



Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy

Level 8, 60 ECTS

Programme Handbook

2025/26

Foreword

Welcome to DBS where we will help you realise your ambition. We have an international reputation for high-quality teaching and learning and our intention is to do everything we can to support you during your time with us.

Dublin Business School (DBS) is Ireland's largest independently owned, third level institution. We have campuses in Dublin's city centre and nationalities from over ninety-five countries participate in a bustling and thriving student life.

We offer programmes across a range of disciplines from business to data science and business analytics, marketing to psychology and psychotherapy, from accounting and finance through law, arts, and creative media. We are committed to enabling strong academic outcomes through employer-led programmes and delivering an outstanding student experience.

The information contained in this handbook is crucial to your learning. It provides important information on your programme, your assessments, and the key individuals you will meet. For these reasons we want you to constantly read and refer to this handbook and use it as a key information source during your time with us.

We are dedicated to ensuring that you have a rewarding and fulfilling experience while studying at DBS and through your programme of study, you begin to realise your ambitions and your career goals.

Good luck on your journey!

Lori

Lori Johnston

Academic Dean

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Section 1 Programme Information

Welcome Message from Academic and Clinical Director

Hello and a very warm welcome to Dublin Business School. My name is Iseult White and I am the Academic and Clinical Director for your Psychotherapy programme.

You have made the right choice in deciding to study at Dublin Business School. We are Ireland's largest independent third-level institution, offering a range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional programmes in Business, Arts and Law. Your choice to study Psychotherapy will enhance your personal, academic, and professional development.

DBS has built on a reputation of "Excellence through Learning" and we pride ourselves on our ability to design and deliver programmes which are academically rigorous and innovative whilst ensuring they meet the demands of an ever-changing interdisciplinary field of research and practice and professional standards and requirements. All faculty members are experienced tutors who are specialists in their chosen field. As well as being highly qualified academically they are also actively engaged in research and practice, bringing a wealth of experience to the classroom that feeds directly into your learning experience.

I look after the undergraduate programmes in the Counselling and Psychotherapy discipline, which includes the BA (Hons) in Counselling and Psychotherapy and the postgraduate programmes including the Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy and the MA in Psychotherapy. I work closely with your Academic and Training Officer, Programme Coordinator and your lecturers.

Your student portal is a one stop shop for accessing your email, timetables and more. I would like to note the DBS email assigned to you. It is important that you correspond with DBS staff using this email only. We will send a number of important communications to this email during your studies. This information and more, is available in your Student Handbook, which can be accessed via students.dbs.ie/academic-operations

It is appreciated that new students each have particular needs. This handbook is designed to provide you with much of the information you will require in the first few weeks of your programme of study. It will aid your study immensely if you familiarise yourself with the contents of this handbook and keep it somewhere safe. It is to be used in conjunction with the Module and Assessment Guides that you will also receive via Moodle. We hope you enjoy your time with us here in DBS and look forward to helping you during your learning journey.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the following section: **2.5 Mandatory Attendance to Experiential Modules**. The experiential elements of this program are core to the success of your training as a psychotherapist so there are strict attendance requirements for all experiential modules. If you are struggling to attend for any reason we want to support you. So please get in contact with the Academic and Training Officer or a trusted member of staff if you are having any difficulties.

Best wishes to you all for a great year!

Iseult

Iseult White
Academic and Clinical Director for Counselling, Psychotherapy, Psychoanalysis and Addiction

1.1 Programme Administration

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of your course, or a problem relating to any aspect of your time here at DBS you should contact your Academic and Training Officer or Programme Coordinator. If they cannot tackle the question or problem themselves, they can help you identify the person who can and they will refer you on to them. Below is short description of the people you will meet on your programme:

Academic and Training Officer (ATO)

The ATO is responsible for coordination of the organisation and delivery of the programme, and for the management and support of learners on the programme. The ATO has an important role in mentoring learners and providing them with guidance and support on both academic and non-academic matters related to learner life. The ATO also monitors continuous assessment schedules for all programmes to ensure academic integrity. All Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) requests are reviewed by the ATO via the [HelpDesk](#).

The core purpose of the ATO role is to provide professional leadership and management for an allocated subject area in order to facilitate teaching and learning and to secure effective use of resources.

Clinical Placement Officer (CPO)

The CPO works closely with students to facilitate placement possibilities for all students, developing and maintaining placement possibilities for students on the psychotherapy training programmes in the Department of Psychotherapy. The CPO vets and works closely with the clinical placement centers and receives regular updated reports from them.

Practicum Coordinator has responsibility for the monitoring and recording of personal psychotherapy and for individual supervision. The Practicum Coordinator collates all documentation to provide evidence that students have completed the requisite number of hours of personal psychotherapy, of process group, and of individual supervision and client hours.

Programme Coordinator provides administrative support on the programmes and ensures all learners are provided with full details of their programme of study. They are the first point of contact for learners on a range of issues such as programme queries, deferrals, personal mitigating circumstances (PMCs) that may affect their learning.

1.2 Main Points of Contact for the programme

Role	Name	E-mail
Programme Coordinator	Lara Marcaro	students.dbs.ie/dashboard/sccm .
Academic and Training Officer	Estefanía García-Moratilla	estefania.garcia@dbs.ie
Clinical Placement Officer	Estefanía García-Moratilla	estefania.garcia@dbs.ie
Practicum Coordinator	Rachel Forrester	rachel.forrester@dbs.ie

1.3 Programme Team

In DBS, email addresses for lecturing staff are as follows: firstname.lastname@dbs.ie

There are also other valuable points of contact and support in DBS such as Student Services, the Student Engagement and Success Unit, [Student Welfare and Support](#), IT Helpdesk and the award winning [DBS Library](#). The [DBS website](#) will contain more information on these and other great DBS services and supports. Students can contact us through students.dbs.ie/dashboard/sccm where they will be met with the Student Help Form. This creates a request or ticket which is monitored by the teams.

