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BELFAST**



DClinPsy Research



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Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Programme

Research Teaching

There are 3 modules across the three years of training:

- **Applied Research 1** (1st Year): Comprehensive overview of the main research approaches.
- **Applied Research 2** (2nd Year): Focus on practical steps for performing specific research methods.
- **Applied Research 3** (3rd Year): Emphasis on preparing and defending a doctoral dissertation.

Teaching is generally led by:

- Course team staff
- School of Psychology staff
- Guest lecturers



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What research do trainees complete?

Trainees conduct 3 pieces of research across the 3 years of the course:

- 1. A Service Related Project (SRP):** Generally an audit or service evaluation that focuses on a topic that has been identified as important by a service where the trainee is on placement.
 - This is submitted in 2nd year.
- 2. A Large Scale Research Project (LSRP):** This can be a qualitative or quantitative study conducted on a topic relevant to mental health & wellbeing and/or clinical psychology:
 - A proposal for the LSRP is submitted in 1st year.
 - The completed LSRP forms part of the thesis submitted in 3rd year.
- 3. An Extended Literature Review (ELR):** Critically evaluates and synthesises research findings relating on a topic relevant to the LSRP.
 - The ELR forms part of the thesis submitted in 3rd year.



Who supervises DClinPsy Projects?

All trainees are supervised by two QUB staff members.

Supervisors can be based in:

- Course staff team
- School of Psychology
- Other departments at QUB

Non-QUB staff (E.g., Clinical Psychology colleagues working in local trusts) can also contribute to supervision in addition to the two QUB staff.

Trainees meet with their supervisors regularly to receive support and advice for the completion of the project.



Thesis and Viva

A thesis of no more than 40,000 words is submitted in May of the final year of training.

It consists of the following three main sections:

- The Extended Literature Review prepared as a manuscript for submission to a named journal
- The Large Scale Research Project prepared as a manuscript for submission to a named journal
- Appendices

Final year trainees then take part in an oral examination of the doctoral thesis (the viva), which usually takes place in June.

The viva provides an opportunity for the trainee to respond to questions from one external examiner and one internal examiner about the work that they had conducted. It is also attended by an independent convenor who will chair the viva.



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Examples of DClinPsy Projects

- Exploring Psychological Flexibility, Self-Compassion and Team Climate in Predicting Work Stress in Palliative Care Staff
- Post Traumatic Growth Inventory: Psychometric Assessment and Path Analysis.
- Children's Hospices: Exploring the Well-being and Experiences of Staff and Parents
- Understanding the Comorbidity of Military Veteran PTSD Symptomatology and Sleep Disturbances: A Network Analysis Approach.
- Attitudes about legitimacy and referral decisions in Functional Neurological Disorder
- Experiences of mothering across contexts; a qualitative approach.



Summary



- Research teaching happens across the three years, within teaching days.
- Three pieces of research (SRP, ELR and LSRP) are conducted over the three years of training.
- The LSRP is supervised by at least two QUB staff members.
- The LSRPs can focus on a range of different topics and can utilise a variety of research methods.
- In final year, trainees submit a thesis that is examined during a viva.
- Trainees are encouraged to publish their research in peer reviewed academic journals.



Examples of Publications

Amy Walsh, Bridget Tiernan, Brent Thompson, David McCormack, Pauline Adair (2023) 'Nobody taught her how to be a mother': The lived experience of mothering without a mother. *Infant Ment Health Journal*. Jul;44(4):554-571. Epub 2023 Apr 27

Gráinne Ward, Pauline Adair, Nicola Doherty, David McCormack (2023) Bereaved mothers' experience of expressing and donating breast milk: An interpretative phenomenological study. *Maternal & Child Nutrition Journal*. Jul;19(3):e13473. Epub 2023 Mar 16

S O'Toole, C Suarez, P Adair, A McAleese, S Willis, D McCormack (2022) A Systematic Review of the Factors Associated with Post-Traumatic Growth in Parents Following Admission of Their Child to the Intensive Care Unit. *J Clin Psychol Med Settings Journal*. Sep;29(3):509-537. Epub 2022 May 8

Amy Walsh, Pauline Adair, Gráinne Ward, Bridget Tiernan, David McCormack (2023) Experiences of mothering from prison; a qualitative evidence synthesis. *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology*. 34(2):216-260. Epub 2023 Apr 26

Catalina Suarez, Pauline Adair, Nicola Doherty, David McCormack (2022) Exploring Adjustment and Parent – Infant Relations in Mothers of Premature Infants: Thematic Analysis Using a Multisensory Approach. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*. Aug;47(7):827-839. Epub 2022 Mar 14

Úna O'Boyle-Finnegan, Christopher D. Graham, Nicola Doherty, Pauline Adair (2022) Exploring the contribution of psychological flexibility processes and self-compassion to depression, anxiety and adjustment in parents of preterm infants. *Journal of Contextual Behavioural Science*. Apr;24:149-159. Epub 2022 May 7





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Questions about
DClinPsy research?

