



The British  
Psychological Society



Division of  
Clinical Psychology  
Pre-Qualification Group

# The Alternative Handbook **2018**

Postgraduate training courses  
in **Clinical Psychology**



# Contents

7	Bangor University	324	Leeds University
25	Bath University	343	Leicester University
49	Birmingham	362	Liverpool University
69	CCC	381	Manchester University
91	Cardiff University	401	Newcastle University
112	Coventry and Warwick	419	Oxford University
128	University of East London	453	Plymouth University
154	Edinburgh	475	Queens University
176	Essex University	489	Royal Holloway University
194	Exeter University	520	Sheffield University
214	Glasgow University	541	Southampton University
237	Hertfordshire University	564	Staffordshire University
261	Hull University	583	Surrey University
275	Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience	611	Teesside University
296	Lancaster University	629	Trent University
		655	UCL

**DISCLAIMER:** The opinions expressed by the trainees surveyed for the Handbook and those providing comments are theirs alone, and do not reflect the opinions of the British Psychological Society or any employee thereof. The British Psychological Society is not responsible for the accuracy of any of the information supplied by the trainees surveyed.

# Introduction

## Dear Prospective Clinical Psychologists,

Choosing which courses to apply for to undertake your professional clinical training is one of the most important decisions in your journey towards becoming a Clinical Psychologist. There are many factors which may influence this decision, all of which will shape your experiences as a Trainee Clinical Psychologist and the Clinician you will become. These include the selection procedures, the course content, location, theoretical orientations, staff research interests, placement opportunities and support structures available.

The Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP) Pre-Qualification Group represents those before training (Pre-training) and in-training (i.e. current trainees) within the DCP. Click [here](#) to go to our website to find out more information and download our most recent newsletter for further updates, events and helpful documents to download (e.g. the Understanding Formulation publications). Of recent date, two of our committee members went on to publish 'Top Tips for Child Placement' document for future and current trainees – a fantastic example of our work that is freely available online (<https://www.bps.org.uk/system/files/user-files/Division%20of%20Clinical%20Psychology/public/CYPF%20Top%20tips%20ID711%20web.pdf>). Follow us on Twitter for further updates: @DCPPreQual

We proudly present the Alternative Handbook for Postgraduate Training Courses in Clinical Psychology: 2018 Entry. In this compendium, we have asked the current trainees from across all year groups to tell us what it is like to be a trainee on these courses. These range from the application process, through to course study, their placements and the types of support available in terms of personal, professional and academic development. Overall, the information provided here aims to give you a flavour of what it is really like to be a trainee in 2016/17 at the course(s) which interest you.

Each year we strive to gain a realistic account of trainee's perspectives on the different courses and we could not do that without the time taken by current trainees to respond to our questions. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all respondents of this year's survey and thank each trainee for their input. We are sure that the comments provided will be invaluable in helping you, as aspiring Clinical Psychologists, to consider and plan your application for training. Furthermore, this publication would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our colleagues on the DCP Pre-Qualification Group Committee and the BPS staff working behind the scenes – a huge thank you to all our colleagues who have worked diligently to produce this publication.

We wish you good luck and our very best wishes for your career development.

**James Randall-James**

In-Training Co-Chair

**Alice McNamara**

Pre-Training Co-Chair

On behalf of the 2016/2017 Division of Clinical Psychology Pre-Qualification Group Committee

## How to join the Pre-Qualification Group

The Pre-Qualification Group is here to support and represent you in the pursuit of becoming a qualified clinical psychologist, ensuring your views and needs are integrated into the activities of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP).

## Membership

Membership of the Pre-Qualification Group is open to Graduate members of the Society who are either in a 'Pre-Training' role (i.e. anyone who has completed an accredited psychology degree and are in a pre-training role e.g. assistant psychologists, support workers, aspiring clinical psychologists) or are 'In-Training' (i.e. individuals who are on an accredited clinical psychology doctorate course).

## Joining the Pre-Qualification Group

The Pre-Qualification Group is part of the British Psychological Society's Division of Clinical Psychology. You automatically become a member of the Pre-Qualification Group when you join the DCP at either the General (Pre-Training) or In-Training grades at no extra cost! If you are unsure as to whether you are registered with the Pre-Qualification Group, please email [membernetworkservices@bps.org.uk](mailto:membernetworkservices@bps.org.uk) and ask to be added to our mailing list.

**For further details on joining the Division, please visit:  
[www.bps.org.uk/dcp](http://www.bps.org.uk/dcp)**

---

## Please note:

- We recommend that the Alternative Handbook be used in conjunction with information produced by the Clearing House for Postgraduate Courses in Clinical Psychology and the individual course websites.
- There are many issues to consider before applying to a Clinical Psychology course. We suggest that, as you read through this Handbook, that it may be helpful to make a list of what seem to be the most important issues for you. Courses are usually happy to be contacted by applicants who need further information and most have websites you can access.
- If you are not successful in your application this year, it may be helpful to contact the courses to request individual feedback on your application / interview. Although not all courses provide this, it is worth trying as this feedback may help maximise your chances of success in the future.
- We have generally tried to include verbatim responses where respondents have provided comments. Unfortunately, some responses have had to be removed because the content was deemed inappropriate (e.g. comments that were libellous, those that could have been considered a defamation of character, etc.) or were a repetition of information already stated (e.g. amounts for funding, areas trainees live, etc.).
- You should ensure that you take note of the number of trainees who have responded and numbers within year groups. It is also important to remember that processes may have changed since year groups started, e.g. interviews, and this may be why different views are expressed.
- All information is based on the experiences and reports of current trainees. Although the DCP Pre-Qualification Group committee endeavours to bring you up to date information, we cannot vouch for the accuracy of the data provided.
- With regards to the section on Support for trainees with disabilities, respondents used the Equality Act 2010 definition:  
'A person (P) has a disability if— (a) P has a physical or mental impairment, and (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on P's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

## Trainee response rate

University	Number of places			Total	Responses	Percentage
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3			
Bangor*	11	11	11	31	18	58
Bath*	14	14	17	45	23	51
Birmingham*	17	17	17	51	19	37
Canterbury Christ Church*	33	33	33	99	18	18
Cardiff*	17	17	15	49	19	39
Coventry and Warwick*	10	10	10	30	9	30
East Anglia	20	20	20	60	0	0
East London*	31	31	31	93	29	31
Edinburgh	10	10	10	30	25	83
Essex*	11	11	10	32	9	28
Exeter*	15	15	14	44	15	34
Glasgow*	12	12	23	47	30	64
Hertfordshire*	15	15	16	46	20	43
Hull	15	15	14	44	3	7
Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, King's College London	21	21	21	63	18	29
Lancaster*	24	24	24	72	30	42
Leeds*	16	16	16	48	15	31
Leicester*	12	12	12	36	13	36
Liverpool*	24	24	24	72	11	15
Manchester*	24	24	24	72	25	35
Newcastle*	14	14	14	42	8	19
Oxford*	16	15	15	46	46	100
Plymouth*	13	13	13	39	21	54
Queen's University, Belfast	11	11	11	33	4	12
Royal Holloway*	29	29	29	87	44	51
Sheffield*	18	18	18	54	27	50
Southampton	13	13	13	39	19	49
Staffordshire	15	15	15	45	15	33
Surrey*	29	29	29	86	30	35
Teesside*	14	14	14	42	10	24
Trent (Universities of Lincoln and Nottingham)*	16	16	16	48	25	52
University College London*	42	42	42	126	11	9

\* The number of trainees on each of these courses can be found on the Clearing House for Postgraduate Courses in Clinical Psychology website: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/chpccp/Courses.html>

# Bangor University

18 responses (58% of 31 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	39%
Year 2	50%
Year 3	11%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	11%
25 – 29 years	61%
30 – 34 years	17%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	11%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	50%
Twice	22%
3 times	28%
4 times	0%
5 times	0%
6 times	11%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	6%
MA	0%
MSc	44%
MRes	0%
Diploma	13%
Post Graduate Certificate	25%
Conversion course	6%
None	38%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	6%
1 year	0%
2 years	6%
3 years	44%
4 years	22%
5 years	11%
6+ years	11.0%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	61%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	22%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	17%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	11%
Research Assistant	28%
Voluntary Research Assistant	17%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	67%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	33%
Other	22%

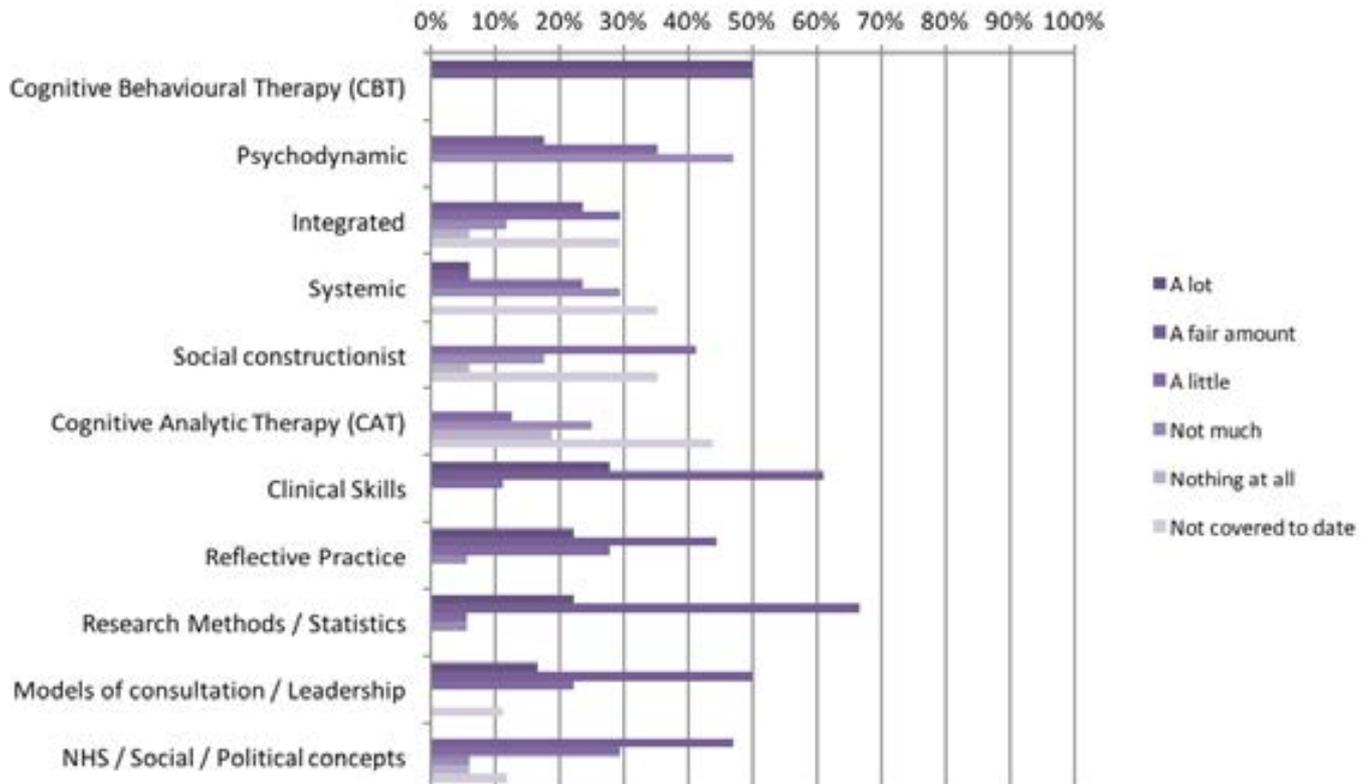
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Very well organised. Admin staff really friendly. Thoughtful - they handed out a goody bag with water and crisps which was a nice touch.
- Very supportive. The pre interview meal was very useful. The interview was about me as a person; my values were very important.
- Very supportive, and I was well looked after by staff. The course had a buffet supper the evening before which gave me the opportunity to learn more about the course and speak with current trainees, which was very helpful. I felt the process was fair. I thought the panel tried to put candidates at ease.
- The experience felt incredibly supportive and well-thought out. There is a pre-interview buffet the evening before, with a short presentation by the programme director and some trainees. The interview day itself is well-thought out - it has been designed so that you do not meet other trainees, which I found helpful as I cannot deal with others' anxieties! We have a chaperone who takes us to the different parts of the interview which for my intake was a presentation exercise, the interview and then a research exercise. Everyone was really friendly and helpful and the interview itself felt relaxed. It felt like they wanted to get to know me rather than find out how much I knew about things. The feedback process is also second to none - we find out if we do or do not have a place on the Friday of interview week which was great, and there is an opportunity for detailed feedback whether successful or not.
- I felt quite relaxed by it all, I was given plenty of information leading up to it and having the opportunity the night before to hear about the course from current trainees and clinicians who teach on the course was great. The interview process was quite laid back though still nerve wracking. You are given someone to accompany you who teaches on the course throughout the interview day, moving you from interview to stats test which was quite nice
- I could not design the interview process better than Bangor if I did it myself.
- The course was very welcoming and caring in their approach. The presentation and meal the evening before helped to put me at ease and really give me a 'flavour' of what it would be like to study at Bangor. I interviewed at three different course centres and can say that Bangor was the most relaxed, welcoming and as a result, the one I performed best in.
- The programme staff at Bangor definitely went the extra mile to ensure that all candidates had felt looked after during the interview process. The interview buffet the evening before was a positive experience and provided an opportunity to get a feel for the course by meeting staff and current trainees in a relaxed atmosphere. A member of the team chaperoned me from one part of the interview to the next, which allowed me to feel more relaxed and spend less time worrying about where I needed to be. On reflection, I think that the staff wanted to get a sense of who I was as a person and what my values were. The programme respected me and ensured that all parts of my interview happened at the scheduled time. After the interview I was provided with a goody bag!
- I found the whole process really supportive. From the pre-interview dinner to the chaperone on the day I felt that Bangor went above and beyond to make me feel as comfortable as possible. They appeared to want to get to know me as a person and this really came across during the clinical interview.
- At the end of the day it is an interview after all, but the course really do look after you throughout the entire process, they try their very best to make you feel relaxed and at ease, which was extremely helpful. The interview process was very fair and not a horrible experience at all! A very compassionate process. Supportive of interviewees and what felt like a genuine desire to see the best of candidates, and understand their strengths and values.
- Friendly and welcome process.
- Very person centred and made me feel valued. Every effort was made by my chaperone to put me at ease and make me feel comfortable.

- I felt supported and welcomed, the process is very respectful of the individual and their experience of a very stressful situation.
- It was friendly.
- It was a well-managed day where course staff functioned as your guide, helping you get from location to location and helping to manage expected anxiety.
- Friendly process. No long wait and calm environment.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



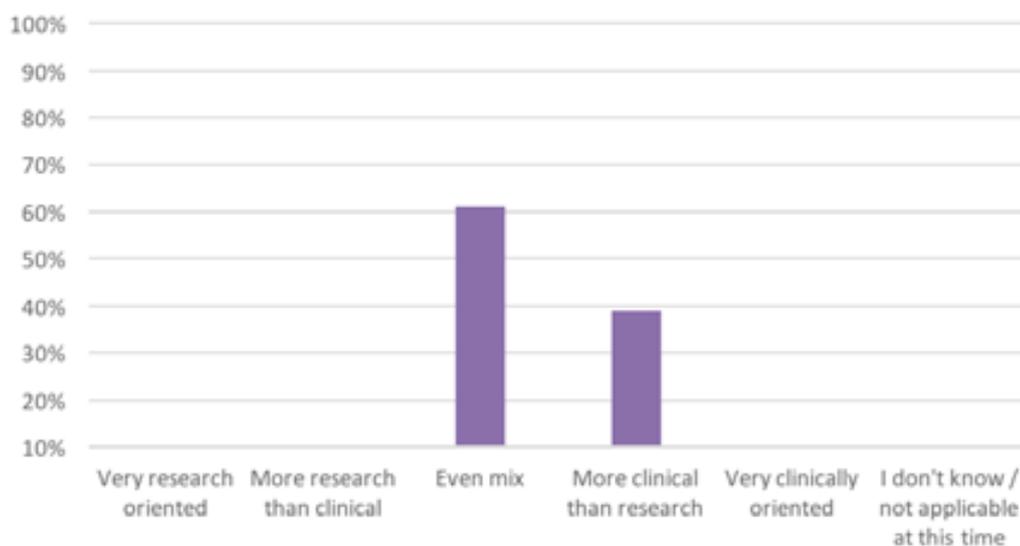
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	100%
Mindfulness	100%
Schema Therapy	56%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	100%
Solution Focused Therapy	0%
Neuropsychology	61%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	44%
Other	0%

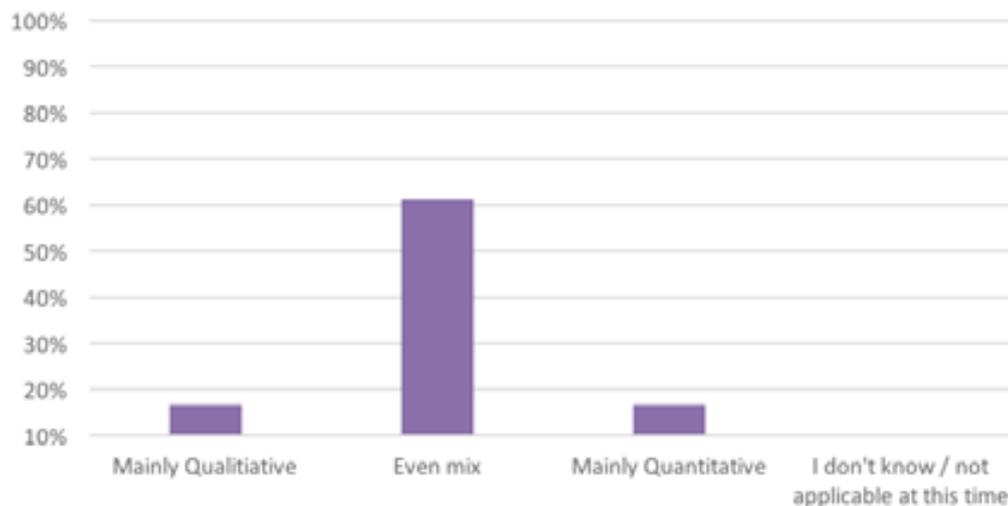
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- The course is CBT plus third wave.
- Way too much time spent on CBT for my liking, however I knew this when I applied.
- A lot of focus on CBT more recently, a big focus on DBT with Michaela Swales, and ACT.
- The CBT workshops are very practical which is a great way of developing our therapeutic skills.
- Bangor favours third wave therapies so aside from CBT a lot of time is devoted to these. An 8 week mindfulness course at the start of training was really beneficial! Other areas such as psychodynamic, systemic...etc are also covered but in less detail.
- Some scheduled teaching (psychodynamic) has been cancelled with no clear indication that it will be re-arranged.
- I feel that a lot of basic clinical skill is assumed rather than measured or taught systematically.
- The mix is broad and eclectic and designed to give a basic introduction to concepts that you may encounter on clinical placements.
- A lot of time to CBT and disorder specific teaching.
- Also good amount of time spent on DBT

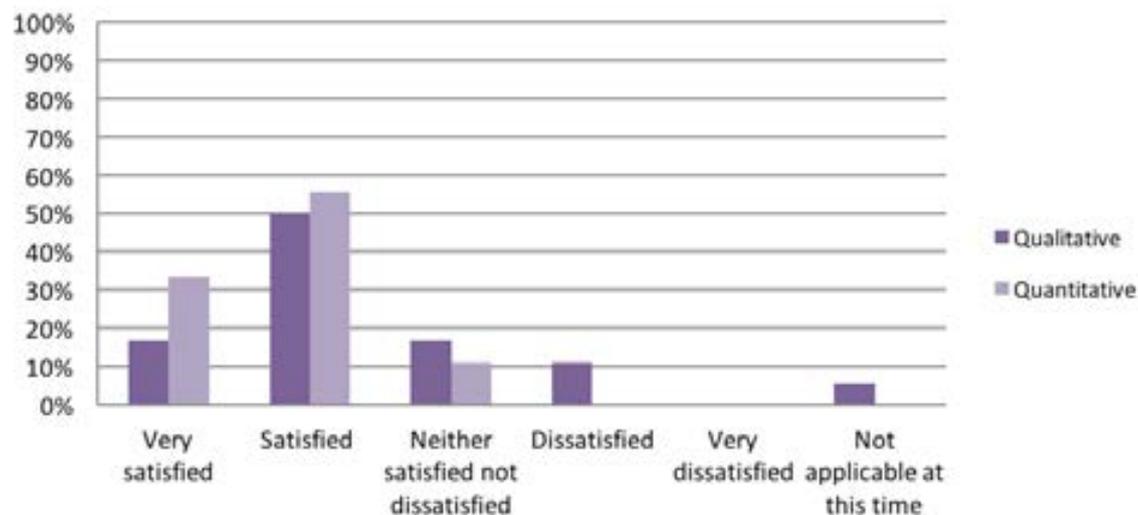
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



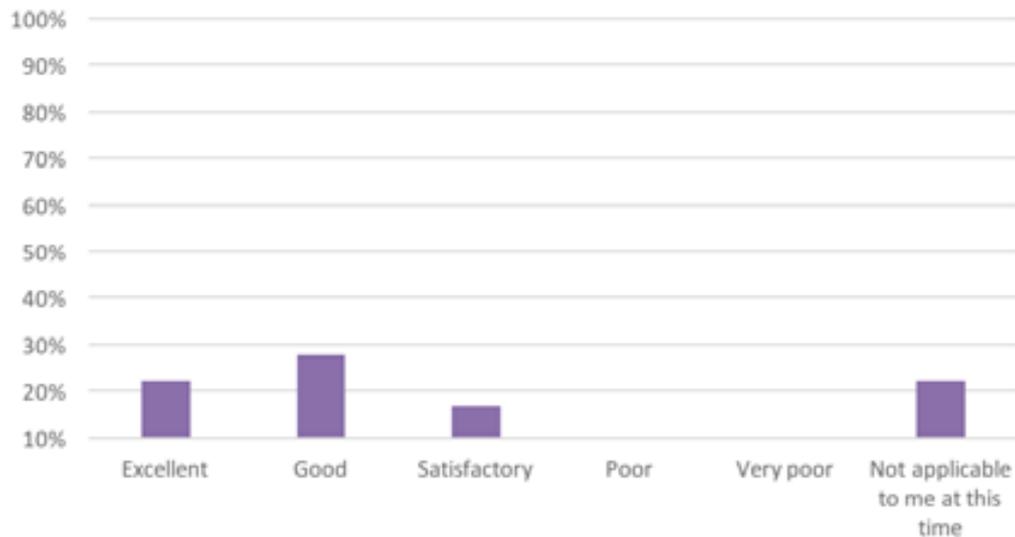
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



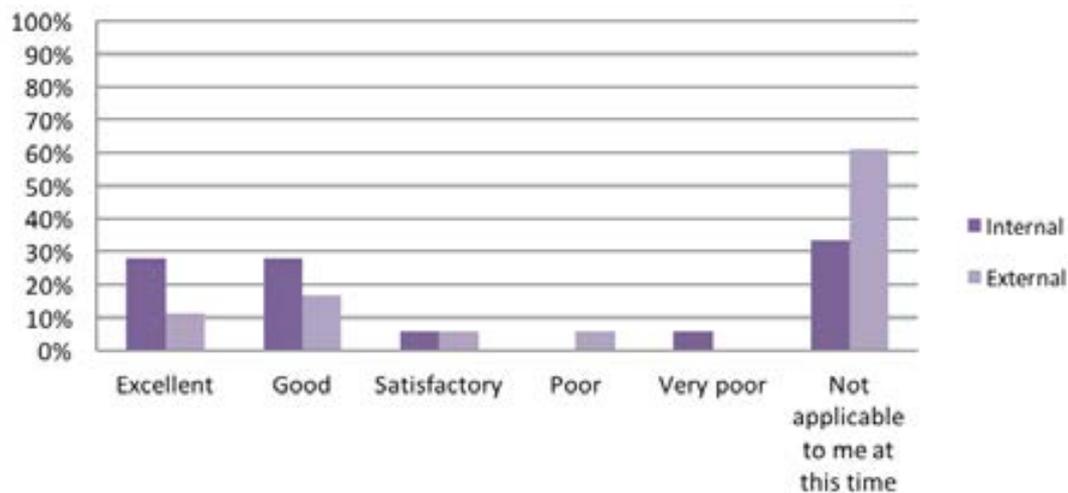
#### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Research staff are very supportive
- To date we have received one session on qualitative techniques
- You couldn't ask for more support or friendlier (& very knowledgeable) researchers (Mike & Chris)
- Statistics support could not be better.
- Due to the small size of the course, research queries are often discussed individually, which is a luxury. However this prevents acquiring wider knowledge than what is applicable to your research area. Further, the research team are more equipped to discuss intricacies of quantitative research as opposed to qualitative methodologies.

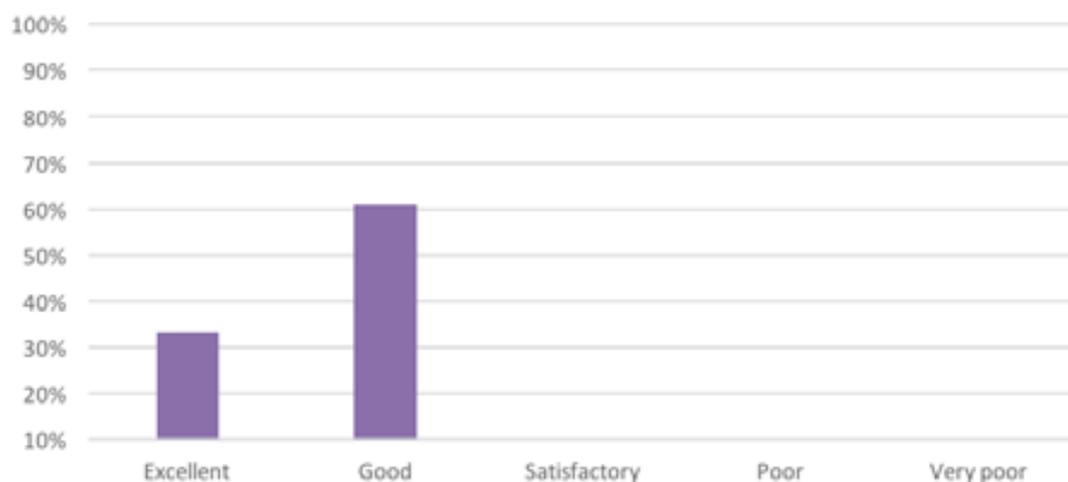
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



### What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?



### How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?



### **Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

- The course have a very active “People Panel” which are involved in teaching, selection and observations.
- A lot of teaching is provided by practitioners who really understand the challenges of working in the field
- Teaching is to a really high standard. Teaching is delivered from clinicians with expertise in the area. Trainees are asked to provide feedback on teaching. All-cohort teaching days are arranged approximately twice a year, with is a good opportunity to all get together!
- Diversity is rarely discussed and I think this could be vastly improved upon.
- Have a lot of contact with the people panel of service users which provide some excellent insight into training. All lecturers are also current clinicians so really understand the practicalities of applying knowledge to placement work.
- With a small cohort, teaching is often very interactive and tailored to questions that come up in the session. The course clearly puts a lot of effort into how they structure and conduct the teaching.
- All of the teaching has been to an exceptionally high standard so far and is mostly delivered by practicing clinicians.
- Teaching is delivered by local clinicians. Quality is very variable, a number of sessions are 3 hours of PowerPoint presentation covering out of date research.
- DBT teaching is excellent.
- Teaching is largely provided by local clinicians
- More teaching on diversity and social constructionism/ critical approaches would be valued.
- Good teaching from local clinicians.

## **Support for trainees with disabilities**

### **Do you have any disabilities?**

0% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## **Demands of the course and support systems**

### **Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?**

- Course is what you make of it. There is enough time to get your work done and have a life if you use your time wisely.
- Going through the ethical approval process was probably the most demanding aspect of the course so far (mainly because it was new to me) - but this isn't unique to Bangor!
- Juggling multiple demands, however this is the nature of the course and is to be expected.
- Getting used to balancing university work and placement has been stressful but we do get a day a week paid study leave. The distances to and from placement can be quite far, but they do try to give people placements closer to their home address.

- The standards of the course are high and like with any postgraduate training, it requires significant amounts of effort. The course however are very good at making themselves available to help you achieve your best. Yes, it's demanding, but I wouldn't imagine any more/less than other course centres.
- I have found the commute to Bangor for teaching days particularly tiring! This requires me to stay over in hotels on some occasions.
- Balancing the academic assignments with placements and additionally thinking about research has been quite a challenge to get used to and my time management skills have had to improve overnight! However the course are very supportive and will go out of their way to help any way they can.
- Returning to academic work was slightly challenging.
- First placement experience was particularly challenging. On reflection I didn't feel prepared enough for the demands of my first placement and how to approach supervision.
- Managing a steep learning curve in the face of several personal difficulties in the first 12 months. Transferring from a strong research background to purely clinical work.
- There can be a lot of travel.
- One of my placements was far away and in quite an isolating environment which made it hard.

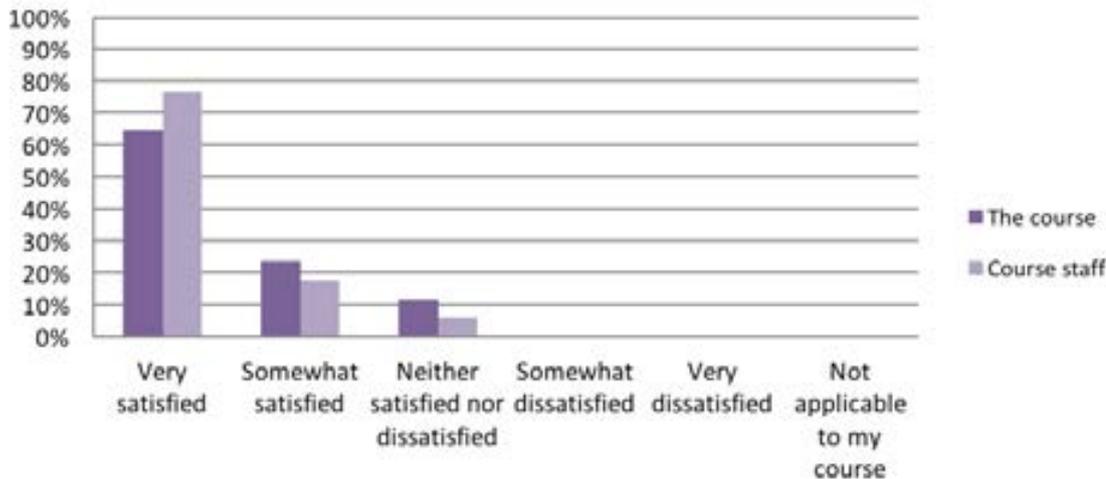
#### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	94%
"Buddy"	61%
Manager	50%
Placement Supervisor	94%
Librarian	17%
Professional Mentor	0%
Personal Tutor	94%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	83%
Independent personal advisor	11%
Other	50%

#### Under "Other", responses included:

- Bangor provides 24 therapy vouchers to all DClinpsy students.
- Personal therapy vouchers (x3)
- Training Co-ordinator (x3)
- You get 30 sessions of access to therapy for yourself if you want it.
- The People Panel have also offered their support when trainees have experienced difficulty in their clinical work.
- Personal development scheme (counselling vouchers)
- Therapist

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

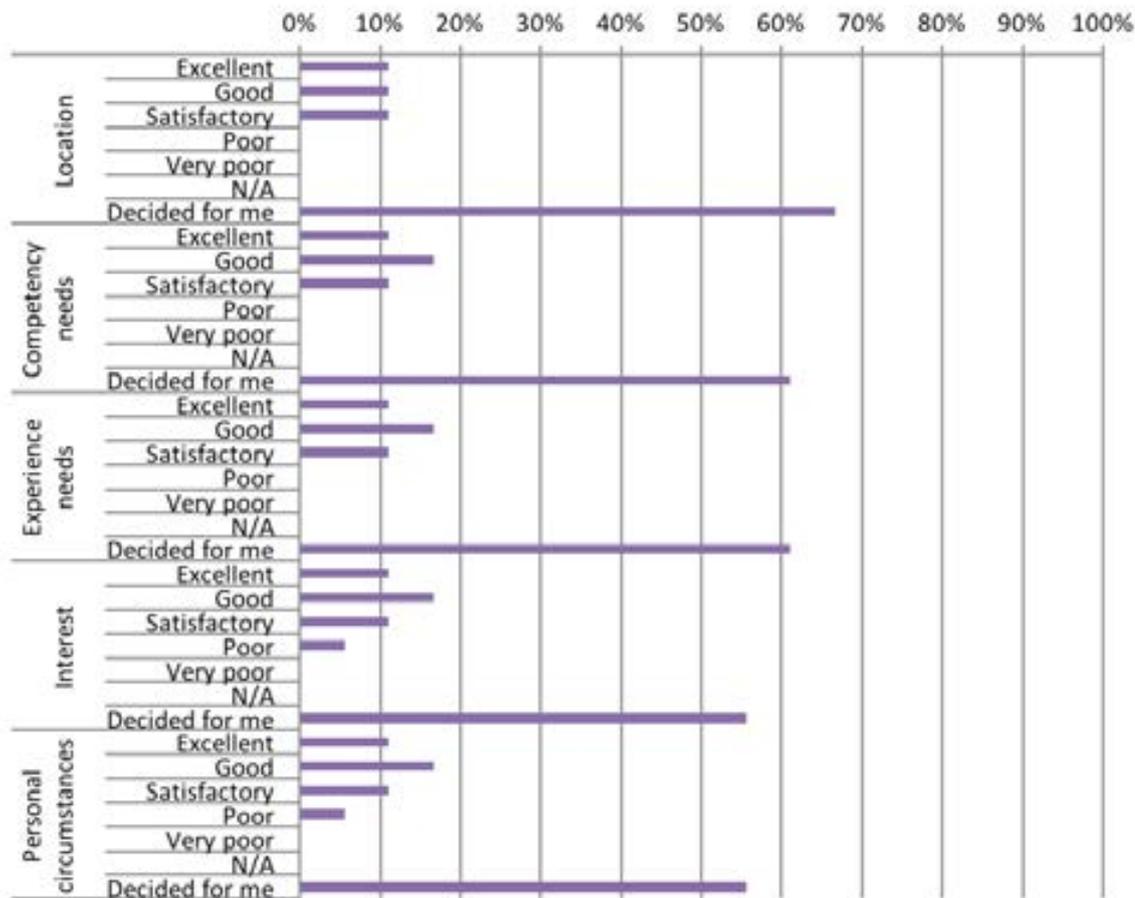


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

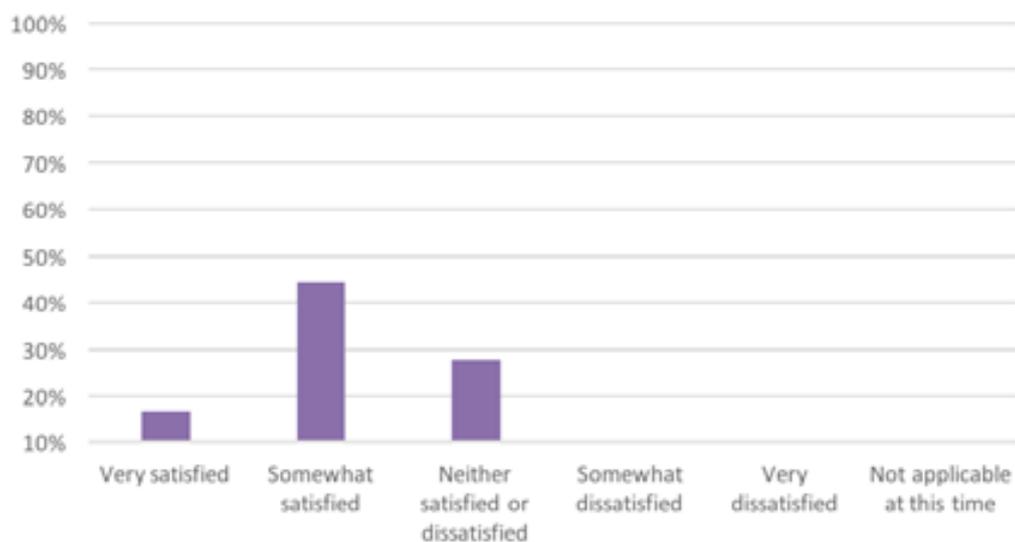
- There is a strong sense of support between trainees from across cohorts
- The support I have received from my Training Co-ordinator has been exceptional.
- I have not encountered any particular difficulties so far, but am aware of the many options I have available to me when I do. I think the therapy vouchers we are given (15 or 25) at the beginning of training are an excellent opportunity and method of support.
- The support I have received from placement supervisors and my training coordinator has been excellent. We also have therapy vouchers to use throughout our training, which I will definitely be using at some point.
- I cannot stress the support that Bangor provide. As we are a small cohort and a small programme team, there is a very friendly and you feel that everyone is on your side. We are also entitled to therapy vouchers which over our training allows us to access up to 12 therapy sessions with local clinicians. These are not limited to problems that arise on the course and can be used for personal matters.
- Very attentive and supportive. Flexible in times of crisis.
- My training coordinator has been very supportive through this process
- Very good, very individualised and thinking about my own training needs and interests.

## Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



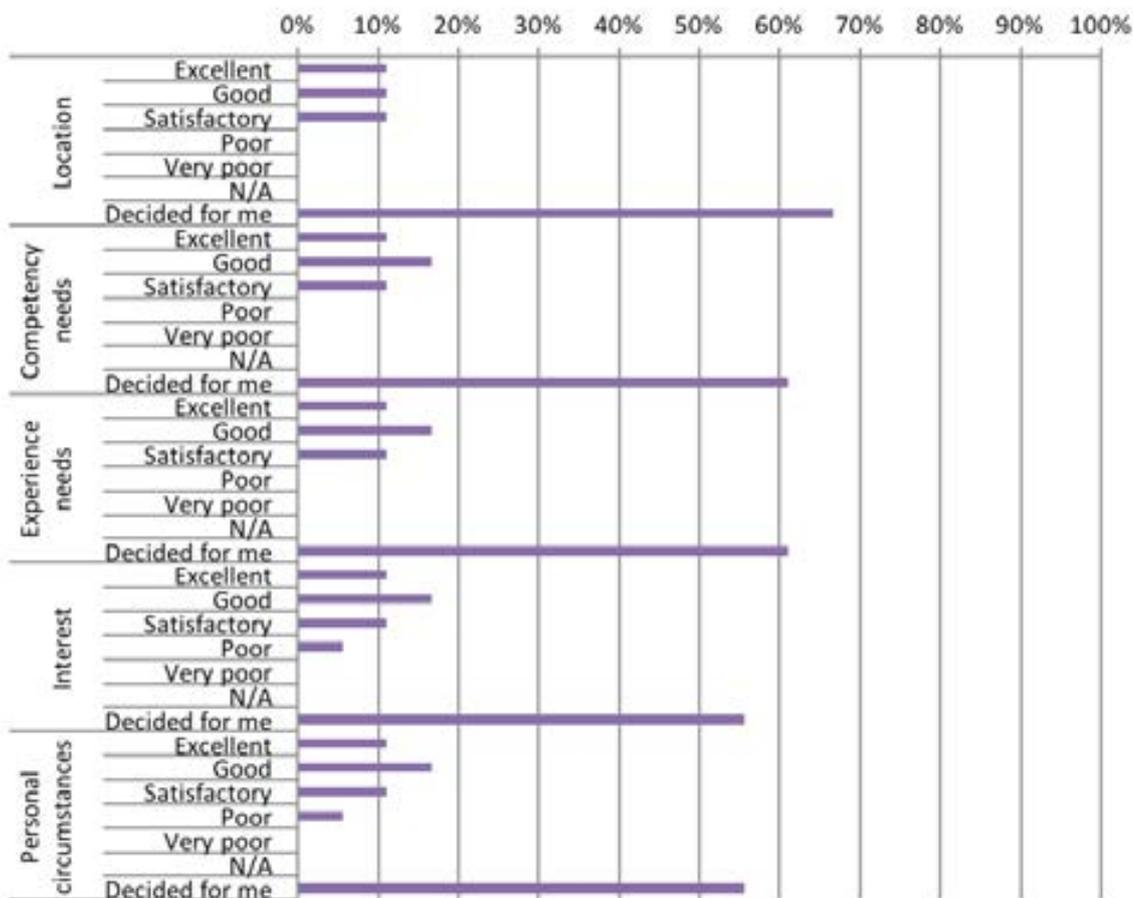
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- No course could ever prepare you a 100%.
- Teaching and placements are split, so unfortunately teaching that would have been helpful for my current placement are being taught when it's finished. Given that the cohort is so small I find this surprising.
- A 5 week teaching block helps prepare trainees for their first placement.
- Due to the large area that Bangor covers, we are prepared in that we may have a long commute or have to stay over during placements. The course however cover all mileage and accommodation costs and do their best to place you as close to home as they can.
- Relevant teaching is often delivered after placements have already taken place.
- More discussion around problem solving on placement and approaching difficult supervisory relationships. More support put in place at first instance when it had been identified that there are problems on placement.
- Placements are decided for you with no negotiation except in exceptional circumstances.
- Different placements have different teaching styles. I personally found CAMHS and LD to be more helpful in preparing me for placement than AMH. There has been no teaching related to my specialist placement interest.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Really enjoyed my ID and Older Adult placements.
- Like many areas in the NHS there are challenges. However, as a Clinical Psychology Trainee I feel strongly that we are in a very fortunate position
- Wales still uses paper notes in some areas which is a shock when I have previously used electronic systems in other places, though this is being updated across the region.
- I have just completed my first placement. I had the utmost support along the way and my experience has been fantastic. The amount learned and opportunities for clinical activity were excellent. I am aware that other trainees in the same cohort have had significantly different experiences to one another and therefore applicants should be cautious in using this data to choose between course centres.
- The course appear to have taken into consideration where people live when allocating placements, and personal circumstances.
- Difficulties within teams has made it hard to engage in multidisciplinary work in my placement.
- Placement experience is largely dependent on supervisory relationships. A difficult relationship can be a test of a trainee's resilience and interpersonal effectiveness, but six months can feel like a long time if things are difficult.
- Given the area, there are few supervisors in certain specialisms. Willingness to supervise therefore seems to be the most important criteria in the course's selection of supervisors.
- I had a difficult experience with my supervisor on placement and felt inadequately equipped to approach it.
- The quality varies across placement, some have been excellent and others poor in each regard - as is typical in any training course.
- I have enjoyed all 5 of my placements. There is no scope for placements abroad within this course.
- Supervisors in the whole very good with some exceptions.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	89%
No	0%
Don't know	6%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	89%
No	0%
Don't know	6%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Bangor, Colwyn Bay, Anglesey and Chester.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	44%
No	50%
Don't know	6%

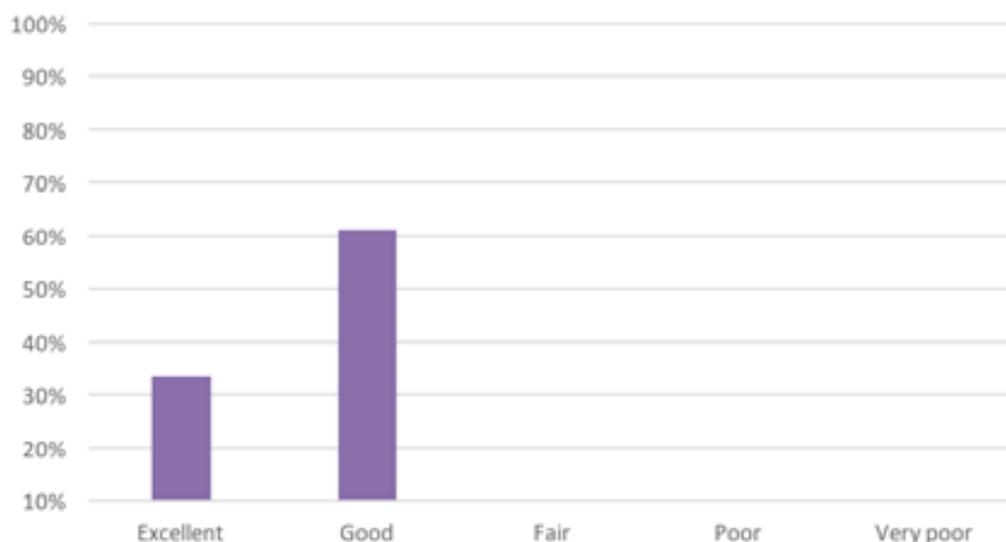
### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	44%
Fair	56%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

#### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- Use your study days wisely.
- It can be challenging but it is a Doctoral level course.
- There is a sufficient amount of study time to allow you to maintaining a good work life balance.
- This is very subjective - if you are strict with your working hours (including study days) you may be able to get everything done during 9-5, Mon-Fri hours. This hasn't been my experience but is my personal choice and is not reflective of the course.
- Juggling university work and placement work (especially when you haven't worked with a particular clientele or service previously) can be difficult.
- Maintaining a good work life balance requires much organisation and setting boundaries. It can be difficult, but I quite quickly recognised the importance of this during my first placement where I had a large commute.
- I feel at times I do not have enough time to spend reading about topics in preparation for choices on assignments, research etc.
- The course only has coursework components - no exams - which works well for me.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Although I took a substantial drop in salary it is excellent for the role I have as a trainee.
- I am being paid an excellent amount to be a trainee and feel incredibly lucky and privileged.
- Petrol and hotels for academic block teaching/placement can be a big up front expenditure but the course are good at getting the money back to you.
- Cost of living is very good. The training salary is above the regional average in North Wales.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Choosing 3rd year placements.
- Very supportive cohort and training team.
- The supportive environment and the opportunities in third wave therapies.
- My cohort are an incredible source of support. I love that it is such a small cohort as it means we have become close very quickly, and each teaching session is more interactive and personal due to the size. The course itself has been well thought out and there is a lot of support available if needed. The surrounding area is also beautiful which helps on long commutes! Definitely a great place to study.
- It's a small cohort so you form good relationships quickly in your own year, and across other academic years. There is also a lot of support for you if you need it. North Wales has stunning coast lines and picturesque scenery. Your lecturers can also be your colleagues so understand the practicalities of working in the area.
- The small cohort, meaning you know the other trainees well and feel more supported by the course team.
- Its focus on clinical activity, third wave therapies and its excellence in research.
- I am really enjoying working so closely with a small but very supportive cohort (10 of us), who have all become great friends! This has definitely helped me manage the demands of the course better.
- The course is very well organised.
- The friendly atmosphere of the course, the placement and research opportunities and the beautiful scenery.
- Clinical work. Have loved all my placements- even the ones in areas which I know I won't be drawn

to work in after qualifying.

- Location.
- I have really enjoyed all clinical placements including the range of models experienced and supervision.
- The support provided by the training coordinator.
- The access to PPD.
- The broad variety of clinical specialism/experience of the programme team.
- The structure and balance of teaching and clinical commitments.
- Bonding with the other trainees
- clinical time
- Small cohort
- Location is beautiful
- 3rd wave focus
- Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?
- The Health Board calculates expenses using the three main district hospitals as bases, so consider this when thinking about where to live.
- I think it is an excellent course that expects high standards but in turn offers a great deal of support.
- It's a great course, especially if you are interested in CBT and third wave therapies. If you prefer a more critical/reflective stance this course would probably not suit you.
- Have a reliable vehicle. Be prepared to write paper notes if you aren't already, and don't expect Wi-Fi everywhere.
- Be prepared for potential travelling if you come to Bangor.
- None
- While it is difficult to do the course while living in England, some do manage it! You have to like time in your car though!

## Course survey results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Tests, interview, role-play and group task.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	1 day a week
Placement	3 days a week
Personal Study	1 day a week
Research	Combined with personal study

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# Bath University

23 responses (51% of 45 trainees)

## About the trainee

**What is your current year of training?**

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	52%
Year 2	17%
Year 3	30%

**What was your age when you started training?**

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	13%
25 – 29 years	57%
30 – 34 years	17%
35 – 39 years	9%
40 – 44 years	4%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

**How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?**

Attempts	Percent
Once	26%
Twice	39%
3 times	26%
4 times	9%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	4%
MA	9%
MSc	61%
MRes	0%
Diploma	9%
Post Graduate Certificate	13%
Conversion course	17%
None	26%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	4%
2 years	26%
3 years	26%
4 years	17%
5 years	13%
6+ years	13%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	48%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	22%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	61%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	4%
Research Assistant	39%
Voluntary Research Assistant	26%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	52%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	13%
Other	26%

## The selection process

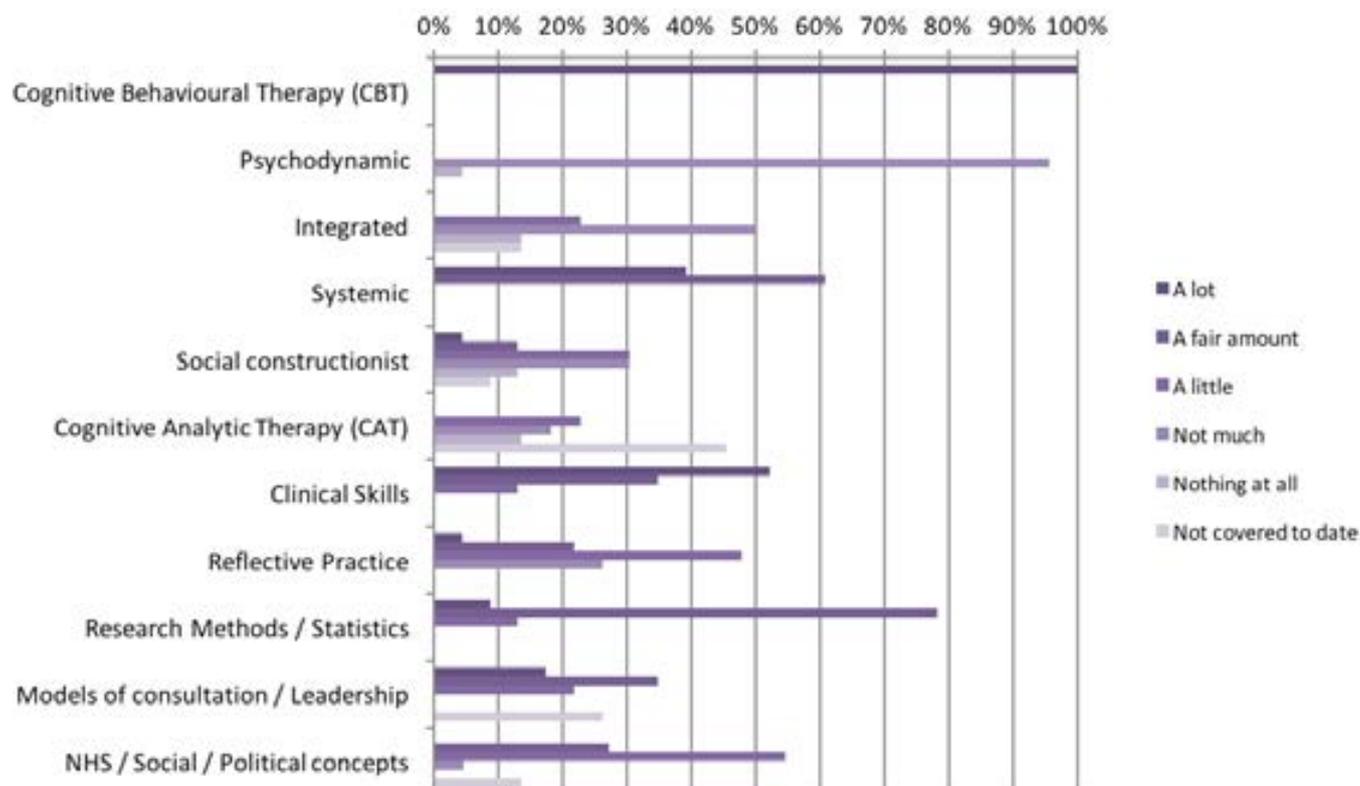
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- It was a very positive experience. I was surprised how relaxed and enjoyable the day was. The staff were exceptionally friendly and welcoming, the Course Director was selling the course to us rather than the other way round. The existing trainees who helped out on the day were friendly and good fun.
- I found the interview day very welcoming. Although it was a long day we were assigned trainee 'buddies' who chatted to us and helped put us at ease. The style of the interview really suited me, with the questions given typed as well which was helpful to refer back to. I found the lunchtime talk engaging, particularly the part by PPE, and it felt like a more two-way process than other courses, with the course giving reasons why we should choose them and not just the other way around. They provided lunch and parking permits, which sound like little things but were one less thing to worry about.
- The staff made me feel very comfortable and certain aspects (having questions verbally asked and provided on paper) took the pressure off. It was clear that staff wanted to get the best out of me, and this was shown by clarifying questions/giving prompts. Although the interview day was long, there was a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, helped by trainee buddies on the day and a provided lunch. I had a great chat with a PPE which made me really want to go to Bath as I saw they were putting PPE at the centre of their approach to teaching.
- Really friendly and tried to get the best out of you and an opportunity to find out more about the course. Having the questions written down is really helpful.
- Can't remember a lot of it due to nerves. Very friendly. Bath assign buddies who are current trainees - it's a good way to meet other interviewees, ask the trainees about their experience of the course. Presentation at the lunch break about the course, really sold the course to me.
- Supportive and encouraging
- It was very positive, the course staff were very encouraging and sensitive to the pressures of being interviewed. It was helpful to have a buddy from current trainees during the day and have a presentation from staff and trainees at lunch time! It gave a real flavour for the course and its philosophy so it felt like making an informed choice.
- It was positive -well organised - really friendly trainees.
- I was incredibly nervous but the interview day was kept as relaxed as possible which made it easier. Both interview panels were friendly and encouraging. We also had current trainees who were there to look after us on the day which really helped.
- Gruelling and long, but gave me a good sense of the University and a good way to network. Staff and support staff and current trainees were very helpful.
- Very good. I particularly liked it that Bath had questions written down for you during the interview so you didn't have to keep worrying about asking what the question was, or remember 3 different aspects of a large question. It reduced my anxiety. The panels also seemed encouraging and like they wanted you do well and get the best out of you which I think is important.
- The day was actually quite enjoyable, everyone was really friendly and welcoming. it felt like a supportive environment and it didn't feel like they were trying to catch you out.
- Much better than I had expected, it was actually quite an enjoyable day.
- The interview process felt very friendly and supportive. I felt like they were trying to get the best out of us and it was really encouraging to have buddies from the current trainees to talk us through the day.
- I found the interview process exhausting although all of the staff were extremely friendly and supportive. The buddy system with students on the course was also really helpful.

- I really enjoyed the interview day for Bath. I thought all three parts of the interview were fair, and allowed you to give your best. It didn't feel like they were trying to trip us up, but it was challenging. The lunch provided was good, and having trainees who were around to speak with and with whom you could ask questions, was helpful.
- The interview day felt long but actually quite enjoyable. It was good to get the pen-and-paper clinical task out of the way first. The two interview panels were quite a while apart which was good for time to recover/prepare but made for a tiring day. It was nice to be interviewed by two different panels and with a different focus in each, and the interviewers themselves were encouraging. The presentations on the day were great for getting a feel for the course and its ethos, and having trainees from other years helping out and acting as buddies meant it was a great chance to ask them about 'real life' on the course and get a tour of the campus.
- Although interviews are naturally anxiety provoking, I felt the whole day was as well set up as it could be. Enough information beforehand, a buddy who you could ask questions to and who supported you to the panels, and friendly staff who appeared to genuinely want to get the best out of you.
- It was really positive. The buddies on the day were very helpful and helped to put you at ease. I liked having a talk from the course director over the lunch and having the opportunity to take a tour. However, my interviews were at the very beginning and end of the day so there was some nail-biting in between!
- Interviews are always nerve wracking but I felt like they tried to ease the anxiety as much as possible
- I enjoyed the interview day and I was made to feel welcome. It was helpful that the course director and some trainees made time to talk to us.
- Very organised and friendly, felt like they wanted me to do my best. I was allowed to go back to questions and add more information which was helpful.
- The interviewers at Bath were really supportive. It felt as if they were trying to get the best answers out of me and I didn't feel like anyone was trying to catch me out. All interviewees were supported by current trainees who were very friendly and had lots of good things to say about the course. My buddy showed me and a few other interviewees round the campus and took us for coffee between interviews. Even though I was nervous, overall it felt like a very positive experience.

## Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



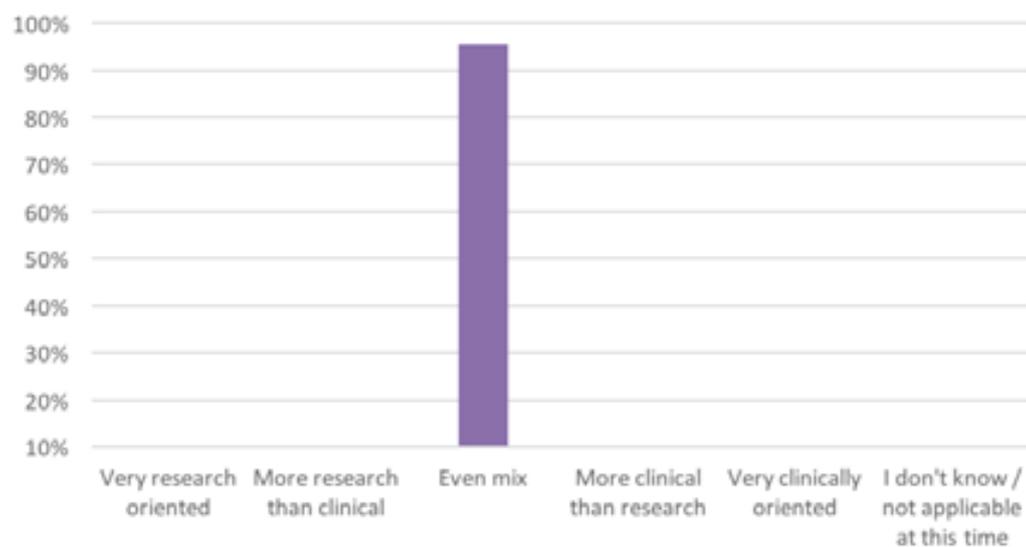
What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	52%
Mindfulness	96%
Schema Therapy	30%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	70%
Solution Focused Therapy	52%
Neuropsychology	82%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	48%
Other	4%

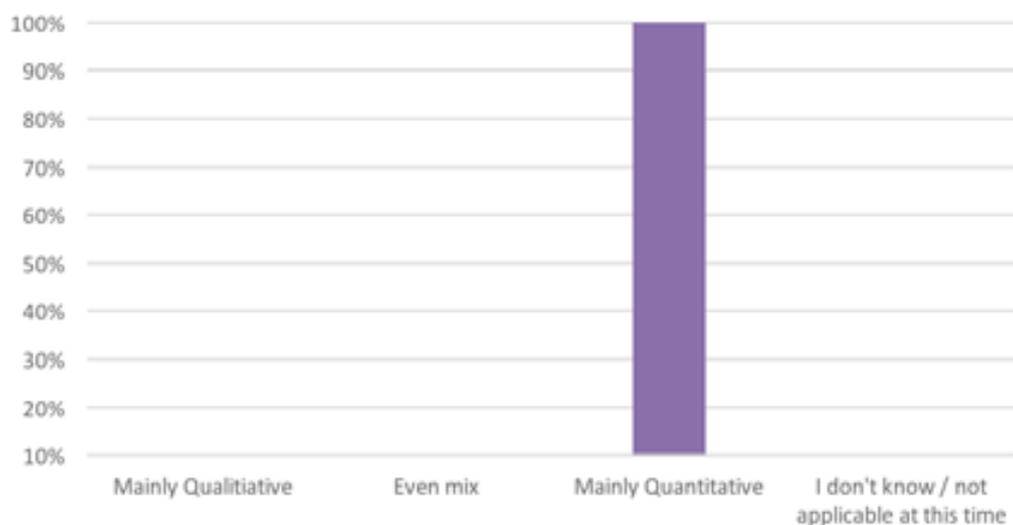
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- Very CBT heavy, only 1 day on psychodynamic over the 3 years
- It would be great to have some study time as packing everything in (placements and teaching) doesn't leave much time for working on projects. It would be helpful to have more teaching on integrative methods earlier on, as we tend to jump straight into this when we start our first placement (because services are often integrated anyway). The teaching is really excellent quality though, with really effective speakers from all around the country and I'm very grateful that so much emphasis is placed on this.
- CBT and systemic are the two primary areas although in the final year I understand that you can choose other topics as a cohort to receive teaching on (e.g. third wave therapies, CAT etc.)
- We receive a full day teaching on most of these topics, by experts in the field. Our teaching schedule is very full.
- CBT heavy, with systemic
- Tasters only of other approaches.
- The systemic teaching is great and a good balance to the CBT.
- The course is focused on CBT & systemic. This clear direction means that I hope to graduate feeling like I have a strong base in two models rather than feeling like I know a little about a lot of models. For myself I wanted to feel competent in clinical practice and so I appreciate this focus although my own interests in the longer term are in MBT / psychodynamic practice. As such it is likely that I will do further training.
- This is an unapologetically CBT course. However, the systemic teaching is excellent, and there are opportunities through placement and your research to further any interests you may have in other approaches. The strength of it being mainly CBT is that you feel competent in at least one model upon graduating. Still, if you know CBT is not for you, then Bath is not for you.
- There is a LOT of CBT teaching (as would be expected with BABCP accreditation) as well as systemic (likewise with that accreditation), particularly in the first year. However, in the second year and most certainly in the third year the focus is a lot more on other therapeutic models (particularly ACT, through lots of health teaching in the 3rd year), adapting skills to working with different client groups, and also higher level competencies. We also get a lot of high quality health teaching. Teaching on psychodynamic approaches is very minimal.
- If you want to know a lot about CBT and gain significant practice using the model, then Bath is the course for you. Whilst we get a day's systemic teaching a month, and options in the third year for teaching on other models, the majority of the teaching is focused around the use of CBT.
- I really like the strong focus on CBT and systemic. The two approaches work well alongside each other and elements of each can be integrated when working with clients and their families.
- Bath is quite a CBT heavy course. We do get a fair amount of systemic teaching as well. However, psychodynamic and CAT perspectives are not really covered at all.
- The focus is on CBT and systemic approaches which fits with my preferences.
- The Bath course is very CBT-focussed, with a fair bit of systemic. You come out eligible for BABCP accreditation and you have the option to go for intermediate systemic accreditation too. There's also an increasing emphasis on facilitated reflective practice sessions. Other models (such as ACT, CFT, CAT) are covered much more briefly in one or two-day workshops.

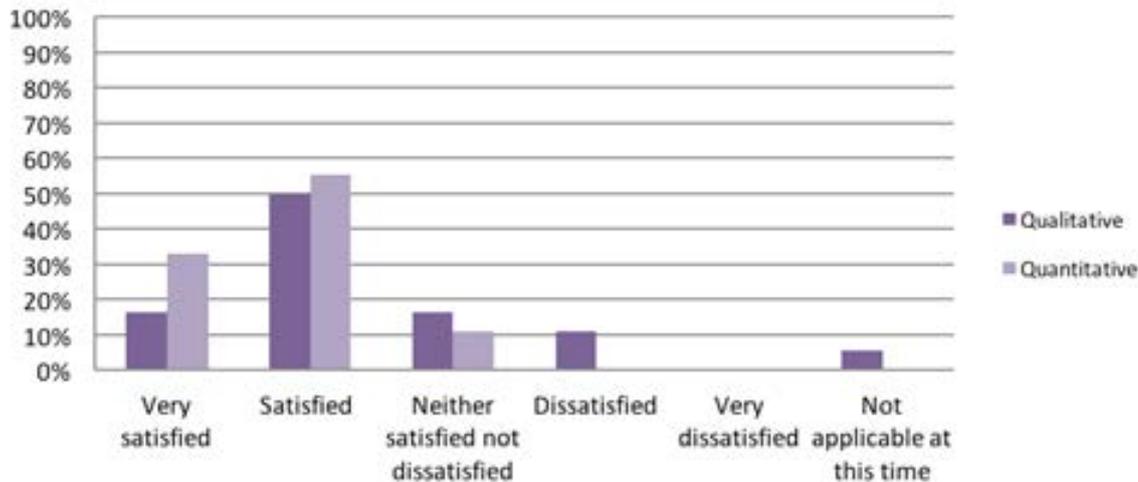
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



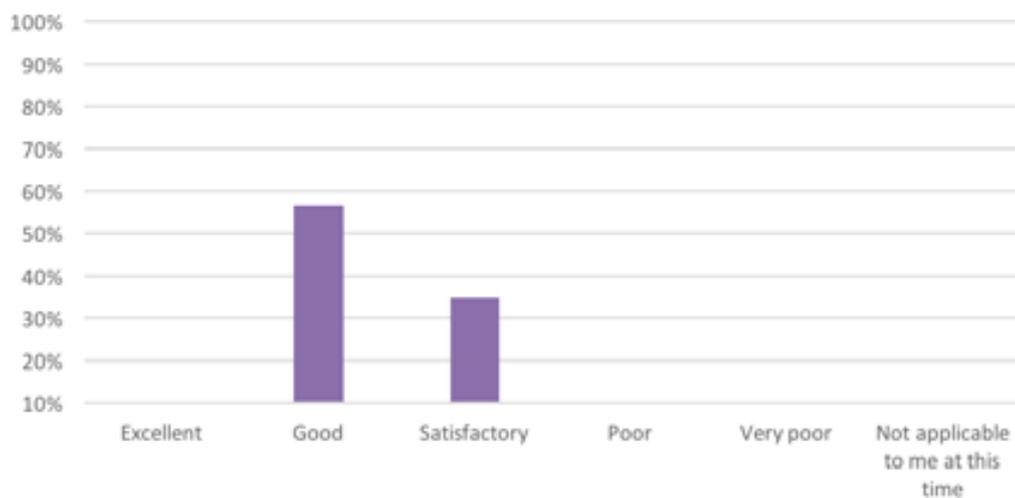
## Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



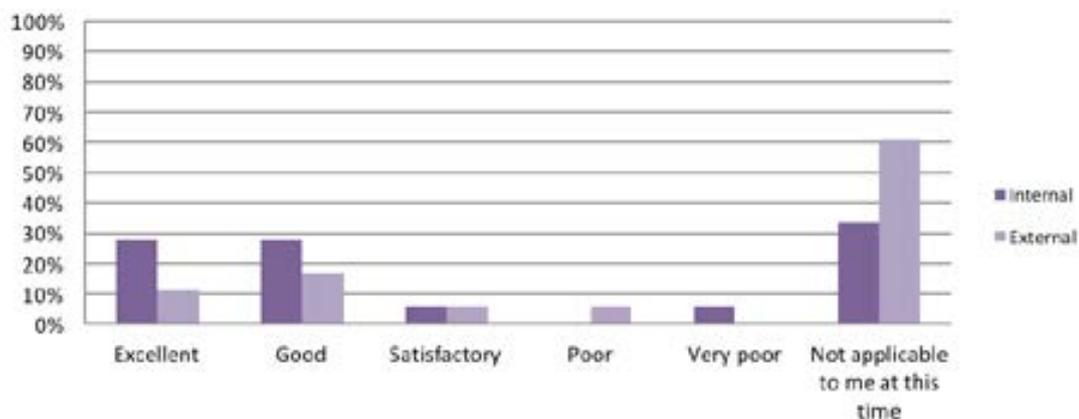
## Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Trainees complete three separate research projects to make up a portfolio as opposed to one thesis. The main research project has to involve quantitative methods.
- Qualitative teaching is getting better, but there are still holes
- Although the emphasis is on quantitative and we have to predominantly use quantitative in our main research projects, there is good teaching session on qual methodology and we are able to incorporate by using mixed methods for our main project and we are able to do a qualitative service improvement project.
- Bath focusses much more on quantitative research but I have been able to include qualitative elements in all of my projects. It is still possible if that is what you want to do and I would encourage applicants who prefer qualitative research to come to Bath to help change the quantitative-dominant ethos.
- I would prefer a greater balance between quantitative and qualitative as I am more interested in the latter. However I appreciate that I will likely graduate with a strong grasp of quants methodology.
- The emphasis here is on doing quantitative research, or at the most mixed methods. Our main projects cannot be full qualitative.
- A real focus on research from the beginning of the course to put trainees in good stead for the rest of training.
- There is a strong focus on research at Bath and the requirements are significantly greater and a higher standard (more like a PHD at times) than on other courses. Your main project must be quantitative or mixed methods and has to compare groups so the project becomes very large very quickly. The literature review has to generate new knowledge in addition to just reviewing existing literature, so Bath set the bar quite high on research but you learn amazing research skills and all trainees tend to publish at least one paper.
- Our main project has to include quantitative methods. Only our smaller projects can be purely qualitative.
- You are expected to develop your own research projects (with support) which can be a challenge if you don't have extensive research experience. However we will leave with a good knowledge of how to conduct research which will help when qualified.
- There's a much greater emphasis on quantitative research, although there is the option to incorporate qualitative techniques into our projects.

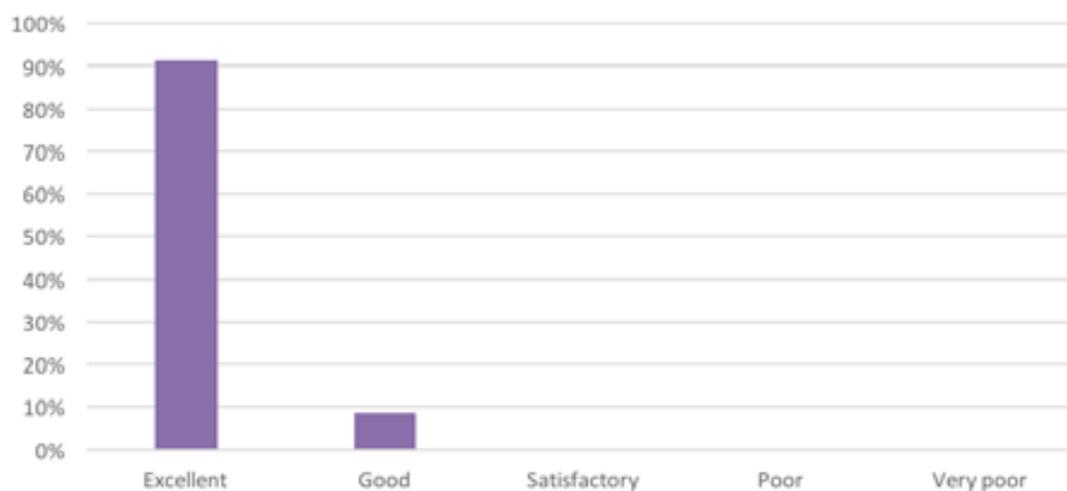
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



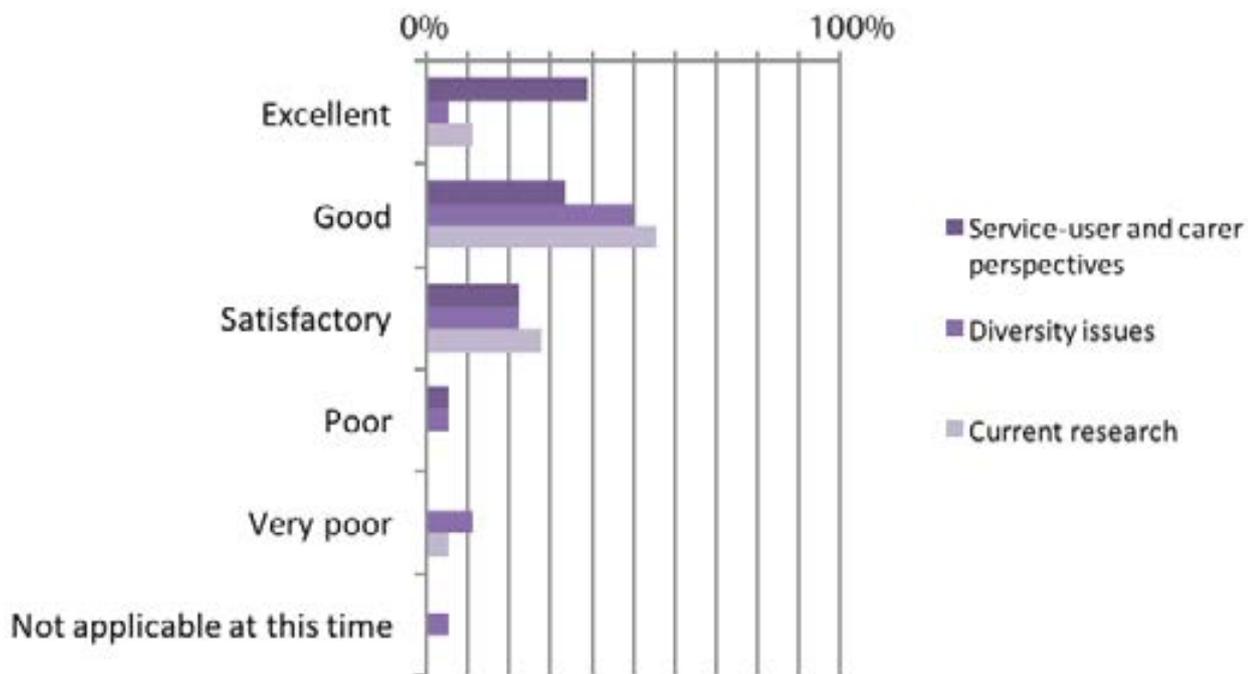
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



## Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

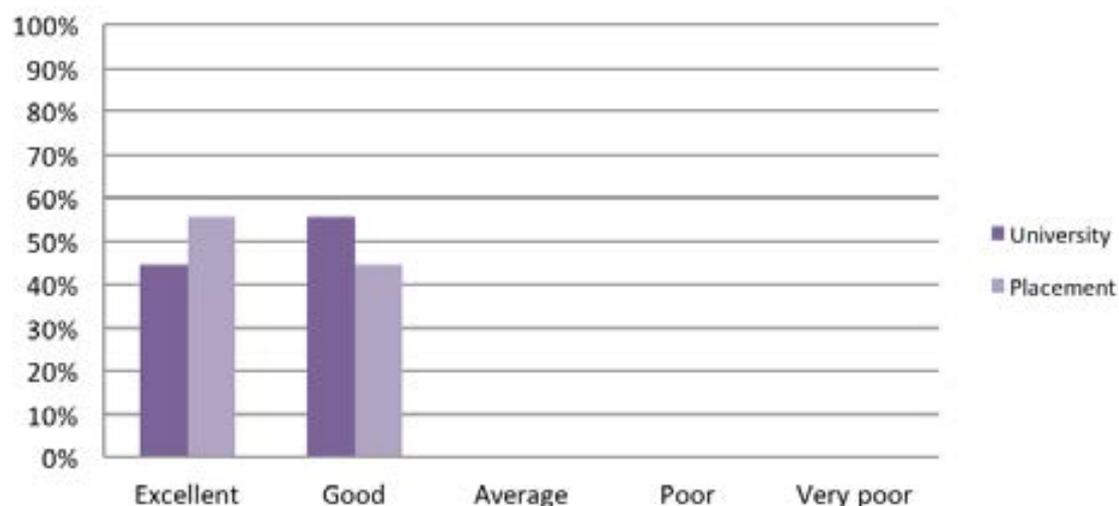
- The teaching quality is exceptionally high. I have a range of experience of studying and working at other universities and the quality of teaching at Bath, by both employed and visiting lecturers is very high.
- I've been so impressed with the speakers who have taught us-I have been star-struck on a few occasions and felt completely inspired by the passion and ideas brought by them. The learning materials have been really well organised and speakers have been great at engaging us and getting us to practice skills and make the most of teaching. It's also made me really want to teach in future.
- It truly is fantastic.
- There is an emphasis on lecturers including information on up to date research and integrating service user perspectives into teaching, as well as making sure to get practical skills practice in. The quality of teaching is generally brilliant. We get lots of visiting lecturers who are well known in their field (and often have written the models we're being taught about!) and have specialist knowledge.
- The teaching we get is brilliant! Experts in their relative fields who created models and have practiced for years so are incredibly experienced. We really are learning from the best at Bath!
- The teaching at Bath is incredible. I have friends on other courses locally who are very jealous of the high quality and amount of teaching that we receive. Some people might want less teaching for more study time but I personally feel much more equipped to work clinically across multiple settings as a result of the fantastic teaching we have. I wouldn't want to have any less and think other courses should have more.
- The course are trying to include more service-user perspectives, and some teaching has incorporated this very well - I hope for this to continue to improve in the future
- Overall we have excellent teaching at Bath. We also provide feedback on teaching via online feedback and at committees to help develop the teaching.
- The course staff are great and we've been really lucky to be taught by a lot of fantastic guest lecturers who are experts in their fields. I have particularly enjoyed our Health Psychology teaching. I started the course with little interest in health, but after the health module I was hooked and have decided to undertake my final elective placement in a pain management service.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

13% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Not having study time scheduled in the timetable.
- There is almost no study time to complete case studies, research proposals and assignments, which means it is very difficult to maintain a good work-life balance.
- Time constraints. It's like doing a full-time job alongside a PhD. I'm really looking forward to summer when teaching days become study days, as it's very overwhelming during the term.
- There is quite a few deadlines in a short period of time and pressure to come up with your research ideas early on. Having a lack of study days during this period makes it quite demanding.
- The main demand is trying to balance research and clinical work at the same time without letting anything drop.
- High expectations for research, with not enough allocated time.
- There are a lot of deadlines in first year and a lot of pressure to finalise project proposals which is difficult when there are no study days and little study time timetabled.
- Yes - work/life balance can be difficult
- The research aspects of the course are very demanding and require you to use a lot of your own time to make sure you reach deadlines.
- Heavy research component with separate literature review, service improvement, consultancy and main research projects.