Section 2 Programme Details

2.1 Aims of the Programme

The Higher Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy consists of three interconnected strands which provide learners with a firm foundation in core academic issues, personal development and skills training. These three interconnected strands are: experiential training groups, personal development through the experience of psychotherapy and process groups. The successful combination of these three strands enables learners to receive a thorough grounding in the theoretical aspects that will inform their practice. The theoretical orientation of the programme is humanistic, psychodynamic from an integrative model and learners are introduced to the principles of psychoanalysis, developmental psychology, family systems, group psychotherapy and psychopathology. Learners are also supported and directed in personal development and self-care through engaging in personal therapy, stress response modules and process groups. Alongside knowledge of different forms of psychopathology and theories of psychotherapy and counselling, the programme therefore develops learners' own experiential learning and personal development.

The general programme aims are to:

1. Require learners to undertake their own personal psychotherapy, process group work and stress response practice for the duration of their training.
2. Assess learners' progression through training in the skills and theories of humanistic/ psychodynamic psychotherapy and psychoanalysis in ways that are transparent, fair and meet the highest standards of professional practice.
3. Equip learners with practical research methodology skills appropriate to the fields of counselling and psychotherapy.
4. Provide learners who have graduated with a Level 8 qualification in a non-cognate discipline with an introduction to the skills and theories of humanistic/ psychodynamic psychotherapy and psychoanalysis.

The programme is constructed as a two-year part-time programme of 12 modules leading to an award of Higher Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy. This programme enables learners to graduate with a relevant qualification suited to a broad range of career and professional development options and progress on the path towards becoming a professional working in this field.

For learners who apply and progress to the Master of Arts in Psychotherapy, supervised clinical practice is added to the three strands. Personal psychotherapy, undertaken from year one of the Masters programme, is a requirement that is not represented in the modules of the course. The other major component of personal exploration and development, namely the Process Group Work is however, represented.

Taken together, the Higher Diploma is the first two years of a four-year professional training, which in combination with the Master of Arts in Psychotherapy, is crucial to allow a decision to be made on the basis of a knowledge of a learner's work and participation concerning their suitability for supervised clinical practice. The Higher Diploma, as the first two years of this training, is therefore a period primarily of personal development for the learner and allows DBS to establish a fair and balanced informed profile of the learner regarding suitability for supervised clinical practice.

2.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the programme graduates will be able to:

MIPLO1	Demonstrate initiative and personal responsibility through engagement with personal psychotherapy, group facilitation and team work via process group work, and a capacity to adopt mindful practice and problem-solving skills in managing stress response and people skills in practice.
MIPLO2	Develop an awareness and provide evidence of competence in critically reflective practice, problem solving and self-care.
MIPLO3	Demonstrate competence and a critical understanding in simulated skills practice in a classroom context based on the theories of the major modalities, in particular the humanistic and psychodynamic modalities in accordance with the integrative model.
MIPLO4	Synthesise knowledge of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychoanalysis, psychodynamic and humanistic psychotherapy.
MIPLO5	Display a critical awareness of the principles and practice of research methods appropriate to the field of psychotherapy.
MIPLO6	Demonstrate the ability to undertake contemporary and extensive research through a library-based mini dissertation, and communicate findings effectively via individual and group presentations.

2.3 Programme Structure

The Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy level 8 is a stand alone qualification and also acts as the first two years of a four year Masters in Psychotherapy programme. Upon completion of all components, the four year programme is recognised by the Irish Association of Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy as meeting their standards for accreditation. The Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy is two years in duration, students do not provide clinical work to clients until they move onto the MA in Psychotherapy. Rather, the Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy prepares students for clinical work on the MA in Psychotherapy by assisting students to develop the knowledge, skills and critical personal development which will inform their clinical practice.

While the Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy level 8 is a stand alone qualification, many will be applying for it on the basis of it acting as the first two years of the four-year professional training programme. As such, the division between the first two years, Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy and the second two years MA in Psychotherapy programme is crucial to allow a decision to be made on the basis of a knowledge of a student's work and participation concerning their suitability for supervised clinical practice.

The first two years is therefore a period primarily of personal development and academic endeavour which allows the core trainer and stress response trainer to establish a profile of each student so that

a fair and balanced informed decision can be made regarding professional suitability for supervised clinical practice.

Learners will undertake 12 core modules, including a minor research dissertation. This is intended to ensure all learners develop critical knowledge, gain clinical skills and experience and develop personally through their own psychotherapy and process group experience.

2.4 Other Relevant Programme Information

Module Level

Stage label	Module title	ECTS	Module synopsis
Award	(A8PP116) Counselling and Psychotherapy Skills I	5	This module is designed to introduce and build key skills for the practice of counselling and psychotherapy. Emphasis is placed on the skills relevant to the beginning stage of the counselling process. The theory of person centred-therapy provides the main structure for the skills programme with an introduction to relevant concepts of the psychodynamic approach to practice. Attention is also paid to the further development of interpersonal and communication skills and to the preparation of the trainee to engage in the therapeutic encounter. Considerable emphasis is placed on the development of the self- awareness of the trainee as they begin to be able to self- assess their own process. It is taught experientially in 12 three-hour sessions with class group sizes of no more than 15.
Award	(A8PP167) Traditions of Psychotherapy	5	This module explores the various traditions of psychotherapy, beginning with psychoanalysis. It allows learners to make comparisons and to clarify some of the differences and some of the points of contact. The module outlines the evolution of techniques in order to facilitate understanding of counselling and psychotherapy techniques and how these approaches have been blended to form an integrated model and what fundamental differences in basic principles pertain.
Award	(A8PP173) Counselling and Psychotherapy Skills II	5	This module develops the listening skills and self-awareness which were gained in year 1 and facilitates the trainee in relation to managing the therapy situation. It is taught experientially in 12 three hour sessions with class group sizes of no more than 15 learners.
Award	(A8PP134) Psychopathology and Case Histories	5	This module introduces learners to the discourse of different clinical practices. First of all it teaches learners the language and theory of psychiatric and mental health diagnosis to inform them of psychiatric and mental health practice. It relates this discourse to the context of their study and

