



Centre for Counselling

Faculty of Humanities &
Social Sciences

Master of Science in The Psychodynamics of Human Development

Course Handbook 2025 – 2026

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Introduction

Welcome to the MSc in the Psychodynamics of Human Development, taught jointly by the British Psychotherapy Foundation and the Centre for Counselling at Birkbeck University of London. This course handbook contains information currently available to guide you through the course.

The British Psychotherapy Foundation

History and aims

The MSc Psychodynamics of Human Development was established in 1996 as a collaboration between Birkbeck College and the British Association of Psychotherapists. In 2013 the BAP merged with two other psychotherapy organisations to become the [British Psychotherapy Foundation](#) (*bpf*). The aim of the *bpf* is to make a serious contribution to emotional well-being and mental health in the UK by providing access to psychotherapy treatment for the public, comprehensive support to members and education and training for the next generation of psychotherapists.

Clinical training

The *bpf* offers professional training programmes in [Psychodynamic Psychotherapy](#), [Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy](#), [Jungian Analysis](#), and [Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy](#) as well as providing [introductory courses](#) and continuing professional development (CPD) for psychotherapists and others working in therapeutic settings.

This MSc will not lead to an automatic offer of a place on a *bpf* clinical training as there is a separate selection process for this.

The *bpf* is a member of the [British Psychoanalytic Council](#).

The Centre for Counselling at Birkbeck University

Birkbeck College was founded in 1823 as the London Mechanics' Institution and incorporated into the University of London by Royal Charter in 1920. The College is ranked among the leading UK university institutions for its levels of national and international excellence in

research in the Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. From this base of research excellence Birkbeck provides a unique range of degrees and other courses designed specially to meet the needs of mature students.

Postgraduate taught courses can be taken over two or three years part-time. The normal basic entry requirement fixed by the University of London is a second-class honours degree in an appropriate subject from a UK university. Many overseas degrees are accepted as equivalent to this standard. Work and later training experience and skills may also be taken into consideration. The Birkbeck **Centre for Counselling** is located in 30 Russell Square, in the heart of Bloomsbury, London. It is a centre of excellence for counselling and psychotherapy studies, offering a range of courses for students at all levels from complete beginners to those wishing to undertake a full professional training. Students can choose whether to develop a broad-based understanding of counselling and counselling skills or to specialise in psychodynamic counselling and psychotherapy with our unique organisational and psychosocial perspectives. Counselling and psychotherapy have been taught successfully at Birkbeck for over 50 years. Our core mission is to widely disseminate the understanding and practice of therapy, particularly psychodynamic counselling/psychotherapy, in order to support improvements in mental health and to promote interpersonal understanding between individuals, groups and organisations. We have a unique position nestled within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences which facilitates close academic relationships with related subject areas, such as psychosocial studies and health and social care. The lively research environment contributes to the academic rigour and contemporary relevance of our courses. The psychodynamic model we teach developed out of the theory and practice of psychoanalysis which has been modified and updated over time. We combine this with a interpersonal processes in groups and organisations - aimed to support those working in an organisational setting - and a unique psychosocial perspective which ensures our students are equipped to work effectively in today's diverse society. Our clinical teaching staff draw on their extensive current professional experience to inform and enrich their teaching and you can read a selection of staff publications; some of our teaching staff also have a research background in Psychosocial Studies and have links with research institutes which undertake mental health-related research, such as the Birkbeck Centre for Interdisciplinary Mental Health Research (CIMHR) and the European Educational Research Association (EERA). The Centre is keen to maintain the strong psychosocial research background present in all our courses that previous colleagues within the Psychosocial Department at BBK, now part of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, have fostered. Our aim is to support the understanding of the intertwining of the psychological and the social in the constitution of the human subject and the wider social formation. In practice, this means research and programmes of study that embrace discursive and critical psychology; psychoanalytic theory; psychodynamic and systemic psychotherapy;

social theory; sociology; feminist theory and philosophy; gender, sexuality and queer studies and anti-racist and postcolonial theory. Methodologically, the commitment is to empirical work in the qualitative traditions that have emerged in the wake of post-structuralism.

For further information contact bcc@bbk.ac.uk or visit our website: <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/school/centre-for-counselling/about-us>

Course Management Structure

The MSc is run by a Course Management Committee which meets once a term to discuss arrangements for the course. An annual meeting of the Joint Steering Committee, chaired by the Director of the Centre for Counselling, reviews all aspects of the course.

The Course Management Committee

	<i>bpf</i>	Birkbeck University London
Course Directors	Dorothee Magni	Martyna Chrzescijanska
Head of Research	Katerina Sarafidou	Martyna Chrzescijanska
Course Administrative Support	Samantha Lelong (Course Manager)	Kirsty Harris (Counselling Centre Manager) Onna Schneller (Programme Administrator)

If you require information or guidance from Birkbeck, you can contact your programme administrator at Bcc@bbk.ac.uk

Course Teams

Jungian Analytic theory	Katerina Sarafidou (BJAA) Julian Masters (BJAA) Giles Allen (BJAA) Katerine Dent (BJAA) George Taxidis (BJAA) Ali Cliffe (IPCAPA) George Bright (SAP) Birgit Heuer (BJAA) Ann Kutek (SAP)
Psychoanalytic theory	Robert Fleming (ACP) Sara Leon (ACP) Marianne Parsons (ACP) Inge Pretorius (ACP & UCL) Jonathan Shann (UCL) Noemi Klein (ACP) Marianne Parson (ACP)
Infant observation	Dee Ingham (ACP) Anggie Trelles-Fishman (ACP)

	Sheila Levi (ACP) Sarah Robinson (ACP) Valerie Mortin (ACP) Marta Venegas Escobar (ACP) Arianna Pulsoni (ACP & Essex) Jen Ng (ACP) Alison Cliffe (ACP) Alice Field (TBC) Perran Ellson (ACP) Kate Purdy (ACP) Stefania Grimandi (ACP) Diana Radeva (ACP)
Work discussion	Eugenia Baibazarova (ACP) Magdalena Fronczewska (BPC) Rumbi Magadzire (ACP) Diana Radeva (ACP) Martyna Chrzescijanska
Research	Katerina Sarafidou (BJAA) Martyna Chrzescijanska

Visiting (External) Examiners

Psychoanalytic stream: Ms. Dawn Clarke

Jungian Analytic stream: Dr Ann Addison, Department Essex University

Libraries and Online Resources

Students have access to a number of online resources including the vast majority of relevant databases in the field and the Birkbeck e-library. Students are encouraged to use online resources as soon as enrolled and to familiarize themselves with the [Birkbeck library and online resources](#).

The Birkbeck Library

Students can use the library at Birkbeck and are encouraged to become familiar with its wide range of resources and study support from the beginning of their first year. The moodle page [Library and Information Skills module](#) is a good introduction to making the most of this library. More information on the library can be found on the website: [Birkbeck Library - Birkbeck, University of London](#)

The Library entrance is on the ground floor of Malet Street adjacent to the Torrington Square entrance. The Birkbeck student ID card allows students to come into the Library and borrow books. Any queries about membership may be dealt with in person at the Membership Desk (next to the Costa Coffee café) or via e-mail:

library-help@bbk.ac.uk

The [Birkbeck e-library](#) can be accessed via the workstations in the library, Birkbeck ITS workstation rooms or from students' home or office computers.

Please consult the library page and the '[News and updates](#)' page for up-to-date information about the library opening hours.

Students also have access to [other University libraries](#) including ones close to where they live or work via the **Sconul Access scheme**. Birkbeck students also have access to the University of London's Senate House Library, which has an excellent social sciences collection. To join Senate House, students need to print off the membership form, accessible via their [My Birkbeck profile](#). Birkbeck Library aims to be accessible and convenient for all. [Assistive technology and library support services](#) are available for those with disability or dyslexia please go to

<https://www.bbk.ac.uk/library/disability-service>

Contact the Access Support team at librarydisability@bbk.ac.uk or telephone 020 3926 1441 for issues related to accessibility of the library.

The MPoHD librarian is Helen Fuller: h.fuller@bbk.ac.uk

The **bpf** Library

The **bpf** library is located on the ground floor and is open to students to consult books onsite. Students are welcome to use the library on Wednesdays from 3pm and some Thursdays (please see the librarian link to the website for most up to date openings and closures). Please contact the **bpf** Librarian to check whether the library is available for you to use if outside of MSc teaching hours. We can only permit use of the library during term time as the building often has maintenance building work and we do not allow lone working in the building.

Other Facilities at **bpf** Kilburn and Birkbeck College

Birkbeck

The main building of the central London campus is at Malet Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1E 7HX. The library, IT support and My Birkbeck help desks are located here. The college also uses nearby buildings for the delivery of seminars. A location map can be downloaded [here](#).

Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access and accessible lifts and toilets. Reception desks and teaching venues have induction loops for people with hearing impairments, and there is large print and tactile signage. Accessible parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops can all be arranged by the Disability & Dyslexia Service.

Students are enrolled with Birkbeck College from the beginning of the course and so are entitled to access the full range of facilities available to students of the university. The first port of call for students to gain information about facilities and locations is the [My Birkbeck](#) page of the College website to find information on these facilities that include the use of the library, learning support and skills training, computing and IT support, disability and dyslexia support, along with guides for new students and catering services. Students are strongly advised to use this page.

bpf Kilburn

The **bpf** is located at 37 Mapesbury Road, London NW2 4HJ. Teaching rooms and libraries are located on ground and first floors, with access by staircase only. A large kitchen is available for students to use as a social meeting area and for the preparation of snacks and meals. You will be provided with a 'use of house' booklet to familiarise yourself with.