- Yes, it is currently a demanding time as we are in the process of developing our 3 projects around teaching and placement commitments. It is demanding on our time, and sometimes difficult to keep to deadlines in submitting proposals. This predominantly research element is the most demanding aspect for me at present. I am told things get bit easier in the second year when projects are somewhat developed and you know what you're doing! The difficulty at present is working on something which may or may not develop, and moving through ideas until something works.....times by 3 (for all 3 projects).
- Travelling long distances can be demanding.
- Keeping up with course demands with very limited study time is very demanding
- There is a lot to juggle in first year - many demands on your time. However, trainees say that this eases a little in second and third year. This is partly due to the BABCP accreditation which places extra demands on you, and partly because the course demands excellence in its research and therefore places emphasis on starting early on this.
- The lack of study time is really challenging. In first year there's basically none during term time, a bit more on a fortnightly basis during second year, and one day a week in third year. Over the summer months we get 2 days study time a week alongside our 3 placement days. This means that during the first two years a lot of research work must be done in extra time outside of 5 days 9-5, and there's a real crunch time in 3rd year once we do have a bit more study time. We juggle a number of research projects (a main project, service improvement project, literature review, plus a smaller consultancy project) which can be tricky when you're trying to do them all well at the same time, alongside placement and case studies. Also there's a lot to think about on placements to tick all the requirements for systemic and BABCP accreditations, although the course does what they can to make this integrated to the general placement experience and have very structured paperwork and processes to make sure nothing gets forgotten.
- Lack of study days means that time to do outside reading or research is difficult. Although this comes in peaks and troughs, it can mean giving up evenings/weekends at times to get it done. However, when asked to give up some of the teaching to make room for study days, we haven't been able to choose what we would lose.
- Another difficulty can be having to stay away for placement if it's quite far away because of the large geographical area. That doesn't happen for everyone and isn't the whole time but for some placements it can be required.
- Balancing the academic requirements of the course (research projects) with the desire to develop clinically. The course have cut out all unnecessary assignments (so we do not write essays and only submit case reports, research proposals and final projects) but the research demands take up a lot of time as Bath set a higher standard on research than most other courses. This has meant not having the time to read up on clinical material that I would have liked but there is more time for that over the summer months when teaching stops and you have two study days each week from July to September.
- Lack of study time can mean it is difficult. The course do try to address this but it remains an issue. Sometimes deadlines all occur at the same time which can make a work/life balance difficult to achieve.
- I have found it very hard to manage the projects as this largely needs to be done in our own time. We are on placement 3 days per week and at teaching 2 days per week, with minimal study time. Study time increases in 3rd year.
- The course is time consuming, and there is a lot of different research projects to juggle at once, but this does mean that you get the BABCP accreditation and Systemic Foundation and Intermediate awards
- The course is really demanding. There has been relatively little study time for us in the third year, although I know the course has been working on improving this for subsequent year groups. There are an awful lot of hoops to jump through, both in academic/research terms and in terms of what we have to do to pass our clinical placements. Instead of one thesis we produce a research portfolio

and a professional portfolio with a main project and a number of smaller projects, including service-related projects and an extended literature review. While this has a number of excellent advantages (e.g. getting a range of research experiences, having several publishable-length papers ready at qualification), it is very demanding from a time and effort point of view and most of us have felt under a lot of pressure at various times.

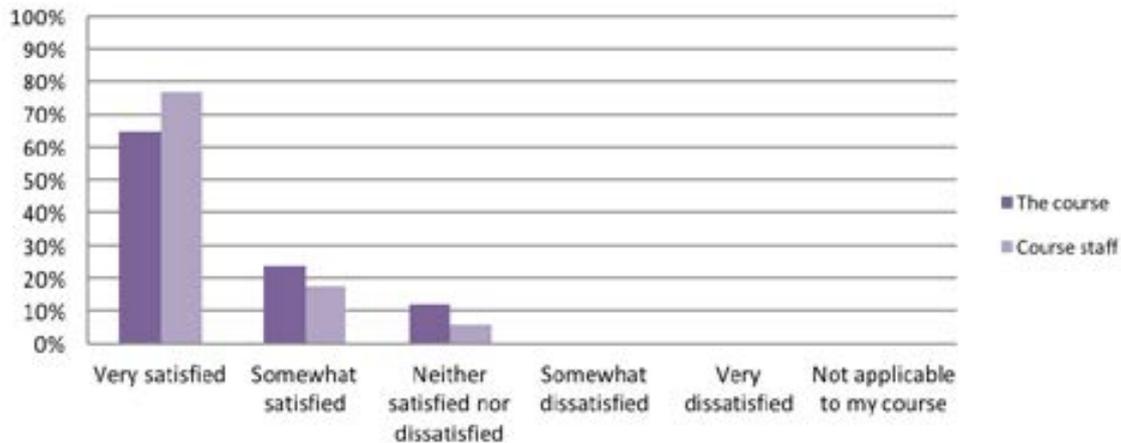
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	74%
“Buddy”	95%
Manager	17%
Placement Supervisor	96%
Librarian	39%
Professional Mentor	43%
Personal Tutor	96%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	96%
Independent personal advisor	48%
Other	9%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- Personal Support Tutor
- Sometimes the best source of support is the cohort itself
- My fabulous cohort has been the best and most important support system throughout the whole process.
- Everyone has a clinical tutor, who oversees our progress on the course and in placements, and a personal support tutor, who is not connected with the university and supports you with the personal impact of the course. There is also regular facilitated reflective practice and we are taught mindfulness skills as a means of stress management which I have found very helpful.

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

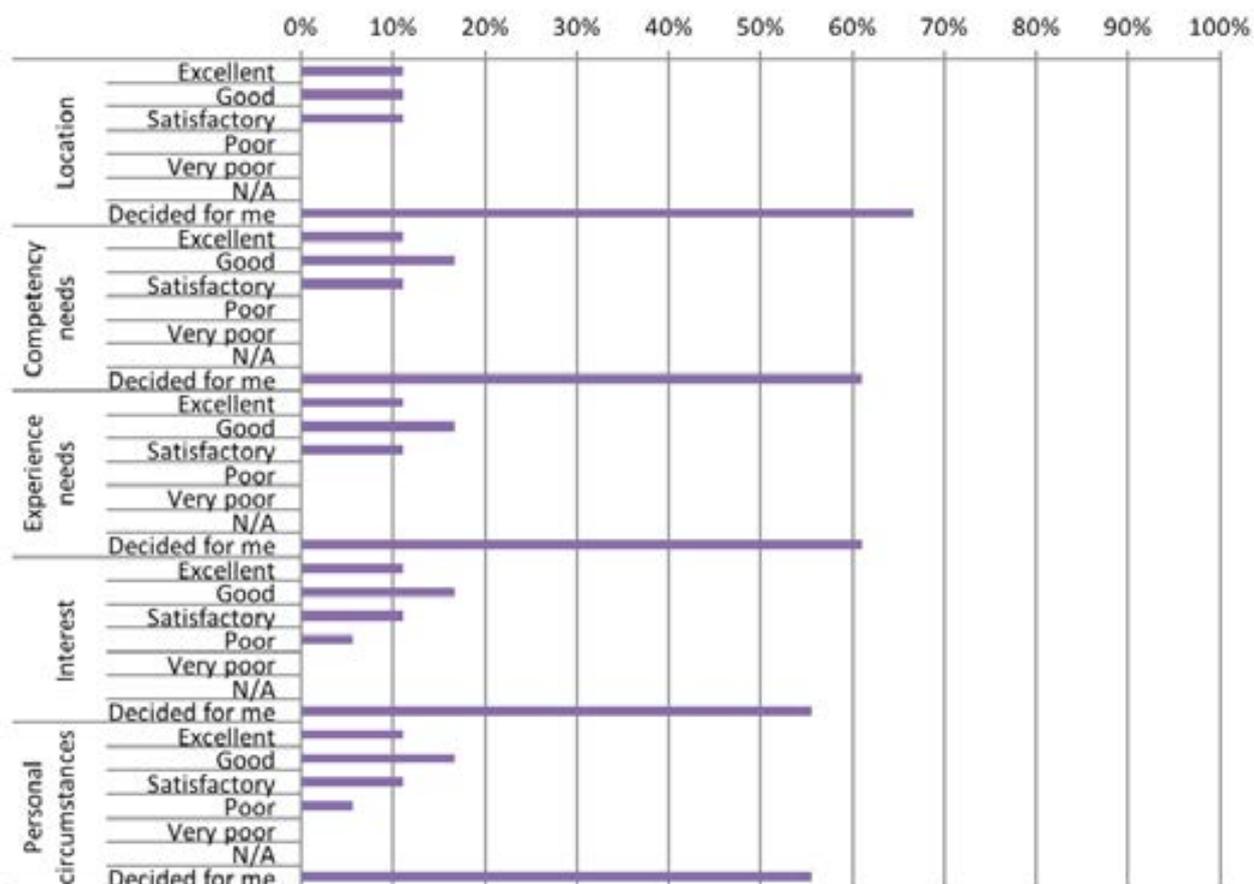


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

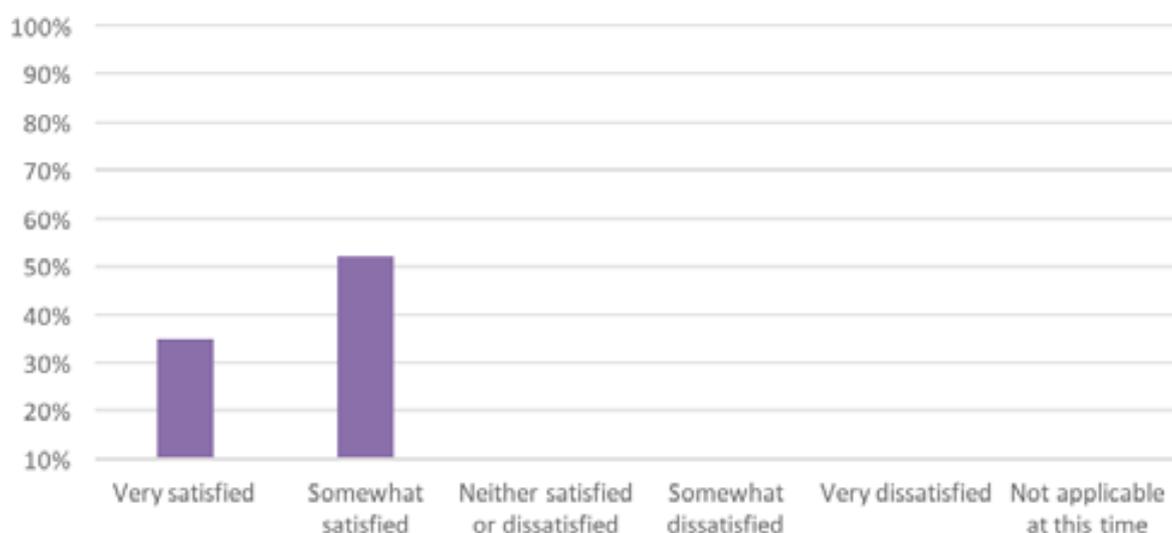
- It would be really good to have access to psychological therapy through the course (either free or subsidised) as I think it would be really useful to build our own reliance and I think it's our responsibility as practitioners working with vulnerable people. The fact that the course don't emphasise this or only offer this kind of support if things get bad or there is a significant mental health condition gives me little faith about prevention/normalises the need for support for anyone, and I think it sends the wrong message.
- There is a lot of really helpful support available that is easily accessible.
- I've been supported a number of times when I've been finding things difficult. You have to seek it though, and be open about your difficulties. If you do that, people bend over backwards to help.
- The course staff are busy but do their best to be available. There is always someone you can talk to.
- Members of the course team, as well as personal support tutors external to the course are always available to support you if required. There are other methods of support too including a buddy, research supervisors, placement supervisors and of course the rest of the cohort.
- The course staff are incredibly supportive and really accommodating when people are struggling. Extensions are possible and staff have met trainees in cafes over the summer to provide support on research projects. They are very approachable and it has also been helpful to have a personal support tutor who is external to the course and a qualified Clinical Psychologist that you can go to when you are struggling. Our year made space for more reflective time and we therefore meet fortnightly before teaching on a Friday to have reflective practice.
- If you need support, you need to ask for it. Managing multiple projects is challenging and you are not hand-held through the process. I have asked my cohort and my buddy for support when I have needed it. In my experience, tutors and supervisors do not enquire about your life outside of work, so again, it's about raising a request for support if you need it. Extensions for deadline can be given if a valid reason is provided.
- Overall I think support from the course has been pretty good. However, it can be hard to get hold of course tutors at times.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



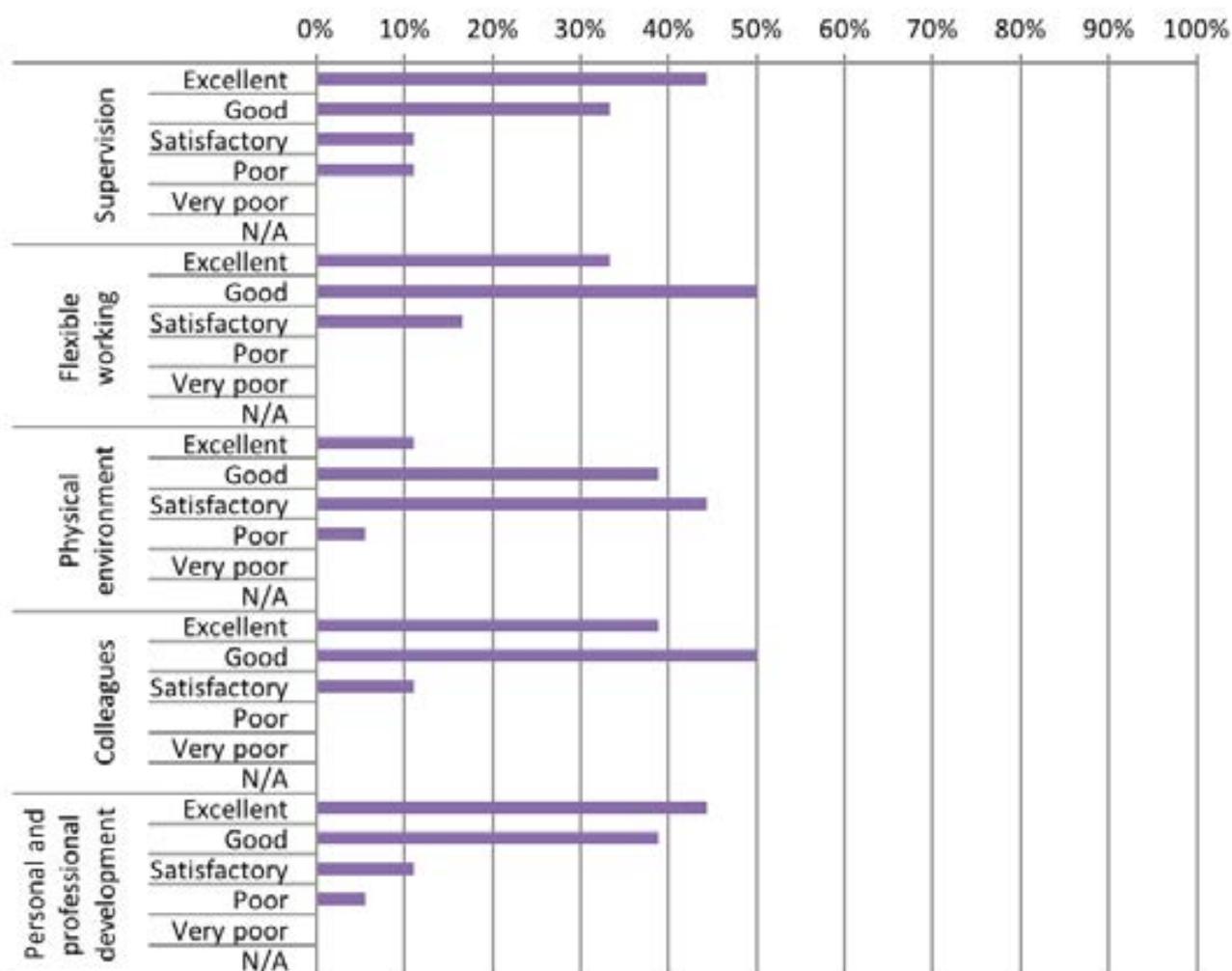
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### **Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- We were informed of the first placement 2 months in advance of starting the course which was really helpful. We were given one week's notice for our second placement.
- Sometimes the timetabling could be better considered e.g. we had teaching very early on some subjects which felt a bit irrelevant but would have been much more useful later on when we were able to put skills straight into use on placement.
- Having a 4 week teaching block before the first placement allows you to build up some solid skills and get to know other trainees well before embarking on placement which helps with how emotionally challenging it can be.
- I was surprised not to get a break between placements, e.g. other courses have placements split by a teaching block. It was tricky ending one week and starting afresh somewhere completely new the following week with little time to reflect or prepare in between, however it has been manageable.
- The timeframe for being provided with information regarding second placement was extremely short (2 weeks prior) which was quite anxiety inducing in terms of planning for location etc.
- Felt very much 'thrown in' in 1st year but this has since changed. The annual appraisal and review of training needs assessment always helps me feel more prepared to go into a placement knowing what my needs and interests are for that placement - it's a long tool to complete but I've found it very helpful!
- One day visit before gradually starting 2 days in first placement then into 3 days which remains the same for all placements following. Information given a few weeks prior to placement about what it is and where. Can take into account personal needs etc. if you discuss with the team.
- The teaching at Bath is excellent so I think this has helped to prepare me for placement. I expect there to be a bit of uncertainty at the start of each placement, and this is getting easier over time as I gain more experience.
- From what I remember, there was an initial two-week teaching period at the beginning of the course before we began our first placements. From then on placements take place alongside teaching for the rest of the course (although teaching does stop for three months over the summer, creating a bit more study time).

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).

- Room bookings and working environment is a constant battle
- Placements are spread far and wide so be prepared to travel and you need a car and be willing to drive. There is little input into selection of placements in the first two years although the course will try to accommodate if you have particular circumstances going on, although it doesn't always feel fair if you're the one travelling far and wide each placement! Much greater involvement in choosing 3rd year electives and the tutor responsible for elective placements works hard to get us all what we want and really hear our needs and interests. Placement quality and supervisors have been fantastic. Although the course is mostly CBT and systemic orientated I have had supervisors from all different approaches which has been invaluable in broadening my skills set.
- Brilliant placement supervisors with significant supervision and guidance. Have made really professional and personal connections with people through placements thus far.
- I've had three amazing placements with really supportive supervisors but I know some others in my year have had experiences of poor supervision and being placed in teams where it wasn't appropriate or too advanced for their point of training.
- I have enjoyed all of my placements so far, and they have provided a wide range of experiences in different settings.
- Placements are generally very good, and supervisors all receive special training from the course. There is a wide range of placement types, including working age adults, older adults, CAMHS, LD

and specialist electives. I have particularly enjoyed my electives (neuropsychology, health), and the course was very helpful in finding placements which fulfilled my training needs while catering to my interests and career goals. There are, however, a lot of course requirements for passing placements, including structured observations, assessments of clinical competence, mid and end of placement rating forms and a case study for every placement. This means we're very thoroughly assessed in each area we work in, but it can detract from the experience of clinical work sometimes, especially towards the end of placement when you're desperately trying to make sure you've fulfilled all the pass criteria areas in the NHS there are challenges. However, as a Clinical Psychology Trainee I feel strongly that we are in a very fortunate position

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	91%
No	9%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	91%
Don't know	9%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Bristol, Bath and Trowbridge.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	30%
No	48%
Don't know	22%

## How do you find the work life balance on your course?

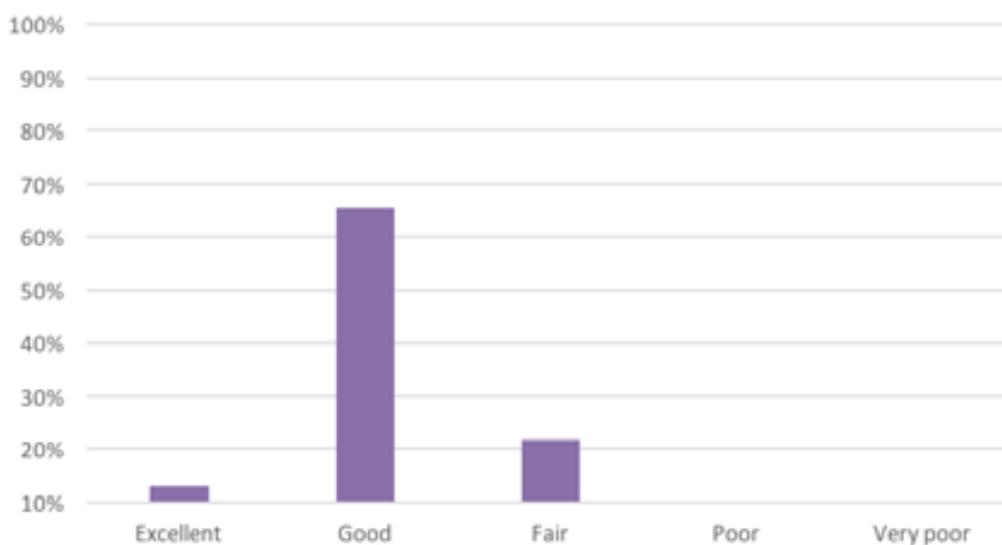
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	9%
Fair	61%
Poor	30%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- It is possible to maintain a good work life balance most of the time except when assignment deadlines are due
- It would be nice to have a few more study days/half-days planned in as otherwise work does fall to evenings and weekends, making it difficult to separate time on/off.
- There are times when it feels quite poor and others where it's much better. This is particularly so when there are a number of deadlines around the same time!
- It can be tricky and there are certainly times I feel I haven't got my balance right but I think it takes time to work out how to fit everything in and look after yourself too.
- Tough in Year 3. Research can be all-consuming
- I am missing life outside of the course a little bit now. Maintaining work/life balance is becoming bit of a struggle but the Easter break is looming and I am determined to ensure I get some days completely work free. Now with the summer pending, and longer days, I think my work/life balance will improve a little bit, but I found it generally tougher during the winter months.
- Third year is by far the hardest year, so work-life balance goes out the window a little bit, but I guess it's what you expect.
- The workload is high and there are periods where I have had to work at weekends. However it is not every weekend and there are periods where it is less intense.
- This course is very demanding. I have often had to work weekends and use my annual leave in order to complete assignments, as there is no time during placement and then there is teaching two days a week. To date we have only been given one timetabled study day.
- Has been mostly okay through first two years (not as I'd have like but about what I'd have expected being on training), although always hard around deadlines because of lack of study time; real struggle in third year as a result of trying to make up for lack of study time in previous years. Tutors emphasise the importance of self-care but it's hard to put into practice. That said, we do come out very qualified and with high quality teaching.
- It is up to you to create a work life balance. The course is very demanding but training is going to be that way and at times is better than others so you need to take the rough with the smooth.
- Work life balance is dependent on the time of year and year of training. The spring and summer term of first year are very demanding and involved a lot of evening and weekend work to revise for the two exams, submit end of placement documents (including case report), write three research proposals and have two mini-vivas (Project approval session, PAS). However, July to September were then very quiet and included two study days so I didn't do any evening or weekend work for three months. Second year has been less stressful for me than first year as the only deadlines are a case report at the end of each placement and the deadlines that you set yourself in terms of chipping away at the research projects. There will be times when it feels like your work-life balance is very poor but most of the time I feel it is good and July-September excellent!

- It is variable. Sometimes it is good, other times are busier and the balance isn't as good as I'd hope.
- I think the work life balance (due to having to work in the evenings/weekends) is the most challenging aspect of the course. However, I think that the skills and experience gained from the Bath course will make it all worth it in the end!
- Work/life balance is always a challenge - as it is for any course!
- Sometimes have been better than others, but in general I have felt that the course has dominated my life throughout the three years. I'm very much looking forward to taking up my former hobbies again! You can absolutely have a life while on this course, but you have to be very good at time management (and willing to more or less put that life aside for several weeks at a time when things get really busy).

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- I have had to adapt to earning a lower salary but it has been helped by being exempt from paying tax under the Wider Access scheme. If this changes then it will be difficult to manage with my current financial commitments.
- I feel incredibly lucky that the course allow us to expense our journeys.
- I understand that there may be changes to the tax allowance which would significantly affect the financial quality of my life.
- This has been good, but we are now about to start being taxed which will affect things dramatically.
- Since the Widening Access Training Scheme has changed to no longer include trainee psychologists, money will be much tighter which is unfortunate. This is being looked at by trust lawyers and the unions. However this isn't course specific this is nationwide.
- The refund of widening access training scheme over tax payment was very nice last summer! And up until this month we haven't paid any tax so the monthly take home sum has been very generous. From April 2017, trainees nationally are going to have to pay tax again but I think a Band 6 salary is more than enough to live on.
- I feel very fortunate to be paid to train.

- Bath is a fairly expensive place to live, however I've managed to rent a flat in town on my own which has been great. We also get a fair amount of our travel expenses paid and we're eligible for student and NHS discounts.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Teaching and placement
- Teaching, supportive and inspiring staff, range of placement options, my lovely supportive cohort.
- A fantastic supportive cohort. Good teaching and the placements.
- Clinical work
- Great teaching, and high quality researchers
- The systemic teaching is my favourite part of the course!
- The rest of the cohort!
- The teaching is from some of the leading professionals in their fields and always extremely high quality.
- My cohort! Quality teaching and supervision.
- My cohort are a really good bunch that is probably my favourite aspect of the course. Everyone, including beyond the cohort, including other year groups and staff members are really supportive and I feel I can approach the people I need to with any concerns or queries I have which is really important.
- I also like the fact that we get some excellent teaching on the course."
- My cohort!
- The high quality of teaching, the extremely interesting placements to date and the rest of the people on the cohort.
- The teaching - we've had the best people! And the supervision I have received on placement. Both have been excellent.
- Clinical work. I've had fantastic placements and supervisors. The course team are generally great. And the teaching is pretty great quality.
- I feel that the course put a lot of effort in to the cohorts and I have a great group of people around me who are all in agreement that the teaching we get is amazing.
- The teaching. I look forward to Thursdays and Fridays when we meet as a cohort to catch up and have teaching. The quality and breadth of teaching is fantastic and I'm glad I chose to come to Bath, in spite of having less study time, than the other courses I was offered a place at.
- Placements
- Excellent teaching, small cohort, beautiful location and gaining the additional accreditations (BABCP & Systemic Theory & Practice).
- The teaching we have is excellent, and is from experts in the field which is a real privilege. The addition of systemic therapy qualifications is excellent and I really enjoy this part of the course.
- The quality of the teaching has been excellent. I also enjoy the focus on research, even if the workload has been quite overwhelming at times. Overall, though, I think my favourite aspect of the course has been my course mates. Everyone has been so supportive of one another and I am really grateful to have met and worked with them.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- More study time would be really helpful but it is difficult to see which aspects of teaching could be dropped.
- Course equips you well, but there are a significant amount of course requirements to achieve this.
- I would like to see more qualitative researchers on the Bath course.
- The course is pretty responsive to feedback, and are always refining things so they work more smoothly/less assessment for the next cohort where they can, so don't be afraid to feed back if something isn't working! We have quite a vocal cohort but we've had important changes because of it.
- We have asked for more reflective practice which has now been increased and based on our feedback may be increased again.
- Similarly there are a lack of study days, particularly in the first year, but again feedback is taken on board and the course are always receptive to it.
- Bath has a reputation for not having study time and that is true in that you don't have a study day every week/fortnight. However, the course is trying more and more to include study time in the timetable and this increases as you go through the course. First years have 2-3 study days from October to April which sounds bad but the reality is there is limited work to do at that point. There is then more study time when the Older Adult timetable starts in April and you have two study days from beginning of July to end of September. In second year, the aim is to have an afternoon of study time once a fortnight but the reality for our year has been whole study days close together followed by a month of no study time due to timetabling issues. In the third year, teaching reduces to one day a week to free up one day of study time as a regular occurrence. In spite of the lack of study time at Bath, I would still recommend it as a course. You are far better equipped to work in today's NHS (BABCP accreditation, leadership and consultancy skills, foundation & intermediate systemic) than most other trainees in the country. I definitely made the right decision in choosing Bath.
- Bath is a fantastic course that will enable you to develop solid clinical and research skills. Upon completing the course, you will also have the additional accreditations (BABCP; Foundation and Intermediate Systemic Theory & Practice) which is a great bonus. However, be prepared to have to work in the evenings and some weekends - the study time allowance at Bath isn't as generous as in other courses.
- Bath is a challenging course, but I feel the quality of the teaching and the skills you develop in clinical work, research and professional development make it all worth it. Keep on at them for more study time! The course is still relatively new, which means they're willing to listen to feedback and are shaping things constantly.

## Courses Survey Results

**Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

**What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?**

- Online test, interview, course talk
- Tests, interviews and two vignettes

**For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.**

Teaching	14 hours
Placement	20 hours
Personal Study	3.5 hours
Research	Dependent on year of training

**What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)**

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	50%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Birmingham

19 responses (37% of 51 trainees)

## About the trainee

**What is your current year of training?**

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	63%
Year 2	11%
Year 3	26%

**What was your age when you started training?**

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	11%
25 – 29 years	74%
30 – 34 years	11%
35 – 39 years	5%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

**How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?**

Attempts	Percent
Once	26%
Twice	47%
3 times	11%
4 times	0%
5 times	11%
6 times	5%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	11%
MA	0%
MSc	42%
MRes	16%
Diploma	0%
Post Graduate Certificate	5%
Conversion course	5%
None	21%
Other	16%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	11%
2 years	11%
3 years	32%
4 years	26%
5 years	5%
6+ years	16%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	63%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	32%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	31%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	21%
Research Assistant	42%
Voluntary Research Assistant	11%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	74%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	5%
Other	16%

## The selection process

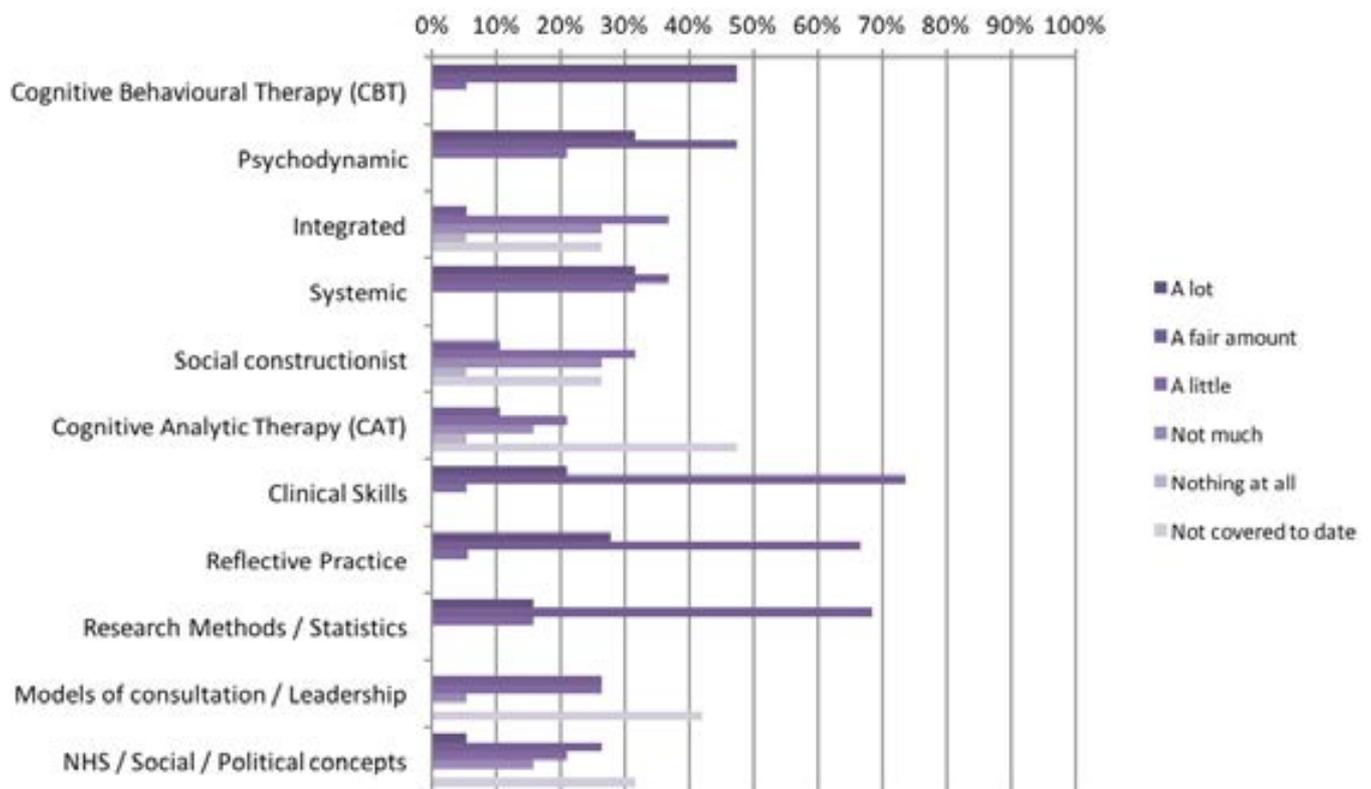
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- The best of all the courses I applied to.
- An ethos of everyone wanting you to do as well as possible. Follow up questions were asked with the intention of getting the best from you. These are always long days. Take a walk on your own occasionally if that would feel helpful.
- The interviews were challenging but friendly. It felt like the interviewers wanted to get the best out of you and the questions allowed me to show my strengths.
- I enjoyed the interview process. It felt relaxed and we had a room where all the applicants that were being interviewed on the day could relax or do extra prep if they wanted to. The process has changed now however, and applicants are only invited to attend half a day rather than a full day.
- The interviewers were surprisingly friendly and tried to get the best out of us during the interview, which I found really helpful - it wasn't like they were trying to trick you or catch you out. The questions were tricky, but relevant and made me stop and think.
- I felt the interviewers were very warm and less formal than I would have expected based on my prior experiences. I think it was this that made it feel more conversational than other interviews I have had.
- I got the impression that interviewers were not simply looking for the 'right' answer, but my ability to reflect and articulate what I had learned from my experiences.
- There was a strict allocation of five minutes per question which I found challenging at times but generally a helpful way of gauging the level of detail I needed to provide, and the time I should give to each point I wanted to make.
- On the whole I found the experience to be quite enjoyable, but I'm not prone to feeling nervous during interviews which may have been a factor implicated in this.
- All the staff were very friendly, approachable and appeared to really try to get the best out of you during the interviews,
- It was good to have three separate interviews because it gave you time to collect your thoughts after each one and prepare yourself for the next. The interviewers were friendly and encouraging.
- I found the interview process very stressful but the course team tried to make it as "nice" as possible.
- The interview panels were friendly and encouraging.
- The interview process was quite informal and relaxed. There were three interviews, clinical, academic, and personal suitability. It was nice that there were current trainee's present to ask questions too.
- Both the course staff and admin staff were really helpful and supportive throughout the whole process. The interview morning itself was fairly relaxed, with three 15 minute interviews (academic, personal and clinical), each with three questions. During each interview the course staff did as much as they could to get the best out of you and prompted you to give more details in answers where possible.
- Not too difficult. Questions were fair. Interviewers encouraged the best out of you.
- The interview process was quick and friendly, but also slightly odd. There were three interviews, each lasting 15 minutes. We were expected to answer 3 questions in each interview and we had 5 minutes to respond to each question. This was timed. The questions in the 'personal suitability' interview were bizarre- I couldn't have prepared for them. The other two interviews- clinical and academic were more 'standard'.
- I really enjoyed the interview process because they made an effort to ensure you weren't there

the whole day and thereby limiting the amount of anxious waiting between interviews. The three interviews were back to back with only a few minutes in between each one which definitely helped the anxiety. The interview flew by and I was on my way home before I knew it. The interviewers were really lovely and made an effort to put you at ease. The interview felt very informal and relaxed as they all took place on the offices of the academic staff - it felt more like a chat than an interview and I feel this helps get the most out of interviewees.