Stage label	Module title	ECTS	Module synopsis
			training in psychotherapy. Secondly this module provides learners with the opportunity to read in detail seminal case histories by influential figures in the history of psychotherapy with a view to learning about the techniques of these practitioners and the direction they give to treatment.
Award	(A8PP110) Group Psychotherapy	5	The module covers the theories of group dynamics and processes. The major theoretical and clinical perspectives underpinning approaches to working with groups are examined with particular focus on the psychodynamic approaches to group.
Award	(A8PP109) Psychoanalysis	5	This module is designed to introduce and develop the understanding of the fundamental concepts of Freudian psychoanalysis so that learners can situate this influential form of work in the context of humanistic / integrative / psychodynamic psychotherapy.
Award	(A8PP111) Stress Response I	5	This module develops an understanding of the physiological impact of the demands of everyday life. It is delivered experientially and provides learners with an appreciation of self-care and skills to practise self-care. The content of each class session is cumulative and requires learners put these skills into practice between class sessions.
Award	(A8PP113) Stress Response II	5	This module develops an understanding of the physiological impact of the demands of everyday life. It is delivered experientially and provides learners with an appreciation of self-care and skills to practise self-care. The content of each class session is cumulative and requires learners put these skills into practice between class sessions.
Award	(A8PP171) The Family and Psychotherapy	5	This module examines the contemporary family and the engagement of family therapists with the contemporary family. Concepts of family and critiques of these concepts from the perspective of gender and culture will be considered. There will be particular emphasis on considering how change happens within families and how therapists seek to influence this. Ideas about family communication, systems, sub-systems, boundaries and hierarchies will all be explored. The usefulness of working with the family system and some of the theoretical underpinnings to working with the family system will be examined, with a particular focus on the influence of Structural, Milan and Narrative approaches. This module will also explore psychoanalytic

Stage label	Module title	ECTS	Module synopsis
			theories on the family complexes and the formation of the individual.
Award	(A8PP169) Theories of Development	5	This module is designed to introduce and distinguish the theories of development and social psychology, by way of case vignettes, from the tradition of psychoanalysis and psychology which have influenced the field of psychotherapy.
Award	(A8PP135) Research Methods and Minor Dissertation	5	This module provides learners with knowledge of research methodologies appropriate to research in the field of psychotherapy, in particular qualitative and theoretical methodologies. It provides an opportunity for learners to formulate and produce a dissertation around a key area of counselling and psychotherapy guided by their study of research methodology and drawing on published clinical material covered in modules on the Higher Diploma programme.
Award	(A8PP122) Process Group	5	Group Process is a fundamental part of training in psychotherapy. It provides learners with the challenge to articulate in a group context issues that arise over the duration of the first year of the programme. It constitutes an indispensable component for personal development. Group Process is an experiential learning of group dynamics as they operate in class groups, teams, family and in society generally. It is the basis of a learner being able to participate in and benefit from group supervision in years three and four.

2.5 Mandatory Attendance for Experiential Modules

As the Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy is part of a professional training, attendance at all elements of the course is mandatory. Personal Mitigating Circumstances do not qualify as grounds to waive this requirement. For your information the following arrangements are in place regarding missed classes:

Counselling and Psychotherapy Skills I and II

- 2 classes missed per year: students will be invited to attend make-up sessions at the end of the academic year. Attendance to these make-up sessions is mandatory in order to progress to the next stage of the programme.
- 3 classes missed per year: students will be required to repeat the module in the following academic year and will not be allowed to progress until the module has been completed.

Stress Response I and II

- 2 Stress Response classes missed per year: students will be invited to attend make-up sessions at the end of the academic year. Attendance to these make-up sessions is mandatory in order to progress to the next stage of the programme.
- 3 Stress Response missed per year: students will be required to repeat the module in the following academic year. and will not be allowed to progress until the module has been completed.

Process Group:

- 2 process group sessions missed per year: students will be invited to attend make-up sessions at the end of the academic year. Attendance to these make-up sessions is mandatory in order to progress to the next stage of the programme.
- 3 and more process group sessions missed per year: students will be required to repeat the module in the following academic year and will not be allowed to progress until the module has been completed.

2.6 Teaching and Learning Strategy for a multi-modal environment

The teaching and learning (T&L) strategy refers to the teaching modes, approaches, and activities that the lecturer will use to help you work toward achieving the learning outcomes for the module. The programme is primarily delivered in face-to-face in-class modes.

Examples of T&L modes include:

Mode	Description
In-class	Where the lecturer and all the students are in the class
Live Online	Where the lecturer and all of the students are online at the same time

Examples of T&L approaches include:

Approach	Description
Lecture	Where the lecturer presents or talks about concepts, ideas, topics, or theories
Tutorial	Where the lecturer and students engage in a discussion
Workshop	Where the lecturer and students engage in activities either collectively or in groups
Lab Demonstrations	Where the lecturer or students demonstrate processes usually on a computer

Examples of T&L Activities include:

Activity	Description
Case Study	Students review real-world examples of what they are learning about
Guest Speaker	A practitioner talks about real-world examples of what students are learning about
Group work	Students are divided into groups to work on a particular activity

Peer Review	Students review and comment on other students' work
Peer discussion	Students engage in a discussion about a topic which the lecturer observes and can contribute to
Quizzes	Students work through a series of short questions
Practical Exercises	Students carry out an individual task during the class
Peer Presentations	Students present either individually or as a group to their fellow students
Controlled Debate	Students are divided into groups and argue the merits of a specific stance on a topic usually determined by the lecturer
Reading	Students engage in a reading activity and either write or report back on what they have read
Watching Videos	Students analyse videos and have peer discussions on what they have seen
Peer Pairing	Students are split into pairs. Individually they carry out a task and then swap their work for the other student to review.
Role Play	Students act out a scenario from the real world for the whole group

Typically, a timetabled class will take place in one mode or another, for example through online, in-class, recorded or hybrid mode. Although the on-demand mode can be used on its own or with any of the other modes.