Wi-Fi is available throughout the building.

The Course Manager is based at the bpf and can be contacted at

msc@bpf-psychotherapy.org.uk .

Term Dates and Times of Seminars 2025/2026

Induction day 1 st Yrs - London	17 th September 12-8pm
Autumn Term (Terms 1)	24 September – 3 December
	Half Term: 22 October

Spring Term (Terms 2)	14 January – 25 March
	Half Term: 18th February
Summer Term (Terms 3)	29 April – 8 July
	Half Term: 3 June

Please note: first year students are invited to an optional **essay writing** tutorial on Wednesday 10th December online. Time to be confirmed.

Study Days 2025-2026

There are three Study Days in each year, in which students on both course streams combine. Study Days are on the following dates:

First Year - Year 1 Study Days 2526 - In person, in London

Date	Time*	Topic	Location
17 th September	12-8pm	Induction	BBK/bpf
25 th February	10 am-8pm	Work Discussion: Psychoanalytic and Jungian Analytic concepts	bpf
24 th June	10 am-8pm	Dissertation directions	BBK

Second Year - Year 2 Study Days 2526 - In person, in London

Date	Time*	Topic	Location
29 th October	12-8pm	Methodology and Epistemologies	BBK
11 th March	10 am-8pm	Dissertation	BBK
10 th June	10 am-8pm	Infant observation	bpf

Important information about the study days

- On some of the Study Days, Online students are offered a reflective session before

the start of the afternoon session.

- Student / Staff exchange and feedback sessions take place as part of each Study Day, usually around noon.
- Programmes including times will be communicated closer to the date.
- Location of the Study Day may change.

Course dates for 2026 2027 TBC

Autumn Term (Terms 1) TBC	September 30 – 9 December (Optional seminar on 16 /12)
	Half Term: 28 October
Spring Term (Terms 2) TBC	13 January – 24 March Easter April 5 2027
	Half Term: 17th February
Summer Term (Terms 3) TBC	28 April – 7 July
	Half Term: 2 June

Study days in person in London for year 2 in 2026-2027 TBC

Date	Time*	Topic	
October 2026	10 am-8pm	Dissertation	BBK
Feb 2027	10 am-8pm	Dissertation	BBK
June 2027	10 am-8pm	Infant Observation	bpf

Timetables

The course is taught on Wednesdays.

First Year

5.00 – 6.15 pm	Work Discussion (terms 1-2) Research Preparation Seminars (term 3)
6:15-6:45 pm	Meetings, tutorials and personal study time
6.45 – 8.00 pm	Infant Observation Seminars (terms 1-3)
8.00 – 8.30 pm	Meetings, tutorials and personal study time
8.30-10.00 pm	Theory Seminars (terms 1-3)

Second Year

5.00 – 6.15 pm	Dissertation Support seminars (term 4) Optional Work Discussion Seminars (terms 5-6)
6:15-6:45 pm	Meetings, tutorials and personal study time
6.45 – 8.00 pm	Infant Observation Seminars (terms 4-6)
8.00 – 8.30 pm	Meetings, tutorials and personal study time
8.30 – 10.00 pm	Theory Seminars (terms 4-5)

Attendance

Consistent and regular student attendance in class (or online) to all seminars promotes and affords student success. If you expect to be absent for a seminar, you are expected to make contact in writing with the bpf course administrator by 3pm on Wednesday on msc@bpf-psychotherapy.org.uk. You are also expected to make arrangements to ensure you can catch up on missed work and for a fellow student to present in your place should you have been scheduled to present that evening.

80% compulsory attendance is required each term and for each module.

Course Delivery

Seminars take place at the premises of the bpf in Kilburn, North London and online.

Students living out of London are given the option to sign up for an online delivery before the start of the course. Weekly seminars are delivered online for this group of students.

Please note that, for planning and resourcing purposes, once students have chosen the option to attend in-person or online, they cannot switch to the other option after the beginning of the course.

All students may have to attend seminars online on occasion, because of strikes or bad weather for example.

Work Discussion and Infant observation seminar groups will either meet online or in person, never as part of a hybrid group.

Although students joining the course in person may occasionally be asked to join online seminars, it is not possible for students registered to attend the course in person to attend part of the course online on an ad hoc basis.

In some very exceptional cases, the bpf course director may grant for a student to attend Theory or Research seminars online. A request has to be made in writing with justification for the request.

Active participation to every seminar is required, whether online or in person.

All 6 Study Days will take place in person, at the bpf or Birkbeck. Please note that in-person attendance to Study Days is mandatory for students of both online and onsite options.

Observation of an infant and research work for the dissertation take place outside formal teaching time.

The observation of an infant takes place in person only.

Some of the course materials will become available through [Moodle](#), a Birkbeck Virtual Learning Environment. On enrolment, students are issued a username and password that allows them to access this area.

For modules delivered by the bpf, students will have access to the bpf's internal IT system.

Online delivery

Online students / distance learners attend 9 weeks a term online and all the study days in person in London. Experiential seminars (Work Discussion and Infant Observation) take place in small groups made of online students only. For theoretical seminars (Psychoanalytic or Jungian theory and Research / Dissertation support), the delivery of the seminars will be hybrid. As part of the online section of the course, a dedicated reflective session takes place on the morning of some of the Study Days to explore and discuss the experience of remote learning.

Please note that, for planning and resourcing purposes, once students have chosen the option to attend in-person or online, **they cannot switch to the other option** after the beginning of the course.

IT requirements

A stable internet connection and a device with a camera and a microphone are necessary to join the course as a distance learner.

When attending seminars online, students are required to have their video on. Seminar leaders may ask a student to leave a session if their camera is not switched on.

It is not permitted to 'listen in'. When joining an online session, students are expected to fully take part to every seminar.

For reasons of confidentiality, students are required to be alone in a room when attending their seminars. Material discussed in the seminars is subject to confidentiality and cannot be shared beyond the course.

It is not possible to switch to the online section of the course, once the year has started.

Course General Aims and Objectives

AIMS

The course aims to:

- Provide students with a forum for thinking about their own work and practice in psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic terms, to enhance understanding and practice.
- Provide a setting in which students may develop a critical understanding of psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic approaches.
- Begin to formulate an understanding of psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theories and locate this in relation to psychosocial studies and other contemporary epistemological viewpoints.
- Provide an opportunity for students to develop skills in observation and self- reflection.
- Facilitate group learning and co-operation.
- Provide a view of the human life cycle through developmental and psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theories and a forum for discussion and debate focusing on these different perspectives.
- Enable students to develop a critical psychosocial orientation in relation to

psychodynamic theories, human development, and epistemology.

- Provide an opportunity to develop epistemological, methodological, observational and research skills in relation to psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theory, infant observation, child development and life span studies.
- Afford students the opportunity to consider training in child and adolescent or adult psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic psychotherapy.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Develop an enhanced awareness and understanding of human development and interaction.
- Development a psychosocial understanding of human development in its social, historical, and political context.
- Develop an introductory understanding of psychoanalytic theory or Jungian analytic theory and its application.
- Further their understanding of communication in a therapeutic context and of the therapeutic process.
- Develop the ability to understand the impact of different organisational structures and other work settings on the therapeutic dynamic.
- Demonstrate personal and communication skills both spoken and written.
- Develop some understanding of epistemological issues and skills in identifying relevant and manageable research projects and appropriate psychosocial methodologies with consideration to psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic studies, infant observation and child development and life span studies.
- Develop and pursue a programme of research and communicate the findings in written form.

First year Course Components

Psychoanalytic or Jungian Analytic Theory: Course Component PSSL001H7 (15 credits)

AIMS

This component aims to:

- Provide a view of the human life cycle through the study of the conjunction of elements of developmental psychology and psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic literature.
- Provide a forum for critical discussion of the different theories outlined and to explore their application to the other course components and to the students' own life experience.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Show an understanding of and a capacity to critically evaluate significant psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic concepts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the human developmental process and key developmental tasks.

CURRICULUM

Psychoanalytic Stream

Term 1 begins with an introduction to the core concepts of psychoanalytic thought. Central texts of Freud and Klein are presented together with more modern commentaries.

Term 2 examines pregnancy and the origins of the relationship between the mother and her baby. It explores the contributions and interactions of the mother, baby, the wider family and environment in the first six months of life to understand how, as Daniel Stern writes, 'in the short span of the first six months of life, the infant emerges as a social human being'.

Term 3 continues by exploring some of the emotional, social, cognitive and perceptual and especially communicative skills and attributes of the baby's development as it completes and moves beyond the first year of life and becomes a toddler. It then looks at the key psychoanalytic concepts of symbolisation, transitional objects and oedipal resolutions (classical and modern positions), moving through toddlerhood to the school-aged child.

Jungian Analytic Stream

Term 1 The Jungian Psyche: The Self and the Collective introduces a Jungian analytic model

of the psyche. Key readings facilitate a critical understanding of key Jungian concepts such as the self as the centre and totality of the psyche, individuation, the personal and collective unconscious, archetypes, the transcendent function, symbol formation and dreams.

Term 2 The Jungian Baby & Child: The Developing Self examines the development of the self and mind in infancy. It starts with Fordham's integration of clinical work with children, infant observation studies and Jungian analytic theory, and the work of Klein, Bion and Winnicott. It considers their contributions to the discussion of central issues in infancy: the self; defences; creativity and the capacity to symbolise.

