



Certificate in Couple Counselling

A course for Experienced Counsellors

Course Prospectus 2024



Validated by COSCA

Certificate in Couple Counselling

Relationships Scotland	1
What is the Certificate in Couple Counselling?	1
Course entry requirements	3
Application and selection for training	3
What does the course involve?	5
Professional requirements	6
Philosophy of the course	6
Aims of the course	7
Course content	7
Teaching methods	7
Course staff	8
Assessment	8
Attendance	9
Cost	9
Course dates for 2023	9
Equal opportunities	10
Further information	10
Details of Member Services	10-12

Relationships Scotland

Working with individuals, couples and families to build strong and inclusive communities

Relationships Scotland was formed from a merger between Relate Scotland and Family Mediation Scotland in April 2008. There are 21 Member Services throughout Scotland, offering a range of counselling, sex therapy, family mediation and child contact services.

Why train with Relationships Scotland?

We are the largest provider of couple and relationship counselling in Scotland.

- ✓ We have more than 60 years' experience of working with couples.
- ✓ We offer specialist training in couple work delivered by experienced couple counsellors.
- ✓ We offer relationship and couple counselling through a network of Member Services covering Scotland – including the islands.

What is the Certificate in Couple Counselling?

This course was developed specifically for counsellors who already hold a qualification in counselling. The Certificate in Couple Counselling (Cert CC) provides additional specialised training in counselling adult couples and working with relationships.

The course runs over 6 Modules comprising of seven weekends and two individual days spaced over a year. The venue is 18 York Place - Relationships Scotland's National Office in Edinburgh – with three training days online – on 8, 9 & 22 June. There is a clinical practice element to the course which would generally be carried out within one of our Member Services. It is for each Member Service to agree to placements, not the National Office.

The Cert CC was awarded COSCA Validation for blended delivery, a combination of in person and online (in real time), in February 2022.

How is working with couples different from working with individuals?

The Certificate in Couple Counselling is for experienced counsellors who wish to develop their skills, knowledge and practice base. Working with couples and their relationship is both similar to and different from working with individuals. Whilst the difficulties individuals and couples bring to counselling might be similar, they are played out in the counselling room quite differently.

Counsellors learn the skills of managing live conflict, complex relational dynamics, secrets, split agendas, triangulation, inclusion and exclusion, whilst caring for the relationship and the individuals within it. Not everyone feels comfortable with this kind of work. However, it is both challenging and rewarding for those who do engage in it.

What theoretical approach covers couple counselling?

Couple counselling is not a counselling discipline with a specific model of work. It is a truly integrative approach. It draws from attachment theory, object relations and systemic work. It can use elements of CBT, TA and Gestalt as well as other approaches. This course looks at the ways in which we use elements of these different models to help understand how relationships work, why people enter relationships and how these can go wrong.

What does the course cover?

The course has three strands which combine to provide a rich and varied learning experience: course work, clinical practice, and supervision.

Course work

The course runs over 6 Modules comprising of seven weekends and two individual days spaced over a year. The course uses an integrative approach to couple work exploring attachment, object relations and systems theory in relation to adult couple relationships. It explores issues that affect couples, such as: infidelity, communication, intimacy, separation, and sexual difficulties.

Clinical Practice

All students on the course are required to have a clinical practice base and to offer 100 hours counselling as part of the course requirement. Of the 100 hours, a proportion must be working with couples. Either a minimum of 75 hours is with couples and the other 25 hours can include individual clients if there is a relationship focus to the work, or the 100 hours can be made up of a minimum of 7 couple cases with at least 6 sessions per case. In either scenario individual sessions that are part of the couple case can be included in the overall case hours.

In order to meet COSCA validation requirements, up to 30% of counselling sessions on practice placements can be delivered remotely. At least 70% must be delivered in person.

The clinical practice element of the course must be completed within a year from the end of the taught part of the course, e.g. for this cohort by the end of November 2025. Casework is discussed during the course as a way of ensuring a clear link between theory and practice.

Placements

It is a requirement of the course that wherever possible the clinical practice hours are completed within a Relationships Scotland Member Service, and it is the applicant's responsibility to secure a placement. If students are unable to secure a placement within the Relationships Scotland Network, consideration

will be given to how clinical practice might be gained within an approved agency. These are usually voluntary placements. Support to secure a placement can be provided by the National Office.