Usually, the lecturer will adopt the same approach for the length of each timetabled class, so your class will be a lecture or a tutorial or a workshop or a demonstration. However, the lecturer may mix approaches during a class. So, for example, the timetabled class may start with a lecture before moving into a workshop and then finishing with a tutorial approach.

Lecturers can also draw on any of the activities above, and others not mentioned above, during a class whether it is online, hybrid or in-class. However, some activities and approaches are better suited to some modes.

You will find the specific details of which mode applies to which module in your online timetable as well as in your Module and Assessment Guides.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact your Programme Coordinator or Module Leader.

2.7 Awarding Body and NFQ Level

This programme has been validated and approved by the Irish state agency, QQI ([Quality and Qualifications Ireland](#)). The programme is positioned at Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), a framework for the development, recognition, and award of qualifications in Ireland. The programme is listed on the Irish Register of Qualifications.

The programme is listed on the [Irish Register of Qualifications](#).

The programme is also currently recognised by [the Irish Association for Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy \(IAHIP\)](#) as part of an overall 4 year training programme in conjunction with the MA in Psychotherapy, to allow learners to meet the accreditation criteria in IAHIP Bye-law 11.

In both the case of QQI and IAHIP, DBS is obliged to carry out reviews and re-submit the programme for re-approval on a cyclical basis. This means that, during your programme of study, there may be changes to programme content or delivery. Where this occurs, transition arrangements are carefully considered to ensure coherence and consistency for learners.

At all times, delivery of the programme must be in compliance with the approved programme and to achieve the recognised award learners must fulfil all assessment criteria, as well as hours for experiential elements of the programme including personal and group therapy and clinical practice, as applicable. IAHIP also sets out specific requirements for how elements are undertaken in terms of in-person activities versus online.

CORU Recognition

CORU is Ireland's multi-profession health regulator whose role is to protect the public through regulating the health and social care professions listed in the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended). It includes the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and the Registration Boards established under the Act 2005 (as amended).

To regulate the professions, CORU will:

- Set the standards that health and social care professionals must meet
- Ensure that the relevant educational bodies deliver qualifications that prepare professionals to provide safe and appropriate care
- Maintain and publish a Register of health and social care professionals who meet our standards
- Ensure that registered professionals keep their skills up to date by promoting Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Run Fitness to Practise hearings into the conduct and competence of a Registrant

CORU confirmed the establishment of and appointment of members to the Counsellors and Psychotherapists Registration Board in 2019, under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (amended) to separately regulate the professions of Counsellors and Psychotherapists.

The Counsellors and Psychotherapists Registration Boards at CORU have statutory responsibility for:

- Establishing and maintaining a Register of members of the profession
- Assessing, approving and monitoring training courses for the health and social care professions under the Act
- Establishing the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics and standards of performance to which counsellors and psychotherapists must adhere.

In July 2025, CORU announced that there will be two distinct registers: one for counsellors and one for psychotherapists. The expected education level for each profession differs:

- Counsellors: Entry to the counselling register will require completion of a relevant undergraduate degree, typically set at Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
- Psychotherapists: Entry to the psychotherapy register will require a relevant undergraduate degree plus a graduate or postgraduate, psychotherapy-specific qualification at Level 9 on the NFQ.

Education providers have approximately four years to align their programmes with these new requirements. These steps ensure practitioners will be trained to consistent national standards and prepare the sector for statutory regulation and future registration.

It is expected that the registers will open in five to seven years. CORU has confirmed that when the registers for counselling and psychotherapy open, there will be a two-year transitional period known as "grandparenting" for existing practitioners. During this time, counsellors and psychotherapists who have been practising for at least two of the previous five years can apply for registration. CORU has not yet announced the grandparenting criteria.

Section 3 Assessment

3.1 Introduction to Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to ensure that you achieve the learning outcomes of each module. Learning outcomes are statements that specify what you will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. Assessment types will include practical, continual assessment, reports, group activities and exams.

It is important that you familiarise yourself with the format and number of assessments, assessment weighting, and due dates. These are published in the Module Guide which is available on [Moodle](#). An Assessment Brief is also published for each individual piece of continuous assessment. This will give details on the format, weighting, and due date, as well as set out what task you are required to complete in the assignment. It also gives the marking scheme for each assignment, and you should use this to guide your completion of the assignment.

All assessments are marked and graded by your lecturer and are reviewed by an internal moderator while the assessment process is overseen by External Examiners. This is to ensure fairness, consistency of marking and the correct standard across all assessments. Results are always provisional until they are approved by the External Examiner and are processed through the programme Exam Board. The purpose of an Exam Board is to formally ratify results and determine award classification (for more information please refer to the [Quality Assurance Handbook](#)).

The assessment schedule is below and Moodle syncs with the Student Dashboard to provide a calendar of deadlines. The schedule lists the due dates for all your assessments due over the academic year. The schedule ensures that the workload is balanced across the academic year. Any extension requests need to be considered in light of this schedule, as changes might risk clashing deadlines, so it is very important to be aware of the potential impact of changes to assessment

dates. The exam timetable is published on the [exam page](#) in the DBS current student area and is usually available about four weeks in advance of the exam period.