Term 3 The Jungian Life Cycle: Individuation considers the unfolding of the self during the life-long process of individuation. It focuses on the developmental stages and the archetypal contexts throughout the life cycle, from childhood, adolescence, through young adulthood, mid-life, the third age to death.

Work Discussion:

Course Component PSSL002H7 (15 credits)

AIMS

This component aims to:

- Provide students with a forum for reflecting on their work practice.
- Apply psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic thinking to understanding processes between workers and client or client group.
- Apply psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theory to the understanding of institutional and organisational processes.
- Enhance students' practice through developing a capacity for participant observation and reflection.
- Provide a forum for the safe presentation of complex and confidential material.
- Encourage detailed and honest presentation of processes and dilemmas within the work setting.
- Facilitate group learning and co-operation.
- Introduce students to the epistemological issues involved in being a participant observer

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to organise material from their work setting and make detailed presentations to the group.
- Demonstrate a capacity to express their ideas verbally within group discussion.
- Develop the capacity to reflect on and apply psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic thinking to the issues raised in individual, institutional and interactive terms.
- Demonstrate openness to learning and a growing capacity to reflect on and to make use of the ideas of others.
- Reflect on the epistemological issues involved in being a participant observer

CURRICULUM

Students take it in turns to present detailed studies of their work and their work situations for discussion. This provides a wider understanding of the different settings in which the students are working. The seminars also provide a forum for integrating concepts from the theoretical seminars. There is an emphasis on observation and reflection and an attempt to consider how powerful defences against pain can operate at an institutional level to stop thinking and change. The conscious and unconscious meanings and alternative approaches to dealing with the work situation being presented are explored and the seminars reflect on how institutional dynamics can affect individual work with different client groups. Reading is suggested at appropriate points according to the needs of the group.

Analytic Reflection on Infant Observation: Course Component PSSLO16S7 (30 credits)

AIMS

This component aims to:

- Provide an opportunity for students to observe the development of an infant in a family.
- Provide a forum for reflecting on the process of being a participant observer.
- Introduce theoretical concepts as tools for reflecting on and understanding parent-

infant observation.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the development of observational skills.
- Show an ability to reflect on the experience of infant observation.
- Show a capacity to distinguish between the observed infant and the infant self in the observer.
- Show a capacity to tolerate difference, including cultural difference.
- Show a capacity to record in detail their observations both of the observed setting and of the responses evoked in them.
- Develop the capacity to share their observations with the group in presentations and through the following discussion to use the group to enhance their understanding.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate observations and theoretical understanding and structure these into a final report.

CURRICULUM

Students are required to observe an infant in their family environment for one hour a week for at least 15 months as part of the course and to write up the observation as soon as possible after the visit. Each student takes it in turn to present their observations to the seminar group which meets once a week. In this way the development of a small number of babies is followed over two academic years by a small discussion group. From the start of the course the seminar leader helps the group to think about finding a baby to observe and in the early seminars, the initial interview with the parents, the stance to be taken in the family and issues of roles and boundaries are discussed. The observer is encouraged to record what they see, hear and feel during the weekly observation of the infant in its family context and in the seminar discussions when other details may be recalled.

The aim of the seminars is to help the observer think about the developing infant and to tolerate the intense emotional experience of such intimate contact; to continue to think about the meaning of the changing relationships observed and their impact on the development of the infant's internal world; to be sensitive to emerging patterns without being closed to unanticipated change and development.

Special notes on Infant Observation

It is a course **requirement** that students find a baby to observe during the first year of the course. Students are not able to progress to year 2 unless they have begun weekly observations by the half term of term 3 (summer term). Students are expected to observe the infant's first 15 months of life at least and to complete a minimum of fifty observations between the start of the observation and the May half term in year two, when the observation normally ends (see *clinical training and infant observation* below for further detail).

While observing the baby in the family, students should demonstrate a capacity for analytic observation, which includes:

- Sensitivity and responsiveness to the situation;
- Maintaining a quiet containing presence;
- Thinking and reflecting on what is observed;
- Maintaining a professional attitude and respecting the privacy of the family;
- Recording observations in detail. This includes remembering the sequence of events with the focus on the infant in his/her setting and also noticing their own responses which might be informative and relevant.
- Writing up and circulating their observations within the confidential setting of the seminar group and using the group discussion to enhance their understanding.
- It is expected that the infant's/family's real names will not be used.
- Written observations and papers written as part of the assessed elements of the course are for the purpose of study and are not routinely made available to the infant's family.

The Infant Observation seminar leader will monitor their students' progress. If students experience difficulties in meeting these requirements and they cannot be resolved by discussion in their seminar group, the seminar leader will discuss the difficulties privately with the student. The student's tutor and Course Director will be approached for their advice. **The Course Committee, after consultation with the student, the seminar leader and the bpf Course Director, will make the final decision on whether the student should be allowed to continue or asked to withdraw from the observation and the course.**

There may be individual changes of circumstances during the course that affect the observation, and the capacity of the observer to maintain an attitude that is not unduly preoccupied, e.g. by student pregnancy or family illness. These circumstances will be considered individually in discussion with the student, seminar leader, tutor and the bpf Course Director, and appropriate decisions made. This may involve a deferment of this component of the course.

Students are not allowed to observe an infant without being enrolled on the course and being part of a supervision group. Should a student decide to apply for a Break In Studies, they will need to discuss with their seminar leader how to conclude the observation.

Requirements for the Infant Observation for Students Considering Clinical Training

There may be additional requirements for the Infant Observation if the student wants it to be taken into account for any future clinical training. Students are advised to clarify the infant observation requirements of any given training programme with a representative of the respective training committee.

Some clinical training programmes such as the [child and adolescent psychotherapy training](#) require two full years of infant observation. Students may wish to observe an infant for two full years as part of their preparation for an application to a clinical training. In this case, students will not be asked to finish with their observation by the May half term in the second year. Supervision beyond the course may be organised by the bpf course director.

Supervision of infant observation beyond the duration of the MSc will come at an extra cost payable by the student directly to their supervisor.

The bpf will support students who need supervision beyond the MSc by organising group supervision with an accredited Infant Observation seminar leader.

Infant Observations by students with very young children or pregnant may present some difficulties when applying to a clinical training. Students are advised to contact the training committee of their chosen training to discuss their personal circumstances.

Disclosure and Barring Service

Because MSc students undertake an infant observation it is necessary for Police Checks to be done with the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#). If at all possible, this should be done before starting the course, and failing that immediately on starting the course, because **an observation cannot begin unless a satisfactory enhanced level DBS check has been completed**. For students who have lived outside of the UK 6 months before the start of the course, an international DBS, police check may be required.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain the police check.

Students should contact the bpf Course Manager and the DBS Trainee Coordinator to start the DBS application:

Samantha Lelong on msc@bpf-psychotherapy.org.uk

DBS Trainees: dbstrainees@bpf-psychotherapy.org.uk

Should there be details that might affect the student's participation on the course these records will be held for a decision to be made about admitting the person to the course and then passed to the CEO. These documents will be held for up to six months unless specific permission is obtained from the DBS to hold them longer.

The bpf's DBS policy is now available to view on line: [Training FAQs - The British Psychotherapy Foundation](#)

DBS Policy: [DBS-Policy-for-Trainees-28.05.2025.pdf](#)

DBS FAQ's link is here: [DBS for trainees, FAQs](#)

Safeguarding and Infant Observation

As part of the Infant Observation module, the course abides by the [ACP's safeguarding guidelines](#).

The Dissertation Module (PSSL003D7): Year 1

The dissertation is submitted in mid-May in the second year of the course but students start work on their dissertations in Year 1. Further information is given in the section on the dissertation later in this handbook.

This component is not assessed in Year 1 but students must have a minimum of 80% attendance.

Assessed Work Year 1

Component PSSL001H7: Psychoanalytic or Jungian Analytic Theory

One essay of between 2,500 and 3,000 words (+/- 10%) to be submitted electronically via

Turnitin by **4:59pm on Tuesday 13th January 2026.**

Component PSSL002H7: Work Discussion

One essay of between 3,000 and 4,000 words exactly to be submitted electronically via

Turnitin by **4:59pm on Tuesday 28th April 2026**

Component PSSL016S7: Analytic Reflection on Infant Observation

One 'take away' examination of between 3,000 – 4,000 words exactly (consists of 2 questions; 1,500 – 2,000 words *per question*) to submitted electronically via Turnitin a by

4:59pm Tuesday 9th June 2025.

Titles for the assignments will be confirmed during the course.

All assignments have a minimum word count. Work that does not meet this requirement will be awarded a fail grade. Students will be permitted one further opportunity for submission. The final mark will be capped at 50%.

The grade awarded for the Postgraduate Certificate for those students leaving at the end of the first year is calculated by the credit weighting (see the [Common Award Scheme regulations](#)) of the Year 1 Components, with an overall mark of 50-59% being a Pass, 60-69% a Merit and 70+% a Distinction (all rounding to be upwards).

Procedure for Assessment in year 1

All first-year assignments need to be submitted electronically on Moodle via Turnitin, where they will be checked for plagiarism, AI generated content and word count. In submitting any work, whether on paper or electronically, students agree to abide by the College's regulations on [assessment offences](#) . Students also undertake that the work is their own, that they have properly acknowledged and cited all materials used from the published or unpublished works of others, and that the work has not previously been submitted for any other module. Students also agree, in submitting the work, that Birkbeck University London may take steps to authenticate the material submitted, including (but not limited to) submitting the work to a plagiarism checking service and copying the work to another member or members of staff.

