

Ideal Content & Structure of a Science & Research Training Module

SRC Resource 4a

An ideal Science & Research module within any (Body) Psychotherapy training course should:

- (1) Provide students with an understanding of the language, constructs, terminology and basic principles of science & research, especially as it relates to the field of psychotherapy.
- (2) Develop the ability to utilise research findings and apply them so as to improve their clinical practice.
- (3) Provide an understanding of basic research design, data collection, and data analysis for research in the field of counselling and psychotherapy.
- (4) Offer opportunities to students interested in developing their actual research skills in the field of psychotherapy practice and social science research.
- (5) Offer opportunities to specialise in qualitative, reflexive and critical approaches to doing research, and develop particular expertise in practice-based research that draws directly on practitioners' own therapeutic work, on the client's experience of therapy, and in narrative, reflexive and auto-ethnographic methods.
- (6) Develop an interdisciplinary understanding of integrating concepts, practices and scholarship from counselling and psychotherapy, psychology, sociology, philosophy, education, cultural studies, health and social care, and other social sciences.
- (7) Develop interests in other areas that might include: disabilities, gender issues, sexuality, trauma, abuse, children & young people, and other specialised client group areas (refugees, prisoners, etc.).
- (8) All this with particular interest to, and appropriate science and research from, the perspective of Body Psychotherapy

Ideal Structure of a Module

Such a module should / would / could aim to provide students with a degree of understanding about basic research design, data collection and data analysis issues in basic psychotherapy & counselling research.

The module should / would / could enable students to develop their basic understanding of debates about research, evidence and practice in relation to psychotherapy & counselling and related practices. Distinctive features of this module should / would / could include:

- integration of generic social / human science and discipline-specific (Body-oriented) psychotherapy & counselling research training
- social / human science training approaches to research in (Body-oriented) psychotherapy
- close links with social / human science research concerned with somatic psychotherapy and also with relevant social / cultural issues
- close links with social / human science research concerned with health, illness and traditional and complementary medical treatment & services

Teaching and Learning Methods

Teaching and learning methods include theoretical seminar-style presentations, discussion-oriented guided peer groups and independent study. Students will need to set some time aside regularly for reading and study. All such hours of these teaching & learning methods should count towards the total. A group facilitator can support with questions to the theme, which raises the learning abilities and supports the development of the 'reflective practitioner'.

This module is especially recommended for those people without any previous knowledge or experience of science & research. Ideally, people in the training institute with experience of science and research could act as facilitators. It could be taught in the form of problem-based learning group, with a group facilitator ‘guiding’ a study group, or support from those trainees with a previous knowledge of science & research.

Formal Teaching

This covers theoretical and practice, both enhancing knowledge while encouraging its practical application. Any format could / would / should normally be used involving active participation, strong experiential elements and clear relevance to clinical practice. Teaching can be provided by local or in-house people with specialised knowledge of particular topics. Guidance on references will be provided by tutors and supervisors.

Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to help students / trainees achieve certain aims. All students /trainees are in the process of becoming body-oriented psychotherapist practitioners. The module is designed as a cooperative enterprise: the training institute provides a forum and outline for development and the student / trainee’s task is to take full advantage of this, actively contributing to their own and also to others’ learning. Techniques such as problem-based learning may be appropriate (see Resource 6).

The module should / would / could provide: some training in research language and methodology, especially in aspects of clinical practice; a critical appreciation of different approaches to research in body-oriented psychotherapy; an opportunity (if wanted) to design a research-based appreciation of key elements of clinical practice; and the ability to work across disciplinary and theoretical boundaries.

By the end of the short course, trainees should / would / could be expected to:

- Display knowledge and understanding of general research principles and methodology, and demonstrate how these may be used within their own clinical work, and in the design and completion of an independent research proposal
- Interpret and evaluate theoretical literature relevant to the provision of body-oriented psychotherapy or clinical psychotherapy services
- Use established bodies of knowledge as a basis for developing their own ideas about practice-based research
- Understand the value of an evidence-based approach to psychotherapeutic treatment, including the distinctive contributions of efficacy and effectiveness research trials to clinical practice, and the use of clinical audit, outcome studies and/or other service evaluation approaches
- Show evidence of the capacity to apply knowledge of research principles and practice; (possibly) designing an independent research project with appropriate methodology and analyses.

Assessment

Assessment (and/or self-assessment) is designed to determine whether the aims of the module have successfully been met. Assessment can be primarily through coursework, with a possible piece of writing as a conclusion / reflection; or possibly a small research design, or a small research project. Any evaluation for this course – where relevant – should / would / could take the form of a piece of writing: length about 1500-2000 words, referring to relevant literature; or included in any dissertation at the end of the psychotherapy training. Some training courses may have other learning and assessment methods, such as student presentations, creative projects, different forms of self-assessment; and/or records of web-based learning, etc.