



Queen Margaret University

EDINBURGH

Programme Specification

Where appropriate outcome statements have been referenced to the appropriate Benchmarking Statement (BS)

- 1 Awarding Institution**
Queen Margaret University in collaboration with With Kids
- 2 Teaching Institution**
With Kids (modules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7)
QMU (modules 5 and 6)
- 3 Professional body accreditation**
British Association of Play Therapists (BAPT)
Professional Standards Authority
- 4 Final Award**
MSc Play Therapy
Subsidiary exit awards
PG Cert. Higher Education
PG Dipl. Therapeutic Play
(neither allows practice as Play Therapist)
- 5 Programme Title**
MSc Play Therapy
- 6 UCAS code** (or other coding system if relevant)
- 7 SCQF Level**
11
- 8 Mode of delivery and duration**
Taught and practice based. Three years part time.
- 9 Date of validation/review**
5th May 2016/ Review of Documents
13th June 2016.

10. Educational Aims of the programme

The MSc Play Therapy course is psychodynamic, non –directive and child-centred in theoretical and philosophical orientation. The MSc Play Therapy aims to educate the next generation of Play Therapists to enable them to work safely and therapeutically with complex children and families. Graduates from the programme will understand and work with the value of each individual child, the fundamental inter–relatedness of the child’s physical, emotional and social needs and the power of love and care to transform life chances.

11. Benchmark statements/professional and statutory body requirements covered by the programme

The professional body accrediting the programme is the British Association of Play Therapists (BAPT). BAPT is a member of the Professional Standards Authority. BAPT has published a list of Play Therapy core competencies which are covered by the programme:

KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

1. Knowledge of theories of child development.

Understand some of the key theories of healthy child development and Psychodynamic processes within the context of familial and social diversity; and be able to discuss these in relation to observed behaviour:

2. Knowledge of developmental psycho-pathology.

Understand the clinical needs of specific groups of children affected by disrupted development; drawing on theories of attachment, mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, disability and trauma. Understand the emergence of psycho-pathology within human development:

3. Knowledge of ecological, systems and social constructionist theories of society.

Understand how the wider systems of family, community, culture and social /government policy impact on children, young people and families and be able to integrate systems thinking and analysis into therapeutic practice with individuals

4. Knowledge of theory and practice of play therapy.

Understand the theory and practice of play therapy, including the humanistic child-centred approach. Understand models of the change process in a play therapy intervention

5. Knowledge of different models of play therapy, including integrative approaches.

Understand and integrate different models of play therapy including directive, non-directive and developmental approaches.

6. Knowledge of theories of play development and of the functions of play.

Understand theories of normal and abnormal play development, the role of play and the use of play as a therapeutic metaphor

7. Knowledge and practice of working with parents/carers.

To have the ability to articulate /translate Play Therapy practice /process and if appropriate to engage with the child’s parents /carers in the therapeutic process.

8. Knowledge of the legislation and policy context for play therapy.

Understand current legislation and policy relating to the practice of play therapy in the context of health, education and social care in the UK, both public and private sectors, including child protection and safeguarding

9. Knowledge of theories of anti-discriminatory practice in play therapy.

Understand principles of anti-discriminatory practice in relation to children, young people and their families within the context of a diverse society

10. Knowledge of contemporary research and practice

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contemporary practice and research in play therapy. Understand evidence-based practice principles.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

11. Possession of the essential personal qualities for a play therapist.

Demonstrate identified personal qualities of a play therapy practitioner to promote public protection and ethical practice.

12. Application of ethics and values in practice.

Understand ethical practice relating to play therapy to ensure protection of children, young people and families and the public. Conform to the required standards for clinical governance laid out by BAPT

13. Maintenance and effective use of clinical supervision

Use clinical supervision to promote and ensure ethical play therapy practice and the protection of the public.

Use clinical and/ or managerial supervision to review and consider own strengths and limitations; operate and practice efficiently within own levels of competence and within limitations of role.

Comply with BAPT's recommended guidelines for clinical supervision.

14. Utilisation of personal therapy and support for development

Integrate personal therapy and developmental support in an appropriate and effective manner; Demonstrate ability to be self-reflective and to integrate learning into therapeutic practice to ensure effective and ethical standards of practice and promote public safety

15. Understanding the importance of maintaining continuing professional development.

Maintain Continuing Professional Development in accordance with BAPT requirements, for promotion of high standards of play therapy practice.

