



*Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy*

## **IACP Guidelines for Counselling and Psychotherapy Placements**

### **Introduction**

IACP was established in 1981, to identify, develop and maintain professional standards of excellence in counselling and psychotherapy. Our work promotes best practice and the development of the profession as well as safeguard the public. IACP represents over 4,200 members and is the largest Counselling and Psychotherapy Association in Ireland.

On the top of individual accreditation, IACP accredits Counselling and Psychotherapy Training Programmes. Education is at the heart of our association. We aim through IACP Course Accreditation to set a standard of excellence for courses of Counselling and Psychotherapy. Prospective students can be assured that courses accredited by the IACP are of a high academic and professional standard.

IACP requires Students on IACP accredited courses to complete a minimum of 100 hours of client work on the student placement, which are supervised in the ratio 1:5 with IACP, BACP or IAHIP Accredited Supervisor.

Regarding client work from the IACP Course Accreditation Criteria:

#### **WORK WITH CLIENTS**

6.1 Students must have opportunities to work with individual clients in a mode consistent with the course rationale, philosophy and design, and with the primary work for which they are being trained.

6.2 It is the responsibility of the training organisation to ensure that students have access to appropriate sources of client referral.

6.3 Before starting client work, students must:

- Be individually assessed for their readiness to take clients
- Have completed a minimum of 25 hours of Personal Therapy
- Have engaged in supervision with an IACP Accredited Supervisor or an accredited Supervisor of an

organisation with whom IACP has a reciprocal agreement

- Have successfully completed Garda Vetting

6.4 It is not appropriate for students in training to gain their client counselling/psychotherapy experience through private or independent practice.

6.5 Substantial and regular counselling/psychotherapy practice with real clients is essential in the training of counsellors/ psychotherapists to a professional standard. The minimum acceptable number of client hours under supervision is 100\*. It is the responsibility of the course provider to ensure the capacity of the student counsellor/psychotherapist is matched appropriately to the client.

\* 120 for courses commencing on and from 1st September 2020

6.8 A clear written contract must be established between the Course Provider and any placement. This placement work should be carefully monitored by core trainers and supervisors.

6.11 Students have an obligation under the IACP Code of Ethics to indicate their Trainee Status to agencies and to their clients.

6.12 There should be a clear delineation of clinical responsibility for clients of students and there should be a mechanism for feedback from Agencies to Training Organisations on student work.

## Student Placements

To comply with the IACP Course Accreditation Criteria, IACP ask that the IACP Accredited Courses request the following requirements to be met by Student Placement Organisations:

### **1. Placement setting must be safe and appropriate**

The premises in which the facility is located are of sound and stable structure, are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. Placement setting must be safe and appropriate for both, the Client and Student Therapist.

### **2. Courses should designate a Placement Officer**

Designated Placement Officer should be responsible for vetting of placements, contracting and communication between the Course, Student and Placement.

### **3. Regular monitoring**

There should be regular monitoring of the placement by Placement Officer.

### **4. Designated Child Protection Officer (DLP)**

There should be a Designated Child Protection Officer (DLP) assigned for dealing with any disclosures between Clients and Student Therapists. DLP should be responsible for reporting of abuse to TUSLA.

#### **5. Suicide Prevention Officer**

There should be a Suicide Prevention Officer available on every placement to support Student Therapists.

#### **6. Clients**

Clients must be vetted and matched with the student therapist with the consideration of competencies and readiness.

#### **7. Contracting**

Clear contract must be signed between Student, College and Placement.

#### **8. Garda Vetting**

Student Therapists must complete Garda Vetting through the course or through the IACP.

#### **9. GDPR compliant**

All placements must be GDPR compliant in order to provide client work.

#### **10. IACP Code of Ethics and Practice**

Students on placements are bound by the IACP Code of Ethics and Practice.

Guidelines created in September 2018 and ratified by the IACP Board of Directors in November 2018.