

In association with

**The Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy (ACAT)**

## **Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) Practitioner Training Course 2024**

### **CAT Practitioner Training**

Cognitive analytic therapy is a time limited psychotherapy (normally 16 to 24 sessions) which integrates theories derived from cognitive psychology, psychoanalytic psychotherapy (mainly object relations) and ideas derived from Vygotsky and Bakhtin. CAT involves developing an active collaborative therapeutic relationship with the patient and is particularly applicable to work in NHS settings with people with complex needs. CAT Practitioner Training is relevant to the needs of a diverse range of care professionals who wish to establish CAT as one of their core skills.

### **Qualification**

Following successful completion of the course trainees will be accredited to practice CAT and will be entitled to become full members of the Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy (ACAT). The course is also relevant to individuals who wish to acquire the Practitioner Training as a prelude to applying for further training as a CAT Psychotherapist and registration with the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). This involves further selection procedures and two additional years of training on completion of the Practitioner Training.

### **Course Structure**

The course is part-time over two years from September 2024 to August 2026. In-person training days with the whole training group run alongside smaller, more frequent seminar discussion groups. Tutors and the Course Director are available in between meetings. Clinical work with psychotherapy clients is completed throughout the course with trainees attending weekly group supervision.

### **Training Days**

There are ten training days each year held on Fridays and Saturdays, consisting of a combination of lectures, presentations, small groups and experiential work focusing on personal exploration and the development of CAT skills and their clinical application. These will be facilitated by course and guest trainers and take place in person at our training venue in Brighton/Hove.

### **Training Themes**

The themes covered by the course over the two years include the development of the self, the therapeutic relationship, transference and counter-transference, CAT theory (e.g. Procedural Sequence Object Relations Model, Reciprocal Role Relationships, Self States), CAT Tools and skills (Psychotherapy File, Target problems, Target Problem Procedures, written and Diagrammatic Reformulations, Goodbye letters), Assessment, CAT in context, self and society, use of time and models of change, CAT applied to specialist

settings/client groups, CAT with people presenting with risk and complexity, CAT within organisations and teams, and issues of professional practice and personal development.

### **Seminars**

These support and extend the work of the training days. Seminars consist of small groups meeting with a seminar leader who will facilitate a mixture of reflective learning, experiential work and guided reading. Some seminars will be peer led. Each module will have 12 hours of seminar meetings (ie. 36 hours per year). These are usually divided into 2, 3 or 4 hour meetings and where possible trainee preference is taken into account with days and times.

### **Tutorials**

Each trainee has the opportunity to meet with their individual tutors three times a year (once each module) to plan and evaluate their individual learning process and to access support with their written assignments.

### **Supervised Clinical Work**

Supervision typically takes place weekly for one and a half hours in groups of three trainees with an accredited CAT Supervisor. Clinical work is for a minimum of two years but usually takes longer (on average it takes three years to complete the required eight cases). Trainees remain in weekly group supervision for the duration of the taught part of the course and until course requirements are fulfilled. Trainees are normally expected to be on placement within an NHS setting. A number of clinical placements are available within Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, where supervision is provided at no charge if the trainee sees Trust patients on an honorary (no payment) basis. Placements are available at various sites within Sussex but it cannot be guaranteed that every trainee will be able to attend a nearby clinical supervision placement, so some travel may be necessary. Alternatively, trainees are able to to arrange their clinical placements in other NHS Trusts or settings. Each placement needs to be approved in advance by the Course Director as meeting all requirements of the training. Any cost incurred for this supervision outside of Sussex Partnership must be met by trainees. Clinical placements are separate from the course and hence the cost of supervision is not included in the fees for this course.

### **Clinical Work**

Trainees will be expected to work with a minimum of eight clients over a minimum of 128 supervised therapy hours, with a mix of mostly 16 and 24 session CAT therapies. Trainees should see people with a range of difficulties and demographic characteristics and would

normally complete at least four adult mental health therapies. Where the trainee works with more specialised clinical populations and where the supervisor agrees it, the remaining four cases can usually be with other clinical populations. Two cases are normally carried concurrently where possible.