Supervision

All students on the course will need to provide details of how they will have their clinical practice hours supervised. We expect that your supervisor will be someone who has experience of couple work. If your clinical placement is within a Member Service, your supervisor might be provided for you, or you will be given details of suitably qualified supervisors in your area. It is expected that you will receive supervision at the ratio of 1:6 (1 hour's supervision for every 6 hours casework)

Course entry requirements

This course is for counsellors who already have a qualification in counselling; applicants need to evidence that they have:

A Diploma in Counselling

Or

A Diploma in Psychosexual Therapy

Or

An equivalent Diploma level training in a relevant therapy – such as Art or Family Therapy

And

A minimum of 100 hours supervised practice integral to the award of any of the above diplomas.

You are required to complete an application form and provide two referees, one of which must be your current or most recent clinical supervisor.

In the situation whereby an applicant to a course does not meet the entry requirements fully and if there are good reasons for making an exception to the requirements, the Course Director will raise this with the Head of Practice initially. If the issue requires further discussion or approval, it can be brought to the Accreditation and Validation Panel (AVP).

Application and selection for training

Via internal application from a Member Service within Relationships Scotland or you can apply directly to Relationships Scotland course administration. Although it is the applicant's responsibility to secure a placement, we can help you liaise with our Member Services to find a suitable placement. Our expectation is that placements are confirmed before the course commences.

Member Services may advertise and offer placements to applicants for their clinical practice. If you intend to use this route you must contact the Member Service and they must agree to your placement before you are accepted on the course.

If a Member Service is not in a position to offer a placement, then we may consider a placement within another voluntary sector organisation with supervision provided by a supervisor on the Relationships Scotland register, who is suitably qualified and experienced in couple work. We do not accept placements within private practice.

It is expected that students on Relationships Scotland courses would not practice privately in areas that they are not yet qualified in. If a student wishes to offer services out with the Relationships Scotland network this should be discussed with the Course Director in the first instance. Issues or exceptions to this expectation can be raised with the Head of Practice, and if necessary, brought to the AVP for approval.

If an applicant to a course is already on another course with Relationships Scotland, it is expected that the Course Director for the course applied for will speak with the Course Director for the current course to establish whether taking on another course is advisable. The Course Directors may want to consider, for example:

- how far the applicant is through their current course
- whether there are any concerns about workload and capacity to complete the initial course if a subsequent course is undertaken
- whether it will be possible for the student to achieve sufficient practice hours for both courses
- the applicant's status with any outstanding assessments

If there are issues that require further discussion these can be raised with the Head of Practice in the first instance and then taken to the AVP if necessary.

Relationships Scotland Member Services

Each of Relationships Scotland's Member Services is an independent charity and as such each offers different services and may have different conditions attached to accepting students for clinical placements.

Whilst the course might ask for 100 hours clinical practice, a Member Service might ask for 200+ hours as a condition of accepting a counsellor on placement. Some Member Services will pay for a student's clinical supervision; others might require a contribution towards the costs. Some Member Services

may subsidise some of the cost of the course in return for a specified number of voluntary hours counselling.

Please check with your Member Service before applying – the contact details for all Relationships Scotland Member Services offering couple counselling are at the back of this prospectus.

Selection at Relationships Scotland

Applicants who meet the entry criteria are invited to either an in-person interview or one online via Zoom with the Course Tutors. This lasts approximately an hour and is aimed at ensuring that you meet the required entry criteria, explore your expectations and objectives for doing the course, and give you an opportunity to ask more about the Cert CC.

Criteria

Applicants are expected to meet the following selection criteria:

- A Diploma in Counselling or Psychosexual Therapy or equivalent which involved supervised practice as part of the course.
- A minimum of 100 hours supervised clinical practice.
- Appropriate timing in relation to significant life events
- Self-awareness, maturity, stability.
- Ability to form a supportive relationship.
- Ability to work with 'live' conflict.
- Ability to reflect upon life experiences.
- Acceptance of an integrative theoretical approach to practice.
- Interest in the training not based on a primary need for personal therapy.
- Ability to recognise and respect the diversity of potential clients' values, culture, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, race, disability and age.
- Readiness to confront and challenge own prejudice.
- A strong internet connection and access to a computer with a camera and good speakers.
- A confidential space to work in.

What does the course involve?

Our comprehensive training programme leads to the award of the Certificate in Couple Counselling (Cert CC). The course is part-time and has been carefully structured to give students time to assimilate the material and reflect on their development.

When the training takes place in Edinburgh students are responsible for arranging their own travel and accommodation requirements. It is worth noting that Edinburgh is a busy festival and sporting event city, and it helps to pre-book travel and accommodation where possible.