3.2 Assessment Brief

Please see the **Higher Diploma in Counselling & Psychotherapy Noticeboard** for the indicative assessment schedule.

Stage	Module	ECTS	Assessment
Award	Counselling and Psychotherapy Skills I	5	1. Individual Paper 20% 2. Presentation and Report 20% 3. In class skills presentation 20% 4. Feedback Exercise - Two feedback sessions (20% each for mid-year and end-year) 40%
Award	Stress Response I	5	1. Individual Paper 40% 2. Stress diary and Evaluation of three week plan (30% each) 60%
Award	Process Group	5	Attendance and Participation
Award	Traditions in Psychotherapy	5	Individual paper 100%
Award	Psychoanalysis	5	In class Exercise 30% Individual Paper 70%
Award	Theories of development	5	In class group exercise and report 50% Individual Paper 50%
Award	Group Psychotherapy	5	Academic essay 50% Weekly diary and reflective summary 50%
Award	The Family and psychotherapy	5	Group presentation and Genogram 60% Essay 40%
Award	Counselling and Psychotherapy Skills II	5	Reflective Essay/presentation 30% In Class skills test 30% Feedback 40%
Award	Stress Response II	5	Individual paper 50% Personal reflective paper 50%
Award	Psychopathology and Case Histories	5	Individual Paper 60% Reflective paper 40%
Award	Research Methods and Minor Dissertation	5	MCQ 10% Proposal 20% Dissertation 70%

All assessment in this programme conforms to the DBS assessment regulations informed by *QQ/ Assessment and Standards, Revised 2022*. Special regulations are defined on the course schedule. Where a learner is found to require additional learning support, the Disability and Inclusion Offer will identify appropriate support or liaise with the lecturer in conjunction with the Registrar's Office, if necessary, to agree a suitable equivalent alternative assessment instrument. This will be in accordance with the DBS Assessment Regulations. Please refer to the DBS Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH) for further details.

Assessment Submission

Your goal is to achieve the highest mark possible in your assessment. In order to do this, it is expected that learners:

- Complete ALL assessment components.
- Submit all assessments on time as indicated on the assessment specification.
- Complete all parts of each assessment.
- NEVER copy/plagiarise or submit content that is not yours by ensuring that you apply the correct referencing standard. DBS uses the Harvard Referencing style. A guide to this can be found [here](#).
- Always ask your lecturer if you are not sure about any requirements, not your fellow students.
- Always complete the required number of questions in an exam.
- Practice writing out answers for end of term exams by doing [previous papers](#), in particular practicing handwriting or typing answers (as per the exam format) to ensure that you are equipped to set out your answers within the format of the exam.
- Always write/type your ID number on any assessment or exam script.
- If you require support for exams/assessment, ensure that you have completed the appropriate paperwork and submitted it to the [Disability Support](#) well in advance of any assessment or exam dates.

3.3 Reassessment

Module assessment has been designed to allow the learner to demonstrate level-appropriate knowledge and skills, often through the lens of application. CAs assess learner knowledge of the theoretical and practical components of the module. Assessment design ensures that weaker and stronger learners can be differentiated by allowing strong learners to display the advanced knowledge they have gained by going beyond lecture materials, and providing evidence of their own relevant in-depth research on a topic.

3.4 General Submission Requirements

1. All assignments must be submitted no later than the stated deadline (date and time).
2. Assignments submitted after the latest deadline specified (including any approved extension deadline) are considered late and penalised according to the [Quality Assurance Handbook \(QAH\)](#)

Part B Section 5.2.2.6 as follows:

- A penalty of 2 marks will be applied per day or part thereof (including weekends and public holidays) for an ongoing failure to submit beyond the submission deadline.
- An examiner has the right to refuse to mark the assignment if the submission instructions have not been observed.

- Where a late assessment is submitted within 14 days of the deadline, and is of a passing standard, the late penalty is capped (such that the minimum grade that can be awarded is 40% for the late submission).
 - Where a late assessment is submitted more than 14 days after the deadline, it will receive 0%. The lecturer may, at their discretion, review the submission for feedback.
 - Where the assessment is undertaken in a group, the piece of work should be submitted in its complete entirety, and any penalty for late submission incurred applies to all group members.
3. Extensions to assignment submission deadlines will not be granted, other than in exceptional circumstances. To apply for an extension please go to <https://students.dbs.ie/dashboard/SCCM> and open a ticket.
 4. All relevant provisions of the Assessment Regulations must be complied with (see [QAH B.5](#)).
 - Students are required to refer to the assessment regulations in their Programme Handbook, and on the [Student Website](#).
 - Dublin Business School penalises students who engage in academic impropriety (i.e. plagiarism, collusion and/or copying, ghost writing/ essay mills, improper use of Generative Artificial Intelligence software).
 1. Refer to the College's [Generative AI Guidelines HERE](#) for further information.
 - Guides on referencing are available on the Library website: <https://libguides.dbs.ie/referencing>
 - Text-matching analysis software is integrated in Moodle to generate a report regarding the degree of text-matching in a submission.
 5. Students are required to retain a copy of each assignment submitted, until the issuing of a transcript indicating the mark awarded and the closure of the Appeal period (2 weeks following the release of final results).
 - Results can only be appealed following the release of final results, and the Appeal form must be submitted to the Exams Office within the Appeal period.
 - An appeal must be based on valid grounds (see the Appeals Policy QAH B.3.5), dissatisfaction with a grade is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.
 - Assignments must be appropriately packaged and presented.
 - All assignments should be submitted to your subject/course page on Moodle by the deadline date.
 - Where a submission involves digital media (i.e formats other than Word, Powerpoint or PDF), it is the submitting students' responsibility to ensure the media is appropriately labelled, fully working and they must retain a copy.
 - Components of an assessment which are not included in the final submission cannot normally be subsequently accepted for grading. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their file is uploaded correctly.
 - Include an electronic **cover sheet** with the following details to the front of the assignment (see below)
 6. Assignments that *breach* the word count requirements will be penalised. *There is a 10% discretion, either way, applicable in terms of word count.*
 7. When you submit your assignment you will be asked to click on a button which will declare the following:

By ticking this box I am confirming that this assignment/exam is all my own work. Any sources used have been referenced.