The first-year assignments are marked by internal examiners. You will be allocated a different

assignment code by the bpf course coordinator, and you should use this to identify your work. Please do not use your name on any part of the assignment (including headers and footers). While every effort is made to preserve the anonymity of candidates when assessing work in year 1 it is inevitable that, in some instances, an examiner will become aware of the identity of the candidate submitting work (for instance in modules with very few candidates, or where candidates have discussed coursework in detail with an examiner before submitting).

Examiners are instructed not to read or assess the part of an assignment that exceeds the maximum word count by 10%. Footnotes, lists of references and appendices are not considered as part of the word count, and are also not assessed as part of the body of the essay.

Assignments will be marked and moderated according to the scheme laid out below. Students will be informed of the provisional marks for their assignments within one month of their submission. It should be noted that these marks are issued for the guidance of students only and are subject to confirmation by the final Board of Examiners that meets in November each year. Marks may be adjusted up or down by this Board.

All formal academic assessment is double marked with a final mark agreed between the internal examiners. This may include the use of a third examiner where there is disagreement. The overall assessment and marking process is scrutinised by two external Visiting Examiners (one for each stream) whose comments have material effects on the conduct and nature of the assessment process.

Assessments are organised by the Course Committee with staff given formal marking sheets and criteria, including instructions relating to double marking and moderating arrangements. Marking sheets are all collected centrally, inspected by the Birkbeck Course Tutor and sent to the Visiting Examiners for scrutiny.

Further information about assessment can be found towards the end of the handbook.

Requirements to progress into second year

All assessment components in Year 1 must be passed to qualify for the Postgraduate Certificate and for entry into second year to the Dip/MSc. In addition, for entry to the Dip/MSc students must have established an infant observation by the half term break in the summer term of year 1 (see Special Note on Requirements for Infant Observation).

Second Year Course Components

Contemporary Issues in Psychoanalytic or Jungian Analytic Theory Component

AIMS

This component aims to:

- Provide an understanding of psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theory in relation to human development, including the foundation and development of key theories and contemporary issues and debates in relation to them.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of and a capacity to critically evaluate contemporary topics and issues in psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theory.
- Demonstrate an understanding of psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theories of human development

CURRICULUM

Psychoanalytic Stream

Term four continues the theme of the first year in dealing with the human life cycle. Seminars on adolescence and young adulthood will be followed by an examination of core tasks of adult life – the capacity for intimate relationships and establishing a family. The term will conclude with psychoanalytic theories around the themes of old age and death.

Term five revisits the developmental life cycle but now examines how strains and stresses experienced in development impact on adult life. Topics such as aggression, narcissism and depression will be discussed using both classical and contemporary theorists. Students are encouraged to include concepts of race, gender and cultural difference where appropriate.

Jungian Analytic Stream

These seminars focus on contemporary Jungian and psychoanalytic thinking and in particular the application of Jungian analytic thinking to broader socio-cultural concerns. They provide an opportunity for students to apply their understanding of key Jungian concepts introduced in year 1 of the course to learning about and engaging with current debates in three broad areas:

The contemporary subject

This includes seminars on sexuality, gender, mind / body relationship and neurobiological development.

The world we live in

This includes seminars on politics, the individual and the collective, war and conflict, race and racism, ecology and the environment and the place of religion and spirituality in contemporary Western society.

Symbols and reality

Based on the idea that cultural production can be seen as symbolic activity, seminars in this series include those on images in, visual and performing arts and music as a symbol

Work Discussion Year Two (Optional)

CURRICULUM

Optional seminars will take place in the sixth terms of the course. Students will continue to take turns to present detailed studies of their work situations for discussion in weekly online seminars. In addition, they may complete a written portfolio for submission to their seminar leader for feedback. The portfolio should be submitted the following September. It will not be formally assessed as part of the MSc award.

Please note that optional seminars may be held on any evening of the week.

PORTFOLIO

AIMS

This component aims to:

- The portfolio will build on your presentations in the work in the work discussion seminars and include your later reflections on the seminar discussions and understanding of the professional role (either voluntary or salaried) in the light of these.
- The portfolio will consist of the written presentation of two interactions to demonstrate your understanding of dynamics in the work situation, illustrate particular themes and inferences, demonstrate an awareness of your own impact in the interaction, and illustrate your ability to use relevant psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theory to inform your thinking.
- Your writing should draw on your experiences in the seminars, the presentations you give to the group, the thinking of the group, your reflections on the presentation and discussion, and the impact on your practice.
- You may also draw upon what you have learnt from other presentations (without identifying them) and their discussion.

There is no fixed word count for the portfolio, but 4,000 words would be an appropriate target figure.

The portfolio should:

- Introduce the work setting and your work role
- Present a process record of two interactions detailing actions, speech, your own emotions and your inferences of the emotional states of others. Normally these will be the interactions you present to the group.
- Reflect on the process of presentation to the work discussion seminar
- Present an analysis of themes emerging in the interactions.
- Use relevant literature to support your understanding of the interactions

OBJECTIVES

The portfolio will therefore:

- Demonstrate your ability to observe, record and reflect on your work
- Show your awareness of difference, including differences in perspective, culture and class which impact on interaction.
- Demonstrate your empathy and insight.
- Show your ability to learn from group discussion and co-operation

Infant Observation 2: course component PSSL002D7 (60 credits)

AIMS

- To provide a forum for reflection at a more sophisticated level on the experience of being a participant observer.
- To introduce more advanced theoretical concepts as tools for reflecting on and understanding parent-infant observation.
- To apply psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic thinking with greater sophistication to understanding observational processes.

OBJECTIVES

- Demonstrate the further development of observational skills.
- Show a more developed ability to reflect on the experience of infant observation including the role of participant observer
- Show a capacity to record in greater detail their observations both of the observed setting and of the responses evoked in them.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate observations and theoretical understanding and structure these into a final Infant Observation Paper.
- Demonstrate further development in their capacity to reflect on and apply psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic thinking to the issues raised in interpersonal interactions including the impact of conscious and unconscious processes on the generation and selection of, and attribution of meaning to, observational material.

CURRICULUM

This component builds on the work of infant observation in Year 1. Infant Observation seminars continue throughout Year 2. Students normally end their observation at the May half term, thus ensuring a minimum observational record of the infant's first 15 months of life. The remaining seminars focus on reviewing the material from the observations and developing the infant observation papers. The final study day at the end of the academic year will also support students to prepare to write the infant observation paper. Students are given the opportunity to consider and use more advanced theoretical concepts in psychoanalytic theory or Jungian analytic theory and to relate these theories and epistemological questions to their experience in parent- infant observation.

The Infant Observation Paper

Component PSSL002D7 is assessed by an infant observation paper of 5,000 – 8,000 words. The paper must be submitted on Turnitin.

Guidelines

The paper should be written in a clear and simple narrative style, and well organised with sections and headings.

The paper will consider the development of the baby in the context of family relationships, in particular the development of the baby's internal world through her experience of, and interactions with others.

The baby should 'come alive' for the reader. You should try to give the reader a vivid picture of the baby's experience in the context of the family. The addition of appropriately selected extracts from the observation notes, combined with thoughtful discussion of the material, will contribute to the reader's 'feel' for the family.

Examiners will be looking for evidence of a capacity for sensitive and detailed observation.

Observational material should be shown in direct quotes from the notes you made on your observations. Such quotes should be distinguished in the text by italics and indentation.

You will also demonstrate a capacity to reflect on the meaning and impact of the observational 'raw material,' drawing on thinking developed in the seminar group. This should include a consideration of what the material conveys about the baby's internal and external development within the family, and the possible meaning of what has been communicated by the verbal or non-verbal behaviour described.

The paper will deal with relevant themes which have emerged from your unique observation, and which may be followed across developmental stages: an 'argument' may be presented and developed in the paper linking observational material across the time span of the observation. This can be integrated with a questioning approach.

Relevant theoretical concepts should be introduced to illuminate and make sense of the observational material. You need to select theoretical ideas carefully. Only include theory that you understand and can integrate into the paper in a way which enhances the reader's understanding.

All theoretical material used should be clearly and fully referenced.

You should demonstrate the ability to seek, establish and reflect on your observer role and give an account of any difficulties and struggles you encountered in doing so. It will be important to refer to your experience of the seminar group and the use you were able to make of it. Examiners will look for evidence that you were able to manage boundaries appropriately, particularly the ending (if applicable). Where this has not been possible it will be important to show you can reflect on what took place and try to understand what influences, internal and external, were brought to bear on you.

It will be important to acknowledge your anxieties and other responses evoked in you by your experience as an observer and to demonstrate a capacity to reflect on and contain a range of feelings. It will also be important to write about how your presence as an observer may have influenced what happened during the observational hour. All family members must be anonymised to protect their confidentiality.

Presentation Guidelines for the Infant Observation Paper

Page 1 should show the title in capital letters, the candidate's name, the degree for which the paper is submitted, the word count and the submission date.

The Infant Observation Paper must be typed or printed with double line spacing throughout on A4 size paper. There should be a margin of 1.5 inches on the left-hand side of the page.

Pages should be numbered consecutively, including the list of references and appendices. A consistent style of referencing should be adopted. All references should then be listed in alphabetical order at the end, giving full publication details.

The paper must include a statement or indication that confidentiality has been observed.

