



Guidance Notes for an application for assessment of comparability of training(s) other than the Birkbeck MSc courses, for the purpose of applying for BPC registration.

Introduction

The Birkbeck Counselling Association (BCA) has agreed a process with the British Psychoanalytic Council (BPC) for appropriately qualified and experienced BCA members to register with the BPC as Psychodynamic Counsellors.

One of the agreed criteria is that applicants will normally have graduated from a Birkbeck master's level training - MSc in psychodynamic counselling and psychotherapy, or MSc in psychodynamic counselling and psychotherapy with children and adolescents. BCA members who have completed a different Birkbeck counselling/psychotherapy training and do not have a master's qualification, but have completed further training (at Birkbeck or elsewhere) may apply for their training and experience to be assessed as comparable with the Birkbeck master's level trainings.

A decision by the scrutiny committee (see below) that an applicant's total training is comparable would enable the applicant to apply for registration with the BPC as a psychodynamic counsellor. All other requirements for BPC registration (e.g. the clinical work requirement for two psychodynamically/psychoanalytically supervised year-long cases) would also need to be met. **An assessment of comparability is solely for the purpose of determining that the applicant may go on to apply for BPC registration through the BCA - it has no application or validity outside this context.**

For applicants considering applying for BPC registration on the basis of training(s) other than a Birkbeck MSc course, these guidance notes are intended to explain and help you through the process of a comparability assessment. There are separate guidance notes for the second part of the process - applying for BPC registration. Please bear in mind that the overall aim of both processes is to protect the public and maintain public confidence in the profession.

Organisation

The BCA has set up a scrutiny committee (SC), as a sub-committee of the BCA Board. It is composed of about seven members drawn from BCA and BPC. Its remit and protocols have been agreed with the BPC and its task is to assess applications and to assist applicants in meeting the criteria.

Decisions about comparability are made by the scrutiny committee on a case by case basis and will require you to provide details of your level of psychodynamic/psychoanalytic knowledge and understanding, clinical experience, professional development and duration and type of personal therapy for comparison with the level expected of a Birkbeck MSc graduate. You may find it helpful to discuss your situation informally with the chair of the scrutiny committee before making an application, and you are very welcome to do this. The chair can provide you with transcripts of the of the MSc programmes to enable you to make a comparison between your level of knowledge and understanding and that required for the MSc qualification.

Criteria

1. Training:

This must be genuinely comparable, in total, in terms of providing the knowledge and understanding of psychodynamic/psychoanalytic counselling and psychotherapy that would be



expected from a graduate of the Birkbeck MSc courses. Additional training need not necessarily be one continuous course but could be made up of smaller units of training.

Your work during training(s) must have been assessed and you will need to provide evidence of your qualification.

We will need formal, documented information (i.e. provided by the training organisation) about the teaching hours, the reading, the written work, the therapy requirements and the clinical experience associated with the training. We will also need your own submission explaining how your training is comparable with the Birkbeck MSc trainings. You may also be asked for more detailed official transcripts of course content and/or asked to fill in additional forms which provide detailed transcripts of the material covered by the Birkbeck MSc training, requiring you to state how your training has covered each element.

Informal CPD groups, and trainings with an emphasis other than clinical work with clients/patients (e.g. supervision trainings), while providing valuable experience, are unlikely to be considered as comparable because of the different emphasis.

2. Personal Therapy

This must be equivalent in total to that required by the Birkbeck master's programmes - a minimum of 3 years of once weekly (or more frequent) therapy with an appropriately qualified and experienced psychoanalytic psychotherapist. **Currently** the requirement is that the therapist should be registered with BPC, but a therapist who is registered with the psychoanalytic and Jungian section of UKCP (CPJAC), or accredited by BACP as a psychodynamic/psychoanalytic practitioner may also be acceptable*. If your therapy has consisted of more than one period, possibly with different therapists (appropriately qualified and experienced, as above) and the total time in therapy is at least 3 years, this may be acceptable. You are welcome to discuss this situation informally with the chair of the scrutiny committee before making your application.

* **From Autumn 2025**, the BPC will require all registrants to have been in therapy throughout their training with a BPC registered psychoanalytic psychotherapist or psychoanalyst, so if you apply after this time and your therapist was UKCP or BACP registered or a BPC registered psychodynamic psychotherapist or counsellor, you would not meet the equivalence criteria for BPC registration.

3. Clinical work

You must be able to supply evidence of psychodynamic/psychoanalytic clinical work equivalent to the placement requirements of the Birkbeck masters programmes. This would require a minimum of two years of seeing patients/clients weekly in a psychodynamically/psychoanalytically supervised placement.

* **From Autumn 2025**, the BPC will require all registrants to have been in supervision throughout their training with a BPC registered psychoanalytic psychotherapist or psychoanalyst, so if you apply after this time and your supervisor(s) during training were registered with UKCP or BACP, or were BPC registered psychodynamic psychotherapists or counsellors you would not meet the equivalence criteria for BPC registration.

4. Other experience



You may have other experience that could be considered relevant, such as teaching on a psychodynamic/psychoanalytic training, or publishing your psychodynamic/psychoanalytic work in an appropriate journal. Please use the additional information section of the application form to tell the scrutiny committee about this.

5. References

A reference is required for each course or training that you have completed and also for any clinical work you have done as part of your training, or have done elsewhere and wish to include in the assessment.

Confirmation of duration and frequency (not a reference) of your personal therapy is required from your therapist(s).

6. Membership of the BCA.

You are required to be a full member of the BCA before applying and must be paying your subscription by standing order or other regular payment.

There is no restriction on the membership of other professional bodies.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The application process requires you to provide information about yourself and your work, some of which may be categorised as 'special category data' for the purposes of the General Data Protection Regulation. The information you provide will be used only for the purpose of determining your application for comparability of training. It will be shared between members of the BCA/BPC scrutiny committee. Your referee(s) will also be asked to provide information about you in their reference(s). If you apply, it will be implicit that you consent to the information that you and your referee(s) provide being used in this way.

Application Process

If you would like to apply for BPC registration including an assessment of your further training as comparable to the Birkbeck masters programmes, please contact the chair of the scrutiny committee. She will arrange payment of the application fee, and will then refer you to a member of the committee who will be your application adviser as your point of contact and to help you through the process.

Your application advisor will send you the application forms for you to return electronically, together with referees' forms and guidance notes, as well as details of where to send any supporting documents that you are unable to send electronically.

BCA's application fee for the comparability assessment process and BPC registration application is payable in two instalments. The non-refundable fee for a comparability assessment is £120. If your comparability assessment is successful, a further non-refundable fee of £230 would be payable to continue with the registration application. (The total fee for both stages of the application is £350). If your comparability assessment is unsuccessful, you will not be able to continue with your application for BPC registration although the scrutiny committee will advise on what further training or experience might enable you to apply for another comparability assessment at a later date.

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You will be allocated the same application advisor throughout the entire process. The chair will inform you of the outcomes of both your comparability application and your registration application.

Nikky Sternhell
Chair, BCA/BPC Scrutiny Committee,

n.sternhell@btinternet.com