I have read the College rules regarding plagiarism in the QAH Part B Section 3 and understand that penalties will be applied accordingly if work is found not to be my own. All work uploaded is submitted via Ouriginal, whereby a text-matching report will show any similarities with other texts.

3.6 Useful links and tips

Door codes for Bow Lane are available at Reception desks.

Once registered, a learner should use the calendar in their student email account for personal timetables.

- . www.dbs.ie
- . <https://elearning.dbs.ie/> (Moodle)
- . www.mydbs.ie (student email)
- . <https://tts.dbs.ie/> for generic timetables
- . <https://library.dbs.ie/>
- . <https://lorls.dbs.ie/> (to access your reading list online)
- . <https://esource.dbs.ie/home> (repository of student and faculty research)
- . students.dbs.ie/dashboard/sccm (to log support queries or issues)

If you have any problems with your timetable or require technical support, please log a ticket at students.dbs.ie/dashboard/sccm.



Section 4 Academic Calendar

The [Academic Calendars](#) can be found on the DBS website.

It shows the term dates, as well as reading weeks, the Christmas break, and the exam session, including the repeat exams.

Section 5 DBS Regulations and Quality Assurance

The previous sections set out the structure and requirements of your programme with regard to modules, content and assessment. It is important that all learners are aware that there are College regulations, frameworks and requirements that all learners must adhere to as part of their study with us. The DBS Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH) sets out all DBS's policies relating to student matters, and this set of policies and procedures has been approved through a process with QQI. The QAH is kept under review and policies may be amended or added to address new and emerging issues.

The Quality Assurance Handbook is on the DBS Student website [here](#) and there is a link to it on every Moodle page under **Quicklinks>Academic Policies & Procedures**.

The QAH is divided into sections to signpost you through it and help to identify the areas you may need to access. A list of the sections is given below. The QAH should be your first port of call if you have a question about College regulations, or require assistance with a matter such as an appeal or complaint, for example.

QAH Table of Contents

- [A.1 Governance](#)
- [A.2 Overarching Policies](#)
- [B.1 Learner Admissions](#)
- [B.2 Learner Supports](#)
- [B.3 Learner Conduct, Appeals and Complaints](#)
- [B.4 Programme Participation](#)
- [B.5 Assessment Regulations](#)
- [B.6 Examination Boards and Award Classifications](#)
- [C.1 Learning and Teaching](#)
- [C.2 Programme Development and Review](#)
- [C.3 Transnational Collaborative and Joint Awards](#)

5.1 Key Assessment Regulations

Quality Assurance Handbook – Key Assessment & Regulations Reminders

LIMITED ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES (QAH B.5.1.3)

Students generally only have FOUR (4) opportunities to complete a module successfully
If you do not use an opportunity, and do not defer the sitting, it still counts as an attempt
Dissertation modules usually only allow TWO (2) opportunities.
Students who Exhaust their opportunities will be Withdrawn from their programme

PMCs (QAH B.4.3)

Personal or medical circumstances which impact a students' ability to complete an assignment or sit an exam.
PMCs must be submitted to your Programme Coordinator within 7 days of the deadline or exam sitting.
PMCs are not automatically approved.
PMCs require supporting evidence where available.

PMC
FORM

LEARNER
SUPPORTS

CAPPED MODULE GRADES (QAH 5.5.3)

A repeat attempt on a module incurs a capped mark of 40% on the overall module mark. The individual components may achieve the full grade, but for Transcripts and Award Calculations, a repeated module will be counted as achieving 40%.

If an Academic Impropriety finding requires a repeat, your Award will be capped at a Pass.

**Quality
Assurance
Handbook**

(2019)

LATE SUBMISSION PENALTY (QAH B.5.4)

Unless an Assignment Extension has been approved, a penalty will be applied to reduce a grade if an assignment is submitted after the deadline.
Submissions **will not be graded** if these are received more than 2 weeks after the original deadline.

ASSESSMENT EXTENSION
REQUEST FORM

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (QAH B.3.3)

Academic Impropriety (eg cheating, plagiarism, collusion, ghost-writing) are serious offences, and appropriate penalties will be applied if identified.
Students found to have committed A.I. may be subject to a Fail grade (see No Repeat for Honours) or Withdrawn from the college.
The Library has classes and support guides on Academic Referencing, Urkund, etc.

LIBRARY SUPPORT -
REFERENCING

APPEALS (QAH B.3.5)

Appeal, Verification of Results, and View Script Requests can only be submitted within 7 working days of the release of final results.
Students are advised to refer to the Appeals Policy closely before submitting an Appeal, to understand what is considered Grounds for an Appeal.
Appeals based on disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiner are not considered grounds for an appeal.
Appeals submitted without evidence, or as an incomplete request, will not be investigated and cannot be refunded.

APPEALS, VERIFICATION, VIEW SCRIPTS
POLICIES & FORMS

5.2 Programme Specific Regulations

Each year you will be appraised of specific requirements of your course when you get your personal timetable. These requirements are in relation to Personal Therapy, mandatory classes and client work. You need to read these carefully and ensure you understand the requirements. The course team will be happy to clarify any questions you may have.