- I thought the interview was designed to get the best out of the candidate. There were three short interviews and two people on each panel. We were given a presentation about Birmingham and the course before hand, which was a nice.
- The interview day started with a general talk about the university and Birmingham and current trainees then spent lunch time with the potential candidates prior to individual interviews. We had three interviews and it didn't feel like any of the waiting periods were too long which was helpful for nerves. There was a room we could use all day which was also helpful. Each interview felt entirely different due to the different styles of the interviewers, some were warmer and encouraging others counting down the time you have for each question. But the general content of each interview was applicable and there was space for informal discussion after interviews.
- I found the interview process at Birmingham to be more friendly and efficient than the other courses that I applied to. I was less anxious during the process because they were 3 separate short interviews over the space of one hour compared to a whole day interview where there is a lot of waiting around. I found the interviewers to be friendly and appreciated the immediate feedback I received after the research interview which helped to reassure me and set me up for the rest of the interviews.
- The interview experience was a lot less daunting than it had been made out to be. I'd go as far to say it was quite enjoyable.
- I found that I had probably over prepared.
- The interviewers were all very nice and it felt as though they were looking to get your best answer rather than catch you out and identify the flaws in your answers.
- It was a very quick process, with three 30 minute interviews back to back. This was good as there was no waiting around (less time to reflect on how anxious you were), but it was difficult to then alter your mind-set ready for the next interview. The questions were appropriate, and the interviewers were patient and supportive.
- Course content and teaching

## How much teaching is there on different models?



## What other topics are covered by your course?

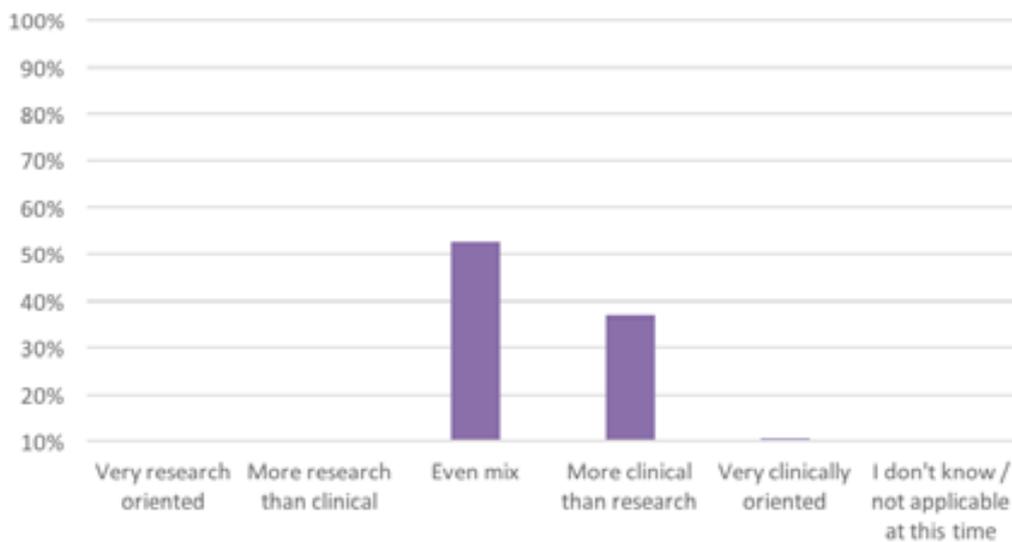
Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	72%
Mindfulness	50%
Schema Therapy	22%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	89%
Solution Focused Therapy	22%
Neuropsychology	89%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	39%
Other	6%

### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

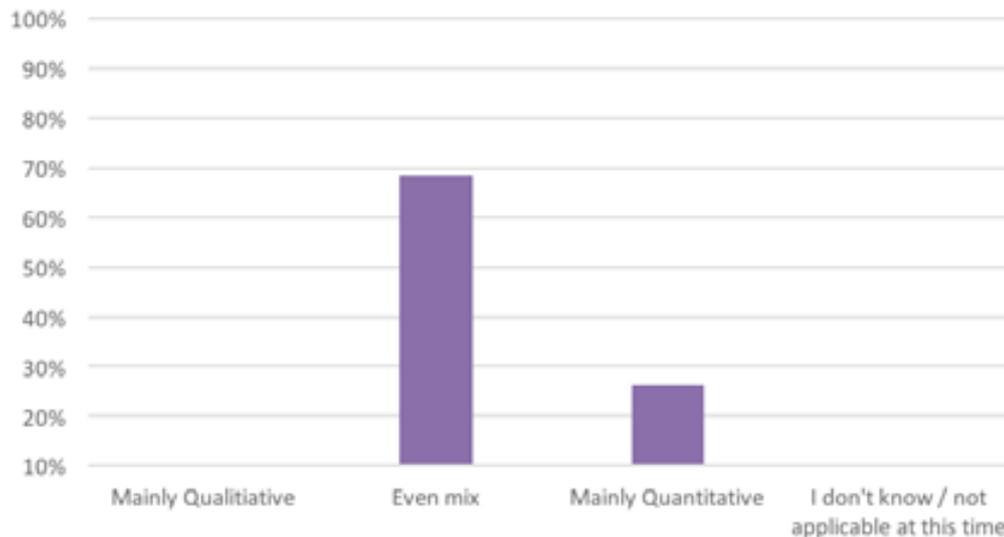
- THE course structure has now changed. Now you do CBT and choose one other primary model. ACT teaching is brilliant.
- The course is changing a lot for the years below us, so my experience may not be relevant. However I think our course has a good foundation in systemic working and thinking, as well as a broad range of optional modules available in the final year for more specialist models.
- They are generally very well balanced, and the quality of teaching is typically of a very high standard.
- One shortfall is that for us to have teaching from experts in their field, there has sometimes been less of a flow to the teaching so that they do not follow a logical order

- In 1st year it feels like we have had a nice introduction to all key areas, without anyone assuming that we have a basic understanding or experience in any given area.
- There was quite a lot of systemic teaching at the start of the year, probably due to us having the opportunity to gain the foundation qualification from the AFT. Psychodynamic teaching has been good, and there has been teaching on CBT for different age groups.
- In first year the focus seems to be on CBT, psychodynamic and systemic models with a small bit of behavioural teaching.
- As a third year, there are lots of options to choose workshops in different modes of therapy. The model with the least options is systemic.
- There is a heavy amount of CBT in the first two years. However in third year you are able to pick workshops which you are interested in, giving a broader range of areas.
- Birmingham offers all four models and generally all 4 models are taught each year. However, there has generally appeared to be more emphasis on systemic teaching and the teaching feels systemic heavy at times. DBT and ACT however do form our core teaching in year 1 and 2 which is positive. Many of the third wave models like CFT and CAT aren't covered until third year unfortunately.
- During the first 7 week teaching block, CBT and Systemic approaches were covered in more detail, however, since then our models teaching has focussed on psychodynamic. It would have been better to have all of the models teaching spaced out at the same pace so that it is easier to keep them all in mind when on placement.
- It felt at the beginning of the year (teaching block) that there was a bias towards CBT and systemic therapy. However, once we started placement we were given some teaching on psychodynamic.

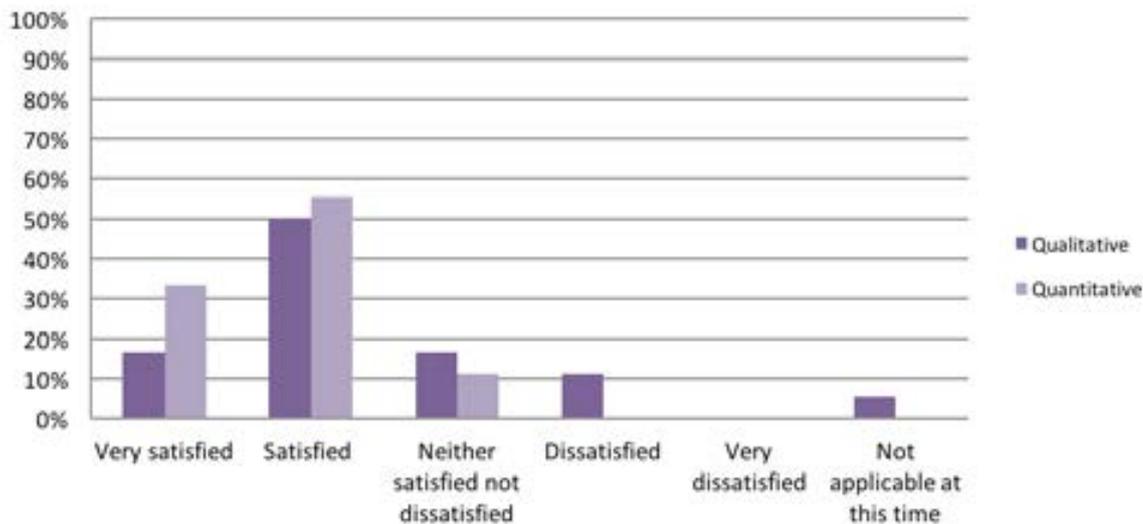
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



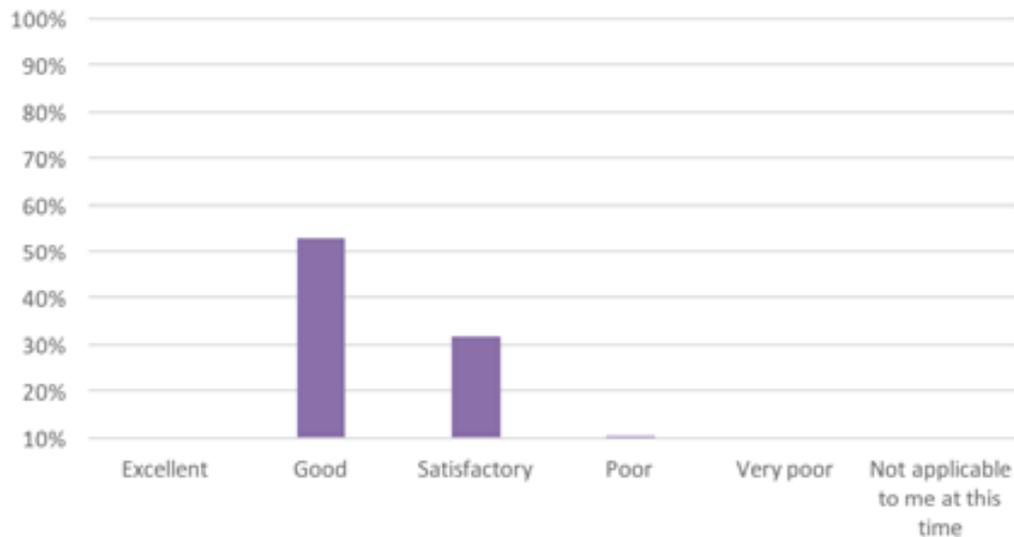
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



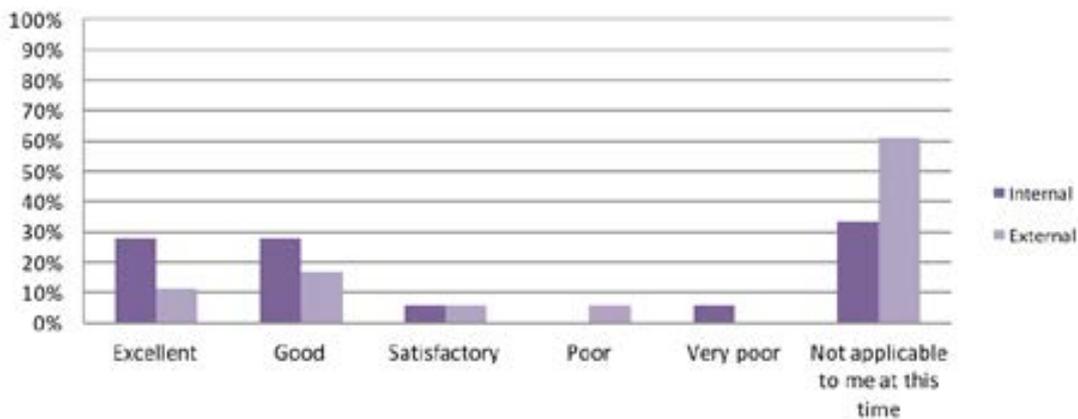
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- There does not seem to be the same sort of support for the research compared to the academic side of things. It feels quite separate. There is support, but it is harder to arrange because research supervisors work independently to academic supervisors.
- More choices for a thesis project in adult mental health would have been desirable
- There was no research teaching in the first term, which I noticed was different to my peers on other courses. This was nice as it allowed us to get settled into the routine of teaching and placement before adding the research element into the mix. This does mean that the second term has been more research heavy in terms of quantitative and qualitative analysis teaching. Aside from a small research fair (with very limited suggested topics for research) there has not been much guidance regarding what research topics to investigate for thesis.

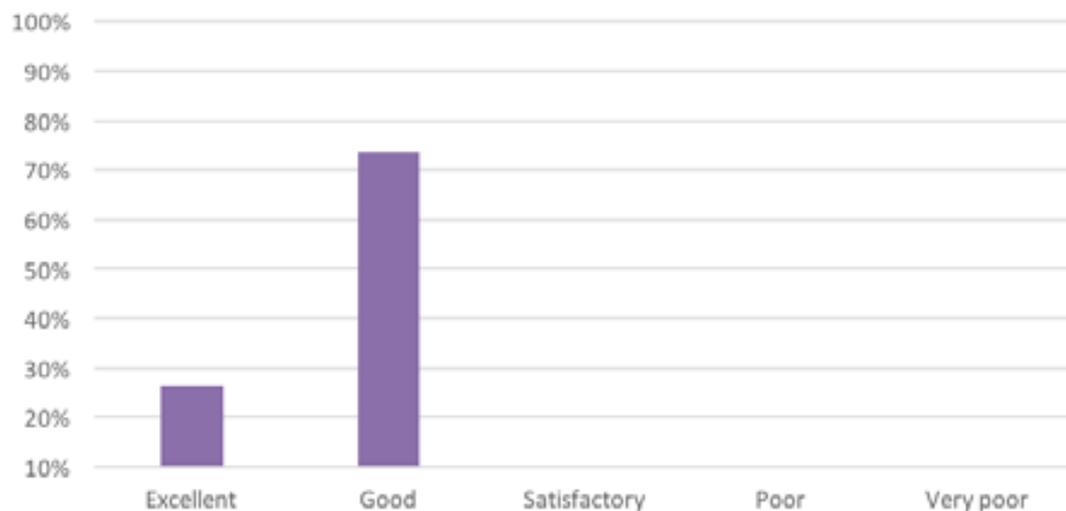
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



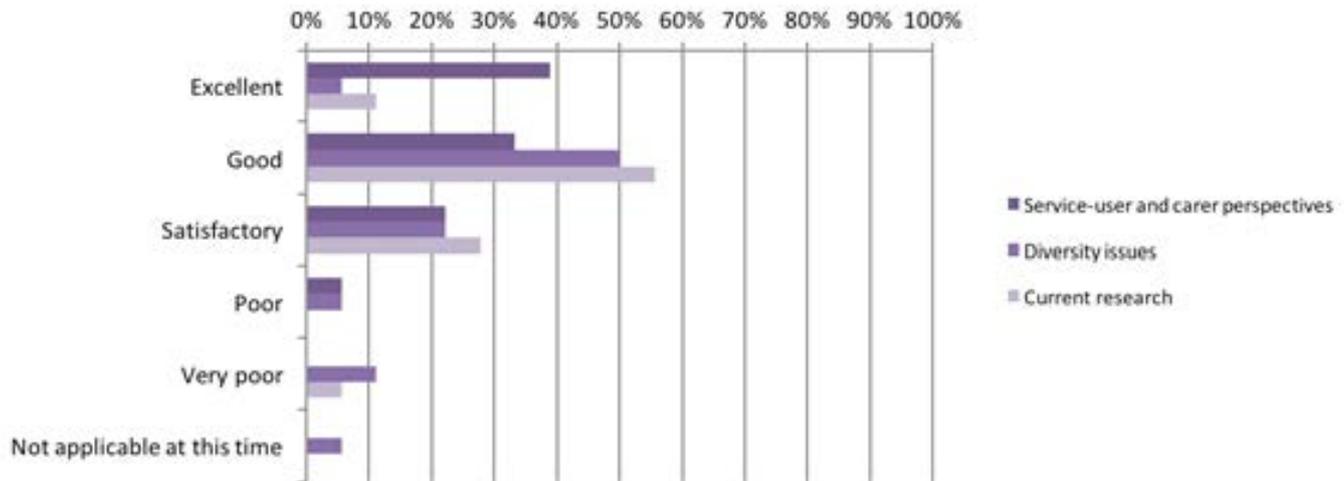
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

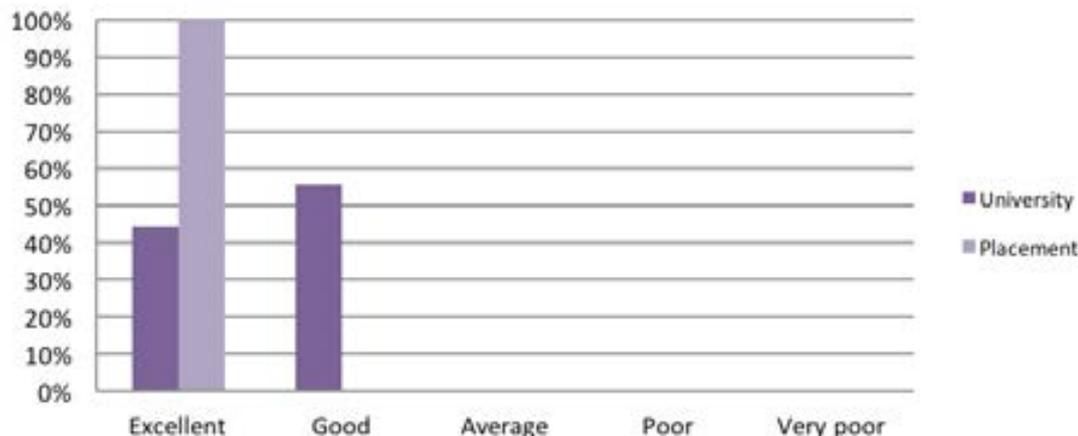
- There can be variation in the quality of teaching. We give feedback at the end of every session and this is taken into account and certain teachers are invited to cover certain specialist areas as a result.
- The teaching has been really enjoyable so far and the course get a wide range of professionals from the local area involved in our teaching
- Lecturers all bring different methods of teaching. Some are really creative and keep you engaged throughout the day, whilst others talk at you from a PowerPoint. I think this reflects more on the lecturers than the course itself. However, we do offer feedback after each session which hopefully influences the teaching for future years.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

**Do you have any disabilities?**

6% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

**Please describe how well your needs are met at:**



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Time management. There are periods of time where we have a lot of study when there isn't much work and vice versa.
- Constantly switching between different types of work - placement, research, clinical practice reports, etc. - has been really challenging because you only have a limited time to work on each. I'm looking forward to our writing block so I can really get a continuous time to work on my dissertation.
- I found it difficult choosing a topic for my research thesis as there wasn't a broad range of research projects on offer; a lot of the projects fell within a few topic areas and it felt that a lot of interesting areas weren't on offer. Obviously you have the choice of coming up with a novel idea from scratch but that can be quite daunting for people who don't have research experience.
- Combining the clinical work with research demands and coursework has been difficult at times, especially if personal issues unrelated to the course crop up.
- It can be difficult to juggle all the different elements of the course - i.e. placement, academic coursework and the research project however the university is really supportive in helping you to manage this.
- Placements are located either within trust (Birmingham and Solihull) or out of trust (Black Country). The majority of our year seem to be located out of trust in the Black Country (i.e. Dudley, Sandwell, and Wolverhampton). I've found the commute to my placement in Wolverhampton difficult at times due to motorway roadworks and it can take me up to 1 hour 30 to get to placement in the morning, despite living in the West Midlands. Aside from this, the course is very manageable at the moment. But as we are only on placement three days a week it is manageable.
- As to be expected, juggling different assignments/research and placements requires organisational skills.
- I think it's juggling all the different components that is demanding, but the course team and my placement supervisor are approachable and supportive.
- No.
- It can be at times when deadlines are looming, but these are spaced through the three years.
- Getting in touch with research supervisors and tutors can be difficult at times which makes it difficult when you require research supervision or need to book placement visits.
- "I've found that juggling my responsibilities as a parent and being a trainee difficult, particularly due to having a placement quite a distance from my home. And trying to find childcare
- Furthermore, as most trainees are on placement "outside of trust" it can be quite demanding doing all of the intrust admin whilst not being able to access trust computers.
- Although I haven't formally started my thesis project yet. I can see that data collection will be quite demanding.
- Academic work load

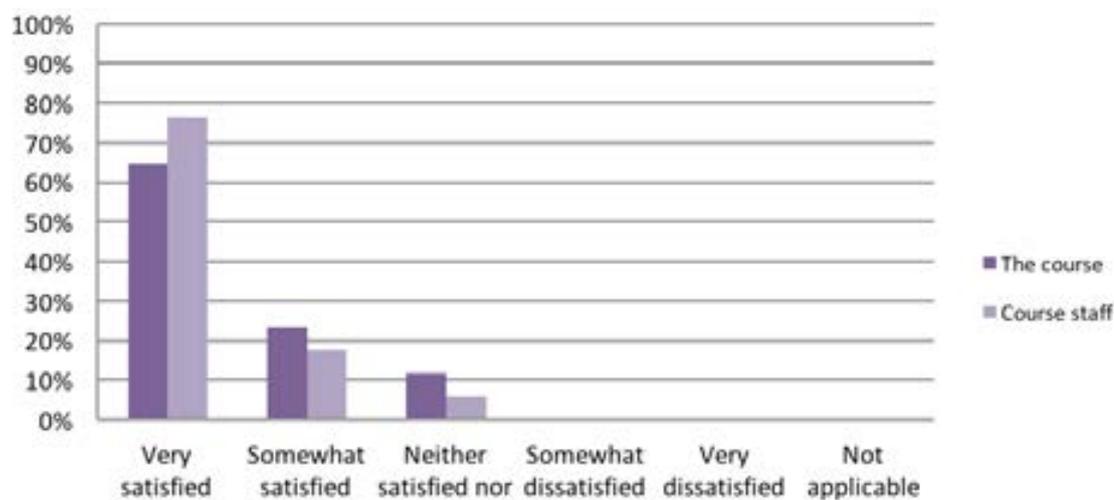
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	95%
“Buddy”	100%
Manager	53%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	53%
Professional Mentor	5%
Personal Tutor	95%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	95%
Independent personal advisor	26%
Other	21%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- Appraisal tutor (x4)
- Access to the therapy network and personal therapy

### How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

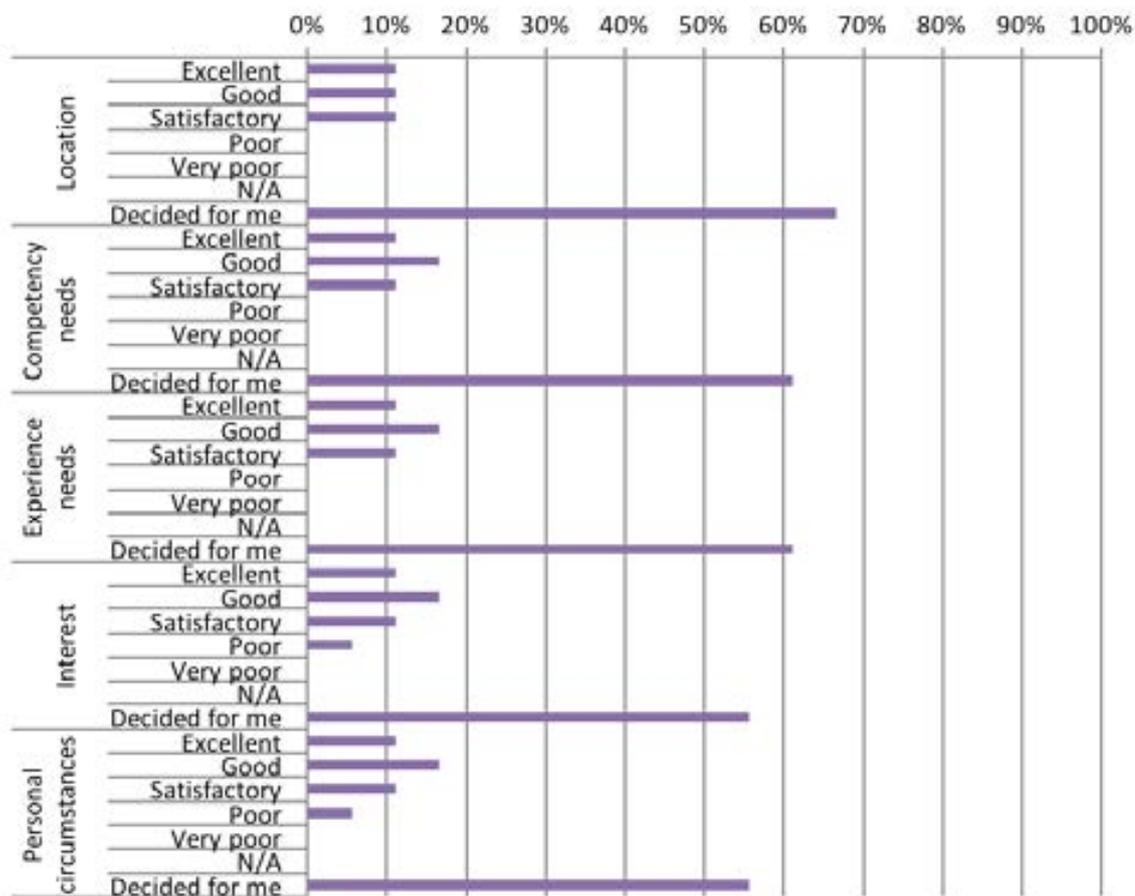


**Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

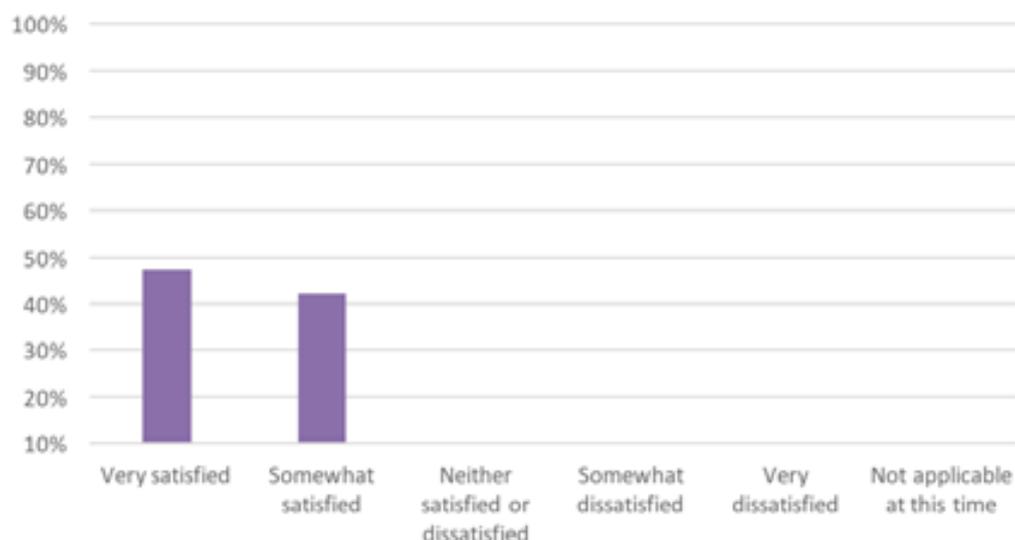
- My tutor has been accessible and supportive throughout the year. I have also had support from the course to access personal therapy through local therapy networks
- If the need arises there is a lot of support available. The University have been very flexible.
- The course has been very supportive, particularly my placement tutor. I can't praise her highly enough.
- I have had difficulties in my first placement due to wider service issues, and there was a concern that the placement was going to break down. The course team have been very supportive with this, and have done all they can to support me through these difficulties by providing me with various options going forward.
- Lots of support
- I have found the course team to be very supportive when difficulties have arose. They were easy to access and advised of other areas to seek support as well.

## Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



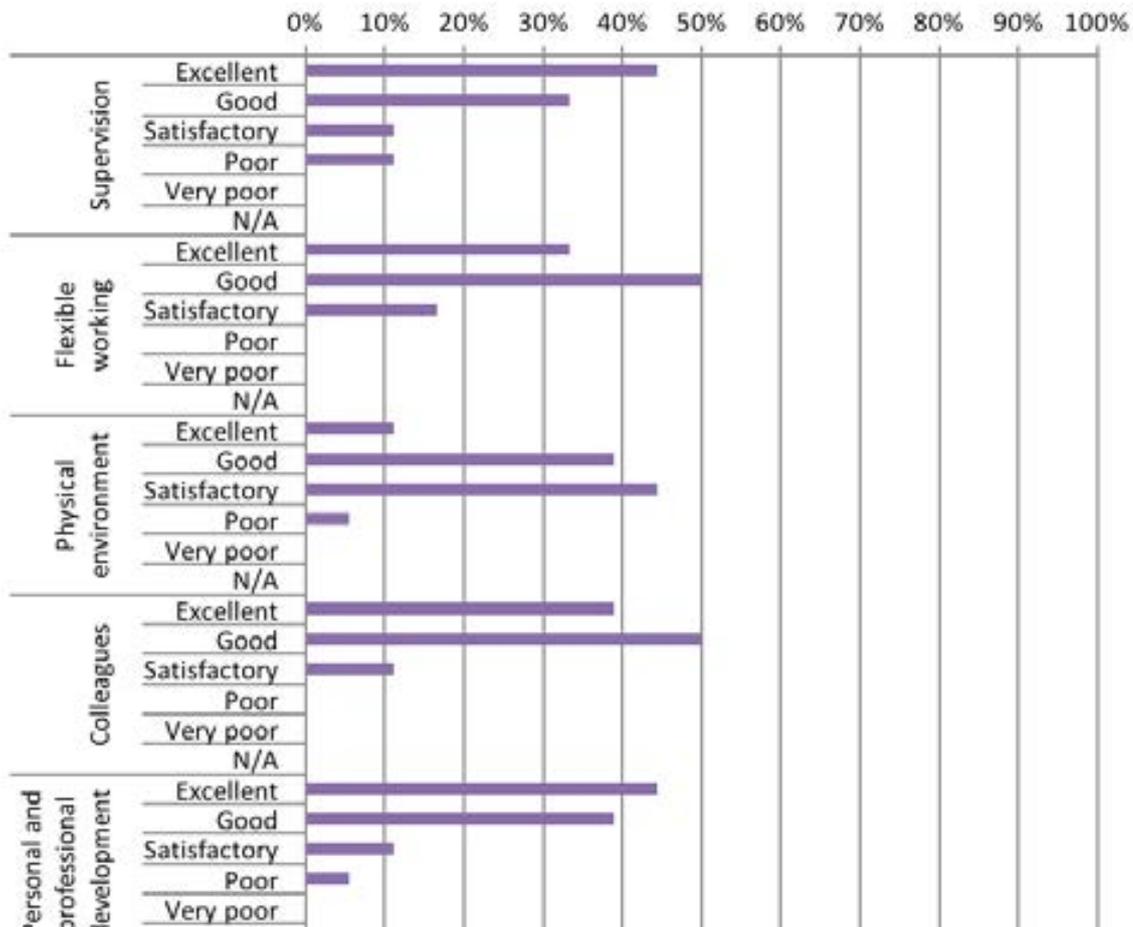
### With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



#### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- The course team do their best to consider everyone's requests/needs/demands in relation to placement at a time services are changing and potential supervisors are thinner on the ground. 3rd years have much more input too.
- Teaching block helpful in establishing connections with the rest of the cohort and preparing us for first placement.
- I had quite a lot of clinical experience prior to the course so I was not too worried about placement basics. I felt some things were laboured a bit too much (active listening skills, etc.), but I might not have felt like this if I hadn't done much clinical work before.
- Because we all do placements in a random order, sometimes key bits of teaching for certain placements come after you've completed that placement. Although this can't be helped with the way placements are currently run on the course, it's something that I feel could be strengthened going forward.
- In 1st year, we were given a general overview on communication skills, and an introduction to most client populations that we will work with on placement. I felt this prepared and gave me confidence for going on to placement.
- A lot information about processes for placement and competencies are provided which helps with anxiety. You are able to express a preference for particular client groups for your foundation placement and most, if not all trainees got one of their preferences in my year. A lot of people also ended up being on foundation placements in areas they were happy with.
- At the beginning of the course we had a week of communications skills teaching and also a one-day placement preparation workshop.
- Lots of choice in third year for core placement and specialist placement
- We had some initial clinical practise sessions in year 1 and general teaching in a 6 week block which included assessment and formulation before we began placement. This was helpful in providing a secure base. There is also a lot of paperwork and we had sessions on this prior to our first placements. In regards to the specific skills i.e for each client group it is luck of whether the teaching falls before you start the placement or after you've finished since we all do different placements at different times.
- I have found that although the course does give you a good introduction to models it does not prepare you for using those models with the type of complex presentations that you meet in secondary care mental health. I have found myself having to seek a lot of additional resources and books to support the work I am doing on placement. My placements supervisor has been helpful on signposting me to useful resources however I often feel as though I am playing catch up

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).