16. Understand basic skills in independent business practices.

Understand the need to develop skills in relation to management of their own independent business, including effective financial management, compliance with regulations for self employment, management of personal data, procedures and policies to ensure public protection, health and safety etc.

PRACTICE SKILLS

17. Engagement and facilitation of a therapeutic relationship.

Demonstrate effective engagement and facilitation of the therapeutic relationship with clients and significant others.

18. Assessment of need.

Understand and be able to undertake assessment of the emotional, psychological and social needs of clients; and to formulate appropriate therapeutic objectives

19. Planning and contracting for play therapy practice.

Formulate clear, meaningful and appropriate therapeutic contracts, including therapeutic aims, objectives, boundaries and rules.

20. Intervention and provision of direct therapeutic services.

Intervene and provide play therapy to achieve identified therapeutic objectives; monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of play therapy interventions and adapt skills and techniques to a diverse range of children, young people and families

21. Provision of well planned therapeutic endings.

Provide planned and coherent opportunities to enable work with clients to end in a therapeutic manner.

22. Maintenance of rules and boundaries within play therapy practice.

Maintain clear professional, personal and therapeutic boundaries

23. Maintenance of confidentiality and privacy.

Maintain the confidentiality and privacy required by clients and significant others; meeting both legal and ethical standards, including Data Protection requirements.

Recognise the limitations of confidentiality in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

24. Clinical record-keeping and writing skills.

Accurately record play therapy interventions, working within the requirements of Data Protection legislation.

Communicate effectively in writing through clinical records, written assessments and reports of therapeutic progress.

25. Effective work with different client groups.

Work in an effective anti-discriminatory way with a diverse range of children, young people and families, considering the individual's identity and cultural needs.

26. Communication skills.

Communicate effectively, through non-verbal and verbal expression, with clients and significant others. Use a range of therapeutic person-centred skills, including active listening, empathic responding, questioning, paraphrasing, tracking, reflection and summarising.

27. Inter – personal communication through use of creative media.

Demonstrate and facilitate a range of verbal, non-verbal and symbolic communication using a variety of play and creative media with children, young people and families

28. Maintenance of effective inter-professional relationships.

Collaborate and communicate with other professionals; demonstrate effective inter-professional working for the benefit of children, young people and families. Work within agency policies and procedures and work effectively as part of a team around the child, young person and family.

29. Develop and manage a play room/ play therapy environment.

Take responsibility for the development and safe management of the play therapy environment/ play room, in line with Health & Safety standards. This includes selection and maintenance of play materials, risk assessment of the environment and taking appropriate steps to ensure continuing safety; ensuring privacy during sessions, preserving confidentiality in use and storage of therapeutic materials produced in sessions.

30. Effective work in different settings.

Contribute effectively to the work of organisations, demonstrate understanding of agency functions and priorities. Consider the dilemmas of integrating play therapy practice within organisational contexts. Work independently, set priorities, plan and manage own workload and organisational tasks efficiently.

31. Application of evidence based research to play therapy practice.

Identify and critically evaluate relevant current research evidence and integrate into play therapy practice.

Demonstrate that play therapy practice is informed by contemporary evidence based research. Demonstrate an understanding of research methods and the application of research methods within clinical contexts. Application of evidence based approaches in the evaluation of Play Therapy outcomes and effectiveness to assure quality of service delivery and enhance the evidence base for Play Therapy.

In addition BAPT lists personal qualities that are a pre-requisite of good practice:

Empathy

To empathise with the emotional and psychological expressions, experiences and needs of clients and significant others

Sincerity

Commitment to being sincere and genuine to self and others

Honesty

To act truthfully and with integrity towards self and others

Respect

To acknowledge and show acceptance towards other people's understanding, experiences and abilities

Ethical

To be committed to ethical practice and able to comply with the ethical code and values defined by the British Association of Play therapists;

Knowledgeable

To be able to apply knowledge, evidence and experience critically

Self – Awareness

To assess, review and consider own competencies, strengths and weaknesses as a Play Therapist

Self Responsibility

To operate and practise efficiently within own level of competencies

Congruence

To be authentic and genuine in conduct with clients and significant others

Compassion

To be emotionally warm, caring and concerned towards others

Critical Reflection

To critically reflect upon the emotional, social and psychological world of clients, significant others and the Self and to integrate reflection into practice

Commitment to professional development

To continue professional development as a play therapist in a responsible and effective manner

Commitment to personal development

To be reflexive, to integrate personal insights into future practice, to continue personal development in a responsible and effective manner