Given the responsibility involved in the practice of psychotherapy it is essential that only learners assessed to be suitable for clinical practice are recommended to the Master of Arts in Psychotherapy to engage in supervised client practice regardless of their academic achievement. For this reason, the Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy as a Level 8 award at the end of the first two years of the four-year professional training, which is recognised by IAHIP, is part of the assessment of suitability. Aside from this, there is also a further interview on application to the MA programme. This is fundamental to the design of the Masters in combination with the Higher Diploma as together

they constitute four-year professional training recognised by IAHIP and in terms of maintaining standards for training and protecting learners and the public from inappropriate situations. An exit award of Higher Diploma Level 8 in Counselling & Psychotherapy Studies is available to those who pass all required modules if they do not wish to, or do not meet the requirements to progress to the Masters in Psychotherapy.

Please refer to all special regulations on the timetables that have been emailed to you by the programme coordinator. Also, please pay close attention to personal therapy requirements as per the IAHIP and our own internal requirements. If you have any questions, please contact the practicum coordinator, academic coordinator or the training coordinator for further information.

Personal Psychotherapy

Psychotherapeutic experience as a client is provided through individual psychotherapy requirements during training and through group process experience.

Personal therapy is a fundamental basis for training and subsequent practice in humanistic /integrative/psychodynamic psychotherapy. Students on the HDIP programme are required to undergo personal psychotherapy for the duration of the training. The orientation of your therapist must also be humanistic/integrative/psychodynamic and must be accredited with IACP or IAHIP, for example. Fulfilment of this requirement is assessed on the basis of receiving a form from the psychotherapist that the student has attended **a minimum of 40 hours completed as part of the Higher Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy**. The importance is that this is weekly, continuous personal therapy and **not an hours counting exercise**. Therefore, irrespective of the hours attained, no student should cease personal therapy at any point whilst attached to this training. This is monitored by the core trainers and the Practicum Coordinator. Personal therapy is an additional expense and not covered by course fees. This financial arrangement is managed by the student and their chosen and approved therapist.

Professional Suitability Interview Process:

The Feedback and Professional Suitability Interview process provides assessment through ongoing dialogue and feedback between learners, and trainers and supervisors. These interviews take place twice yearly at mid-year and end of year. This structure integrates the assessment of theory, self awareness, clinical skills, and clinical practice, and gives an opportunity for learners to receive developmental feedback on their progress.

In the 2 years of the Higher Diploma, the Feedback and Professional Suitability Interviews are conducted by the Counselling Skills I and II, Stress Response I and II trainers. Your trainers will explain this process in more detail during class. If you have any questions, please speak with them directly.

To pass these modules, students must pass all components separately: the written theoretical essays and each of the Reflective Statement/Feedback interviews. A pass in one component cannot compensate for a fail in another. Failure to pass any component will limit progression. Please note



that extensions and reassessment in the summer repeat cycle are not available for the Reflective Statement/Feedback interview assessment element of the programme.

Section 6 Supporting Student Success

One of DBS's strategic objectives is to support student success and enhance the student experience. We enable student success through high-quality services and support. The College provides academic resources, student services, engagement support and infrastructure to provide an outstanding student experience and enable strong academic outcomes. The Student Experience Team ensures that our students have the best possible College-life experience and promotes a DBS community and culture focused on their wellbeing and success. The Team has received awards to recognise their efforts.

6.1 The Learning Charter

The [DBS Learner Charter](#), which was revised in early 2022 to reflect the challenges of engagement, defines a number of DBS and learner commitments that will foster a supportive, constructive and positive learning environment for students at DBS.

Section 7 My Career

7.1 Student Careers

The DBS Careers Team is dedicated to ensuring that you are equipped with the right skills to achieve your career goals upon graduation. The Team constantly ask the following questions:

- What is a work-ready graduate?
- What skills does a work-ready graduate need to succeed?
- How can we equip our students with these skills?

During your time in DBS, you will:

- Be given the opportunity to complete a skills self-assessment quiz at various times during your journey in DBS. This will allow you to judge yourself against the skills employers are looking for in graduates, and by following the advice given improve your score throughout your time at Dublin Business School.
- Be asked to complete a number of online mini-modules which will allow you to self-improve across all of the skills employers require from graduates.
- Understand the individual Careers pathway developed for your programme, by following and fully participating in this pathway you will enhance your Career and employment prospects.
- Listen to weekly podcasts with industry influences and leaders
- Attend weekly Careers workshops which have been specifically developed to equip our students for the modern employment market
- Attend Industry events and get the opportunity to talk to recruiters directly
- Have one-to-one sessions with a Careers Coach, which can include areas such as networking, CV preparation, interview skills, job search and building a successful LinkedIn profile.
- have formal and informal opportunities to improve your scores across defined skills, knowledge and attributes that employers are looking for in Graduates.

The Careers Hub is based in Aungier Street behind reception, and the team can be contacted by [e-mail](#).

Section 8 My Student Life

8.1 Peer Mentor Programme

The DBS peer mentor programme is designed to give students across DBS the opportunity to represent and mentor students by sharing their stories and experiences of college life. Our mentors act as positive role models throughout the year to their respective groups and are sources of information, from orientation through to the end of the year. The mentors help make coming to DBS a more welcoming, less daunting experience for everyone. As well as arranging informal meetings and social events with their mentees, the team assists with any queries or concerns that new students may have. Throughout the year this team of students is supported by our Student Experience Team with whatever challenges and issues they face. This academic year we will have over 100 peer mentors divided across three areas - a programme based, regional (by nation) based, and year-based mentors. Each of our student mentors is given continuous high-quality training throughout the academic year to ensure they are fully engaged in our college experience and best prepared to support their mentees.

8.2 Class Reps

DBS was the first private college to engage with USI to train all of our class reps on the NStEP Programme. This programme was launched in 2016 by the HEA, QQI and USI, and applies the best principles of student engagement to enhance and enrich the College's interactions with our Class Reps. Early in the Academic year, your lecture will look for a nominated class rep from each class. These will then partake in NStEP training and be invited to sit on the Student Council.