Examiners are instructed not to read or assess the part of an Infant Observation paper that exceeds the maximum word count by 10%. Footnotes, list of references and appendices are not considered as part of the word count and are also not assessed as part of the body of the paper.

Draft Infant Observation Paper

Prior to submission of the final Infant Observation Paper, tutors are willing to read a draft. Exact arrangements for submitting, reading of, and feedback on, drafts must be made in advance with the infant observation tutor.

Assessment Criteria for the Final Infant Observation Paper

Assessment Grades

There are four grades for assessed work: Distinction, Merit, Pass and Fail. A detailed description of the assessment grades can be found earlier in this handbook.

Assessment Criteria

The Infant:

- Does the narrative bring this particular infant experience of developing within their environment alive to the reader?
- How well described are the challenges that the baby faces, and the ways that they respond to them?
- Does the paper reflect upon the nature of the baby's internal world?
- Is thought given to the baby's discovery of their body, the exploration of their world and the symbolic nature of play?

The baby's inter-personal relationships:

- Is the reader given a clear sense of the baby's relationships as they develop – especially with their mother, but also with father, siblings, grandparents, friends etc.?
- Are we given a sensitive account of how the milestones in the mother & child relationship

are negotiated – feeding, weaning, separation etc.?

The Observer:

- Does the paper convey the writer's experience of taking part in an infant observation?
- How well was the observer able to use themselves as an instrument of observing – remembering detail, feeling into the baby's experience, maintaining appropriate boundaries, tolerating and respecting difference, including cultural difference, viewing difficulties empathically, observing their own defences, tolerating not-knowing, understanding unconscious identity, managing anxiety and the impulse to criticise etc.?
- Are unconscious dynamics discussed thoughtfully?
- Is the baby's developing relationship with the observer and its possible significance considered?
- Has the writer been able to reflect on their development as an observer, including their use of the seminar group in this development?

Reflection on epistemology:

- Does the paper examine the use of infant observation as a method of social enquiry?
- Does the observer consider the impact of the conscious and unconscious processes and interactions experienced during the observation on the generation, selection and the attribution of meaning to observational material?
- Does the observer reflect on the role of the seminar group in developing awareness of unconscious process?
- Is there reflection on ethical dilemmas raised by the observation, including how it was introduced to the infant's family?

Theory:

- How well is Psycho/Jungian analytic theory solidly understood and appropriately integrated in the paper?
- Does the paper contain original thought or demonstrates originality in the application of theory to the individual observation experience?

Writing:

- Is the paper structured to read fluently and coherently?
- Are extracts from observations well chosen to illustrate key points?
- Has attention been paid to issues of confidentiality?

Confidentiality Statement

When a confidentiality statement has not been included by the student in their coursework, or when it becomes clear that procedures to protect confidentiality have not been applied, markers are advised not to mark the coursework. This will result in a Fail mark and the student will be asked to re-submit their work.

Procedure for assessment of the Infant Observation Long Paper

One electronic copy of the dissertation and the infant observation paper should be submitted via Turnitin on Moodle by 4.59 pm on the due date. All assignments must be typed with double line spacing. Pages should be numbered consecutively, including the list of references and appendices. A word count should be included at the end of assignments.

Examiners are instructed not to read or assess the part of an assignment that exceeds the maximum word count by 10%. Footnotes, list of references and appendices are not considered as part of the word count, and are also not assessed as part of the body of the paper.

All second-year assessments are marked and moderated according to the scheme laid out below (Distinction, Merit, Pass, Fail). No feedback or marks for the dissertation or infant observation paper will be given until after the final examination board meeting in November after which these will be available to students on request.

Dissertation: course component PSSL003D7 (60 credits)

AIMS

- To introduce methodological and epistemological issues relevant to studying the psychodynamics of human development, drawing on recent work in psychosocial studies and other social sciences.
- To critically evaluate psychodynamic theory, research and observational methodology in the light of developments in contemporary social research.
- To enable students to identify an issue or issues based on the teaching and experience of the course and suitable to be the subject of a dissertation.
- To facilitate the pursuit of that issue through a period of independent research under supervision.
- To enable students to identify and apply as necessary appropriate conceptual and/or methodological frameworks, including the ability to distinguish the application of

psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theory and the clinical practice of psychoanalysis or Jungian analysis.

- To help students acquire and deploy skills in the planning, management and execution of a sustained project.
- To support students in the development of independence of outlook, enterprise, initiative, creativity and communication skills.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop a critical understanding of the fundamental principles of psychosocial studies and contemporary social science methodologies.
- Demonstrate a capacity to appraise critically research and observational studies of the psychodynamics of human development.
- Develop a critical awareness of epistemological issues as they apply to psychoanalytic and Jungian analytic approaches to human development.
- Demonstrate some understanding of psychosocial epistemology and methodology through the selection of relevant and practical research/dissertation projects.
- Identify, in conjunction with course staff, a feasible and manageable topic for students 'dissertation which can be investigated psychosocially.
- Identify and apply a conceptual and/or methodological framework appropriate to the topic and formulate and implement a programme of independent research.
- Undertake a comprehensive search and study of literature and other data consistent with the aims of the research.
- Acquire and deploy skills in the planning, management and execution of a sustained research and writing project.
- Present a well-argued written dissertation supported by reasoned analysis, interpretation, explanation, and evaluation of relevant material and demonstrating a thorough and critical understanding of the subject.

CURRICULUM

In this component the following topics are covered: ways of knowing; theories as discourse; epistemological backgrounds; methodological choices; observer effects; observational method; knowledge as power; talk as text; developing an archive; designing a study. Students undertake a substantial piece of supervised work leading to a dissertation. This may be either empirical or theoretical. The choice of topic can be drawn from a very broad field.

Psychosocial Research Methods

The Psychosocial Research Methods consists of pre-recorded lectures (**TBC**). The lectures on the course will introduce students to the epistemological and ontological principles of psychosocial research and to specific research methods.

All sessions of the taught element will:

- attend to issues of reflexivity, ethics, power and inequality in the research process as an integral element of the teaching;
- attend to the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the particular method(s)/ approach;
- interrogate what validity and reliability mean in relation to the particular method(s)/ approaches being discussed;
- have a focus on exploring answers to the module's central question, "what is psychosocial research?"

The Dissertation

Component PSSSL003D7 is assessed by a dissertation of 10,000-15,000 words, which is undertaken as a substantial piece of supervised work. This may be either empirical or theoretical. The word count for the dissertation does not include the bibliography, figures and tables, or any appendices. The dissertation has to be submitted on Turnitin by 4:59pm on the date given below.

Selecting a Dissertation Topic

Discussions relating to the selection and design of topics for the MSc dissertations, and preparation for a successful submission of the ethics proposal take place during seminars in Term 3. Early commitment to a topic can be an advantage and is advisable. Nevertheless, a variety of factors may result in a change of topic becoming necessary and it is important to accept such a change as a learning experience and not a failure.

The selected topic should reflect the subject matter of the course; i.e. it should focus on some aspect of the psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic study of human development. **It is an essential requirement that the selected topic can be investigated psychosocially.**

The onsite and online resources available through the Birkbeck library offer important

opportunities for exploring the literature available on possible topics of study.

Content of the Dissertation

The dissertation must apply a psychosocial approach to knowledge and research. As such it needs to consider both socio-cultural and political factors, as well as emotional (and if appropriate, biographical) factors. The dissertation should demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate psychodynamic and research literature and other specialist literature in the field. The aims of the study should be clearly defined, and research questions (whether theoretical or empirical) clearly stated. For theoretical studies, it is likely that literature review and argument are more closely intertwined throughout the dissertation. For empirical projects, the literature review should not exceed one third of the total dissertation.

There should be a careful description of the approach taken in the study and, in particular, the psychosocial context. In an empirical investigation this is likely to involve a clear *method* section including descriptions of participants and the process of recruitment, methods used, and the investigative procedures. The presentation of data should be clear, using tables where appropriate. Appropriate qualitative analytic procedures should be employed. Findings of the investigation should be thoroughly discussed and linked back to the literature review.

The psychosocial context and implications of the study for future research and possibly clinical practice should be discussed. The limitations and strengths of the study and any ethical issues arising from the study should all be fully addressed.

Theoretical dissertations should contain a clear statement of the conceptual approach to the study, including the context of arguments and the evaluative criteria employed. A wide range of textual or other sources for the study are expected. Considerable weight is given to the quality of the critical skills demonstrated in the dissertation.

Draft Dissertation Proposal

Students in year 1 will be supported to develop their draft dissertation proposal and application for ethical approval of research during seminars in term 3.

Theoretical dissertations

A completed draft dissertation proposal (year 1) should be submitted to the **bpf** course team towards the end of the summer term.

The aim of the draft proposal is to provide sufficient information to ensure that plans for the dissertation are appropriate, properly developed, and feasible. It also guides the allocation of an appropriate supervisor.

The proposal will include the following components:

- A description of the research question and/or main thesis/argument to be developed.
- An exploration of the benefits and difficulties for the researcher embarking on the research topic.
- An account of the rationale for the study.
- An initial literature search.
- An account of the proposed methodology.
- A statement about the next step.

Empirical dissertations

The Independent Research Methods taught by Birkbeck will be available online via Moodle from October 2024. For students intending to carry out an empirical project it is compulsory to view the online pre-recorded IRM lectures. Lectures can be [here](#)

Students doing empirical research must submit a draft dissertation proposal to the Birkbeck Course Director by the date given on table below. Following this you will be allocated a supervisor.

