

## Level 4 - Personal Therapy Course Requirements

1. The student is required to complete a total of 70 hours of personal therapy during the 3 years training programme, these being comprised of 16 hours and 54 hours during the Certificate and Diploma levels respectively. This means Life-Force School students who have not taken any time out during training will automatically meet the requirement to complete 16 hours of personal therapy prior to the commencement of clinical practice and will have evidence of this in the form of their Level 3 Certificate Personal Therapy Record Sheet.
2. For either Life-Force School students who have taken a year or more out from training, or for those joining the Diploma via the APL route, one of the following options regarding the course requirement to complete 16 hours **in the year preceding** the Diploma course and **prior** to the commencement of clinical practice, will be applicable:
  - a) **The Student has Completed 16 Hours of Personal Therapy in the Preceding Year**  
 These students need to provide evidence in the form of a **Letter from their Personal Therapist**. This letter should be on letter headed paper incorporating the therapist's counselling qualifications, must state a minimum of 16 sessions attended, confirm weekly attendance and that the practice was supervised. Allowances can be made for holidays and/or illness but the contract must have been for weekly sessions. The therapist must also meet Life-Force School Counsellor Requirements as detailed below.
  - b) **The Student has NOT Completed 16 hours of Personal Therapy in the Preceding Year**  
 These students are required to attend a total of 70 hours of personal therapy during the Diploma course, with 16 hours being completed **prior** to the start of clinical practice. In such circumstances the student will therefore need to commence personal therapy soon after the offer and acceptance of a place of the Diploma course.

Summary of Personal Therapy Requirements				
Training Prior to Diploma	Route onto Diploma	Evidence of 16 Hrs Personal Therapy within the last year	Diploma Course P.T Requirements	Total P.T Hrs Cert. & Dip.
Completed Certificate Level <b>in year before</b> start of Diploma	Life-Force Level 3	Personal Therapy Record Sheet – 16hrs	54	70
	APL (175hrs)	Letter from Personal Therapist – 16hrs	54	70
Completed Certificate Level <b>more than 1 year before</b> start of Diploma	Life-Force Level 3	Letter from Personal Therapist – 16hrs	54	70
		<b>OR</b> No Evidence	16 + 54	70
	APL (175hrs)	Letter from Personal Therapist – 16hrs	54	70
		<b>OR</b> No Evidence	16 + 54	70
<b>N.B. 16 hours of WEEKLY Personal Therapy must be completed prior to commencement of clinical placement.</b>				

3. All personal therapy sessions must take place at the counsellor's practice **where both parties are physically present** and must be on a **WEEKLY** basis. Sessions should only take place remotely, either by telephone or on-line, if there is a period of lock down or either party needs to self-isolate. The total number of hours required during the Diploma may be separated into 2 blocks, each being a minimum of 25 sessions. Short breaks in weekly therapy due to holidays should be part of the therapy contract, however a minimum of 8 and preferably 10 consecutive sessions must be undertaken by the student without a break in attendance.

#### 4. Counsellor Requirements

Before commencing personal therapy, it is the student's responsibility to ensure the prospective counsellor meets all the following Counsellor Requirements. As such the counsellor **must**:

- a) Be listed on the BACP Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapists or another professional counselling register which is recognised by the Professional Standards Authority.
  - b) Work within BACP guidelines and be a member of a professional body e.g., BACP, UKCP
  - c) Have a Counselling Diploma with a minimum of 450 counselling face to face tutor training hours
  - d) Have been in post-diploma qualified practice for a minimum of 2 years.
  - e) Have completed 350 supervised client hours, comprised of a minimum 100 during training and minimum 250 since qualifying, and attended a min 1.5 hrs of supervision per month during these periods of practise.
  - f) Be able to provide a theoretical orientation in line with the course i.e., a humanistic client-led approach integrating the psychodynamic model, CBT techniques or creative media.
  - g) Attend 1.5 hours supervision per month as per BACP requirements for an accredited counsellor/a counsellor working towards accreditation.
  - h) Provide the student with the name of their supervisor because the student cannot have the same supervisor themselves for their clinical practise during Level 4.
  - i) Not be a member of the School's management and teaching team.
  - j) Not be on the School's Approved Supervisor List or present student-clients to a supervisor who is part of the teaching/management team.
  - k) Confirm they are not in a therapeutic counselling relationship with another student from the same cohort and will not knowingly take on another of the student's peers as a client.
5. Before commencement of counselling sessions, or if changing counsellors, the student must email the Course Director the names of both the counsellor, and the counsellor's supervisor, so that the boundaries stated above can be checked and maintained. Should an unforeseen conflict of interest inadvertently occur, due for example to a student having taken a year out from training, which results in a counsellor seeing 2 students from the same cohort then the counsellor should discuss the situation with both student clients with a view to closing the counselling contract with one of them within 4-6 sessions.
6. Life-Force School does not have a list of counsellors and the student is free to choose their own counsellor provided they meet the Counsellor Requirements. However, it is important that the student contracts with a therapist with whom they can connect and form a solid working alliance.
7. Students can contact the LIFE-FORCE Centre BACP Accredited Counselling Service if they wish to have counselling at the Centre. Sessions can be provided by counsellors who trained with the Life-Force School but students would still need to check with the School to ensure the above boundaries are in place before commencement of personal therapy.
8. Students are required to maintain an accurate record of personal therapy sessions by adding the appointment dates of each arranged session onto a **Personal Therapy Record Sheet**. They should then add the relevant record code to evidence; the session took place and whether it was face-to-face, by telephone or online; the session was cancelled and by whom, or the therapy contract was temporarily suspended. **(Ref. Record Code Requirements)**  
This sheet needs to be signed on a termly basis by the student's counsellor to confirm all the above Counsellor Requirements have been met and the sessions listed have been attended by the student. The completed sheet must also be signed by the student's personal tutor during individual tutorials and be included in Unit 4 of the student's Professional Portfolio as written evidence of completion of this important course requirement.
9. The student needs to be aware that the 54/70 hours requirement is a minimum, and students are encouraged to be in long-term therapy for the duration of the course. Also the School reserves the right to extend this minimum hour requirement should any of the course staff consider the student would benefit from longer term therapeutic support and work.
10. **Extensions are not available for the 54/70 hours requirement of individual personal therapy.**

## **Post-Course Placement Extension**

Should a student be granted a post-course clinical placement extension in order to complete the required 100 hours of client work, it is recommended the student **continues attending weekly individual personal therapy** during the extension period and maintains their Personal Therapy Record Sheet accordingly and include this in Unit 5 of the Professional Portfolio. This recommendation must be discussed during a tutorial and will take into account the student's individual circumstances, reasons for being granted an extension and the degree of on-going personal support needed, resulting in a mutual decision agreed by both the tutor and student.