8.3 Student Council

The DBS Student Council welcomes all students appointed or elected to the role of Class Representative, Peer Mentors, Sports Clubs & Society leaders and members of the Students Union. The Council acts as a platform for two-way communication between the college and the student body. Students who represent the Student Council are made aware that they are responsible for collecting feedback from the student body and notifying the college on any specific issues that arise throughout the term.

8.4 Student Entertainment

The Student Experience Team, in conjunction with our Student Union and Societies, organises a full and varied schedule of social and cultural events throughout the year. From Freshers week in September, RAG week, weekly film screenings, cultural excursions and day trips, and the Student Awards in May, there is something for everyone. We also celebrate important cultural and national events such as Holi, Chinese New Year, Eid, St Patrick's Day, 4th July and other National Holidays.

8.5 Social

College Life is about much more than just education. Through our broad range of clubs and societies, our students get to enjoy the full student experience, which extends beyond lectures and exams. The DBS Campus is Dublin City Centre, and we use all of the extra-curricular and recreational opportunities that our unique location offers. DBS recognises that clubs and societies are key to enhancing and enriching a student's experience while in college. We, therefore, encourage all of our

students to get involved. Besides doing something that they love and enjoy, they will meet new friends with similar interests, meet fellow students on different programmes, and develop as a person. Whatever the interests, there is a club or society for everyone! For Club and Society Leaders it is an opportunity for personal development and demonstrating key graduate skills to potential employees.

8.6 Societies

All Society Officers take part in a comprehensive training programme which covers areas such as leadership, event management, teamwork and conflict resolution. They feed into a strong support network, led by the Student Experience Team in partnership with Student Union Officers. On successful completion of their tenure, the leaders receive a digital badge which gives official recognition and can be displayed on their LinkedIn profile. The College has over 50 societies across different interests, activity-based, special interests, religions, International and cultural and volunteering and social.

8.7 IT Helpdesk

Support will be provided by the DBS administrative, facilities and IT support services. IT can be contacted for support by logging a ticket on Moodle.

8.8 DBS Library

Multiple supports can be accessed through the Library and Academic Hub. Multiple support classes are available. To see the range of support classes available, or to book a support class please visit the library page: <https://libcal.dbs.ie/calendar?cid=-1&t=g&d=0000-00-00&cal=-1&inc=0>

Section 9 My Health and Wellbeing

9.1 Counselling Services

DBS offers a free confidential counselling service for all students. This is provided through our counselling partners, MyMind.ie, ensuring confidentiality and a guaranteed appointment with a counsellor within 72 hours. Since COVID-19 these are all provided via on-line and video link services.

In order to access counselling please email the [Student Welfare Officer](#) who will arrange to meet with you and discuss your needs in a sympathetic and confidential manner.

9.2 Disability and Inclusion

DBS have a dedicated Disability and Inclusion Officer who works closely with other areas of the college including Faculty, the Library, and Exams to ensure that any student's special needs are catered for.

The purpose of the Disability Supports Service is to ensure that programmes and facilities are accessible to students with disabilities, long-term medical conditions, and long-term mental health conditions. The Disability Supports Service aims to provide support for these students to assist in their achievement of educational goals. Eligible students should register with the Disability Supports Service to ensure they receive the appropriate assistance during their studies.

We encourage you to register with the [Disability Supports Office](#) as early as possible in order to avail of support and accommodations. We recommend that:

- Students should contact the Disability and Inclusion Officer to make an appointment to discuss their requirements.
- Students must produce a professional assessment of their disability or medical certification of their condition.
- The Disability and Inclusion Officer will put in place the required accommodations.
- Students may liaise with the Disability and Inclusion Officer throughout their time in DBS.

All students who register with the Disability Supports Office are entitled to double the allowance and double the loan period of Library material. Students may also avail of a one-to-one session with the Information Skills Librarian on how to find, evaluate, cite and reference information.

9.3 Student Well-Being Programme

The student Calendar focuses on Health and Welfare early in the College Year, with themed weeks on Mental Well-being, Disability Awareness, and Consent, within the first five weeks of College. These weeks specifically make incoming students aware of the support that they have, both at an institutional and peer level. DBS facilitates regular student well-being and mental health workshops in conjunction with Jigsaw, The National Centre for Youth Mental Health. These are compulsory for all student officers, and club and society officers, and are open to all other students. We also run regular dyslexia workshops which are always excellently attended.

9.4 The Student Engagement and Success Unit

Dublin Business School (DBS) welcomes and supports all new entrants in their transition to third-level education. As part of this commitment, DBS has established a Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU), which aims to help all new students at DBS transition successfully into Higher Education. Starting the first year of college is a transition in everyone's life. SESU is there to help learners make this transition, so if learners are having difficulty settling into college or simply making a start in their programme, SESU is there to help.

As part of Dublin Business School's SESU, we have a number of student learning supports to offer to both new and continuing students for 2025/26. These include SESU Drop-in sessions – Tea & Talk, SESU Workshops for Numerical Skills, Academic Writing & IT Skills as well as Research skills & referencing delivered by our Award-Winning Library Team. Our Peer Mentor Programme also provides peer support across all programmes throughout the academic year.

There may be times when learners will need support and assistance with their studies or with personal issues and SESU is there to help.

SESU also keeps abreast of developments in the field of student engagement, curriculum design, policy, writing and teaching learning and assessment.



Section 10 Conclusion

We hope you have found the programme handbook helpful. If you have any queries, please contact your Academic and Training Officer (ATO) or Programme Coordinator. Their contact details can be found in Section 1 of this handbook.

Enjoy your time at DBS!