All empirical dissertations must have been granted ethical approval by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Psychosocial Studies. Information is available [here](#)

The aim of the ethics submission is to provide sufficient information to Birkbeck's Ethics Committee that you have considered the ethical issues in your research and made adequate provision to take appropriate care of your research participants and yourself so your research conforms to the ethical code of practice.

You will be supported in developing the ethics submission in the 'dissertation preparation' seminars in terms 3 and 4. You will also have received a copy of the submission form and guidance on its completion. You must discuss the completion of the application with your Birkbeck supervisor and obtain his/her approval and signature before being allowed to submit the ethics proposal.

Ethics approval must be granted before students can collect their data.

Code of Ethical Conduct

Guidelines on ethical conduct and procedures for ethical approval for empirical studies conducted for the dissertation can be found on the [Research Integrity website](#).

Dissertation developmental tasks

You are required to write two dissertation developmental tasks in preparation for submitting your completed paper.

Typed copies of each 2500 to 3000 word task should be submitted electronically to the appropriate supervisor. They will be read by bpf/Birkbeck staff as appropriate and returned to you with formative feedback.

You should discuss the orientation and content of these tasks with your bpf supervisor if writing a theoretical dissertation or the literature review, or with your Birkbeck supervisor if writing the account of the methodology.

Students writing an empirical dissertation:

Task due in December

Present an appropriately structured and critical literary review of the published work relevant to the topic of your dissertation demonstrating how this has informed your choice of your research question(s).

Task due in January

Give a critical account of the proposed methodology to be implemented in the research including a presentation of the research question(s), the rationale for choice of methodology and a consideration of the ethical issues in its implementation.

Students writing a theoretical dissertation:

Task due in December

Present a review of a selected aspect or theme drawn from the theory relevant to your

dissertation topic.

Task due in January

Present a second chapter of the dissertation reviewing a second selected aspect or theme drawn from the theory relevant for the dissertation topic.

Supervision

All students are allocated supervisors who meet with them individually (usually outside of the course timetable) up to four times to support the dissertation process. Students also have opportunities to discuss their work in the dissertation support seminars.

Theoretical students are allocated a bpf supervisor.

Empirical students will be allocated a Birkbeck supervisor (who is going to be the main supervisor and will meet with you individually up to 3 times) and a bpf supervisor (whom you will meet twice, ideally not earlier than term 4 or 5 or once the project is well developed and data have been collected and analysed). Empirical students will discuss the Psychoanalytic / Jungian analytic context of their research question with their bpf supervisor whilst the Birkbeck supervisor will be consulted for the research components of their dissertation.

	Year 1 2024/25						Year 2 2025/26					
	Term 3 Summer 2025			Term 4 Autumn 2025			Term 5 Spring 2026			Term 6 Summer 2026		
	First half	Second half		First half	Second half		First half	Second half		First half	Second half	
Student Tasks	Explore research skills Explore research ideas	Explore research ideas	Develop your research question	Complete initial reading and develop the literature review.	Empirical: Begin empirical research once ethical application is approved Theoretical: continue literature review and refinement of topic/development of main argument	Work towards the submission of the first written dissertation development task	Empirical: Complete empirical research/data collection & write up methodology & results sections. Theoretical: Initial completion of introduction and of one additional chapter	Empirical: Complete empirical research sections. Theoretical: refine introduction, complete second chapter	Complete full draft dissertation and submit to the BPF supervisor.	Write draft infant observation paper and submit to IO seminar leader. Submit final IO paper.		
Submission dates		Submit draft dissertation proposal by 2 July			Ethics proposal submission	Ethics proposal approval by end of the term Dissertation development task 1 3 December	Dissertation development task 2 14 January	Empirical research sections to BBK supervisor by end March	Draft Dissertation 29 April Final Dissertation 26 May	Draft IO Paper 1 July Final IO paper 21 July		
Seminar Modules	Research Preparation seminar	Research preparation seminar			Dissertation support seminar Pre-recorded lectures on research methodology (online)	Dissertation support seminar Supervision support	Individual work Supervision support	Individual support Supervision support	Individual work Supervision support			
Study Days		SD 3 Dissertations				SD 4 Dissertations 29 October	SD 5 Dissertations 11 March			SD 6 IO 10 June		

		25 June								
BPF Supervisors						BPF supervisors appointed. Discuss research idea and overall structure, PA/JA literature choices	Discuss implications of results for psychoanalytic or Jungian analysis, consider any revisions on the overarching structure of the dissertation	Feedback on final draft		
BBK Supervisors						BBK supervisors appointed. Discuss research questions, methodology, interview plan	Discuss interviews and data gathered	Discuss findings, draft results		

Timetable overview for the Dissertation

Students are expected to engage in the following research activities: Year 1: Term 3

Brainstorming dissertation topics in seminar groups

Selecting dissertation topic and developing a research question

Submitting a draft proposal / application for ethical approval Meeting bpf dissertation supervisors

Completing a preliminary literature search

Year 2: Term 4

Attending pre-recorded lectures given as part of the Independent Research module on Moodle.

Empirical: developing the research design; beginning data collection Theoretical: developing literature analysis and theory

Attending supervision Completing literature search

Completing the first dissertation development task

Year 2: Terms 5 - 6

Completing the second dissertation development task

Theoretical: continuing literature analysis and theory development; evaluation of research

Empirical: continuing data collection, data analysis; discussion of results; evaluation of research

Attending supervision

Writing up and submitting the dissertation

Students who wish their supervisors to comment on a final draft of the dissertation must submit this to **their bpf supervisor by 29th April 2026.**

Submission and Presentation Guidelines for the Dissertation

Students must submit one electronic copy of the dissertation via Turnitin on Moodle.

Dissertations must be typed with double line spacing throughout. There should be a margin of

1.5 inches on the left-hand side of each page. Pages should be numbered consecutively, including all tables, figures, list of references and appendices. A word count should appear at the end of the dissertation.

Page 1 should show the title in capital letters, the candidate's name, whether it is an empirical or theoretical piece, the degree for which the dissertation is submitted, the word count and the submission date. For example:

<p>NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF FATHERS' EXPERIENCES OF THEIR FIRST CHILD</p> <p>AN OTHER</p> <p>Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of MSc. in the Psychodynamics of Human Development, Birkbeck, University of London, In collaboration with the British Psychotherapy Foundation</p> <p>An empirical study</p> <p>Word count</p> <p>Submission date</p>

An Abstract providing a summary of the dissertation in not more than 300 words should appear on page 2.

All publications referred to in the dissertation should give the surname(s) of the author(s) followed by the date of publication in brackets. All references should then be listed in alphabetical order at the end, giving full publication details. A consistent style of referencing should be adopted, ideally the Harvard system.

Examiners are instructed not to read or assess the part of a dissertation which exceeds the maximum word count by 10%. Footnotes, list of references and appendices are not considered as part of the word count, and are also not assessed as part of the body of the paper.

Assessment Criteria for Dissertation

There are four grades:

Distinction (70-100%), Merit (60-69%), Pass (50-59%) and Fail (0-49%). Dissertations will be marked according to the criteria specified below with each marker giving a % mark which is then converted to an agreed grade. A more detailed description of the assessment grades can be found in this handbook. Please note that the key requirement is for the candidate's dissertation to relate to psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic perspectives; wider perspectives may also be drawn on where appropriate.

CRITERIA: EMPIRICAL PROJECTS	CRITERIA: THEORETICAL PROJECTS
Introduction and review (30%)	Introduction and review (40%)
Identification of a clear set of aims and research questions or hypotheses	Identification of a clear and coherent set of aims concerned with a specific thesis or argument
Inclusion of a scholarly review of the literature relevant to the project	Appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the theoretical material considered and the rationale provided for its selection
Clear evidence of a psychosocial frame and approach	
Methodology/choice of material (20%)	Theoretical argument and discussion (50%)
appropriateness of the methodology, with accompanying rationale	Accuracy with which theoretical material is described and the degree to which understanding of its significance is shown
Results and discussion (40%)	Extent to which the case being made is clearly and logically argued and the extent to which is supported by the use of source material.
Quality of presentation and analysis of results	
Quality of the psychosocial analysis of the data, including a critical appreciation of the data in terms of the use of psychoanalytic or Jungian analytic theory	
Quality of discussion of the strengths	

and limitations of the methodology	
Demonstration of awareness of ethical issues in the conduct of the study	
	Quality of arguments presented in the study in terms of the use of psycho-analytic or Jungian analytic theory
Literary quality and overall impression (10%)	Literary quality and overall impression (10%)
Literary quality of the presentation of the dissertation including the use of footnotes, references, bibliography and appendices where appropriate	Literary quality of the presentation of the dissertation including the use of footnotes, references, bibliography and appendices where appropriate
Overall quality of the dissertation as a whole, including reflections on the research process	Overall quality of the dissertation as a whole, including reflections on the research process

Assessed Work - Year 2

Component PSSL003D7: Dissertation

A dissertation of 10,000-15,000 words to be submitted by

4:59pm on Tuesday 26th May 2026

Component PSSL002D7: Infant Observation 2

One infant observation paper of 5,000-8,000 words to be submitted by

4:59pm on Tuesday 21st July 2026

Students who fail the Dissertation (Component PSSL003D7) and/or the Infant Observation paper (Component PSSL002D7) may resubmit these **in May 2027 (date to be advised)**

Assessment on the MSc / PgDip

Assessment Criteria

Your assignment will be evaluated in terms of its content, structure, clarity and the quality of its analysis.