The clinical practice element, consisting of 100 hours of supervised counselling, usually takes place at a Relationships Scotland Member Service. All students will be required to pass an assessed role-play in Module 2 in order to proceed with the course and counsel couples.

Professional Requirements

Students throughout the period of the course will be expected to:

- Keep accurate and up to date case records of individual and couple client counselling.
- Keep a log of casework and attendance at supervision sessions.
- Receive supervision at the ratio of 1:6.
- Work within an ethical framework.
- It is expected that students are current members of a professional organisation (COSCA, BACP or COSRT).
- Provide evidence that they have sufficient Professional Indemnity Insurance to cover their couple work – usually provided by the Member Service.

Philosophy of the Course

The philosophy of the course is based on the following aspects:

- The importance of a balance between practical skills, theoretical input, and personal development.
- The creation of an environment in which students can achieve to the highest possible standards.
- That adult students bring with them rich experience in both skills and life knowledge which they can contribute to the whole group's learning.
- That assessment will be based on a wide range of practice, academic and experiential learning.
- A commitment to ethical practice. All students will adhere to the ethical practice of COSCA (Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland), BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy) or COSRT (College of Sexual and Relationship Therapists) or any other relevant professional organisation's ethical code. Ethical guidelines will be given to all students.
- An expectation that students will utilise research literature to inform their practice.
- A commitment to students receiving a rich matrix of teaching, directed study, self-directed study and group work.

- A commitment to experiential learning, offering students diverse opportunities for self-development and personal growth.

Aims of the course

The course aims to equip students with the specific skills, knowledge and awareness needed to work effectively as couple counsellors. The training provides an environment in which students can explore and expand their personal and professional development. The overall aim is to produce competent, empathic, reflective couple counsellors.

Course content

The course content will include the following key areas:

Module 1

- Ethical practice
- Contracting
- Attachment theory
- The application of attachment theory to adult couple relationships
- The exploration of different models of adult couple relationships

Module 2

- Risk assessment
- Couple work assessment

Module 3

- Adult sexual relationships
- Love and issues related to intimacy
- Working with anger
- Diversity and difference in adult couple relationships

Module 4

- Working with couples in connection to their systems
- Object relations and how it affects couple relationships

Module 5

- Loss
- Separation

Module 6

- Mediation
- Blended families
- Endings

The module content is underpinned by ethics and research. Each module will contain core elements of theory, practice and professional development.

Teaching Methods

The course offers a wide variety of teaching methods. It recognises that adult learners will have very different backgrounds and therefore teaching strategies are employed to accommodate the range of personal learning needs and styles brought by the participants. These may include:- theoretical input,

group discussions, skills development, role play, personal development groups, case studies, audio-taping and filming, experiential work, seminars and written work.

When the course is online, the monthly email that is usually sent to students with information about the weekend, including any required pre-reading, will also give information about what resources/materials are required for that month's teaching e.g. to have colouring pencils photographs etc. at hand.

Course Staff

Both core teaching staff are trained couple counsellors / trainers / supervisors with many years of experience of counselling and delivering training. Both are currently counselling. Both are members of appropriate professional bodies such as BACP, COSCA or COSRT, and abide by their codes of professional ethics. The ratio of staff to students will normally be 1:8.

Assessment

You will be assessed in several ways throughout your training. There will be continuous assessment in which you are encouraged to take an active role through contact with tutors, peers, and supervisors. Assessment feedback will be given throughout the course and within the two formal timetabled tutorials.

There are three elements to the formal assessment: course work, clinical hours, and supervision.

Before client work begins

- Training Agreement needs to be signed and sent in by manager and supervisors before placement can begin.
- 1,500-word essay to be completed before students begin clinical work (by the end of the second module).
- The essay should cover how the student's current practice will need to adapt to working with couples. The essay should include an assessment of the student's own level of competency and knowledge plus an awareness of gaps at this time.
- Students will be required to complete a 45-minute assessed couple role-play before being able to work with clients – course tutors will give formal feedback.

When client work begins

- Taped 4th couple session to be sent in for assessment. Feedback will be given by both tutors.

At 50 hours practice

- Students are required to submit a 500-word self-assessment on their development as a couple counsellor including skills, knowledge, awareness of self in relation to the material presented by clients – this self-assessment statement will be discussed in individual tutorials.
- A supervisor's report covering the development of the student in relation to couple work.

At 100 hours practice

- A 3,000-word critical evaluation of a 30-minute taped section of an actual couple counselling session including an exploration of the counsellor's interventions and reference to theoretical perspectives. The recorded session will need to be submitted as well as the written work.
- Final supervisor's report.
- Log of hours; clients seen; statistical information regarding who is seen and for how many sessions; presenting difficulty; focus in sessions etc.