### Personal Psychotherapy

Each trainee will be expected to complete a minimum of a 16 session weekly personal CAT (plus follow up) during the first year of the course. The cost of this is not included in the fees for the course.

### Written Work

Trainees complete one case study and one theory paper each year. In addition, trainees need to ensure they allow sufficient time for private study.

### Mental Health Placement

In cases where a trainee may not have sufficient experience in a mental health setting working within therapeutic boundaries, a placement will be an additional component to the course.

### Ethical Practice

Trainees will become Trainee members of ACAT and will be expected to work within ACAT's Code of Practice and Ethics for Members, as well as within their Appeals and Complaints Procedures.

### Assessment

Successful completion of the course will comprise of regular attendance at all aspects of the course (85%); satisfactory completion of case studies and written papers; completion of clinical practice requirements; satisfactory reports from trainers and supervisors; and completion of a personal therapy.

### Diversity and Inclusivity

As a therapeutic model, CAT has always been aware of the need to maintain a focus that is much wider than individual interaction and which integrates the societal and cultural context of personal difficulties. Therefore, issues of class, race, gender, sexual orientation and disability, particularly in relation to power and social exclusion, are central to the CAT model and the course will aim to address them throughout the training. The course is committed to attracting applicants from as diverse a population as possible, and applications from black and minority ethnic candidates and other minoritised groups are very much welcomed.

### Course Location

The training days are held face to face in an accessible

and comfortable training venue in Brighton & Hove. Seminars are likely to be held mainly online but may also involve some face to face meetings in Sussex. Supervision groups are available in Brighton and Crawley but may also be available at other sites where ACAT accredited supervisors are able to run supervision groups.

### Teaching Team

The core course team comprises of Dr Elisabeth Mason, Dr Robert Marx, Paul Johanson and Sara Casado. Guest speakers are likely to include Steve Potter, Mark Walker, Prof Hilary Brown, Dahlia Maslin, Sarah Marx and others. Other staff are involved as supervisors, tutors and markers. The course is committed to drawing on service user expertise in delivering the training.

### Cost

Training Fees are £3995 per annum. This includes the cost of training days, seminars, tutorials, marking and ACAT's annual registration fee for the duration of the taught part of the course. It does not include the cost of course books, personal psychotherapy and supervision (see 'Supervised Clinical Work'). SPFT staff are eligible for a £1000 p.a. discount on fees. In addition, a discretionary reduction in fees is available where funds allow to non-SPFT staff who require support with self-funding and who apply for the bursary scheme at the time of application to the course. The amount applied comes from course funds and will depend on the financial viability of the training and is unlikely to be more than 20% of the fees. The course is non-profit making and every effort will be made to avoid turning away eligible applicants on financial grounds.

### Criteria for Application

Applicants are generally current members of a recognised core profession with significant experience in a mental health or learning/intellectual disabilities setting, usually demonstrated by at least two years' post-qualification experience, and some prior experience and/or training in psychotherapy/counselling at an introductory level. Attendance at a two day CAT introductory course is helpful prior experience. Applicants without a healthcare profession may be considered if they can demonstrate evidence of equivalent experience through a mixture of elements including attendance at a CAT introductory course, supervised clinical experience, theoretical teaching gained from other counselling/psychotherapy training courses, experience of working within a mental health setting, and experience of personal psychotherapy.

### How to Apply

The Course Director is Dr Elisabeth Mason.  
For an application form or further enquiries please contact the Course Administrator, Niki Larsen-Johnson.  
Email: [pp@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:pp@spft.nhs.uk) Tel: 0300 304 0689

There is a direct train link from London Gatwick Airport to Brighton that takes less than 30 minutes and there is a direct train from London Victoria to Brighton which takes about an hour. We have increasingly taken trainees from further afield and welcome applications nationally and internationally.

**Applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible as places are limited, and date of receipt of application will be taken into account if the course is oversubscribed. A minimum number of trainees are required for the course to go ahead.**  
**Deadline for applications: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024**