Content

Your essay needs to contain evidence of knowledge of the area, key issues and concepts and where appropriate research or clinical evidence. If you include quotations, use quotation marks and indicate the source of your quotation. Please include a list of all your references at the end of your essay.

Structure

A good essay presents a coherent argument backed up by evidence. Planning your essay carefully enables you to stay within a structure throughout the essay. Ensure your structure answers all aspects of the essay question.

Clarity

Ideas and arguments need to be presented clearly. Terms need to be explained explicitly.

Quality of Analysis

It is important that you demonstrate evidence of your understanding, rather than a list of facts or other people's explanations.

Presentation

All assignments must be typed with double line spacing. Pages should be numbered consecutively, including the list of references.

Assessment Grades

Throughout the two years of the course four grades are used for assessed work:

80-100% High Distinction	Marks in this range indicate an exceptionally high level of scholarship and outstanding performance in terms of all of the dimensions outlined. While work at this level exhibits scrupulous completion of the requirements of the assignment, it will also exhibit a high degree of initiative, high quality of analysis, academic sophistication, comprehension, and critical assessment, making a novel contribution to psychosocial studies.
70%–79% Distinction	Marks in this range indicate high levels of scholarship, and high performance in terms of all of the dimensions outlined. Comprehensively argued writing of interest and originality which is also well organized and presented exhibiting a sound, critical and analytical grasp of the relevant literature(s) and drawing on an extensive range of relevant academic sources. The work will display an excellent understanding of underlying theory as well as employing appropriate analytical techniques, resulting in an argument of interest and significance.
60%–69% Merit	Work that demonstrates a good command of the subject and relevant literature(s) as well as a sound grasp of critical issues, with evidence of independent thought and a high standard of argument as well as good presentation. Work towards the bottom of this range may have occasional weaknesses and flaws but will nevertheless show a generally high level of competence. Work towards the top of this range will be highly competent on all dimensions.
50%–59% Pass	Marks in this range indicate general capability, but with moderate levels of weaknesses on one or more dimensions indicated above. Work in this range may contain inaccuracies, the arguments may lack clarity or rigour, or there may be a lack of critical understanding. It will however be coherently structured and presented, showing a sound command of the subject, some awareness of critical debate, and the ability to construct a generally coherent argument.

40%–49% Fail	Marks in this range do not quite meet the minimum standards for a pass, with considerable levels of weaknesses on one or more dimensions. Work in this range may suffer from flawed arguments, weak structure and presentation, an inadequate command of course materials, or a serious failure to reflect on those materials. It will however demonstrate a basic understanding of psychosocial studies and show evidence of reasonable attention to the course materials.
30%–39% Low Fail	<p>Marks in this range display major levels of weaknesses on two or more dimensions. The work may be reliant on a minimal range of reading and reflection with poor attention to detail.</p> <p>Work in this range may be characterised by assertions lacking supporting evidence or argument, or by seriously flawed understanding of key concepts.</p>
0%–29% Very Low Fail	Marks in this range indicate general incompetence, with highly serious levels of weaknesses on two or more dimensions. Work in this range will either fail to present any real argument or opinion, or fail to engage at all with the topic in question. Work may quote heavily from a small number of sources, but fail to integrate them and provide little or no narrative to explain their relevance.

Feedback and support

Students receive individualised feedback on all assessed work carried out during the course, subject to the regulations on confidentiality of exam material. The assessment procedures are structured to be formative as well as summative, in that students receive feedback on work submitted at various points (effectively, the beginning or end of each academic term) and can utilise this feedback when preparing for their next assessment. Students who fail essays are supported in resubmitting them in time for the requisite exam board, so as not to hamper unnecessarily their progress through the course.

Confidentiality Statement

When a confidentiality statement has not been included in written work submitted by the student, or when it becomes clear that the confidentiality of an observed family or research participants or others referred to has not been protected, markers are advised not to mark the coursework. This will result in a Fail mark and the student will be asked to re-submit their work.

Referencing

The system of referencing that students are required to use in all written course work is APA 7th edition. Further information can be found at <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/learning-development/preparing-for-study>

It is essential you reference your work appropriately. Marks will be deducted for poor or incorrect referencing. Unreferenced work can be regarded as plagiarism (see above).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the most common form of examination offence encountered in universities, partly because of the emphasis now placed on work prepared by candidates unsupervised in their own time, but also because many students fall into it unintentionally, through ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism. Even if unintentional, it will still be considered an examination offence.

This section of the Course Handbook is intended to explain clearly what plagiarism is, and how you can avoid it. Acknowledgement is made to guidance issued by the USA Modern Language Association (MLA, 1998).

Plagiarism is the publication of borrowed thoughts as original, or in other words, passing off someone else's work as your own. In any form, plagiarism is unacceptable in the Department, as it interferes with the proper assessment of students' academic ability.

Plagiarism has been defined as "the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own" (Lindey, 1952, p2). Therefore, using another person's ideas or expressions or data in your writing without acknowledging the source is to plagiarise.

Borrowing others' words, ideas or data without acknowledgement

It is acceptable, in your work, to use the words and thoughts of another person or data that another person has gathered but the borrowed material must not appear to be your creation.

This includes essays, practical and research reports written by other students including those from previous years, whether you have their permission or not. It also applies to both 'hard-copy' material and electronic material, such as Internet documents. Examples include copying someone else's form of words, or paraphrasing another's argument, presenting someone else's data or line of thinking.

This form of plagiarism may often be unintentional, caused by making notes from sources such as books or journals without also noting the source, and then repeating those notes in an essay without acknowledging that they are the data, words or ideas belonging to someone else. Guard against this by keeping careful notes that distinguish between your own ideas and researched material and those you obtained from others. Then acknowledge the source.

Further information can be found at <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/exams/plagiarism-guidelines>

Generative Artificial Intelligence and assignments

Students must not submit any work for assessment that has been generated by a chatbot or AI tool.

Further information about AI can be found here:

<https://www.bbk.ac.uk/downloads/registry/student-policies-2023-24/ai-guidance.pdf>

All assignments are checked for similarity (plagiarism and AI generated content) via turnitin.

Failed assignments

Essays with a provisional grade of 'fail' (mark below 50%) may be resubmitted once within 4 weeks of receipt of the mark for the first submission (Psychoanalytic or Jungian Analytic Theory Component PSSL001H7 and Work Discussion Component PSSL002H7) for remarking by internal examiners.

Students who fail Analytic Reflection on Infant Observation Component PSSL016S7 will be allowed to retake the examination on one occasion, before the second year of their course begins.

Common Awards Scheme Policies – Assessment, Late Work, Mitigating Circumstances, Deferrals

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning experience in higher education. Occasionally, for good reason, a student may be prevented from undertaking or completing an assessment at the appropriate time. To ensure consistent and fair practice across the College policies have been prepared for Departments and their Boards of Examiners to explain what students should do if they are unable to complete an assignment on time, what is understood to be acceptable “mitigating circumstances”, what arrangements can be made to defer submission of assignments or to take a break in studies.

Detailed guidance on Birkbeck Policies is given on the [Birkbeck Rules and Regulations web page](#).

The University Regulatory Framework for Assessment

The Course consists of five Level M modules, credit-rated as 180 credits at level 7. All five modules are core modules, which means they must be taken and passed to allow the student to complete the degree.

Degree Classification

Postgraduate awards may be made with Pass, Merit or Distinction. Distinctions are normally awarded to students who achieve an average result of 70% or more, including a mark of 70 or over in their dissertation, for all level 7 modules on their programme. A Merit is normally awarded to students who achieve an average result of 60% or more for all level 7 modules. A Pass is normally awarded to students who achieve an average result of 50% or more for all level 7 modules.

Failure and Re-assessment of a Module

If a student is given a fail grade for an assessed component on first submission they are permitted to make one further submission. Individual course component sections earlier in the handbook contain resubmission deadlines. A 50% cap is placed on any resubmission (except

where mitigating circumstances have been accepted on the failed assessment, when the student will be permitted to re-submit without penalty).

[The Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study](#) outline how an examination board should treat a failed module when considering progression and awards. However, each examination board is responsible for judging, within these regulations, whether you will need to re-take the module or whether you will be able to attempt a re- assessment. A 'compensated credit' is not available for core modules). Students should be aware that all modules on this programme are designated as core modules and must be passed.

Late Work and Mitigating Circumstances

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning experience in higher education. Occasionally, for good reason, a student may be prevented from undertaking or completing an assessment at the appropriate time. To ensure consistent and fair practice across the College the following guidance has been prepared for Departments and their Boards of Examiners to explain what students should do if they are unable to complete an assignment on time, and what is understood to be acceptable "mitigating circumstances".

Late work

If, for good reason, you have been prevented from undertaking or completing an assessment at the appropriate time you must immediately inform the bpf Course Director and the Birkbeck Course Tutor & Director. You must also submit a mitigating circumstance form as soon as possible (and no later than 2 weeks after the deadline) via your My Birkbeck profile (<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck>), along with written evidence, medical or otherwise, as to why your work was submitted late. The work must then be submitted as soon as possible after the deadline.

The mitigating circumstances form can be accessed on your My Birkbeck profile ; here you can also find further information on [the college's policy on mitigating circumstances](#): This form will then be reviewed by Birkbeck administrators and will be approved or rejected as per the policy. The outcome of the decision will be shared with the student and teaching team at the bpf, however the details of the claim such as specifics around health or circumstances will be kept confidential. So please consider this, if you wish to discuss this with your tutors.