Relationships Scotland follows COSCA's practice standards in requiring individual supervision for students at a ratio of one hour of supervision for every 6 hours of counselling.

Attendance

It is expected that students will endeavour to attend all the taught modules of the course, however a minimum of 85% attendance is required to pass the course (this equates to 14 out of the 16 days).

Cost

The fee for the course is £2,200. This includes all tuition and tutorials, handouts, and mid-morning/afternoon refreshments (when we are training in person at York Place). Students are required to pay the whole course fee even if they do not attend part of it.

Fees may be paid by instalments; please ask for a payment schedule.

Disclaimer

All courses are run subject to numbers and Relationships Scotland reserves the right to charge more than the stated fees when not doing so would render the course non-viable. Relationships Scotland reserves the right not to run the course if there are insufficient people registered to make the course viable.

Course Dates for 2024

Saturdays and Sundays: 9.30am - 4pm in person at York Place (YP) and Online via Zoom

Module 1	13 & 14 April YP
Module 2	11 & 12 May YP 8 June Online
Module 3a	9 & 22 June Online
Module 3b	7 & 8 September YP
Module 4	28 & 29 September YP
Module 5	12 & 13 October YP
Module 6	26 October YP 16 & 17 November YP

Equal Opportunities

We are an equal opportunity employer and abide by Relationships Scotland policy on Equality and Diversity.

Further Information

If you would like to speak to someone about applying for the course, please email:

Liz.Thackwray@relationships-scotland.org.uk

Relationships Scotland, 18 York Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EP

Details of Member Services

Relationships Scotland has 21 Member Services. The following offer relationship counselling: Please contact the service direct if you would like to be considered for a placement within that service. Note that not all Member Services are able to offer placements.

AVENUE (Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Moray)

Belgrave House

7 Belgrave Terrace

Aberdeen

AB25 2NR

Tel: 01224 587 571

Email: enquiries@avenuecharity.org

Relationships Scotland - Couple Counselling Argyll

Tel: 01852 300 514

Email: info@argyllcouplecounselling.org

Relationships Scotland - Couple Counselling Ayrshire

5 Miller Road

Ayr

South Ayrshire

KA7 2AX

Tel: 01292 265 270

Email: info.rscayrshire@gmail.com

Relationships Scotland Borders

P.O. Box 13753

Peebles

EH45 8ZY

Tel: 01721 724 170

Email: info@rsborders.org.uk

Relationships Scotland - Couple Counselling Central Scotland
15 Gladstone Place
Stirling
FK8 2NN
Tel: 01324 670 067
Email: info@relationships-scotlandcccs.org.uk

Relationships Scotland Dumfries & Galloway
11 Nith Avenue
Dumfries
DG1 1EF
Tel: 01387 251 245
Email: info@rsdg.org.uk

Relationships Scotland - Couple Counselling Fife
15 Tolbooth Street
Kirkcaldy
KY1 1RW
Tel: 01592 597 444
Email: miekersccf@gmail.com

Relationships Scotland – Counselling Services Glasgow
27 Sandyford Place
Sauchiehall Street
Glasgow
G3 7NG
Tel: 0141 248 5249
Email: admin@rsglasgow.org.uk

Relationships Scotland - Counselling Highland
6 View Place
Inverness
IV2 4SA
Tel: 01463 712 210
Email: manager@counsellinghighland.org

Relationships Scotland - Couple Counselling Lanarkshire
The Cottage
14 Manse Road
Motherwell
ML1 2PW
Tel: 01698 254 709
Email: rs-ccl@btconnect.com

Bright Light Relationship Counselling (Lothian)
18 York Place
Edinburgh
EH1 3EP
Tel: 0131 556 1527
Email: askus@bright-light.org.uk

Relationships Scotland Orkney
1st Floor
Kirkwall Travel Centre
West Castle Street
Kirkwall, Orkney
KW15 1GU
Tel: 01856 877 750
Email: enquiries@rsorkney.org.uk

Relationships Scotland Shetland
Market House
14 Market Street
Lerwick
Shetland
ZE1 0JP
Tel: 01595 743 859
Email: relationshipscotland@shetland.org

Relationships Scotland – Tayside & Fife
4 Dudhope Terrace
Dundee
DD3 6HG
Tel: 01382 201 343
Email: info@rstf.co.uk

Relationships Scotland - Counselling and Family Mediation Western Isles
1 Bank Street
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2XG
Tel: 01851 705 600
Email: cfmwesternisles@btconnect.com