- Some issues regarding supervision, however the course and my appraisal tutor in particular have been great at helping me work through them.
- Desk space can sometimes be an issue, although this should be organised for you by your placement supervised before you start. My priority for placements was that they were towards the north of the patch, as I had a long commute. This was always facilitated even in my first year placement.
- My experience of supervision on placements has been variable - from terrible to wonderful. I don't know how much control the course has over this, though, as they need placements and so often might not have the luxury of waiting for an outstanding supervisor.
- The placement in first year is a 10-month foundation core placement. Placements in second year are two 5-month core placements followed by either two 5-month placements or two parallel placements in final year (one core and one specialist). There is an option for your specialist placement in final year to be abroad if you are up to date with academic work.
- Quality of supervision depends on the individual, some placements have been excellent, others only satisfactory.
- The course are quite good at ensuring supervisors are aware of the minimum supervision required and the need to observe trainees. If we are not receiving this the course are able to offer support. Initial placement documents ensure we can prompt the discussions with our supervisors. I have found that as placements are becoming more difficult to obtain by the university, core placements are becoming more specialist which makes it difficult when you want to gain your generic skills.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	37%
No	42%
Don't know	21%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	79%
No	11%
Don't know	11%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Coventry and Solihull.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	95%
Don't know	5%

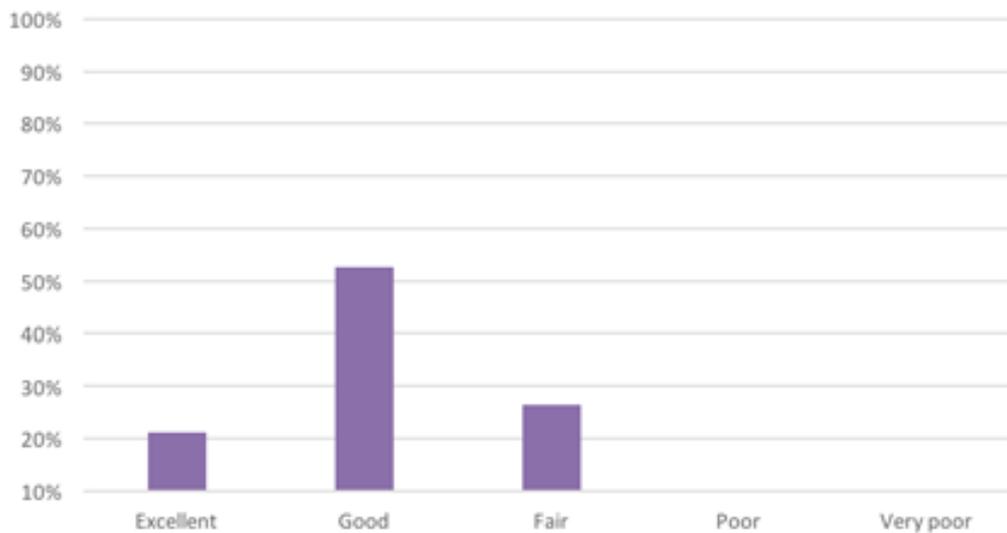
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	21%
Good	53%
Fair	26%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- You largely have control over this. Use your study days (not all courses offer this) find a way of working that suits you and allows you to keep plodding on
- It is possible, but stressful, to leave too much until the last minute.
- I have managed to keep up with several different hobbies alongside the course without any issues so far.
- Travel takes up a lot of time and can be expensive, which has an impact. I am unable to move during training so there was no way of avoiding this.
- A work life balance has been easy to achieve so far during my foundation year. At times you will need to make decisions and sacrifice things but I find that if you are strict and use your study days you don't need to spend hours at evenings or weekends.
- I have a good work life balance at the moment. We have a study day every Monday, which is helpful. I imagine the balance may become more challenging as time goes on when the course becomes more demanding.
- As a third year completing my thesis takes up a lot of time, but this is not more than I expected it to be and work/life balance was fine in year 1 and 2.
- Can get a bit unbalanced at times of deadlines, but for the most part I have had a good work life balance
- If you use your study days well, you do not have to spend too much of your free time on university related work. You have a study day a week and more over summer which has

**How do you rate your financial quality of life?**



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- You can afford a decent independent quality of life in Birmingham on band 6 wages, I know some trainees are house sharing, but you can easily afford a one bed flat.
- The employing trust are not supporting Widening Access to Training.
- Some courses are being supported with applying for tax exemptions however the course have not supported us with this. If I had known this before starting the course I would have chosen a different course as financially I would have been much better off.
- I worked as an Assistant Psychologist for a city council prior to getting on training, and was paid more than I am as a trainee so I have taken a slight pay cut. Our trust also will not support us with widening access scheme payments so we continue to pay tax despite trainees on other courses not paying tax.
- Compared to my salary Pre-training, my finances are a lot better. If you have a placement which is 20 miles away though you cannot claim this back as you can only claim back university days and I have found that this has been a drain on my income more than anything else. But all in all, better than Pre-training!
- Whilst I believe trainees are paid a good wage, I feel the WATS has presented a number of difficulties and equalities (in terms of trainees on one course being eligible and others not).

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- The diversity of experience. Fantastic learning and development opportunities. Everything.
- The cohort is a real mix of personalities, and the university staff are knowledgeable and approachable.
- I enjoy the cohort, we all get on well and it is always nice to see everyone. I also enjoy the variety of placement experiences that are available.
- I really like our reflective practice groups - they are a great chance to meet up with friends and learn from one another, as well as reflecting on the work you've done and the challenges that you face.
- I particularly enjoy the teaching and being with my colleagues on the course. I also find the reflective practice groups a great forum to share and talk through problems in relation to placement, the course, or personal lives
- Reflective practice groups
- Placement or psychodynamic teaching.
- Friendly and very supportive course team and a great cohort of trainees.
- I'm really enjoying my placement and learning a lot!
- It is a nice week balance, with a study day and a training day each week.
- I enjoy teaching days (currently a Friday) as the teaching is really interesting and it's good to catch up with the rest of the cohort.
- Supportive course.
- A very supportive and approachable course team
- We have a really supportive cohort which has been really helpful at stressful times throughout our training.
- My favourite aspect of the course is the supportiveness of my fellow Trainee's. A good support network of colleagues and friends is very important when doing this course.
- Placement - lots of variety and so much learning done whilst on placement
- Experiencing different placements, meeting new people, new challenges, and developing professionally and personally.
- 3rd wave focus

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- Come to Birmingham its brilliant. Trainees are generally very happy here. A very supportive course team who treat you like colleagues.
- The course structure has changed as of this year and applicants will need to choose areas of therapy to specialise in. This will change the experience of trainees going forward. I think Birmingham are one of the first to do this. It will be an interesting time to be at Birmingham, sometimes it felt that things weren't always working that well and these tended to be the things that had always been done a certain way (e.g. getting marking back on time, having printed handouts before lectures). Everything will be new from this year so hopefully these issues won't occur for future trainees.
- I think the course staff appreciate a diverse set of experiences which is reflected in our current cohort. I would suggest that anyone who hasn't followed the 'typical' route on to the course should still consider applying to Birmingham
- At present, the University of Birmingham is one of the only doctorate courses that does not exempt trainees from paying income tax under the Widening Access to Training (WAT) scheme, whereas most other courses do provide tax exemption for their trainees.
- The course could do more to support parents/carers as I have noticed that this does not seem to have been taken into count when deciding placements.
- Compared to peers on other courses we seem to have the least number of marked assignments.
- Though it's a clinical psychology course, the course at Birmingham does not feel overly reflective or emotionally attuned. We have a reflective practice space and psychodynamic teaching by external facilitators, however outside of this, the course team can appear more academic than clinical in their approaches.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Everyone who meets minimum criteria sits the written test at the university (we are looking into the possibility of an on line test but may not happen in time for this year).
- Then shortlisted candidates have 3 different interviews, academic, clinical and personal suitability.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.

Teaching	One day per week but there are blocks at the beginning of some terms that vary according to year group
Placement	On average 3 days per week in years one and two, goes up to 5 days per week after thesis handed in, in year 3
Personal Study	On average one day per week but also a block in year 3
Research	This is part of the personal study day

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

18 responses (18% of 99 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	61%
Year 2	17%
Year 3	22%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	6%
25 – 29 years	72%
30 – 34 years	22%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	39%
Twice	22%
3 times	33%
4 times	6%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	56%
MRes	0%
Diploma	11%
Post Graduate Certificate	22%
Conversion course	6%
None	17%
Other	11%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	6%
2 years	28%
3 years	22%
4 years	17%
5 years	22%
6+ years	6%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	67%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	6%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	50%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	11%
Research Assistant	28%
Voluntary Research Assistant	44%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	72%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	22%
Other	28%

## The selection process

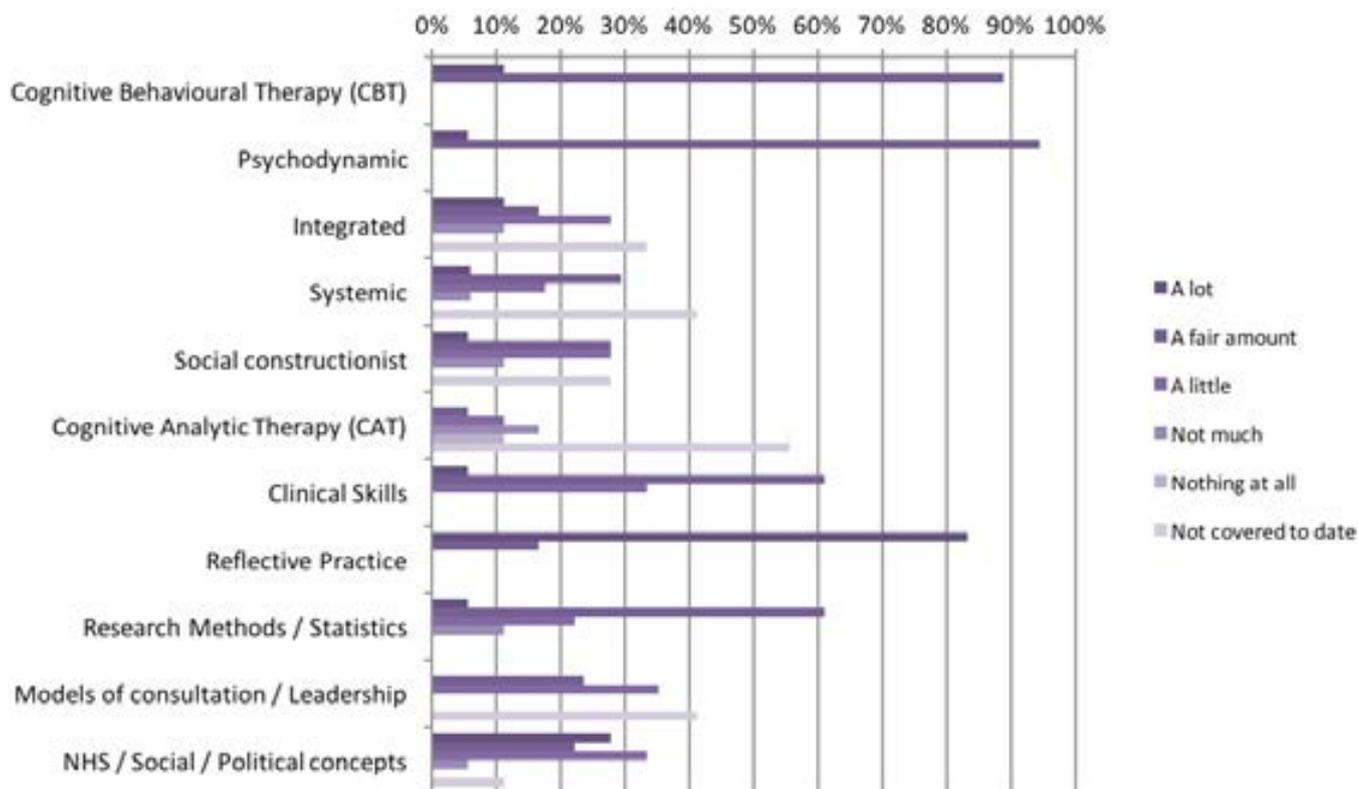
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- I found the panels encouraging and friendly, particularly in the personal interview. They were sensitive to what I spoke about and were not intrusive.
- I actually really enjoyed the interview day. It was very relaxed and the trainee reps and staff made me feel very comfortable. I was continually reminded to just be myself and that was really helpful.
- Warm and welcoming. got the feeling they were trying to get the best out of me and genuinely interested in my experiences
- Really lovely interview. The panel were very supportive and there was a real sense that they wanted you to do your best.
- I interviewed here three times in total, each time the atmosphere felt supportive. All interviewees sat in a large room to be called for interview and had current trainees they could ask questions, and the course staff gave a presentation about the course at Salomon's. The interview process felt encouraging and supportive, and it did not feel that they wanted to trip you up, it felt that they were encouraging you to reflect on your experiences. Since they have tested research skills in the written test they don't have a research panel; instead they have two interview panels; one looking at your clinical experience and the other a personal panel looking at your personal values and characteristics.
- I was really nervous but I felt that the course did their best to put you at ease, and I felt that they wanted to get to know you as a person which I liked
- The Salomon's interview was my first interview, and I was really nervous but they made me feel as comfortable as possible. They always have current trainees around to chat to you and help to relieve some of the anxiety.
- Some of the interview questions were challenging, but the panels were warm and empathic. My overall feeling of the day was positive, and I feel that the course puts a lot of thought into the process to make it as supportive as possible. Also, as far as I am aware, the course will call you to tell you the outcome of your interview (whether you have an offer or not), which for me sums up the effort they put into caring about the applicants as individuals.
- We had 2 30min interviews, one about our clinical experience (role play, application of model to a case, ethical issues etc.) and one about our personal experiences prior to training (difficult life experience, background, what lead us to clinical psychology, personal values etc.)
- It was obviously nerve wracking, but it felt like the course did everything they could to make it easier for us. The interviewers were kind and patient, and really worked to try and get the best answer out of you.
- I found Salomon's to be a really warm environment and everyone involved in the process seemed to try their utmost to make me feel comfortable and reduce my anxiety.
- Good communication from the course throughout the whole application process
- Written test was alright, quite well organised, friendly staff around, and a bit of an opportunity to see the beautiful campus
- The interview itself was great. I mean it was obviously anxiety provoking but it felt like staff tried to find out more about me rather than find flaws in me. I felt comfortable with everyone. Service users and current trainees were on the interview panels, which I think is really good. Again, that made me feel anxious at the time but I think it's important to have representation from current trainees and staff.
- I found the interview process good. The interviewers were respectful and considerate. They seemed really interested to get to know me and to get the best from me.
- A positive experience. Current trainees were on hand on the day to offer support/answer questions.

The interviewers did not try to trick me or tear me apart, there were no good cop, bad cop games. The very first question was difficult and this threw me - there was a long silence. But because staff were friendly and supportive, I was able to get back on my feet and do well.

- I found it supportive and containing. I felt that they wanted to get to know me.
- Interviewers were warm and friendly. It felt like they wanted to get the best from me. The day was well organised and it was helpful/nice to have current trainees around throughout the day to answer questions. Obviously still terrifying but the best experience I could hope for considering my nerves!
- I felt that the university/interviewers tried to get the best out of me, in what can be a very anxiety provoking situation. They had current trainees in the waiting room which helped to calm nerves.
- The interview at Salomon's was a good experience, even though I was pretty nervous. The atmosphere in the waiting room created by the staff and trainees was very supportive and encouraged all the applicants to drop any competitiveness. They gave a talk about the programme and interviews which made you feel like you could really start imagining yourself on the course. They also made it clear that you weren't being judged for anything that you asked outside of the interview rooms.
- In the personal interview, there were 3 members of staff and I found it hard to judge their reactions to what I was saying as most of them kept quite neutral expressions. They were clear and kind and didn't push with questions about difficult experiences but let you keep your own boundaries. I felt I was too honest in this interview and probably made myself sound like an anxious wreck, but I think they valued the honest reflections and didn't seem to hold it against me!
- The clinical interview consisted of reading a vignette, and then going to a larger panel and doing a role play with one staff member. The staff, trainee, and service user then all asked a few questions. I felt this interview panel were friendly and encouraging and got a sense that it didn't matter so much if you don't know how to do everything as long as you can be honest about what you do and don't know.
- I experienced the interview process as warm and supportive.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



**What other topics are covered by your course?**

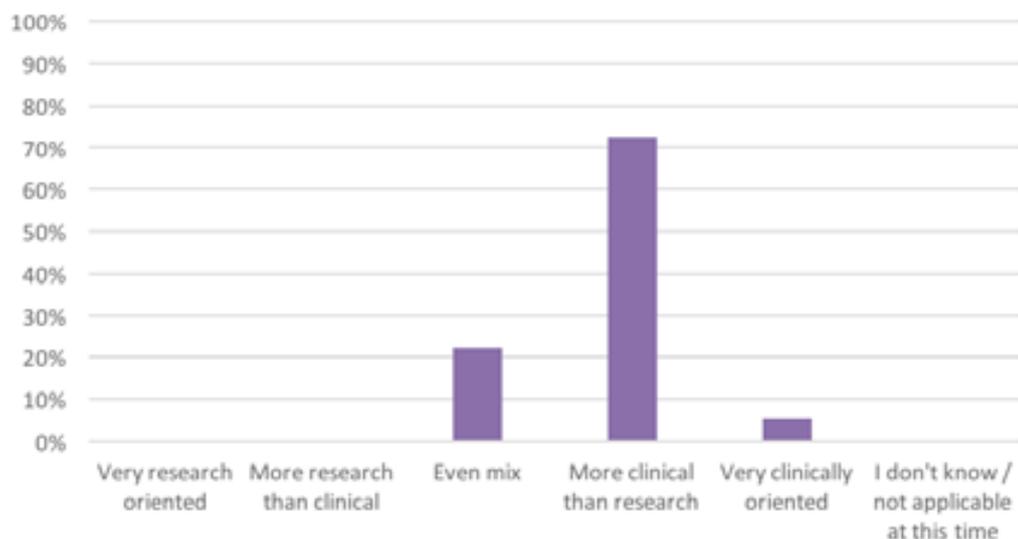
Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	20%
Mindfulness	60%
Schema Therapy	0%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	0%
Solution Focused Therapy	10%
Neuropsychology	90%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	20%
Other	10%

**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

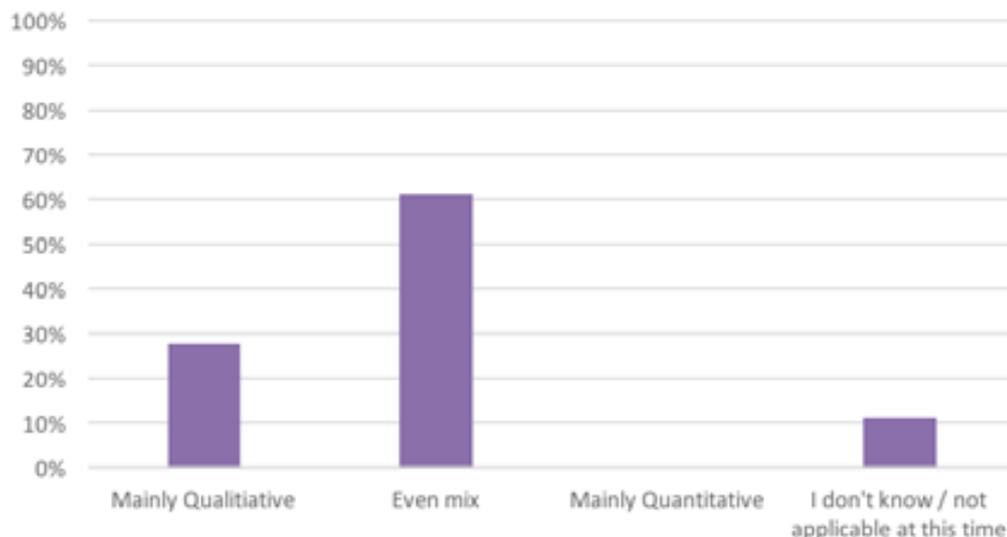
- Salomons definitely takes a breadth over depth approach and tries to give trainees exposure to a range of different models rather than focusing on developing a more in depth competence in one. This has obviously advantages and disadvantages.
- I'm only in the first year but Salomons appears to be less heavy on CBT teaching than other courses from what I gather; which may be a good think if you've had a lot of experience of CBT beforehand or got a CBT qualification.
- It feels like they aim to give us a broad understanding of lots of different models. Whilst this might mean that you get a less in-depth understanding of individual models, it does allow you to work out what kind of clinical psychologist you want to be and pursue your own interests.

- I am only in the first year, so can only speak for what I have been taught to date. The course has always put emphasis on teaching a variety of different models, as opposed to just two in other institutions, which does mean that less time is spent on each of these. However, this is doctorate level work and you are expected to do further reading on models you are applying in practice and specifically the ones you are demonstrating your model specific competencies in. The course also spends a good amount of time on reflection, which is a key strength of the course.
- Salomons spends a lot of the first few months talking about the lifespan and broader issues, such as societal, environmental and cultural factors that might influence presentation. Although this means we might have less model-specific teaching early on, it means that we are spending a lot of time reflecting on current issues, which has also been beneficial. I believe that we will be taught more broadly on a range of models rather than a lot of detail on fewer models.
- Compared to other courses there is a lot less emphasis on CBT, We haven't had much systemic/ neuro teaching yet but this comes later on in the course.
- In the first year, it seemed a bit CBT heavy, I think, but this year (2nd) it's more balanced. We had a really amazing week block of systemic therapy and have had exposure to various models and ways of working (play therapy, narrative therapy, etc)
- The course does well to provide a good balance between most of the major models currently in use in Clinical Psychology.
- It seems like we have had less CBT teaching and opportunity to practice. I was glad I already had some experience in CBT (as a low intensity practitioner). This made my first placement much easier.
- There is a big focus on social and political aspects - inequality, power, privilege, gender issues, culture etc. and reflection on our own personal relationships with these dimensions.
- We haven't covered all of these areas so far in 1st year but I think Salomons covers a bit of everything so you get a good breadth of knowledge, even if you don't have one focus in any particular area.
- A large part of the first year teaching focuses on lifespan issues - I feel that this has provided a solid foundation and will be useful throughout my career, however at times it has felt like not enough time has been spent on model specific teaching.

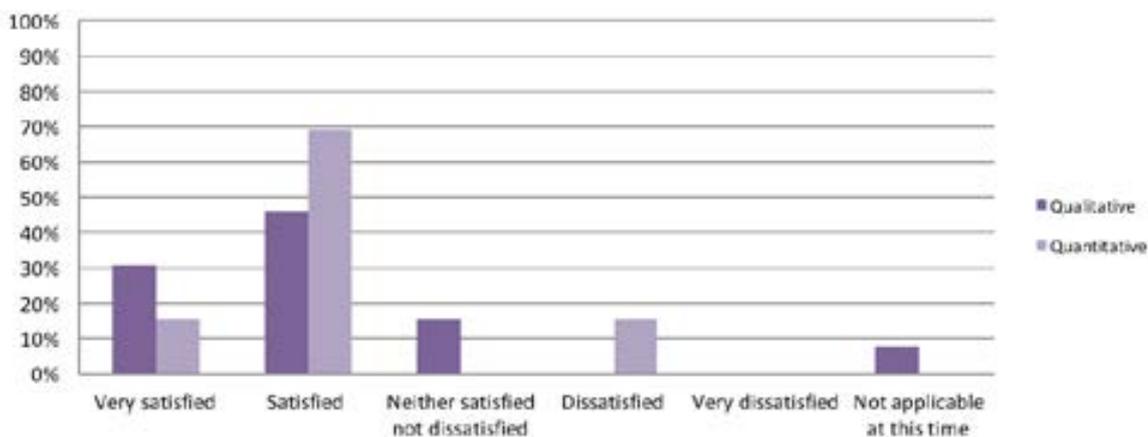
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



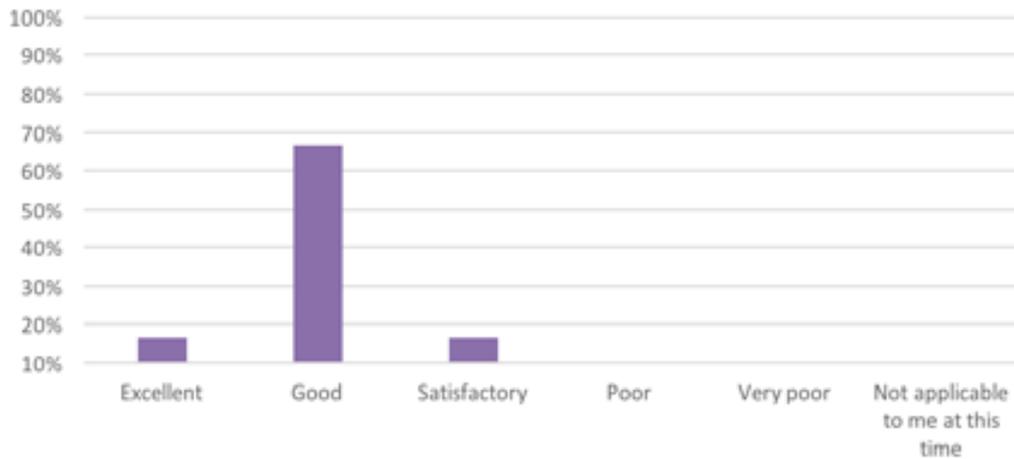
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



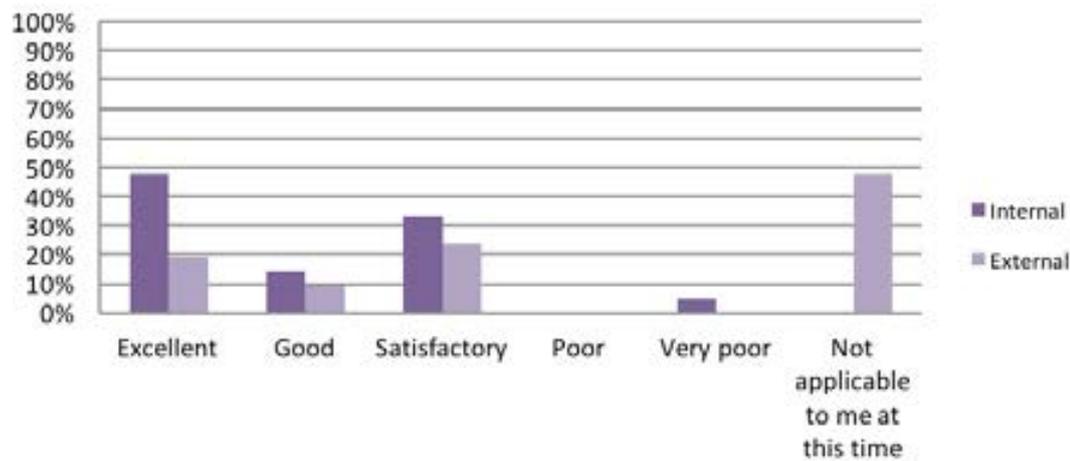
**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- The course is comprehensive in its coverage of research methods and issues.
- We have been supported to start thinking about our research project quite early, which ultimately is going to be really useful. The staff are very supportive.
- I used to think Salomons is mainly qualitative but I think it really depends on your research supervisor. I'm doing a qualitative project but even that includes some quantitative research (which is helpful and important). There are some staff members who seem to really favour one or the other, and some who are ok with both. There isn't an awful lot of teaching on quantitative research, though. Qualitative research is covered a bit more, but often relatively superficial.
- Course tends to focus on qualitative research.

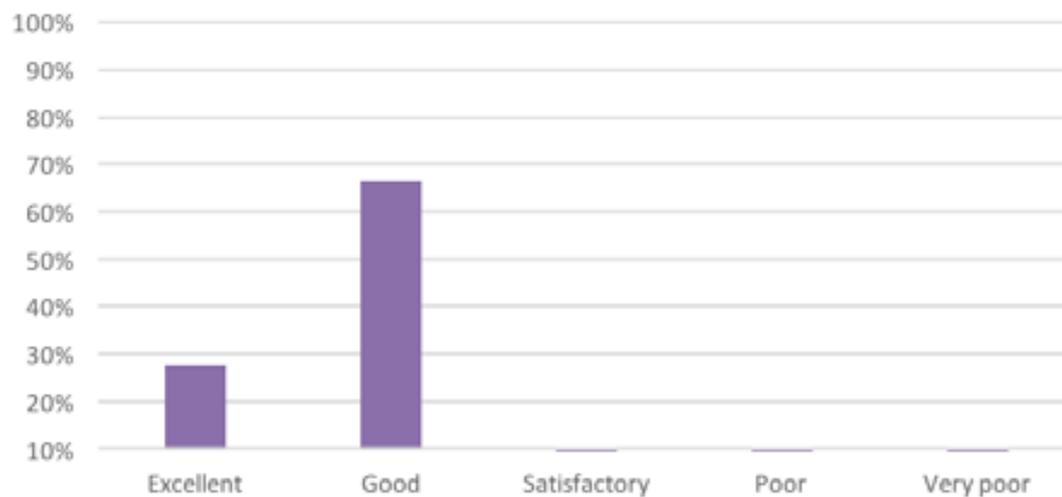
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



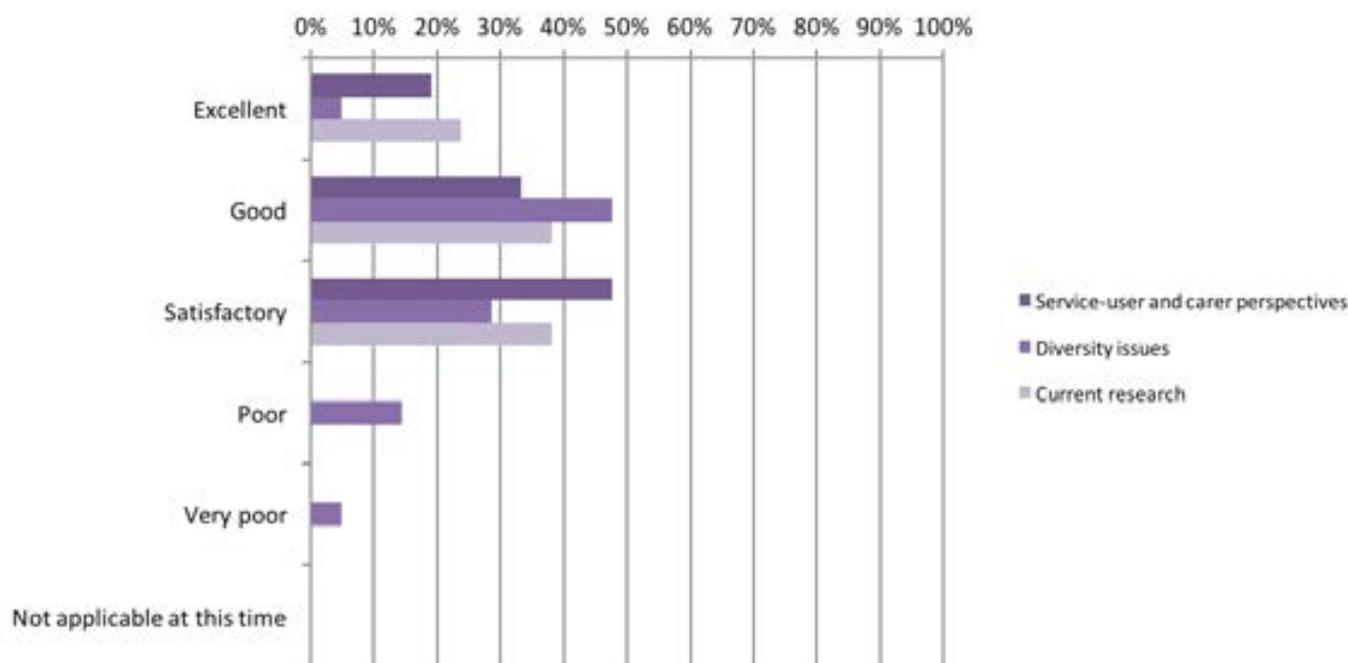
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

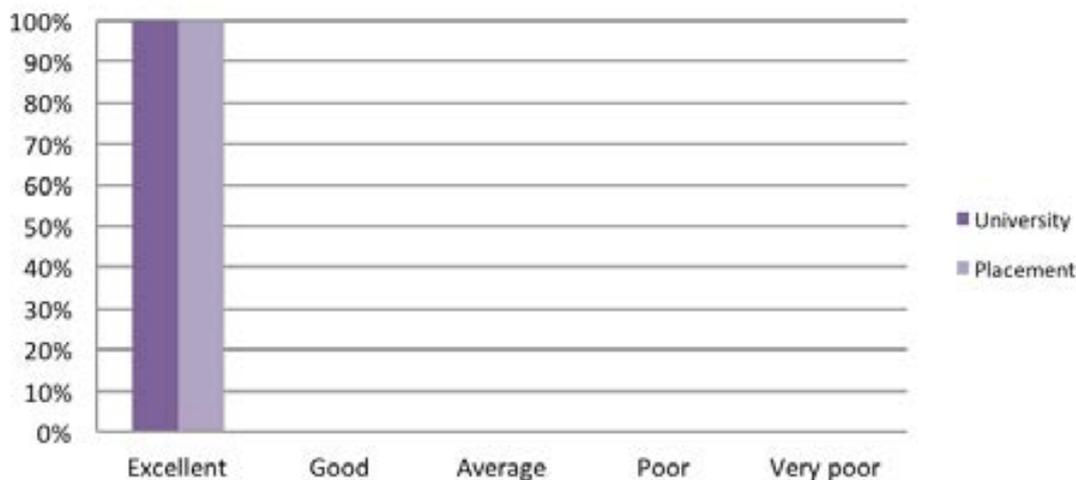
- The experience of teaching depends a lot on your cohort. Most teaching tends to involve a lot of discussion within your cohort. I've personally really enjoyed this, I feel very lucky to be able to spend so much time thinking and talking with such an interesting and insightful group of people.
- The course encourages service user and carer involvement and there is a good amount of service user involvement in teaching and allows for discussions of current issues.
- The course encourages us to be adult learners, and to seek out information we care about. There is less structured teaching than maybe some of the other courses and we do a lot of work in groups/ seminars, with heavy emphasis on the importance of reflective practice (with bi-weekly reflective practice groups where members span all three years). Sometimes I have felt frustrated with the lack of formal, model specific teaching, which would have been helpful for my placement. The first year has focused more on CBT and Psychodynamic teaching. There has been a heavy emphasis on service-user involvement, and we have service-user taught sessions relatively often. However, I value the critical and reflective ethos at Salomons, and the structure of teaching so far has encouraged us to think holistically about the clients we see (and also to better understand our own feelings and responses to things).
- Pretty good all around. Quite a few sessions have included service user and carer perspectives, often in a way that is not tokenistic but shows genuine service user involvement, with some service users taking the lead completely.
- There have been some sessions where I thought service-user input would have been valuable, but this is of course not always easily arranged. Nonetheless, the course have been receptive to our feedback on the whole, and I think we're quite fortunate to be exposed to a diverse group of presenters/lecturers.
- Standards vary widely. Staff lecturers are solid, and some guest lecturers have been amazing and inspiring. However, some guest lecturers have presented very dry PowerPoints and failed to engage the group.
- We are lucky to have a good level of service user involvement in our teaching

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

11% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Yes the course is emotionally demanding due to the pressure of the course, clinical work and self-reflection. Depending on trainees experiences, it seems that people find different parts more or less demanding, e.g. depending on placements, supervisors etc. In the third year in particular there is also a high work load due to completing the thesis.
- Juggling placement, teaching, research and multiple assessment deadlines, but then I guess this would be an issue on any course, i.e. not a specific issue related to the Salomons course
- At the moment I'm in the midst of my major research project. That has been quite tiring. Other than that I've kept a good work-life balance across the course.
- As the course encourages reflection it can be quite difficult during some teaching, particularly if you have personal difficulties that are brought to the front of your mind during the teaching.
- In the first year you also have many deadlines around the same time; it is manageable but it is helpful if you are organised with your time from the start.
- Juggling research, academic work and placement
- The heavy reflection has been emotionally taxing, and has meant that we have become very close as a cohort (so this has been both demanding but rewarding). The spread of deadlines in first year isn't too evenly spread, so this has been stressful (and would be especially challenging if you are not good at managing your own time).
- We have a lot of study days, and this is helpful. However, the course workload (combined with reading from placement) is still demanding in itself, and I have found it necessary to sometimes work on evenings and evenings.

- I was surprised by the emotional demands, particularly in the first semester (before Christmas). It seems like far more than other courses there is an expectation to bring yourself and your own experiences into the forefront, which I like, but is challenging and exposing.
- Issues with supervisor availability and placement arrangements added a significant amount of stress when beginning the course which required a lot of work on my part to try and correct. Support in learning how to apply therapy in practice has been lacking.
- Commuting. The course warns people about this, and I think it's an important thing to highlight. You can get by with a car if you are lucky but it's really not easy, and especially if you are placed outside of London (as many trainees are), it can be a nightmare. Public transport in Kent/Sussex is not always ideal. Anyway, it's not impossibly demanding but worth bearing in mind when you make your choice.
- Coursework deadlines in the first year were quite demanding as you get eased into the course and when you've just found your feet you suddenly have to submit three pieces of work... but that's part of the process and everyone gets there in the end.
- I have found the emotional demands of training particularly challenging. I have been well supported by the course when I have asked for help/support with this.
- Having to sort out thesis supervisors by January in year one was stressful. And for the first deadline in March there are four assignments due on the same day.
- When things are busy, they are very busy!
- I think the course has been manageable.
- There is quite a high workload in 1st year as you have a lot of decisions to make about research projects and lots of regular assessment and evaluation processes to get used to, but I think this is true of every course, and Salomons seems like it has less of a manic workload than some other courses! It's really nice not having any exams.
- Juggling the competing demands of clinical work/placement, academic work and research has been challenging, particularly as I also have quite long commutes.