Coursework submitted late is given two marks: a penalty mark and the 'real' mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. Coursework that is submitted up to 7 calendar

days late will receive a late penalty mark and deduction of 10% of marks awarded from the 'real' mark, to a minimum of the 50% postgraduate pass mark. Any coursework that is submitted more than 7 calendar days will receive a capped mark of 50% assuming it is of a pass standard. If the coursework is returned to you, both marks are given on a cover sheet. If the coursework is not of a pass standard a single mark is given. You will be notified where appropriate of the absolute cut-off deadline for late submission and accompanying documentation.

If students submitting coursework late do not provide any mitigating documentation prior to the meeting of the Mitigation Sub-Committee, the 'real' mark will not be considered and the penalty mark will stand. The results of all cases dealt with at Mitigation Sub-Committee will then be presented to the full Exam Board.

Deferrals

Students are advised that deferrals are viewed as exceptional. Permission to defer completion of work may only be granted for reasons judged adequate in the particular case at the discretion of bpf and Birkbeck. In order to get permission for a deferral, you must make an application the bpf Course Director and the Birkbeck Course Director.

You will need to submit in writing your formal request, and where appropriate you should supply documentary evidence supporting your application for deferral. The latest date for application for deferral of the dissertation is two weeks before the submission date.

It is Birkbeck policy that students complete the deferred elements at the next available opportunity. In most cases that would be the next academic year.

Additional fees for deferral of examination may also be incurred. The amount depends on the resources from bpf and Birkbeck that you require to complete your studies. (See also Section 30: Deferral in the Whole Module).

Breaks in Study

Students may apply for a break in studies for a maximum of two years in total during their programme of study and this will normally be for a period of one academic year. Students who are considering requesting a shorter break will need to bear in mind the impact on the infant observation. Requests for breaks in study must be made in writing to both the relevant bpf Course Director and the Birkbeck Programme Director, and requested formally via your My

Birkbeck profile. The link below under 'for programme students' will advise you the steps needed. It is essential that you request your Break in Studies this way or you may still be liable for fees and it may lead to complications with your qualification.

<https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/student-status/break-in-study>

Final Award for the MSc

Students have to pass all three assessed components in year 1 and both assessed components in year 2 to be awarded the MSc. All marking will be on the numerical scale described above and all components will be taken into account when awarding the final MSc degree at the end of two years study. The final overall mark will be calculated by the credit weighting described in the Common Awards Scheme regulations for all Components

1. Psychoanalytic or Jungian Analytic Theory (PSSL001H7): 15 credits
2. Work Discussion (PSSL002H7): 15 credits
3. Analytic Reflection on Infant Observation (PSSL016S7): 30 credits
4. Dissertation MSc Psychodynamics of Human Development (PSSL003D7): 60 credits
5. Infant Observation 2 (PSSL002D7): 60 credits

Withholding Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma and MSc Results

All candidates who, if successful in their examinations, will qualify for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate, Diploma or MSc, should note that the University/College authorities will withhold the award in the case of any student who is in debt to the College, or to any part of the University, including College Universities and bpf Libraries (i.e. unreturned library books or outstanding library fines). No report will be made on the student's candidature until the debt has been settled in full and attendance at the Presentation Ceremony will not be permitted unless the whole of the debt has been cleared by the due date.

All other candidates who remain in debt to the College will have their results withheld and/or not

be permitted to re-enrol at the College until the debt has been settled in full.

Students who are recorded as in debt when the results are released are warned that when their debt is cleared there will be a delay before their results are released.

Tutorials and Student Support

Personal tutorials

Each student is allocated a personal tutor at beginning of the course with whom they can meet once a term for pastoral and academic support and to reflect on their progress and engagement with the course. See bpf guidelines for Pastoral Support.

Personal Therapy

Students are recommended to undertake personal psychodynamic therapy throughout the course. While students on this course are entitled to use counselling facilities at Birkbeck it should be noted that, due to the nature of the course and the fact that this service can only offer short term counselling, it is highly likely that the recommended psychodynamic therapy will need to be found outside the university setting. See bpf document for therapy guidelines

Dissertation

Dedicated seminars and study days on research and dissertation development are provided to help students prepare for their dissertation and their infant observation paper.

Birkbeck runs a system of academic workshops, seminars (including those on academic writing skills), guides and interactive tutorials on Moodle. Students are advised to make use of all the resources available to support their studies.

Support for students with Disabilities, Dyslexia and Mental Health Needs

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities, specific learning difficulties, medical conditions and mental health conditions (hereinafter referred to as disabled students). Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the [College's Wellbeing Centre](#). The Wellbeing Centre is located in G26 on the Ground floor of the Malet Street building.

All enquiries should come to [the Wellbeing Centre](#), on 020 3907 0700, who will determine the appropriate referral to specialists in the Disability and Dyslexia Service and Mental Health Service. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students' Allowance, specialist equipment, personal support, examination arrangements, etc.

On enrolment you need to complete a Study Support Plan (SSP), which will set out the reasonable adjustments that we will make with physical access, lectures, seminars, assessments and exams. After you complete this and provide disability evidence, we confirm the adjustments you require and then your department and examinations office will be informed that your SSP is available and adjustments can be made. You should contact the Wellbeing Service if any of your adjustments are not in place.

Student Wellbeing services (BBK)

Wellbeing Services encompasses three teams which provide specialist practical, psychological, and disability-related support to students. They work collaboratively to offer a range of services to meet your individual needs and support you to manage your wellbeing alongside your academic studies. To learn more about the teams, the support and resources offered and how to access them visit: <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/wellbeing>

Counselling services. Email: counselling-services@bbk.ac.uk

Mental health services. Email: mentalhealth@bbk.ac.uk

Disability services. Email: disability@bbk.ac.uk

For general enquiries about the support available at Birkbeck, contact the Student Advice team

via their online ASK form or by calling +44 (0)20 3907 0700 (Monday to Thursday 10-6pm and Friday 12-5pm).

The Disabled Students' Allowance

Disabled students on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). The DSA provides specialist equipment including computers with assistive technology and training, personal help (e.g., study skills tutors, mentors and BSL interpreters) and additional travel costs for students who have to use taxis. It provides thousands of pounds worth of support and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Wellbeing Centre can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support. From September 2016, new students will receive their note-taking support from the University rather than the DSA.

Support in IT Services and Library Services

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes an Assistive Technology Room, which may be booked by disabled students. We have software packages for dyslexic students (e.g. ClaroRead and Mind view), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments available in our computer laboratories, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs, etc. We have an Assistive Technology Officer, who can be contacted via IT Services.

Birkbeck Library has an Assistive Technology Centre, where there is also a range of specialist equipment, including an electronic magnifier for visually impaired students, as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability and Dyslexia Service Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service, who provide a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities and dyslexia.

Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)

Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems

may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies to make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic, you can take an online screening test in the computer laboratories – the instructions for the screening test are available on the Disability Office website. If appropriate, you will be referred to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. Some students can receive assistance in meeting the cost of this assessment, either from their employer or from Birkbeck.

Further information

For further information, please call the Wellbeing Centre on 020 3907 0700 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk

Peer Support

Students are encouraged to form small study groups and to work in pairs with colleagues to collaborate on assignment tasks, develop ideas and to offer editing and feedback on written work. This is particularly important whilst studying remotely.

Students are encouraged to create opportunities to meet outside of the course.

Appeals and complaints

Complaints Procedure

The bpf has a complaints procedure that is available from the course secretary. Complaints should in the first instance be taken up with either the bpf Course Director or the Birkbeck Course Director. If students are unhappy with the outcome of this, they should refer to the [Birkbeck student dispute resolution policy and procedure](#)

Bpf policies: [Policies & Procedures - The British Psychotherapy Foundation](#)

Appeals Procedure

Students may appeal against the decision of the board of examiners in certain circumstances. Details of this and other policies can be found on [here](#).

Student Representation and Feedback

The students from each stream of the MSc appoint student representatives to meet with the Programme co- Directors once a term, normally prior to the Study Day. The purpose of these meetings is to feed back to the Course Management Committee any comments and to influence the management of the course programme.

Students Representatives are elected by the student body and are in place for one academic year; their role is to represent the student cohort and to liaise with members of staff and with the course Directors. They are responsible to provide an agenda for every student rep meeting and to discuss the agenda during the meeting. Minutes will be taken during the meeting and made available at a later stage to the whole student cohort via Moodle.

Additionally, the views of all students are sought in both written and verbal forms by the Programme co- Directors.

Birkbeck Student union is providing training for student reps.

Awards and attendance

The MSc course lasts for two academic years, with an exit point at the end of the first year for students who successfully complete Year 1 and who wish to leave with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in the Psychodynamics of Human Development.

Students who wish to continue into the second year to complete the Infant Observation module but who elect not to submit a dissertation may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in the Psychodynamics of Human Development. Students who wish to submit a dissertation but do not wish to complete an Infant observation may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in the Psychodynamics of Human Development.

The Course consists of five assessed components, three in the first year and two in the second. The components are described in detail below.

Birkbeck Students Union

Birkbeck Students' Union is the representational and corporate body of all students enrolled at Birkbeck, University of London. The Students' Union is a democratic and member-led organisation that is legislated to promote the interests of the students of the College.

Further information can be found [here](#) .

Birkbeck Careers & Employability Service

Birkbeck's Careers and Employability Service has been designed to enhance the student experience from enrolment to graduation. We have a number of interventions, services and options which students can take advantage of.

Further information can be found [here](#).