For more details: <http://www.bapt.info/play-therapy/play-therapy-core-competences/>

12. Learning Outcomes of the Programme

Upon successful completion of the programme, students will have meet the criteria detailed in the BAPT Standards of Proficiency, have experience of clinical practice and engaged with the ethos of lifelong learning as set out in QELTA (QMU, 2012). Students will be equipped with a range of clinical and research skills, which will facilitate the transferability of their knowledge to diverse contexts and settings at a UK, EU and International level. They will have the ability to demonstrate the following attributes and skills that are indicated as requirements of SCQF level 11:

In terms of **knowledge and understanding**, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of play
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theories related to the practice of Play Therapy
- Critically reflect on the relationship between theory and practice
- Critically understand a range of approaches to Play Therapy, including psychoanalytic, developmental, behavioural, humanistic and play-centred
- Integrate specific knowledge, and demonstrate critical understanding, of different psychological, psychotherapeutic, medical, social and educational theories of health, disability, disorder and disadvantage
- Articulate the specific needs of different client groups, taking into account their cultural and social contexts

- Demonstrate professional responsibility in relation to BAPT guidelines on conduct and ethics: <http://www.bapt.info/play-therapy/standards-practice-guidelines/>

In terms of **practical skills**, students will be able to:

- Use a wide range of play and media
- Develop critical understanding of the appropriate clinical application of advanced play skills and techniques
- Assess, plan, implement and evaluate an increasingly complex range of individual Play Therapy sessions
- Critically reflect on research paradigms and demonstrate informed understanding of research methodologies in relation to the production of a proposal and research project
- Demonstrate an original contribution (clinical project) to the profession that is informed with up-to-date knowledge, critical reflection and practice, that is set in the wider context of Play Therapy, sustains argument and presents conclusions
- Articulate the analysis of evidence from literature and other sources to develop best practice
- Demonstrate openness, flexibility, sensitivity, and a capacity for self-reflection
- Demonstrate personal conduct in a manner congruent with professional codes of conduct
- Be sensitive to social, cultural and economic variables as they impact on the populations with whom they work and different contexts where they work, and are able to adapt their approach accordingly
- Demonstrate safe practice through achieving a pass level of competency in each separate Practice Placement throughout the programme

In terms of **intellectual skills**, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge
- Critically analyse, evaluate and synthesise key issues which are at the forefront of developments in Play Therapy
- Critically evaluate one's own performance using insight gained through self-reflection as a means of identifying, conceptualising and further defining personal and professional learning and development needs
- Develop skills of reflection and reflexivity
- Critically review, consolidate and extend knowledge, skills, practices and thinking in Play Therapy
- Deal with complex issues and make informed judgements in different clinical situations

In terms of **transferable skills**, students will be able to:

- Communicate appropriately with children, carers and families with a variety of needs from diverse social and cultural backgrounds
- Demonstrate personal awareness and inter-relational skills, in order to build professional competence and effective working in teams
- Communicate, with a range of audiences, including peers, senior colleagues and specialists
- Confidently engage with technologies available in the pursuit of effective Play Therapy practice
- Gather and analyse knowledge and data through application of relevant enquiry methods
- Demonstrate reflexivity in relation to learning and practice to facilitate continuing professional development and lifelong learning
- Engage in autonomous learning and demonstrate initiative in professional and equivalent activities
- Apply the basic principles of accountability, responsibility and quality assurance within Play Therapy practice
- Apply knowledge in the management of time and financial, physical and human resources as it relates to practice
- Take significant responsibility for the on-going maintenance of resources
- Work with peers and engage in inter-disciplinary learning
- Demonstrate openness, integrity and tenacity
- Work collaboratively with other professionals in different contexts to achieve a quality provision for service users
- Gain deeper understanding of self and other through effective use of supervision
- Manage complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements not addressed by current professional or ethical codes of Play Therapy practice

13. Teaching and learning methods and strategies

The MSc Play Therapy teaching and learning methods and strategies aim to employ effective methods of achieving programme and module aims while encouraging flexibility and innovation in meeting student requirements. The MSc Play Therapy is built around play-centred and psychodynamic theory with experiential learning and collaborative practice at its core. Collaborative practice means that the student learning experience encompasses a variety of forms of learning/teaching selected to be appropriate to the particular subject, level and theoretical orientation of the programme. We appreciate that it is important to continue efforts to improve and develop, especially in times of change and an ever-increasing pressure on resources. We continue to use a wide range of learning and teaching formats developed as appropriate to particular modules and levels of the programmes which are commensurate with the assessment of BAPT competencies.