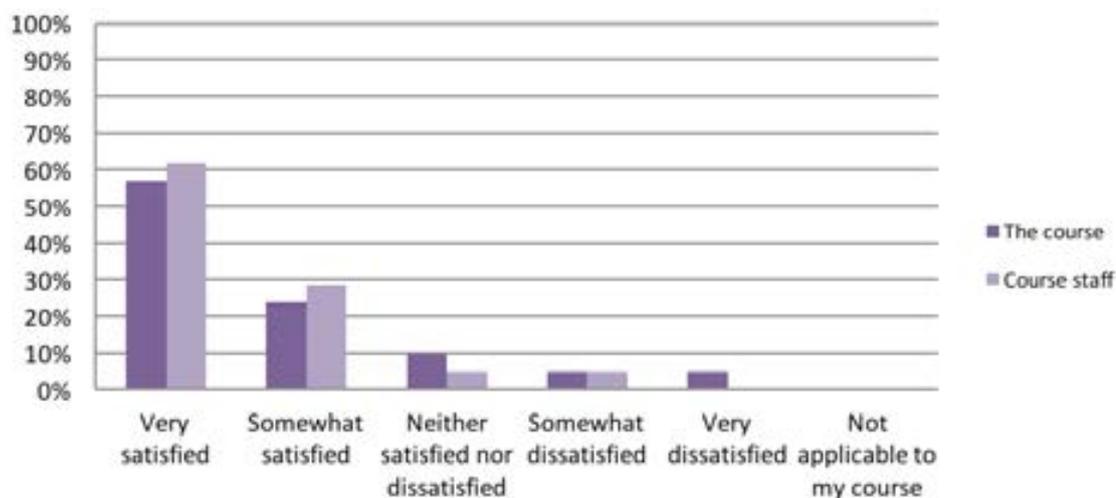
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	100%
"Buddy"	100%
Manager	100%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	89%
Professional Mentor	0%
Personal Tutor	11%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	83%
Independent personal advisor	0%
Other	22%

**Under “Other”, responses included:**

- There are also regular Practice Learning Sets - small groups of 6 trainees - in which various practice/placement related issues can be discussed with a facilitator
- Placement adviser (service user expert)
- Very supportive cohort, and an encouragement to engage in personal therapy
- My cohort!
- Admin staff are very helpful in answering any questions
- Service user advisor

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**



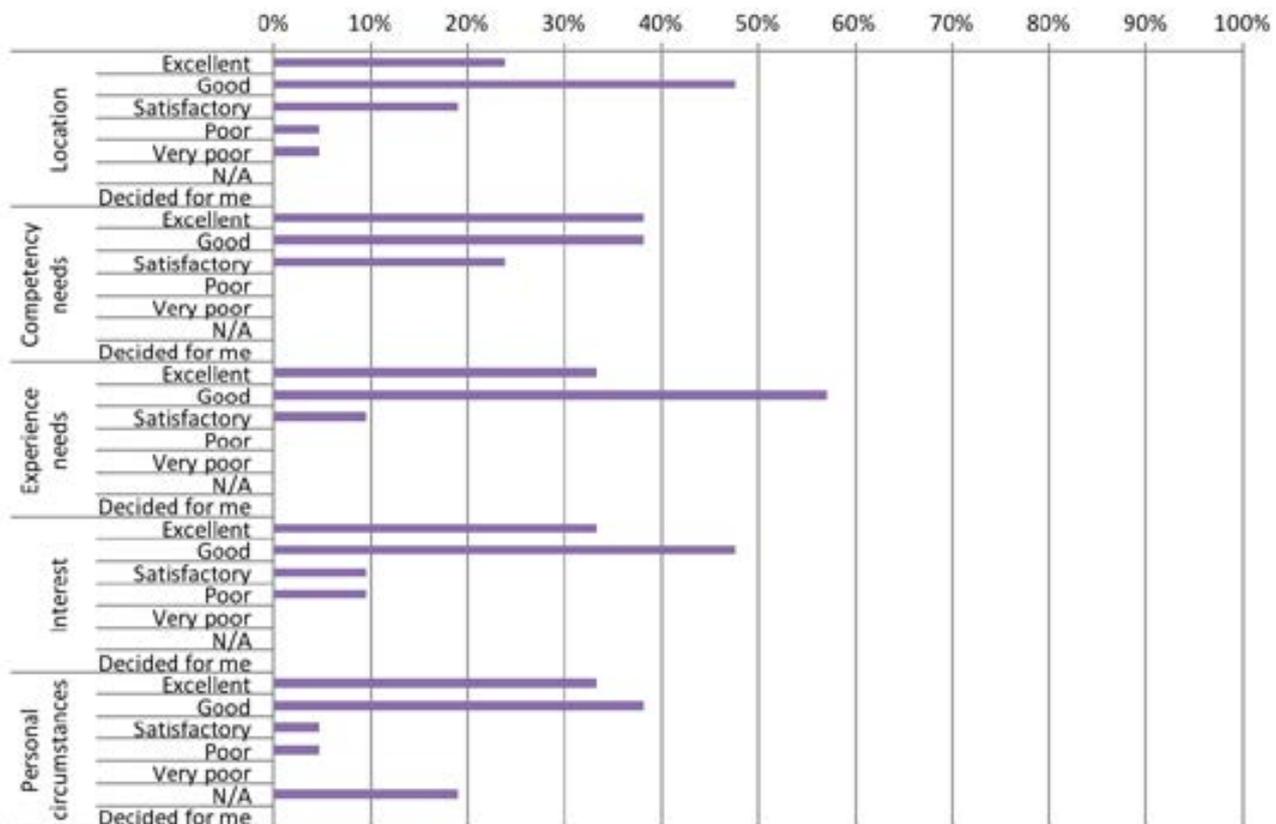
**Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

- I had one of my two placement supervisors telling me they are leaving on first day of my very first placement - my other supervisor and my manager as well as the Trust Training Coordinator have been very helpful and supportive in finding me another placement and ensuring a smooth transition.
- There’s a big focus on supporting yourself within our work.
- The course staff are approachable and responsive to your needs, this is not only teaching staff but admin staff as well, and who are all complete stars!
- The Salomons staff have been extremely supportive. They have worked hard to ensure that (as much as possible) we all have placements close to where we live. We also are given quite a few study days, which really help for keeping up with university work. The staff care about the trainees as individuals, and I would feel comfortable seeking further support if I needed it.
- The staff also put aside time in the teaching schedule to talk about upcoming assignments.
- My manager was very receptive to my placement and supervisor difficulties but sadly their hands were tied in some regards due to the desperate need to keep supervisors for subsequent trainees.
- I think the support you get from the course is pretty good overall. Most staff have always responded quickly to any queries I’ve had.
- Also, I think the admin team and librarians at Salomons are honestly amongst the most amazing people I have met. They are all very approachable, incredibly knowledgeable and helpful. Kind of the backbone of the course! And crucially, they are also really nice to chat with (if you have the time whilst rushing around trying to get your work done...).

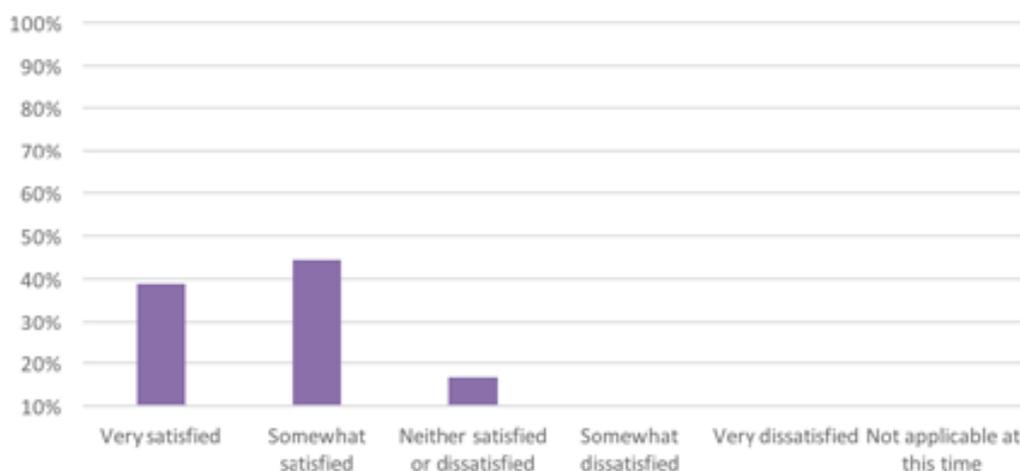
- I have felt very well supported by my manager when things have been difficult
- I have found the course to be supportive.
- My Salomons manager and current placement supervisor have both been very supportive.

## Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



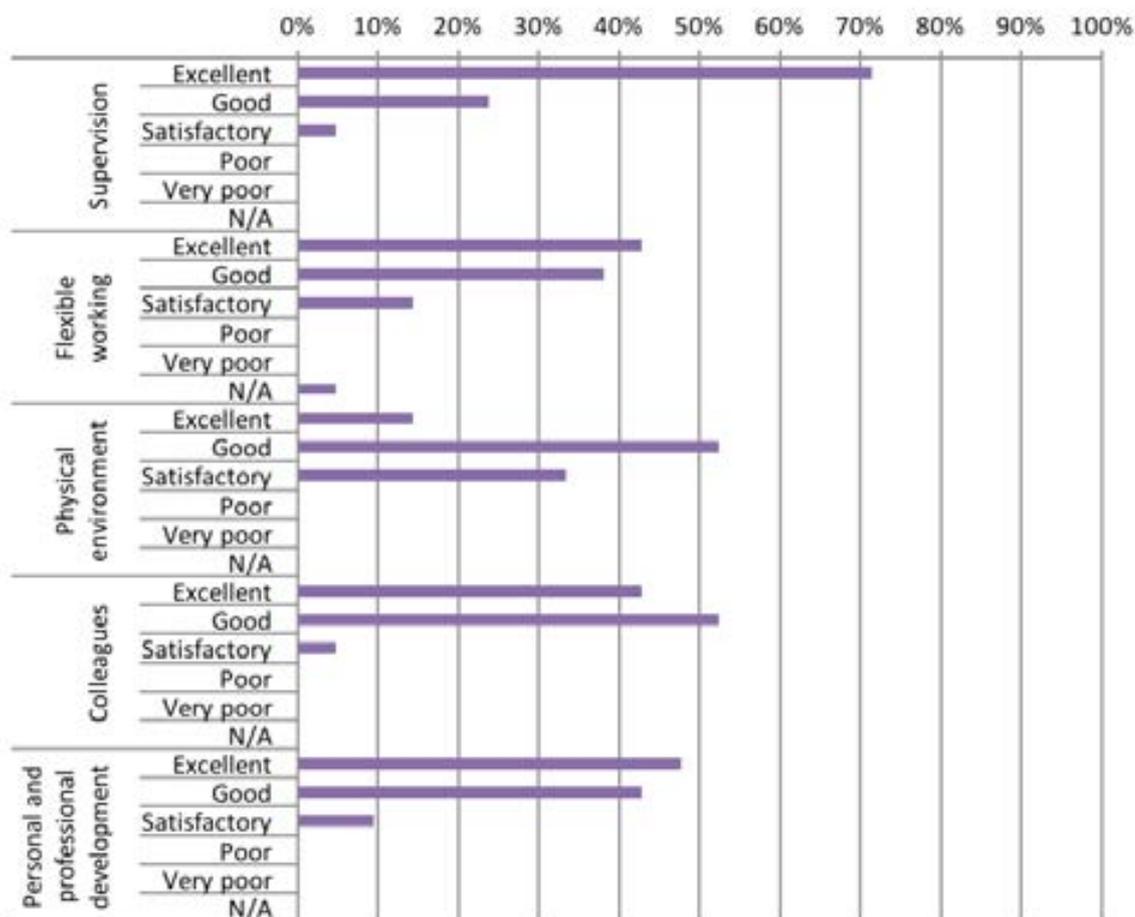
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- I think the course does the best it can. Understandably I think trainees will always find this anxiety-provoking and feel underprepared.
- I don't really know how much a course can prepare you for placement. Everyone comes with such diverse experiences and goes to such different placements. I think that the best way to learn is just to get stuck in and learn as you go!
- I remember in my first year feeling like I didn't know anything going in to placement. I think that's somewhat inevitable however, most training is through experience and it would be hard to teach you anything that would properly prepare you for going into placement.
- I think it is difficult for the course to prepare you for placement; not everyone's needs will be met at some will have placements focused on different models which have not yet been taught. However, as I said this is doctorate level work and you are expected to do reading. I think the most important part for preparation is the time and opportunity to practice clinical skills, which we had, and to discuss sensitive issues and concerns, which we did. Other than that you do really need to dive in. It is helpful to have the initial meeting with your placement supervisor as this is an opportunity to discuss your current experience and confidence, and discuss areas you may need more support and direction in.
- As we all have such varying placements, I'm not sure how feasible it would be to fully prepare us for placement. We did not do very much practical clinical skills before we started placement (assessment, therapeutic skills, risk management skills)-- what we did have was very helpful but I suspect if you did not have very much clinical experience, you might have been feeling nervous about starting placement.
- I think there was a sense that we didn't have much clinical teaching prior to starting placement. This wasn't something I minded - I had a lot of support from my placement supervisor and quite a lot of clinical experience - but I know some people found it very anxiety provoking.
- I think the placement preparation in your first year and second year is good, it's nice to have a bit of teaching before you start placement. In the first year I was anxious about coming into my (first!) placement and the teaching made me feel slightly less worried about it.
- The placement allocation process is not ideal because there are so many trainees and most of them would prefer London placements. Therefore, you have practically no input as to where you get placed. They take your post code into account but that doesn't mean an awful lot, I've had a bit of an iffy experience. But then again, the course does warn you that you might have to travel a fair bit, and ultimately it has worked out well for me. Whilst the placement journey was rubbish, my placement experience was amazing, so it was worth it.
- Third year allocations take place during second year, which feels early and rushed, and i don't think we get an awful lot of support or preparation about it. One teaching session and a meeting with your manager. But I guess it's difficult to organise it any other way.
- As this was my first placement, it's hard to say.
- Feels like we are prepared to feel 'safely uncertain' rather than equipped with knowledge and skills! But this does feel helpful in managing anxiety.
- As placements are so varied, I think it is very difficult to prepare everyone for placement - I felt as prepared as I could have done.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Covers a very wide area and most people end up having at least one placement where they have to travel.
- I am enjoying my placement a lot. My supervisors are very supportive and have been flexible in my work hours due to the distance I have to travel and also personal circumstances. I enjoy having the autonomy to manage my workload and to use supervision to discuss my needs and concerns. The team are lovely to work with and I have already been meeting some of my goals I have had for my personal and professional development.
- I have a split placement, which gives me experience with two different clinical populations. I'm really enjoying placement and learning a lot. Our first year placements (in adult MH) are 10 months long, so this really allows us to get involved in our teams and also to do some longer pieces of clinical work. I have really good supervision, and am working to develop competencies in some third wave therapies. They asked us for our preferences on location, but also for types of settings and population based on our needs, and I think that these have been met for most of my peers. Because the placements range from very urban (London) to very rural (SE Coast) we have a large variety of placements, which is valuable.
- I feel very lucky with my placement. My supervisor is incredibly supportive and I have the opportunity to practice in multiple models (psychodynamic, systemic, CBT). Only thing that is slightly disappointing is having to hot desk because the team doesn't have enough desks/computers.
- See my comment above. My first year placement wasn't in a great location for me BUT I had an amazing experience. My supervisor was very helpful throughout, and I have learnt more than I could

have dreamt of. My colleagues were lovely, and I am still in touch with them. My second year placement is also going well and I am sad to be leaving such an amazing team.

- I always had access to what I needed such as printing facilities, or rooms. Though rooms can be difficult. And I know that some trusts (Salomons spans multiple trusts) aren't as good with equipment as others, but as far as I know it's mostly reasonable."
- Very supportive supervisors and a team of four psychologists and two Salomons trainees. Reasonable workload, and regular, timetabled supervision. I feel very lucky.
- I live a bit further outside of Kent than most trainees and have managed to get placements in London so I'm not commuting too far.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	94%
No	0%
Don't know	6%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	17%
No	78%
Don't know	6%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in London, Brighton and the South East.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	22%
No	61%
Don't know	17%

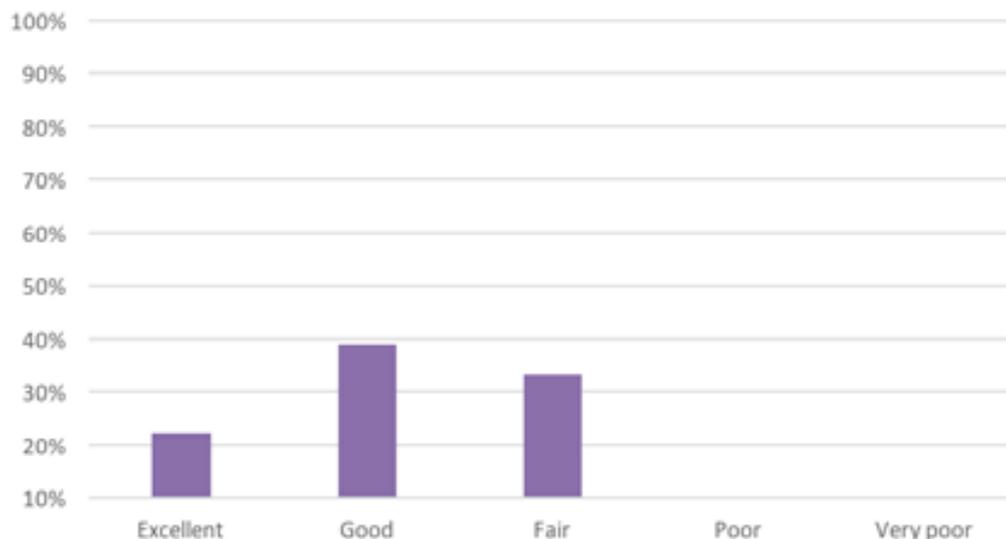
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	78%
Fair	22%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- I found it pretty good in the first year and then worse as the years went on! Now in the third year it is hard to maintain a balance with the thesis but there is still some time for the other parts of your life!
- I've had a good work-life balance up till my third year when the pressure set in a bit. The course can sometimes slip into the weekends when you have hand ins but I also know one person in my year who has never done any extra work outside of 9-5 Monday-Friday.
- I travel a fair distance as I chose to remain where I lived before getting on the course, which is out of area. This can mean that I have little time in the evenings. However, I consider my work life balance to be good; I use the time at university in breaks to study if I need, and use the study days to do all my studying so that I have the weekends off. It is do-able!
- I've had to think more about my work life balance towards the deadlines but other than that, even though it feels like I'm juggling loads at once, I am still able to socialise etc.
- The course is challenging, and I have had to work on evenings and weekends sometimes. However, the course allocates quite a few study days, which are really helpful.
- Honestly, I genuinely believe that this depends on you as a person.
- Yes, training is busy. Yes, you have a lot of stuff to do. But no, it's not impossible to do it 9-5. Sure, the occasional evening is likely going to happen but personally, I think it's all doable.
- Some people regularly work during weekends, others manage to stick quite nicely to 9-5.
- Me, I have worked evenings and weekends but I have also had days where I took it easier, so I would say it can be quite flexible, actually.
- I have been able to boundary and separate my work and personal time.
- It has been better than I expected so far. The commute is long - 90 minutes to placement or college, on average. They do warn you about this.
- There are times around deadlines when it feels like you are working all the time, but it comes and goes. If things are difficult outside of work this can be a major challenge.
- The course states we must have access to a car but I have not yet needed one.
- I don't think the workload has been unmanageable so have not had difficulty maintaining a healthy work-life balance (so far).
- Can be quite hard to maintain boundaries around home life when there is always so much more to learn/do!

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- It would be better if I weren't paying so much for petrol! Even so, the pay is amazing and we are so lucky to be paid for doing what we love! I still have enough to make ends meet and have a life.
- I feel really fortunate to be paid for training but it is a little frustrating that I live and work in London and we do not get the London weighting
- Keep in mind that if you live in London (and have a placement in London), you will still not receive London allowance, which can be tricky.
- However, the course pays for transport to placement, and also if training takes you away from the campus (we have had training in Surrey and will sometimes have teaching in London). Keep in mind that they use Tunbridge wells as the main base though.
- I am living in London Zone 2 and on placement in South London and Maudsley, but don't get London weighting as I'm a Salomon's trainee. Although I can manage with current salary it would be a significant strain off if I had the London weighting to help.
- Whilst the salary is of course very reasonable, unless you relocate near to the university, petrol expenses aren't covered by the course and these quickly rack up.
- Whilst commuting costs quite a lot, you do get reimbursed travel expenses. This depends on where you live but if you live near Salomons then you can claim nearly all of it back and some people get quite a lot of money back.
- But even if you don't take travel expenses into account, Band 6 is pretty good to live in I would say. Currently we do not pay taxes (because of the Access scheme), so I would think I am pretty well off. And even whilst we were paying taxes (before the Access scheme came into play) I was able to save money every month. So I would say it's great and a real privilege.
- I resent the fact that my placement is in outer London but we get no London weighting.
- I feel we are lucky to be in the position we are in - though it would probably be fair to give us some London weighting considering that's where the majority of placements are and where most people live.
- I think the course is generous - covers travel expenses on placement days including transport and parking, and overnight stays/lunch/dinner if placement is more than 1.5 hours away. Also tax-free salary up until now. Lots of annual leave (I think 28 days) which can be taken any time (apart from a couple of specific days in the year) - although no more than 4 teaching days per year can be taken off.
- Cost of living is high in the South East of England

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- I think the plurality of models and approaches.
- The reflective stance the course takes and the openness and friendliness of staff. Teaching days feel very relaxed and there is a lot of support from staff and students across all years.
- Reflective emphasis and the general open-mindedness and absence of a narrow dogma within the course teaching and staff. Salomons is definitely a course with some alternative and diverse topics of teaching that may be very limited or completely absent on other courses.
- Diversity teaching and other reflective elements
- I think the course has thought carefully about how to work with each cohort as a group. This and the reflective practice groups has meant I've had a really good experience of learning more about who I am in groups and finding strengths that I perhaps wasn't aware of before.
- This is difficult - I'm enjoying it all a lot. I have enjoyed a lot of the teaching, and I have met some amazing people, and I am really enjoying my placement, so all of it really! Yes there are difficulties but that is life, overall the course is great and I'm glad I have got the opportunity to study here!
- The cohort is amazing. Also the reflective, critical ethos of the course. We are constantly asked to challenge our perceptions and pre-existing interpretations, and I think this is really important for personal development. I also love the time in Tunbridge Wells, and the access to the Kent countryside.
- I think my favourite aspect is also the hardest - the huge emphasis on personal exploration and development. I really think this goes a long way to making you a better clinician and can be neglected by other courses.
- The general ethos and atmosphere of the course including the trainees and the staff has a very warm, almost family-like feel which helps to make you feel included and supported.
- Hmm. Hard to say. I think the people. I love my cohort.
- Teaching can be amazing, but isn't always. Obviously that's to be expected, no one can always deliver, and some lecturers are great whilst others aren't quite as good.
- Reflective group is another of my favourite aspects of the course but I have to say I have a love-hate relationship with it, and I think many people do. It's interesting, it's amazing, but can also be weird and challenging. But I wouldn't want to change it, it's an amazing experience and I've learnt a lot through it, personally and professionally.
- The level of personal-professional development I have been able to achieve through this course.
- Staff are supportive and we don't have exams.
- Excellent teaching, great ethos
- The social/political/critical underpinnings of all the teaching - reflection on social inequality/power/privilege/culture/service-user involvement, and personal development in relation to this.
- It's focus on building skills as a reflective practitioner and its integrative approach to formulation.
- It's great approach to diversity and integrative practice. It doesn't pick out any way of working as better than any other and gives you a great range of teaching.
- The critical, reflective nature of the course and learning in a supportive environment

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- The course centre will be moving to a more accessible location in the centre of Tunbridge Wells in summer 2017.
- A difficulty at times has been uncertainty - for example all the documents regarding placements were being updated this year which meant we spent some time being unsure of what was expected, which hasn't really changed as it's all quite flexible, whilst you do need to pass the core competencies, you do not need to be perfect on all model specific competencies which can make it hard to know what is expected of you. Additionally, this year the opportunity to fill out feedback forms for lectures has been stopped, which is a shame as this makes providing positive feedback and constructive comments difficult.
- The only thing I would really think about is travel/commuting. It's a practical issue but if you're doing a demanding course, such practicalities have a bigger impact than you'd expect. Salomons is a lovely place to study. Also, I think it's worth pointing out that Salomons cohorts tend to be quite large compared to most other courses (30+ trainees). I was a bit concerned about that but from what I have observed throughout my two years here, each of the year groups are really close (probably because of the way the course is ran). Most year groups have done a cohort-trip of some sort and go out together occasionally. I think you will inevitably end up with a great group of people and make some new friends!
- Best of luck with your application.
- The course has some strong critical psychology representation which is fantastic.
- Currently, the course is not well located for transport links, but it is due to move soon and this will change.
- We will be moving from the Salomons estate to Tonbridge town centre. This will be better facilities and transport-wise, but Salomons is beautifully tranquil and prestigious.
- If you want to reflect, be critical, be challenged, and reflect some more, Salomons is for you!
- Think very carefully about where you want to live and consider traffic and well as distance. Remember that your experiences prior to training are hugely important in shaping the Clinical Psychologist that you will become - it can be easy to slip into thinking that your Pre-training experiences are just things that will help you get onto the course!

## Courses Survey Results

**Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

**What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?**

■ Two Interviews

For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	8 hours
Placement	15 hours
Personal Study	10 hours
Research	4 hours

**What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)**

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# Cardiff University

19 responses (39% of 49 trainees)

## About the trainee

**What is your current year of training?**

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	42%
Year 2	47%
Year 3	11%

**What was your age when you started training?**

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	79%
30 – 34 years	16%
35 – 39 years	5%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

**How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?**

Attempts	Percent
Once	26%
Twice	16%
3 times	32%
4 times	21%
5 times	0%
6 times	5%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	5%
MA	0%
MSc	42%
MRes	16%
Diploma	11%
Post Graduate Certificate	26%
Conversion course	5%
None	21%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	0%
3 years	32%
4 years	5%
5 years	38%
6+ years	26%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	79%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	16%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	42%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	32%
Voluntary Research Assistant	16%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	58%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	21%
Other	26%

## The selection process

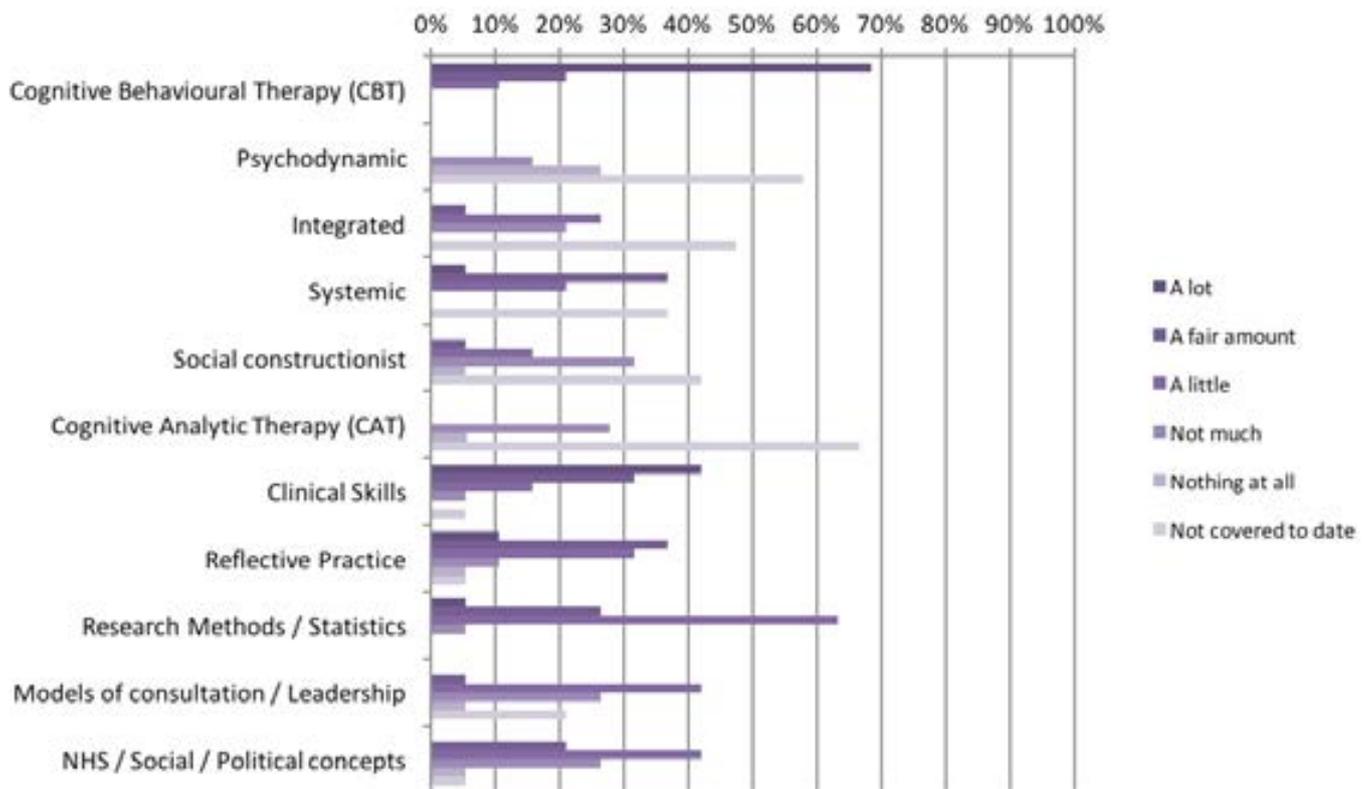
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Positive experience. It felt like they had made an effort to read my application form and tailored the questions to my CV rather than just ask generic questions.
- Very containing. Felt fair and as though they were trying to get the best from you
- Really supportive throughout the interview afternoon. There was an emphasis on encouragement to answer the questions in full and expand when necessary.
- Thoughtful questions, very friendly and fair
- One of best interview experiences I had. Really felt that the current trainees (helpers) and interviewees tried as hard as they could to put me at ease. I felt the questions were good, many of them helped demonstrate who you were in a way that couldn't be answered by a rehearsed answer. Really well organised day.
- I felt the interview was fair. Very supportive staff and encouraging trainees.
- The interview process took half a day and consisted of a written task, and two interviews (Personal/professional and academic/clinical). Interviews were organised so there were only about 12 candidates there at a time so it didn't feel too stressful. A couple of current trainees were also available to speak to. Course staff were friendly and gave a short talk about the course after the written task and before the interviews.
- I was a last minute call up from the reserve list, so I had little information beforehand. We were initially given a brief introduction and overview of the course and then completed a written task. Following that were two interview panels, both of which were friendly and welcoming. My overall experience was a positive one.
- It was friendly and supportive. It was well organised and I knew where I was going. There were trainees on hand to support. The environment was not intimidating. This is my only place of experience. I have no other places to compare interview process to.
- The course acknowledges that the interview process is stressful but really tries to reduce the stress as much as possible. They make every effort to get the most out of you and find out about you as a person. There is a buddy system in place that means you have support from 1st years throughout the interview day. These buddies are not in any way part of the decision making process so you are able to ask them whatever you like and can be relaxed around them when you are not in an interview panel. I also found the interview panel were welcoming and asked fair questions which helped you to draw on your experience but wasn't about proving how much knowledge you had memorised before the interview.
- Good experience. Nice to have people from first year there to support you through the morning/afternoon. Interviews as expected and felt the questions asked enabled me to fully demonstrate my experience. Have heard however, that the new case vignette/ test is harder than when I did it.
- Very helpful - nice atmosphere. Felt like the panel wanted to get the best out of you.
- The questions were fair and allowed you the opportunity to elaborate and use examples. There was one panel that had two service users and two clinical psychologists, and the other had three clinical psychologists and a trainee from the course. Generally no one smiled apart from the service users and trainee, which I found off-putting. There is a comfortable common room for interviewees to sit in before and after the interviews, and current trainees were around to take you to your interview and chat to us about the course.
- Very positive - they wanted the best out of us and tried to make us feel as relaxed as possible.
- I found the interview very friendly and welcoming. Everyone on the day was really warm and really did their best to make you feel at ease. There was a written task and two interviews, an Academic/Clinical and a Personal/Professional interview. The questions were fair and made you think about

your experience - they weren't really questions you could prepare for but were more designed to see the way that you think and your thought processes. They were interested in your values and what you were like as a person rather than what you know.

- The interview felt supportive. The afternoon started with a written task, followed by two interviews - an academic/clinical interview and a personal/professional interview. There were trainees on hand to support you to take you from place to place. I took my time in answering questions and the panels were encouraging of this.
- It was my only interview but considering how nervous everyone was they went out of their way to make it a welcoming and reassuring process. There are only around 10 of you per am/pm which is nice because you can meet others (although avoid anyone that tries to talk to you about how many interviews they have had etc.). There are opportunities to meet current trainees as well as to ask questions of the course staff & director. You start by sitting a 30 minute written exam which is well explained. You are taken to your exam room at your given slot and may even get a window between the panels. I felt calm throughout the morning & surprised at how smiley and friendly the panel were.
- I found the interview Day was very well organised. The two panels were both friendly and seemed to want to get the best from candidates.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



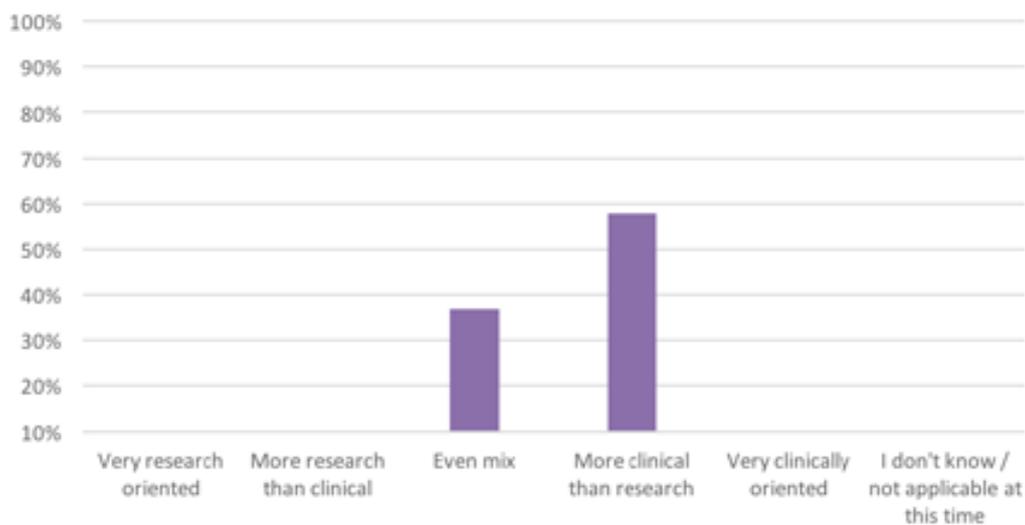
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	61%
Mindfulness	83%
Schema Therapy	17%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	39%
Solution Focused Therapy	22%
Neuropsychology	89%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	17%
Other	11%

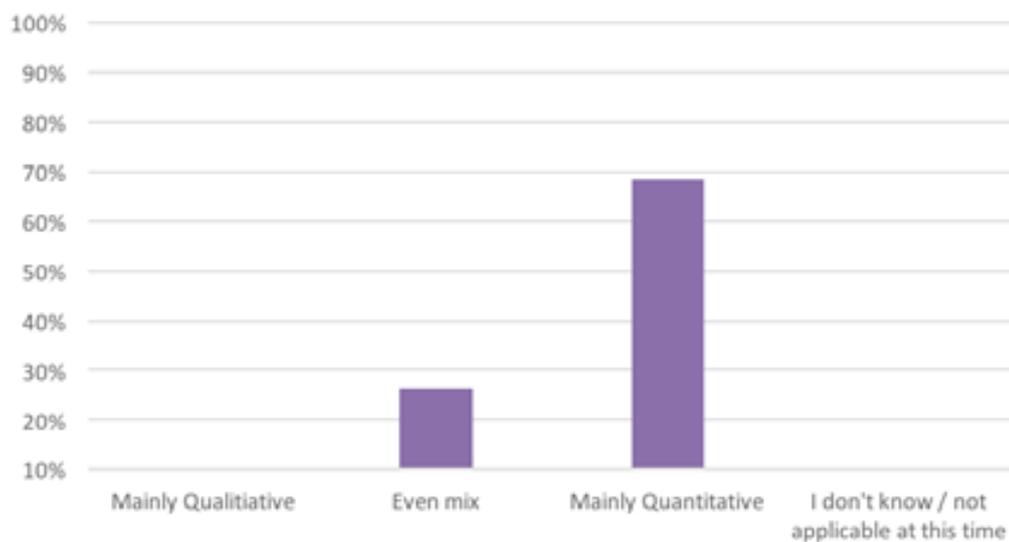
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- It feels as if systemic is under represented in the teaching and is very much treated as the second model
- I suspect this applies to all UK courses, but I'm fed with having to have CBT as the main focus.
- As a first year it is too early to say - we've had lots of CBT teaching so far. Second year includes a lot more systemic teaching but the course does also seem to provide a range of teaching in lots of other areas (just maybe not in as much detail).
- Mostly CBT, though we had a weeks' worth of systemic training within the family therapy institute in the first year and periodic systemic training throughout other teaching days.
- The first year is CBT and the second systemic. I hear we can have DBT in the third year but not much and I also hear we are changing to ACT now there have been some staff changes. Given the number of models in use it does not feel like a balance is given.
- Since CBT is so prevalent it would be better to suggest trainee come with this experience. This time could be devoted to working with harder to engage groups and more complex cases and the models - which reflects placement experience but teaching does not prepare you for this and the assessments do not make accommodation for this.
- Expect the main focus of your training to be CBT and systemic, but don't expect to feel like an expert in either of these by the end of the training. I think this is pretty universal across most courses, but just don't expect to have anywhere near as much training as say a High Intensity CBT therapist.
- Mostly CBT in the first year, but more other models in second year.
- I am a first year and so we have mostly had CBT teaching. CBT and Systemic are Cardiff's main models. I know we have some ACT teaching planned though, and I'm sure others will be covered along the way.
- In 1st year the course has been solely CBT. You get a good grounding with encouragement to apply for accreditation. I have been a bit disappointed there isn't more of a critical/reflective stance on the course, and the medical model emphasis sadly seems to be prevalent amongst some of the teachers.
- Towards the latter part of 1st year we have some systemic and this is more the focus in year 2.

