b>	The skills and art of assessment – the different ways to learn from clients
<b>Week 5</b>	The skills and art of assessment – starting a conversation
<b>Week 6</b>	The skills and art of formulation – putting together the pieces of the puzzle
<b>Week 7</b>	The skills and art of formulation – how big does the puzzle need to be?
<b>Week 8</b>	The skills and art of formulation – telling the stories of lived experience
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>READING WEEK</b>
<b>Week 10</b>	The well-being of others – practitioners
<b>Week 11</b>	The well-being of others – informal carers
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>READING WEEK</b>