14. Assessment strategies

Assessment is a complex and dynamic process, which involves learning from the student's response to a particular form of assessment. As such, assessment informs teaching in a powerful manner. With this in mind, the way that assessment strategies have been planned in this programme is to:

- Ensure that the mode of assessment is appropriate for the learning outcomes
- Designing assessments which cater for different learning styles and preferences
- Assessment offers the opportunity for formative as well as summative measures
- Assessments are accompanied by comprehensive feedback which has the possibility of transferring into other learning situations
- Students have the opportunity for self assessment and peer assessment as part of their learning

A variety of formative and summative assessment methods are used to reflect the range of learning and teaching methods. The majority of the assessments are through summative coursework assignments that are consistent with the overall aims of the programme and follow the principles of adult learning. The choice of assessment methods are informed by the nature of the module and this leads to an eclectic mix of strategies including reports, essays, inter-personal group work, oral presentations, individual viva voce, practical work, reviews of literature, systematic reviews, a research proposal, project work and experiential learning on practice placement. This results in versatile learners who can negotiate different expectations. Those expectations are made clear to students within the module and at various times in the curriculum, students are invited to offer a reflective piece on the experience.

Assessment of students' performance during Practice Placement is based on BAPT competencies., at the end of each semester Practice Placement Educators submit a report to the Professional Practice Administrator, in which they have evaluated the student's level of competency in a number of areas. This report along with the Placement Portfolio including copies of all placement related documentation will be presented at the assessment interview with the Personal Academic Tutor which is conducted at mid way and at the end of each module, Increasing levels of competency are demanded as is evident from both the aims of each placement level and the text of each progressive assessment pro-forma.

The procedure for the administration of assessment follows a clear trajectory. In the summer at the end of the first academic year, the programme team meet to review the year, the

performance of students, the external examiner's reports and the staffs' own view of the success or otherwise of the modules. Any re-design of the next academic years' assessments will follow and careful attention will be taken to offer a range of assessment, to consider assessment load and pressure points in the curriculum.

The philosophy of assessment on this programme is that it should be part of personal and professional development as a move towards becoming an autonomous practitioner. Students therefore must have an opportunity to comment on the nature of this event and for that to be transparent and subsequently acted upon. This happens with individual academic tutors, the programme leader and during staff/student consultative committee work. Student representatives also undertake reviews of the academic year that are fed back to the programme leader. Learning, teaching and assessment are part of a dynamic process. Critical reflection needs to be built into the event to ensure a quality experience for learners.

The following table outlines the proposed assessment timetable across the 3 years part time study required for the MSc Play Therapy:

Formative and Summative Assessments

Level/Year	Module	Formative Assessment	Summative Assessment	Submission Date
Level 1 Year 1	Developmental, Clinical and Play Therapy Theory 1 (30 Credits)	Attendance at observation seminars. Presentation of observations. Brief will be provided.	Synopsis and analysis of observations, 2000 words. Essay 2000 words. Brief will be provided.	Formative: January and April Summative: April
	Clinical Skills, Process and Practice 1 (10 Credits)	Continuous through Clinical Supervision Mid placement assessment Placement log Evidence of personal therapy	Practice Education Passport (PEP) Review of process recordings. Practice Placement Reports. Presentation and viva End of year 1 assessment	Formative: January and April Summative: October (PEP) April
Level 1	Developmental.	Attendance at	Synopsis and	Formative:

Year 2	Clinical and Play Therapy Theory 2 (30 credits)	observation seminars. Presentation of observations. Brief will be provided.	analysis of observations, 3000 words. Essay 3000 words. Brief will be provided.	January and April Summative: April
	Clinical Skills Process and Practice 2 (10 credits)	Continuous through Clinical Supervision Mid placement assessment Placement log Evidence of personal therapy	Review of process recordings. Practice Placement Reports. Presentation and viva End of year 2 assessment	Formative: January and April Summative: April
	Research Methods PM051 (30 Credits)		4000 word research proposal in an area of research related to your clinical practice within an identified subject area.	Summative: March
Level 2 Year 3	Clinical Skills Process and Practice 3 (10 Credits)	Supervision contact hours Continuous through Clinical Supervision Mid- placement assessment 500 word personal statement Placement log Evidence of personal therapy	Review of process recordings. Practice Placement Reports. Presentation and viva End of Year 3 assessment	Formative: January Summative: April
	Clinical Project (60 Credits)	Through submission of a 500 word proposal in January and Supervision contact hours	12 -15,000 words. Clinical Project Presented as a single case study	Formative January Summative: May

15. Programme structures and features, curriculum units (modules), credits and award requirements (including any periods of placement)

The following table outlines the programme structure, features, modules, credits and award requirements across the 3 years part time study required for the MSc Play Therapy. There are 3 Play Therapy Practice Placement modules, one per academic year, with increasingly complex children and families.