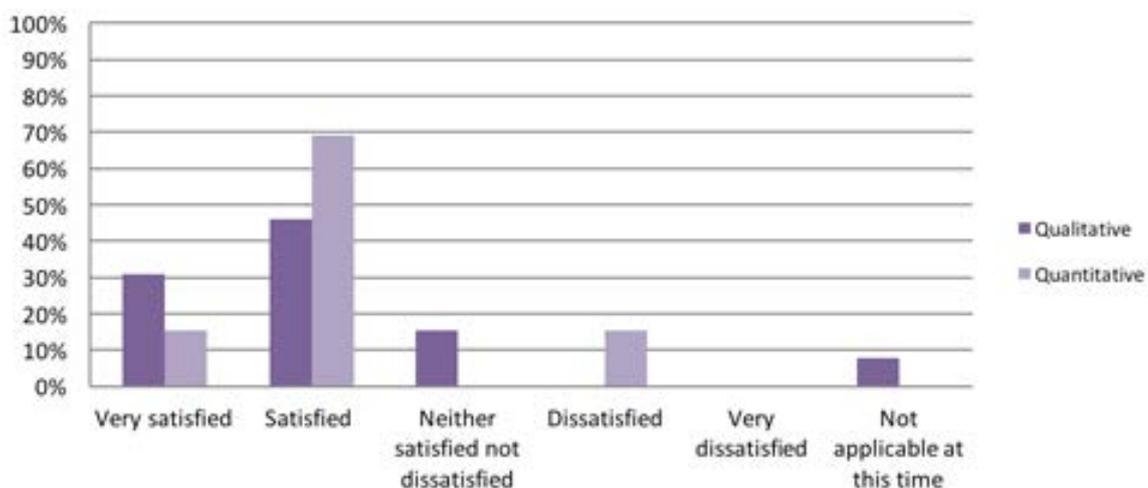
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



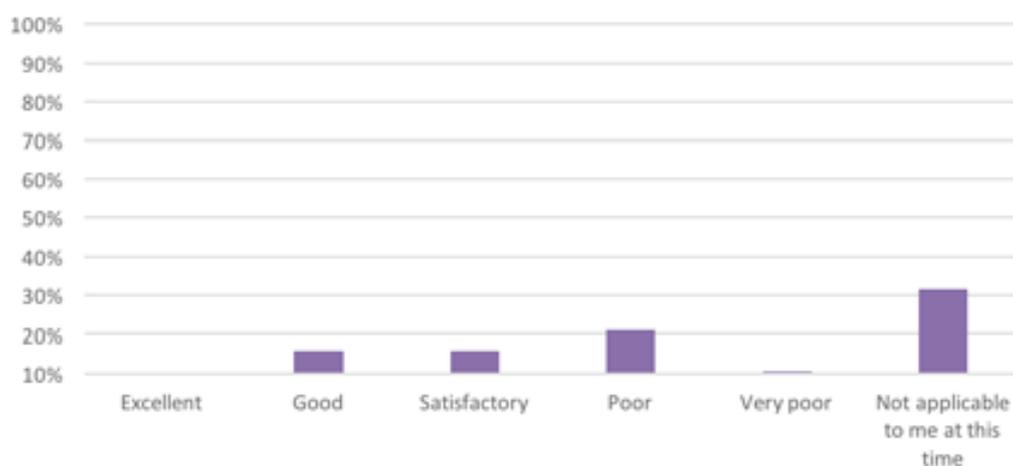
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



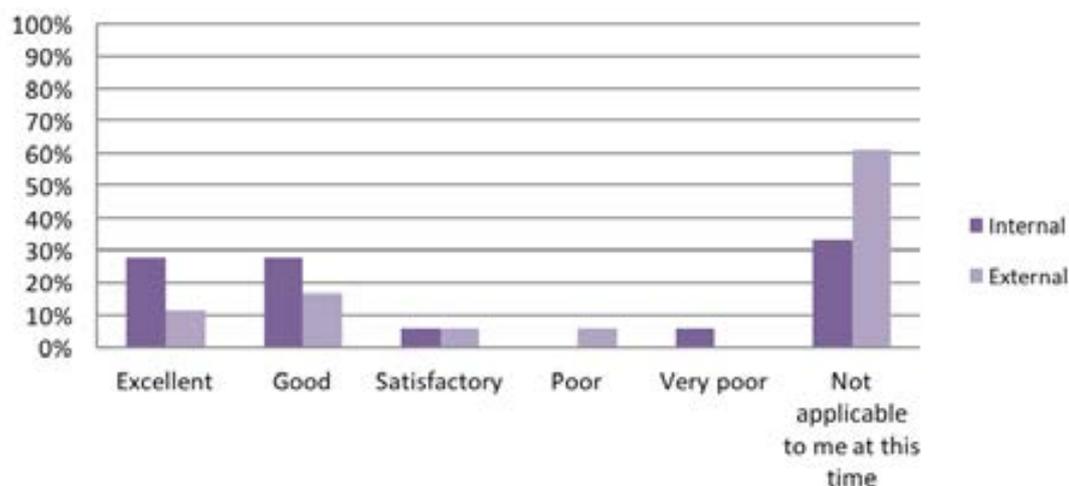
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Cardiff do not allow trainees to design their own research project - instead there is a number of supervisors and existing projects available which are ranked in order of preference by trainees and then allocated. A research portfolio is submitted at the end of the course - this consists of a systematic review, a paper written for a journal and critical appraisal of the research project undertaken.
- The course is now much more quantitative than qualitative and I understand this has been a change over recent years.
- The SSRP is a short project in 1st year and teaching is provided around this.

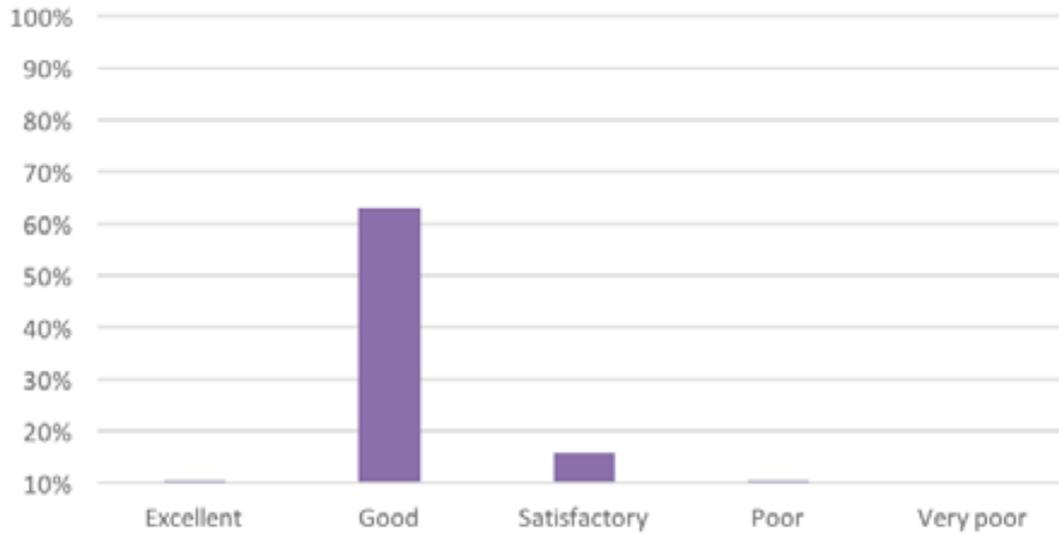
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



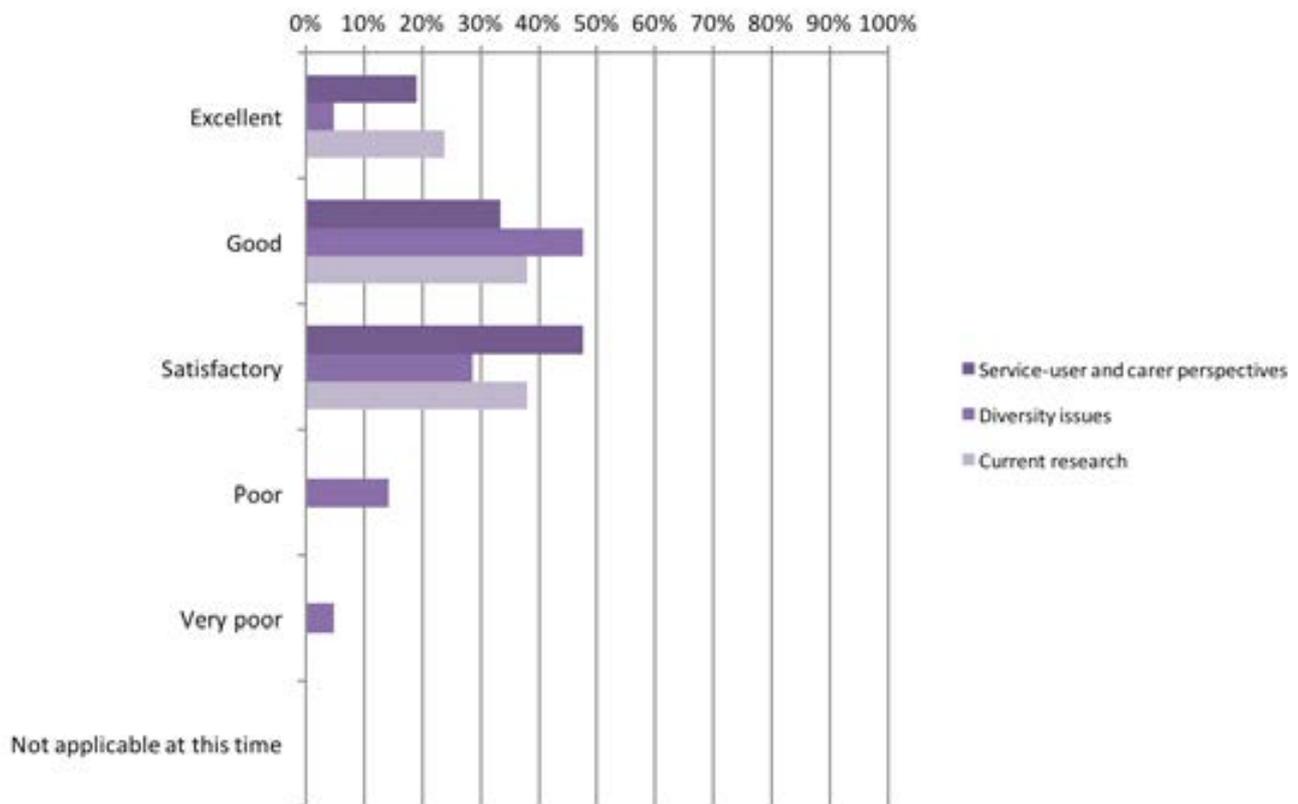
### What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

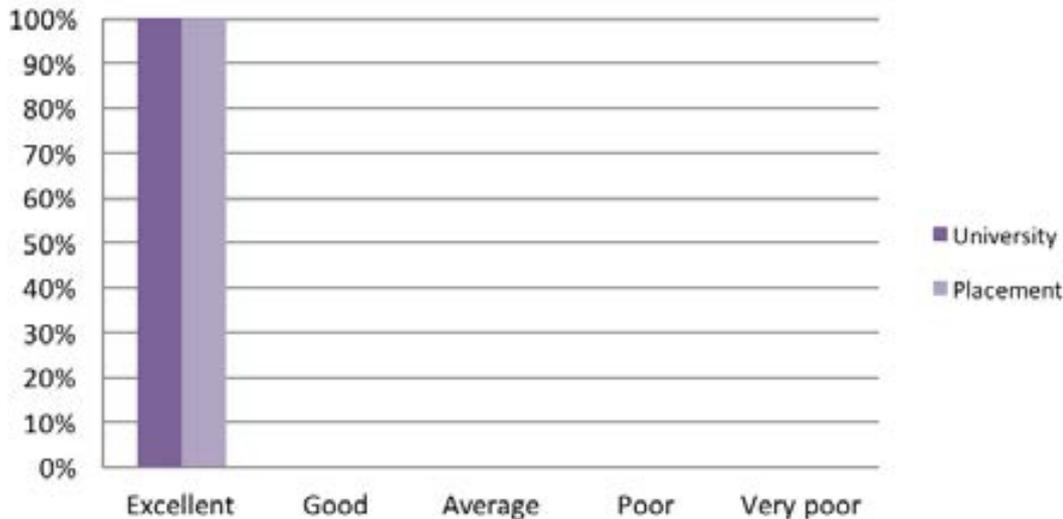
- The course have a very active “People Panel” which are involved in teaching, selection and observations
- It is great to have so much input from local clinicians
- Great that most of it comes from local active psychologists working in the field they are teaching about. This has often been inspiring and given our cohort ideas for roles as a psychologist that we hadn't considered before. Of course, the quality of teaching varies, knowing a topic well doesn't necessarily translate to being a good teacher, but the majority has been good.
- Generally good and enjoyable - teaching is largely done by local psychologists and they usually ensure the teaching is interactive and practical.
- There is a real effort to include service users and perspectives and some of the teaching is amazing but the balance is all wrong. Some of it is pointless and not relevant at this stage in training or the direction Clinical Psychology is moving. In this respect sometimes the research is forefront and sometimes it's dated. There is no effort to address diversity issues or given we are in Wales any effort at all to support trainees to understand a Welsh context which hinders people understanding of what they will encounter to what the social/constructionist/political concerns are.
- It's almost like you can feel the pull between old Clinical Psychologist (therapist) and the new direction for Clinical Psychologist). Our reflective practice model isn't fit for purpose and the course haven't made enough changes to accommodate the growing size of the year group.
- There is one lecture on leadership which was added for the first time this year and there is no teaching on consultation. It's paternalist and protectionist and does not respect the experience trainees bring with them.
- And everyone has to make up cases to fit the integrated assessments because they want pure approaches with just don't reflect clinical practice. It's safe to say the course has many areas for development.
- We are mostly taught by clinical psychologists practising in Wales. This is really helpful as we this usually means we get practitioners that are using in practice what they are teaching and they also then can appreciate the more service level difficulties in delivery of services in Wales.
- I hoped to have more teaching on Welsh diversity issues, but this has not happened and is not currently scheduled.
- A range of teaching that has been very enjoyable so far.
- The teaching has been mainly in CBT- and the quality of this is very good. Often external speakers will deliver topics such as trauma, psychosis, PTSD, behaviours that challenge.
- In first year there is a big emphasis on older adult and adult mental health teaching, as these fit with the two placements in first year. Overall I have felt the quality of teaching could be better and would like to see more of a critical element towards diagnosis and the medical model. There have been multiple staff changes this year which may account for the quality in teaching compared to other years.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

26% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Placements can be demanding with a disability as placements are across a range of health boards so any adaptation needed for work place has to be assessed by occupational health in each different health you work in.
- Yes, the way in which academic work is spaced out means that we often have multiple deadlines very close together. This can be very stressful
- I've found that it's been peaks and troughs of activity. You know going in to the course that it will be hard, but sometimes things have felt overwhelming e.g. a full day of placement, having an assignment deadline, while at the same time conducting a thesis/large scale research project.
- You get more used to being in a constant state of uncertainty, but this can feel like a frustrating extra burden at times."
- Travel can be demanding depending on where you live and where your placements are. There are several 'away' placements which are non-commutable and require living away from home a few days a week (money is provided for accommodation but you are expected to find this yourself). Placements can also be anywhere in South Wales (which is a big area!). Placements less than 50 miles away are considered commutable which can mean lots of travelling!
- No more so than I would have expected.
- Assignments come very close together and the information isn't clear. The handbook is a mess so it's very difficult to find what you need. Assignments are sometimes not introduced you are just expected to know they are happening.

- In the first and second years there are number of competing academic demands between January and April. Deadlines are spaced out but this time can be hard work. Other than those periods I think the academic demand are pretty fair.
- Juggling life and the course can be hard at times, particularly in second year. But it is not forever!
- Some of the academic assignments as we have been asked to present a real clinical case, which often does not fit neatly into a 'straight-forward' academic assignment.
- Unclear guidance on the workload expected of us during placement has caused some confusion amongst the year group.
- There are a number of deadlines from December-March in first year and I have found this quite demanding! However, if you use your study days wisely then you shouldn't have to work at weekends or in the evenings. We are very lucky at Cardiff that we still have one study day a week - it really helps and makes things much more manageable.
- It can be intense but only when personal issues are happening, most of the time if you use your study days well, the workload is doable.
- There are a few assignments/ drafts due in around March/April. They are manageable but require planning. There is a study day each week which really helps! The course are good at mapping out what is due in when and a lot of support is given in first year ( such as handing in a precis, draft etc.)
- During year one there are a number of deadlines close together which requires time management to juggle both clinical and academic demands.

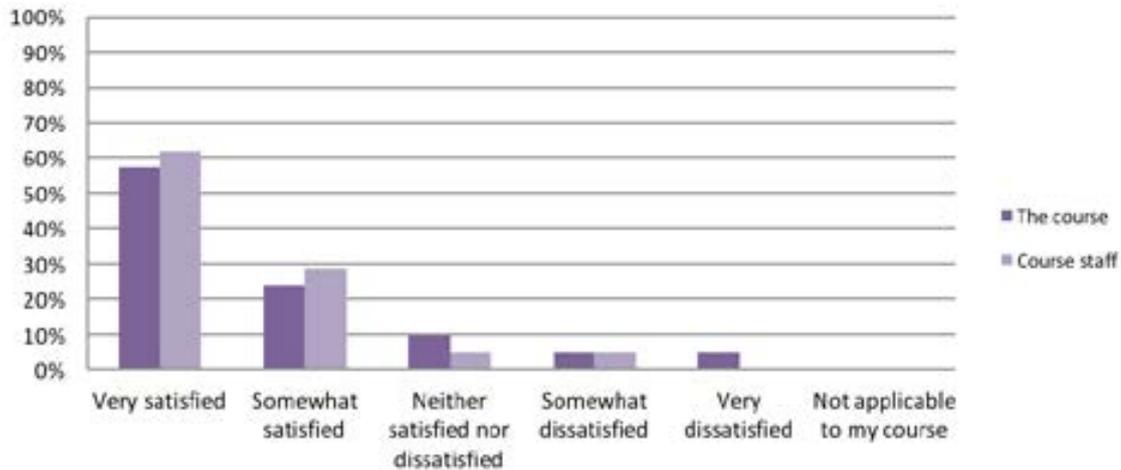
#### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	47%
"Buddy"	95%
Manager	32%
Placement Supervisor	85%
Librarian	42%
Professional Mentor	84%
Personal Tutor	84%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	53%
Independent personal advisor	11%
Other	10%

#### Under "Other", responses included:

- In the first year reflective practice has been replaced with a service user mentoring scheme.
- Your cohort are by far the biggest and best support you will have throughout the training
- A new service- user/carer mentoring scheme has been introduced
- We have a professional mentor, who is a clinical psychologist unrelated to the course. They are there to offer support without it affecting our appraisal within the course and I have found this very helpful. We also have a service user/carer mentor to have reflective practice with.

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

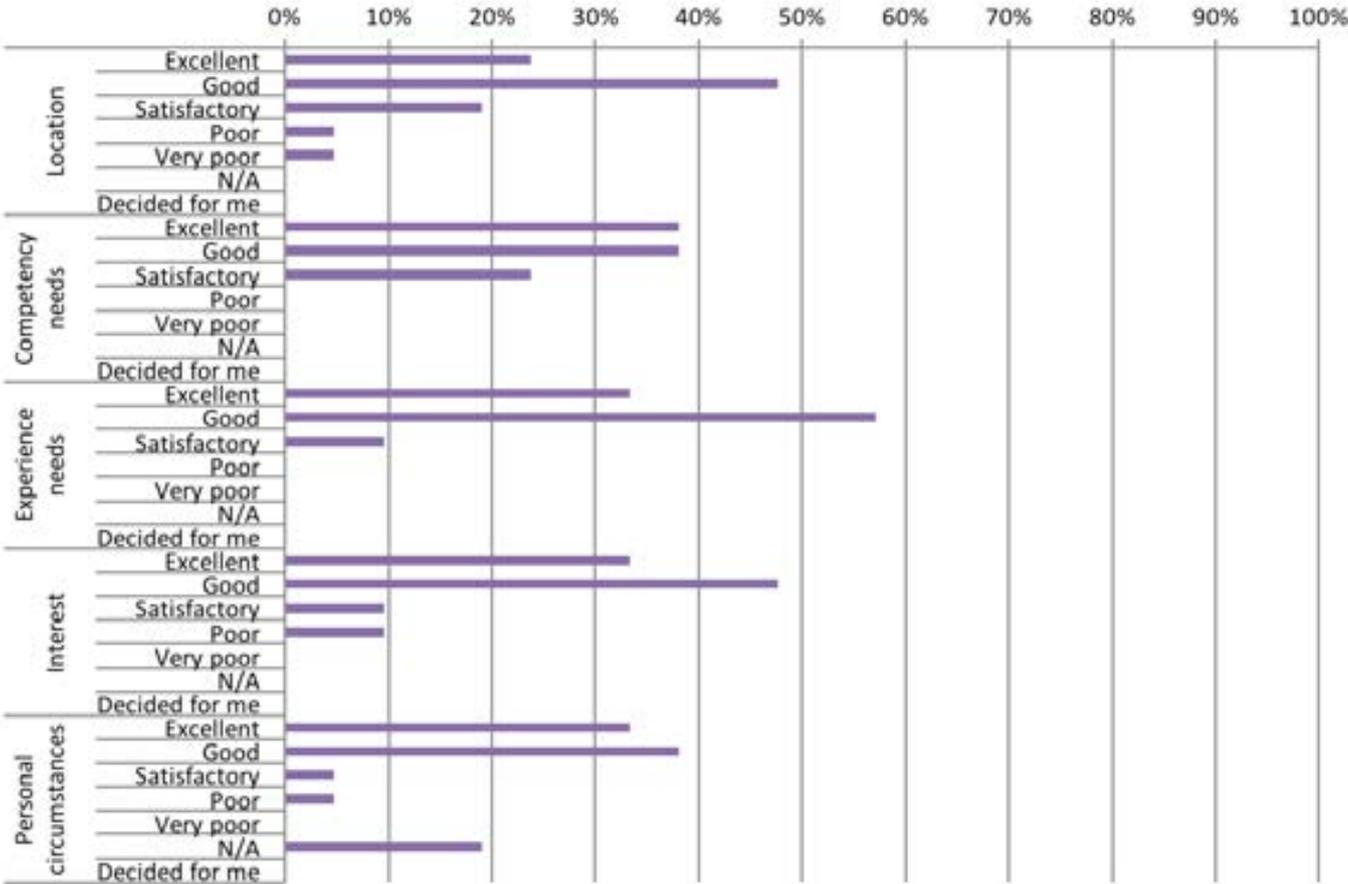


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

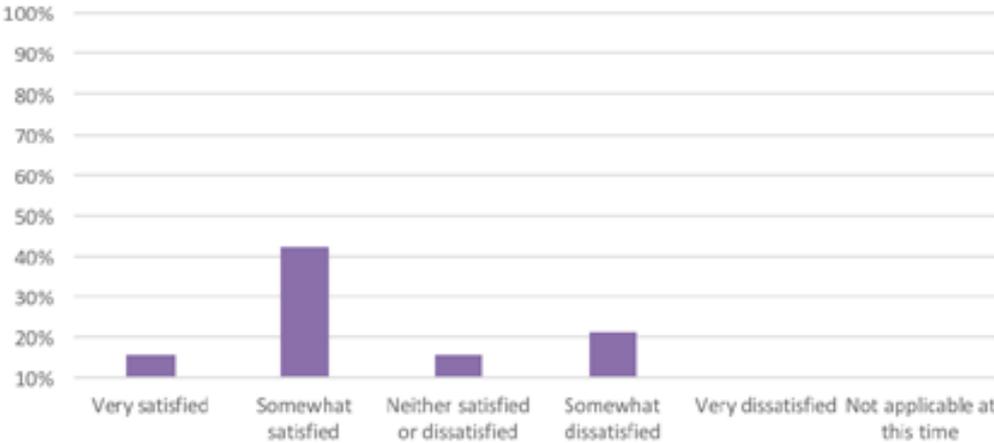
- The course has had a high turnover in staff and have at times been very short staffed so it has been difficult at time to get support from staff for these reasons.
- Upon starting the course, I felt impressed by the amount of support that was on offer if you wanted it.
- It's pot luck who your personal tutor will be. If you get on and have someone who is supportive, it's great. If you don't, not so much. But there's nothing any course can do about that.
- My research supervisor has been superb
- There are lots of different people who can provide support, however trainees feel unsupported at times just due to lack of information from course staff. E.g. not knowing what documents need to be completed on placement, not knowing how to submit assignments etc. Other trainees end up offering a lot of support to each other to manage this.
- No there course try to be supportive. This is not an issue of concern.
- I find generally the course is supportive and really want you to succeed. You have to take responsibility for yourself and ask for help if it is needed. I have had extra support due to personal circumstances and I have felt the course has been accommodating and supportive during those times.
- There have been a lot of staff changes at the moment so things have been a bit disorganised. I have not had any particular issues so have not had to access staff for support really.
- There is also a service user/carer mentor option for first year. You meet 6 times in a year and it's taken the place of reflective practice.
- The professional mentor scheme is fantastic with well qualified staff across the health boards supporting you. You meet 3-4 times a year.
- The course staff are very approachable and open to deal with any enquiry.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



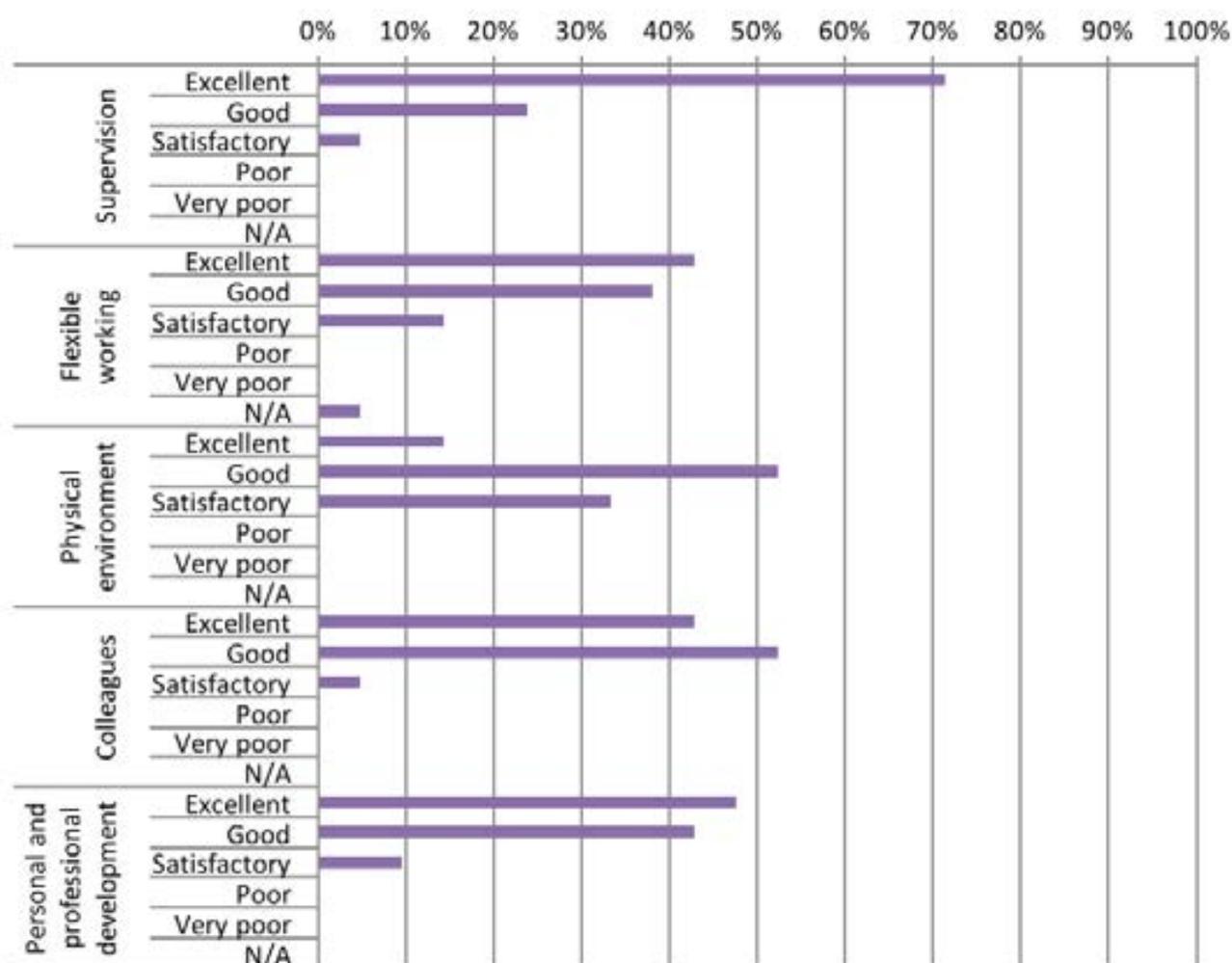
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### **Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- The lack of systemic teaching left a lot of us feeling unprepared for more systemically orientated placements
- It is always a struggle for courses to find placements. As such, sometimes we only get 2-3 weeks' notice about where our placement will be. This was a bit unsettling at first, but you just learn to accept it.
- Before each placement you complete a form stating your competency, interests, experience needs, personal circumstances etc. - in reality I'm not sure how much this can be taken into consideration for everyone as there seems to be a bit of a shortage of placements sometimes.
- We know where they are 2 weeks before we go. It's very difficult to plan your life. We also don't get a say on where so you could end up in a place you don't like. It's not geared towards personal interests or career development specifically. Its very anxiety provoking.
- In the first year we often only had a couple of weeks' notice about where our placements would be but much more notice in the second year. If you are on an away placement (over 60 miles from the university) you usually have at least 4 weeks' notice.
- If you have exceptional circumstances the course is good at supporting you with placements that accommodate this. However, generally you don't have much say in the placement based on interest, but they are decided on competence needs. You need to expect to be placed anywhere in South/ West/Mid Wales.
- We were given a lot of CBT teaching which prepared us well for therapy within placements, however minimal teaching on letter writing or neuropsychological assessment interpretation (for older adults).
- We had a 6 week teaching block at the start of first year, which is more than some courses, so I think they do their best to prepare us. However, if you are going into a field that you haven't worked in before it is always going to be difficult. But Cardiff do try and place you somewhere you have experience for your first placement.
- They try and make it competency led but it's not always possible. There were limited placements for older adults and so clinical health placements are an option for 1st years.

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).

- I've been lucky and had decent placements, while some in my cohort have had some really poor experiences.
- So far the quality of the placement seems to mainly relate to the quality of the supervisor and how supportive they are. It also seems to be common for trainees to not automatically have a desk or a computer when they arrive at placement.
- There are never enough computers or desks and the buildings are often in disrepair. I do feel for the people that have to come to these services - what message does it send.
- On placement you are very much a trainee. My experience is that the focus has often been on my development and I've been given work that relates to my learning needs, not to get waiting lists down.
- My supervisors have been really supportive, friendly and professional. I've met a few that have provided me excellent role models and examples of the type of psychologist I'd like to be.
- My placement had a lot of opportunity for me to learn and gain new experiences, as well as put the teaching we had received to practice. Access to computers and desks has been a big barrier to me completing work/admin on placement.
- I have been very lucky and had a fantastic first placement! My supervisor has been great and has been really supportive and really helped me develop my skills. I couldn't have asked for a better

first placement really. But that's certainly not everyone's experience. Cardiff struggle to find enough placements for us all, which means you can be placed anywhere in South Wales.

- Not always a computer and practical things available on placement but the course can provide a laptop/recording devices etc.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	79%
No	16%
Don't know	5%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	26%
No	68%
Don't know	5%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Cardiff, Bristol, Swansea and Newport.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	26%
No	63%
Don't know	11%

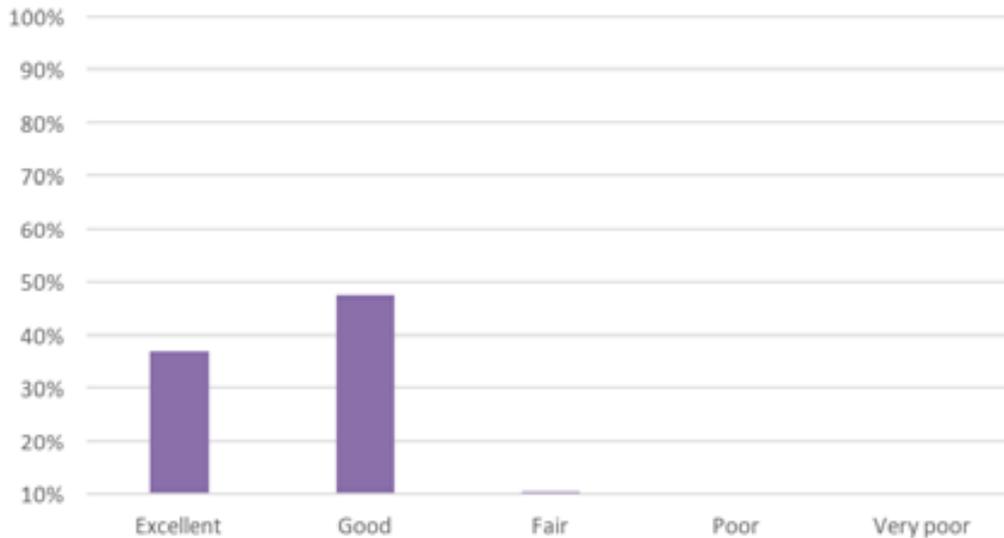
## How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	21%
Good	42%
Fair	26%
Poor	11%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- It varies depending on deadlines.
- Peaks and troughs. Summers have generally been better. I am away most weekends, so I have had to do all my work mid-week, which can be stressful, but it shows it is possible.
- There is a study day once a week which is very helpful. It can be a bit busier around deadlines but if study days have been used properly this should be fine.
- It's not so much that I'm over run with work all the time it's the stress it creates. There is something very unsettling the process causes and this has impacted my work life balance. I have wondered what this is related too and whether it's not about the course but about the state of CP in Wales. It's not what I expected or what I thought I was signing up for but I've taken steps to try and gain control back. It feels as though the course has a lot of power over me and I have little control over my life at present. It's very disempowering.
- On the first day of the course the staff make it clear that they want you to have a good work life balance. They recognise the importance of this balance and I think for the most part I have a good balance. If you used your weekly study day 9-5 you would rarely need to work at weekends. I only tend to work a lot at the weekends in a run up to a deadline, other than that I plan fun things to do.
- There are times when it is all work and no life. But there are times when the balance tips the other way too. I think this is to be expected wherever you train.
- If you use your study day properly you should not have to work any weekends or evenings (so far in year 1!)
- We have one study day a week which really helps with the work life balance. You could get all your assignments done in this time and not have to use your evenings and weekends if you worked hard.
- Use your study days well and plan in fun events.
- The study day allows for good time management.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- If you can, live in Cardiff close to the university so that you can claim your mileage for placements
- We're lucky to get a decent salary at the same time as financial benefits of being a student
- No - we get paid well and we get travel expenses. I was a band 6 previously and I did more clinical work but I have far more stress now even though I only see 6 people. That's not about being rewarded with enough money that others stuff - emperor's new clothes syndrome.
- Recently the trainees have been told we are not eligible for the widening access scheme, and so trainees will now pay tax which will mean less £250 approx. per month.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Placements are across 6 health boards which gives a trainee access to a diverse population from inner city to rural populations.
- Service user involvement in teaching
- Placements and the fact that all our teaching is delivered by external professionals working in the topic area
- Beautiful, varied country, great people. Approachable course staff. Very good prospects as a psychologist working in Wales.
- The teaching is good and the number of assignments is manageable.
- Constantly learning and developing with a great cohort.
- I do enjoy that we are supported in 4 of the key areas for CP and I like coming to teaching - overall.
- The clinical placements are where most of your learning takes place and I love how much I learn there. Working in the Wales NHS is a different experience from England and this is quite useful learning. My cohort are a fantastic bunch of likeminded people whose support is invaluable.
- The opportunity to learn new skills and techniques is really exciting, and teaching, particularly CBT teaching has been exciting and accessible. Getting to know the rest of the cohort has been amazing
- The clinical placements

- We have had some fantastic teaching so far on the course, which I have really enjoyed. Also South Wales is a beautiful place to live, with the mountains and beaches. And probably most importantly my cohort are amazing!! Such a fantastic and diverse group of people.
- I enjoy the pace of the course and the chance to do the different placements.
- My placement has been fantastic, my supervisor is well experienced and there is lots of opportunity to network at speciality meetings/ Schwartz rounds etc. Depending on the supervisor there is lots of opportunity to gain experience of other models and sit in on sessions such as EMDR, CAT etc. That is invaluable and has started me thinking about life after training. The course provide a budget to do training in other areas.
- I have loved the relationships with others on the cohort. We have Tuesday club and try to all get together for a drink after training days. There is also a big get to together with everyone from all years, plus the staff, and we all go away together.
- There is a good balance between clinical, research and academic demands from the course.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- Ignore the idea that each course is a particular 'type' of course and all the rumours that surround these ideas. In reality, staff members running courses won't all imbue the same views and values, courses are constantly changing as new staff leave and join. You will shape what type of psychologist you want to be, not the 'type' course.
- Currently there are a lot of staff changes happening on the course and it may be that these influence how the course is delivered and assessed.
- I can only speak for my course and so others may be the same but I feel like for this course you need to come prepared to roll with it.
- The course is going through some changes with will hopefully improve its reputation.
- Admin is particularly difficult to navigate - they could do with some psychological input.
- There isn't much scope to develop your own thesis ideas. You have to go along with ideas already presented.
- Every course has its downsides, but Cardiff has been a great experience so far, and I feel I am being given good opportunities to develop and grow as a clinical psychologist.
- Cardiff is a great course and a great place to live! I would really recommend it! I think the course could be a bit more reflective and critical. We don't have any reflective practice groups in year one which is a real shame as my cohort has so much knowledge that I could really learn from. I am hoping we cover more critical themes later on in the course.
- I would say there's a big focus on you as an individual and they are reflective. The interview questions reflect this and I found they were more interested in who I was as a person rather than all my knowledge and experience (although important too). I do hope the future of the course goes in a direction that is more critical and encourages trainees to broaden their thinking on the role of psychology within the NHS because it is rapidly changing. There is the option of using course credits from Cardiff and placement to being able to fast track onto the training for becoming a neuropsychologist- although we are yet to hear back from that. The year 2017 introduced a selection test at interview which we didn't have, although most of the current trainees aren't in agreement with this.