Example of Academic Calendar Year - MSc Play Therapy 2016/2017

Week Beginning	Week	Academic Information	Modules
29 August 2015	52	International Student Induction (4 th September)	
5 September	1	New Student Induction to With Kids and QMU.	
12	2	SEMESTER 1 STARTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new Level 1 students outstanding PVG forms must be submitted Students begin Child and Adolescent Development including Obs studies 1 Practice Placement 1 including introduction to placement. Weeks 1 -4
19	3		
26	4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice Education Passpo
3 October 2016	5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Psychodynamic Psychotherapy must be in place
10	6	Reading week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry on at placement
17	7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 students start Practice Placement
24	8		
31	9		
7 November 2016	10		
14	11		
21	12		
28	13		
5 December 2016	14		
12	15	Assessments Semester 1 Ends - 18th December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice placement 1 assessments
19	16	With Kids and UNIVERSITY CLOSES WEDNESDAY 23rd DECEMBER 2015 No teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Placement
26	17	HOLIDAY – UNIVERSITY CLOSED No teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Placement
2 January 2017	18	TUESDAY 5th JANUARY 2017 – With Kids and UNIVERSITY OPENS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement continues
9	19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement continues
16	20	SEMESTER 2 STARTS 16th January 2017	
23	21		
30	22		
6 February 2017	23		
13	24	Reading week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement continues
20	25		
27	26		
6 March 2017	27		
13	28		
20	29		
27	30		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement 1 ends

3 April 2016	31	Easter Holiday	
10	32	Easter Holiday	
		Good Friday 14 th April 2017	
17	33	Assessments	Placement Assessments Levels 1 & 2
24	34		
1 May 2017	35	SEMESTER 2 ENDS 5 th May 2017	
8	36		
15	37		
22	38		
29	39	Exam Boards completed 2nd June 2017	
5 June 2017	40		
12	41	Results available on Student Portal from 12th June 2017	
19	42		
26	43		
3 July 2017	44	Graduation – (TBC)	
10	45		
17	46		
24	47	Re- assessments/Clearing [TBC]	
31	48	Clearing [TBC]	
7 August 2017	49		
14	50		
21	51	Reassessment results available on Student Portal from 23rd August 2017	
28	52		
4 September 2017	1	New Student Induction Week 4-8 th September 2017	
11	2	SEMESTER 1 STARTS – STANDARD PROGRAMMES	

16. Criteria for admission

With Kids in collaboration with QMU wish to recruit individuals who already possess qualities that enable them to undertake study in an appropriate manner and at the appropriate academic level. Thus the students recruited to this programme will be committed, diligent, enthusiastic and possess the skills, curiosity and drive to enhance their knowledge base. It is intended that the annual cohort to the MSc Play Therapy programme will comprise 15 part-time students who will have::

- UK Honours Degree or equivalent <http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/gr/default.htm>. It is intended that an annual cohort to the MSc Play Therapy programme will comprise of professionals with a relevant degree in a related discipline such as childhood studies, teaching, social work, educational psychology and nursing and must have a minimum of 2 years post qualifying experience working in their respective or related field.

or

- Applicants who don't possess the standard entry criteria of a relevant UK honours but have an alternative qualification and a minimum of 5 years direct work experience with children

might be considered for *recognition of prior learning (RPL) credits subject to satisfaction of the QMU RPL regulations*

- International applicants require effective writing and communication skills that demonstrate command of the English language (IELTS = 7).(although a part-time course international interest has already been expressed from New Zealand)

17. Support for students and their learning

QMU programmes normally provide the following student support:

- Personal Academic Tutors
- Personal Development Portfolios
- Student handbooks
- Access to Student Learning Services, Library and IT support
- Access to Student Services: careers, counselling, disability advice
- Representation through Student-Staff Committees

18. Quality Assurance arrangements

This programme is governed by QMU's quality assurance procedures. See the QMU website for more detail: <http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/>.