# Courses Survey Results

## Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Shortlisting test, Interviews and written tasks (during interview day).

For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	10 hours
Placement	21 hours
Personal Study	7.5 hours
Research	7.5 hours

## What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	0%
Presentations	100%
Other	100%

## Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# Coventry and Warwick

9 responses (30% of 30 trainees)

## About the trainee

**What is your current year of training?**

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	67%
Year 2	33%
Year 3	0%

**What was your age when you started training?**

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	22%
25 – 29 years	78%
30 – 34 years	0%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

**How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?**

Attempts	Percent
Once	11%
Twice	44%
3 times	22%
4 times	0%
5 times	22%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	44%
MRes	11%
Diploma	22%
Post Graduate Certificate	22%
Conversion course	0%
None	11%
Other	11%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	33%
3 years	0%
4 years	11%
5 years	33%
6+ years	22%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

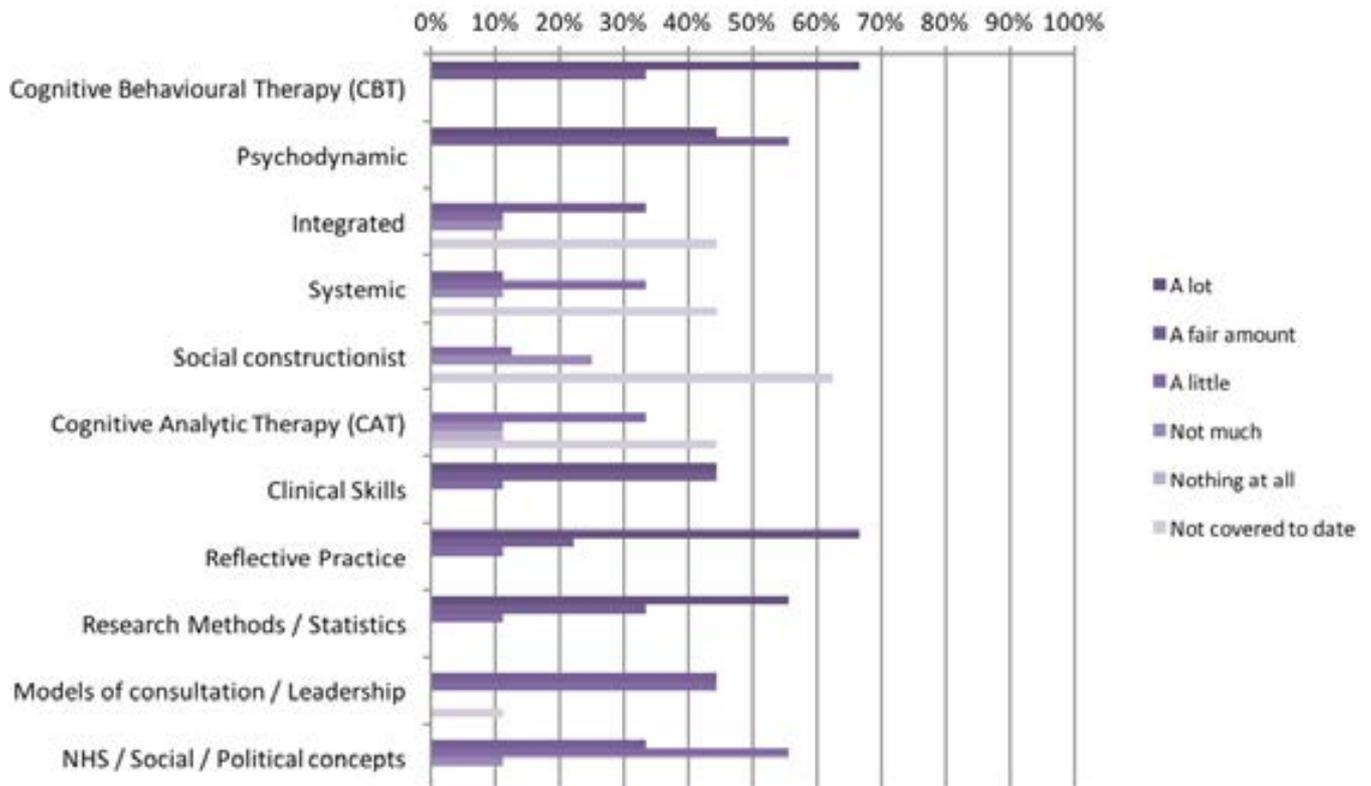
Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	89%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	22%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	33%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	44%
Voluntary Research Assistant	11%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	33%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	33%
Other	44%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Very well organised. Admin staff really friendly. Thoughtful, they handed out a goody bag with water and crisps which was a nice touch.
- The selection process lasted a whole day and so was quite tiring, however, I felt that having multiple tasks throughout the interview day meant that I could show a range of skills. In the lunch break there was information provided on the course and the opportunity to meet Course Director and trainees. Overall, it felt like they had done their best to make the process as little anxiety-provoking possible. There were only 10 other people being interviewed on the same day which also felt less daunting.
- Supportive. Collaborative rather than competitive ethos reduced stress on the day. Having trainees available throughout to answer questions and provide support was invaluable.
- I attended three interviews and the Cov&Warwick day was by far the best experience. From the start, I felt valued and welcomed. Everyone was keen to put us at ease so that we could do our best. The interviewers were all friendly, personable and encouraging and the questions felt fair. I felt the variety of tasks gave me a chance to demonstrate my knowledge and skills in different areas and allowed for mess ups (of which there were plenty!). The lunch was also really nice! Saying I enjoyed it would be going too far but it was as good as it could have been, given the stakes!
- It was the only interview I attended so I have no comparison to others. I experienced the day as well organised and supportive.
- Really great interview process, I felt that they wanted to get to know the real me. The supportive and collaborative ethos was clear, and I felt much more relaxed than at other interviews
- Very welcoming, well organised day. Given time to reflect throughout process which made it much more relaxed and enabled you to show the best of yourself. The course put things in place to make you feel supported on the day.
- I found the interview process to be really enjoyable (which I wasn't expecting), I got the sense that they really wanted the best of us and worked to make it non-competitive with the others on the day. Although it's a long day, it takes the pressure off if one Interview doesn't go so well for example.
- The interview process was draining as it involved lots of different interviews, tasks etc. Despite this, it was an enjoyable experience and it was great having the opportunity to speak to current trainees. Overall the atmosphere was quite relaxed and they gave us a good lunch.
- I found the interview process incredibly supportive. I felt like they really got the best out of me and gave me plenty of opportunity to show what I knew. Throughout the day everyone I saw did their best to put me at ease; it was definitely the most relaxed I've felt at interview! The course ethos really comes across from the interview and the selection day reflects what it's like being on the course.
- Course content and teaching

### How much teaching is there on different models?



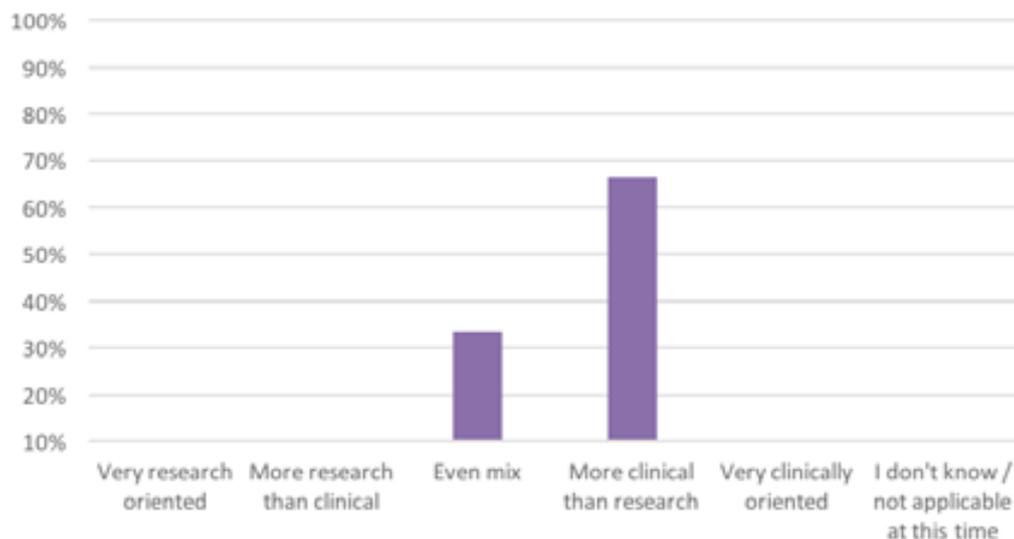
### What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	63%
Mindfulness	75%
Schema Therapy	13%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	0%
Solution Focused Therapy	0%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	50%
Other	0%

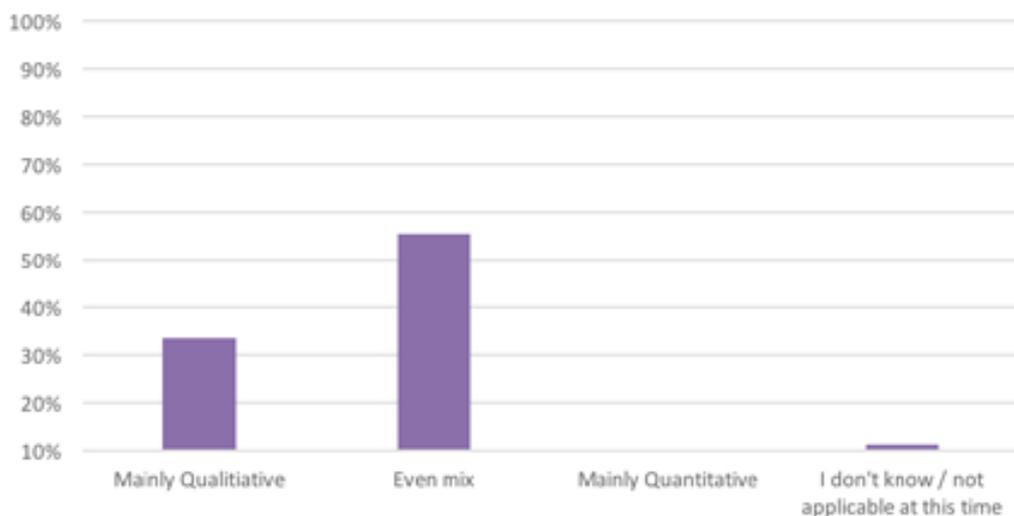
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- Equal split in first year between psychodynamic and CBT.
- As I am only in first year, we haven't yet had access to the third wave therapies teaching (e.g. ACT, CFT, CAT) but we will have the opportunity to attend workshops later in the course. So far, we have focused on the course's core therapeutic approaches: CBT and psychodynamic.
- Good amount of time devoted to CBT and Psychodynamic in first year. I think there is more teaching in the other approaches in the other years
- First year there is a focus on CBT and Psychodynamic as the core approaches. Other training is about working with specific groups of people/ diagnosis.
- Lots of psychodynamic teaching.

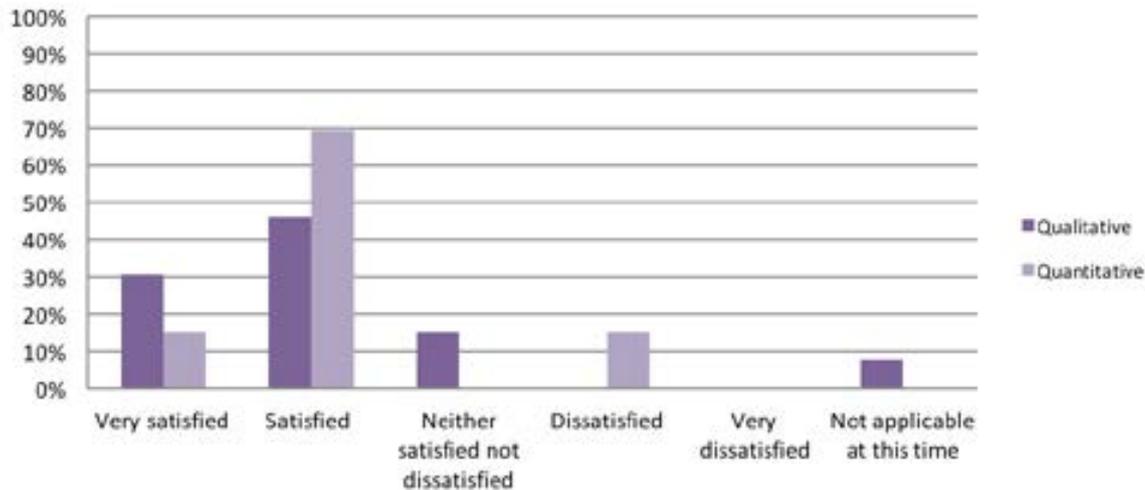
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



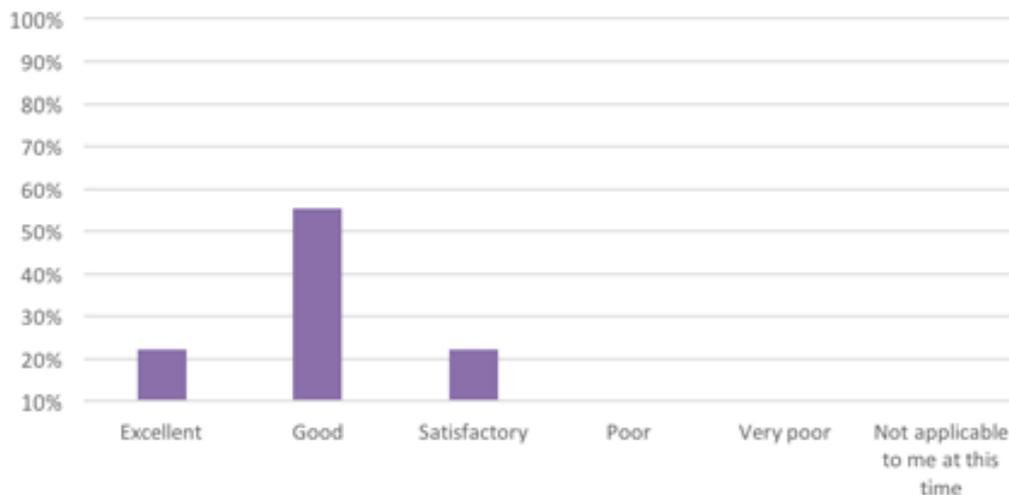
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



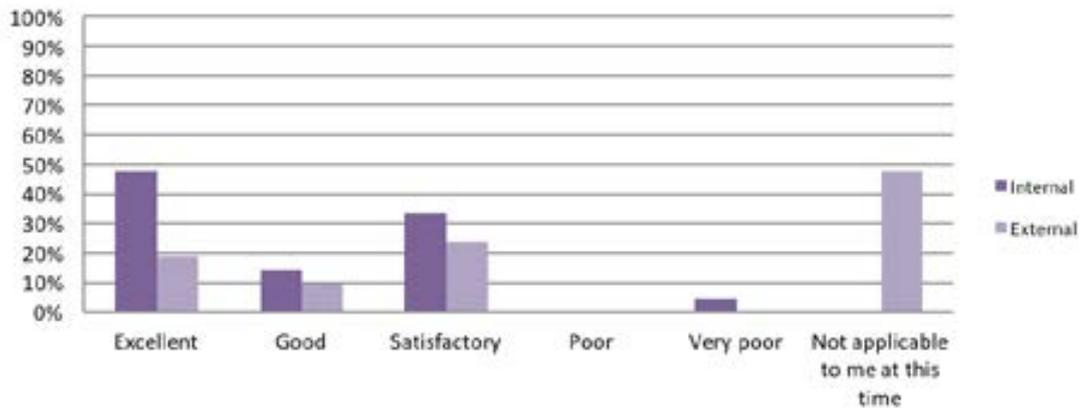
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- First year mainly focuses on the development of a research topic. Research methods to follow in year 2.
- Most trainees on this course seem to choose qualitative methods but we have been encouraged to pursue whichever methodology suits the question we want to ask, including considering experimental design.
- Push for qualitative, but support to do either.

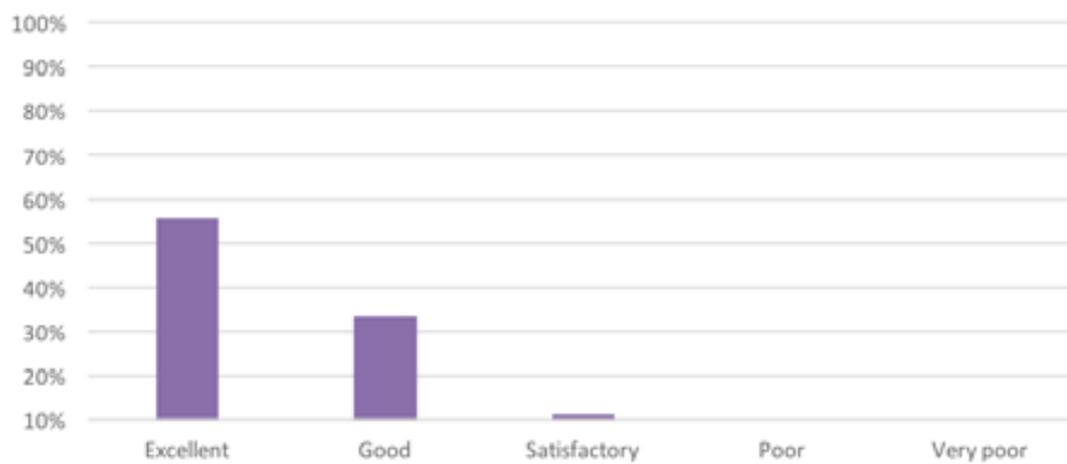
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



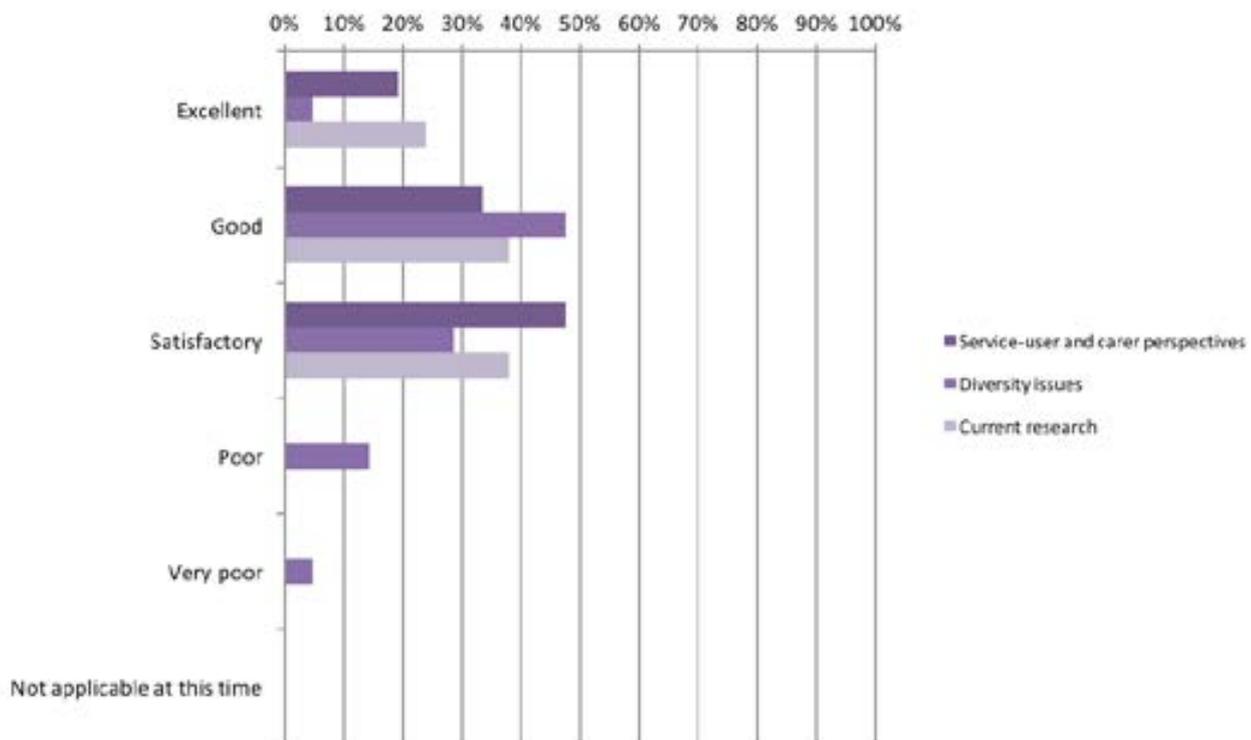
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

- Wide variety of teaching from people within the local area.
- Overall, I have found the teaching engaging and clinically relevant. There is a good balance between theory and practice so that what we learn can be applied on placement. Most of the lecturers are practicing clinicians so they have rich clinical examples and there are lots of interactive activities so that we can try things out in a safe space.
- I would like if there was more teaching on critical and community psychology, both in discrete lectures but also embedded across the course (I believe this comes later but it seems important to raise awareness of the issues highlighted by these branches of psychology (e.g. the impact of social inequality, the difficulties with diagnostic categories) from the start of training).

## Support for trainees with disabilities

**Do you have any disabilities?**

0% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

**Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?**

- So far, I have found the demands of the course to be manageable, particularly the academic side. Having to stay away from home for placement has been challenging however the course have been understanding and tried to support me as best they could. The placements themselves has also been really good so it has been worth it. I have also found having a Buddy in second year really helpful, as it has given me an idea about what's ahead and what is expected.
- I would describe the course as intense. Year 2 requires a significant juggling act. Particularly with preparing to apply to ethics for research purposes. Conducting your research in the NHS adds extra complexities. There are very few study research days in year 2 and therefore I have felt like my work often spreads into my evenings and weekends. That coupled with the demands of placement can be very exhausting and impact on wellbeing. It can be very hard to put practical steps in place for research purposes when you are still actively attending teaching on Mondays and Fridays and placement the rest of the week. Some of my fellow cohort members have additional challenges of young children and I really do not know how they manage. The course offer no additional flexibility for parent's e.g. part time options.
- Balancing placement, university and assignments. But this was expected, I feel supported and it feels manageable.
- I think although it's supported I do think it's important to be open to reflection and thinking about what you bring critically and in an open way. This has helped me get the most of the training, although some days can feel more demanding to do this kind of self-reflection.
- Just having lots of different competing demands.
- Juggling the different demands of placement/university/assignments/research will always be a challenge on any course. They do their best to structure our timetable to give us chance to keep on top of everything!

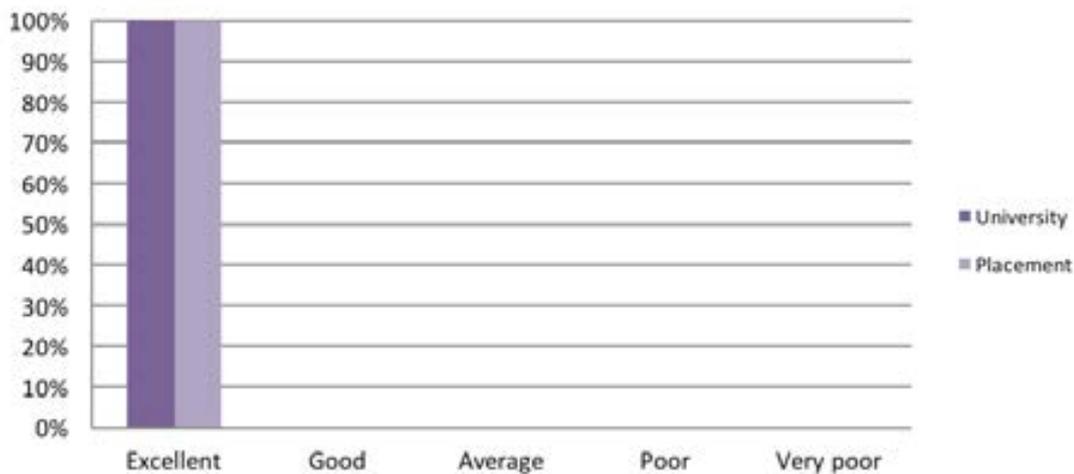
**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	89%
“Buddy”	100%
Manager	11%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	67%
Professional Mentor	0%
Personal Tutor	89%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	89%
Independent personal advisor	33%
Other	33%

**Under “Other”, responses included:**

- The Therapy Network
- The cohort is probably the most useful and effective support throughout the course.
- Appraisal tutor, personal and professional development tutor, access to personal therapy if needed

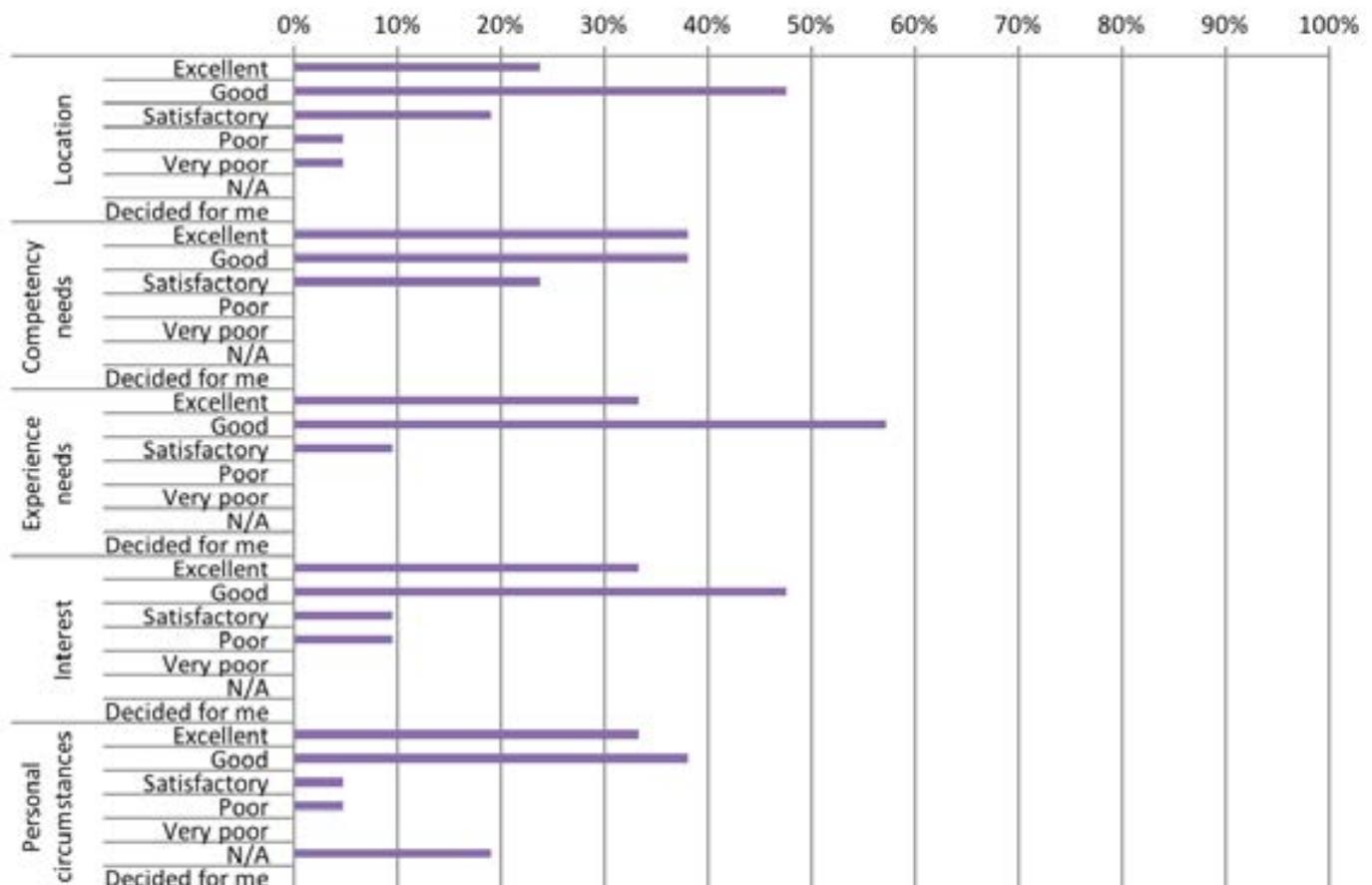
**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

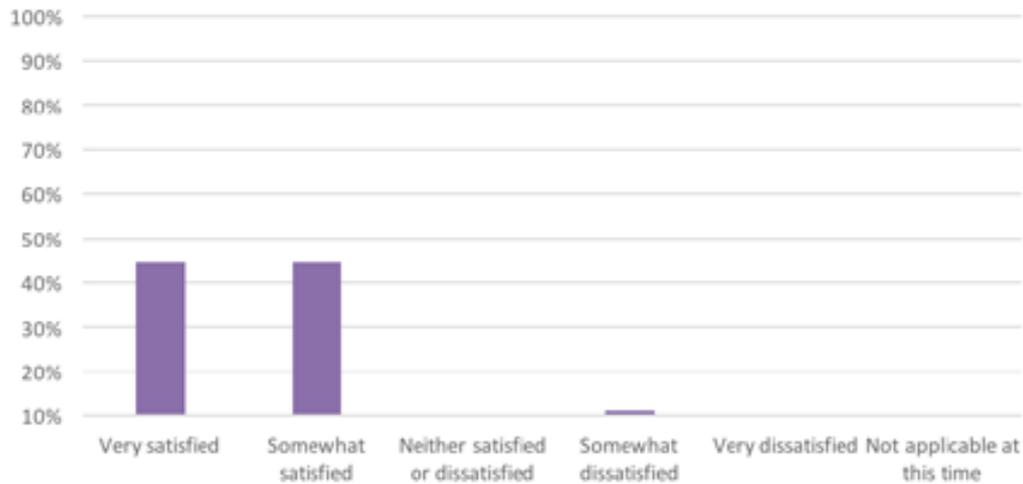


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

- Loads of support available. All staff are very approachable and supportive.
- The course team feel somewhat distant from the trainees. I experience a power dynamic. It doesn't help with feeling you can approach the team for support. The trainees attend end of term meetings to feedback their experiences but not much seems to change. The course team do not have much idea about how trainees are coping personally. There are regular appraisals but these feel very formal, like an assessment of progress and often block me from feeling I can be open about any experiences I am finding difficult. I would like to see changes to the course that mirrors the experience of normal PhD students. When I was an undergraduate PhD students participated in teaching, shared staff room areas with staff and had a very collaborative relationship with staff. As we are at the same level of training I think it should feel less "teacher" "pupil".
- Course team are always accessible and happy to chat.
- Personal / appraisal tutors are available for support and check-in which can help you feel a bit more grounded in a busy first year!
- It's an incredibly supportive course with lots of different options for support when it's needed. The appraisal tutors are very accessible and a great first point of contact for any issues that arise.
- Placements

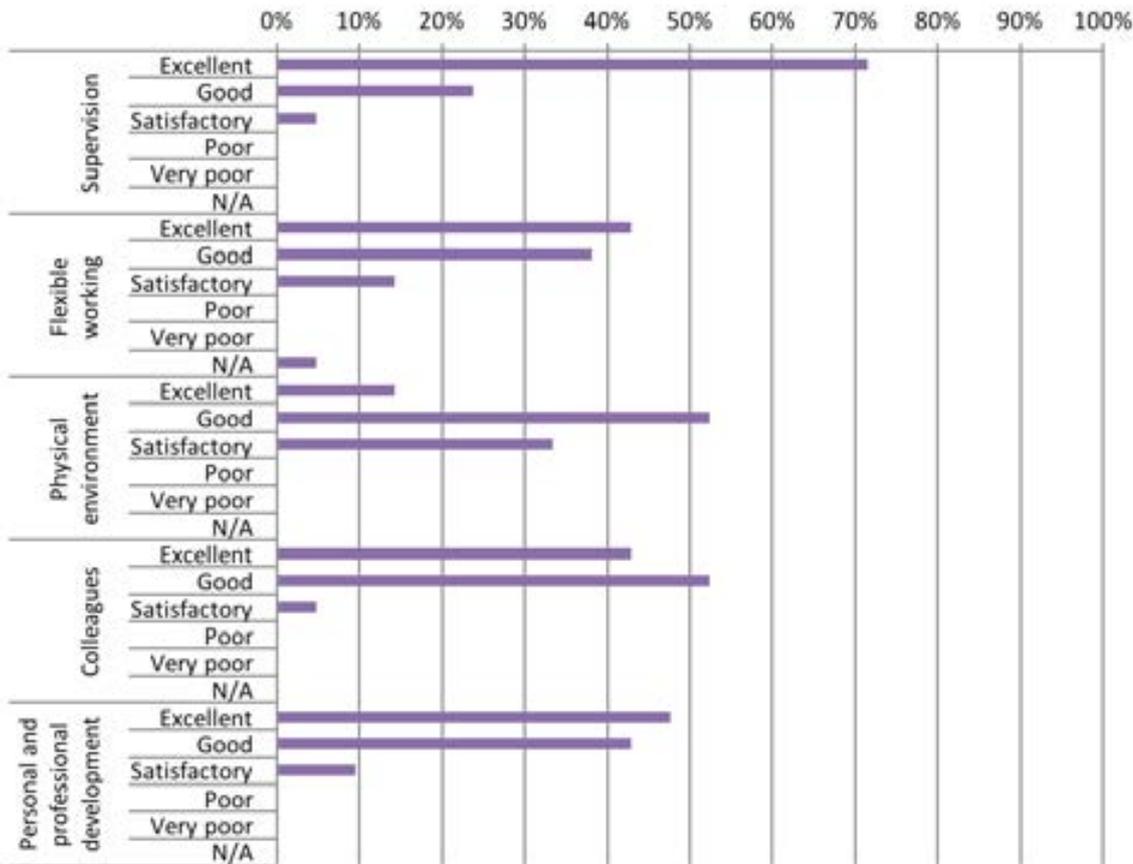
Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



**With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?****Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- We had a full day to help us prepare for placement and the pre-placement visit was very helpful and put me at ease.
- As I had to stay away from home for placement, it would have been helpful for the course to have clearer links with B&Bs in the local area, as this was more challenging to organise than anticipated, although not impossible.
- We often find out about our placements a few weeks before. With some people having to travel as far as Hereford I feel more notice should be given.
- Allocations sent out with limited notice, but they consider our preferences and personal circumstances
- Given training in clinical skills before initial placement. CBT taught first, however isn't used in all placements, but difficult to ever get this in the right order for everyone!

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).

- The course covers a very large area so be prepared to travel for placements.
- I am really enjoying both of my placement and found that trainees are valued and well integrated into the teams. My supervisors are both very supportive and keen to help me in developing. There have been lots of opportunities to get a wide range of experience. I feel as though I have developed a lot already.
- The trainees have very little input into decision-making for core placements (years 1 and 2). However, we are able to choose two 6-month/parallel final year specialist placements which is great.

## Transport needs

Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	78%
No	11%
Don't know	11%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	89%
No	0%
Don't know	6%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Coventry, Leamington Spa and Warwick.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	33%
No	56%
Don't know	11%

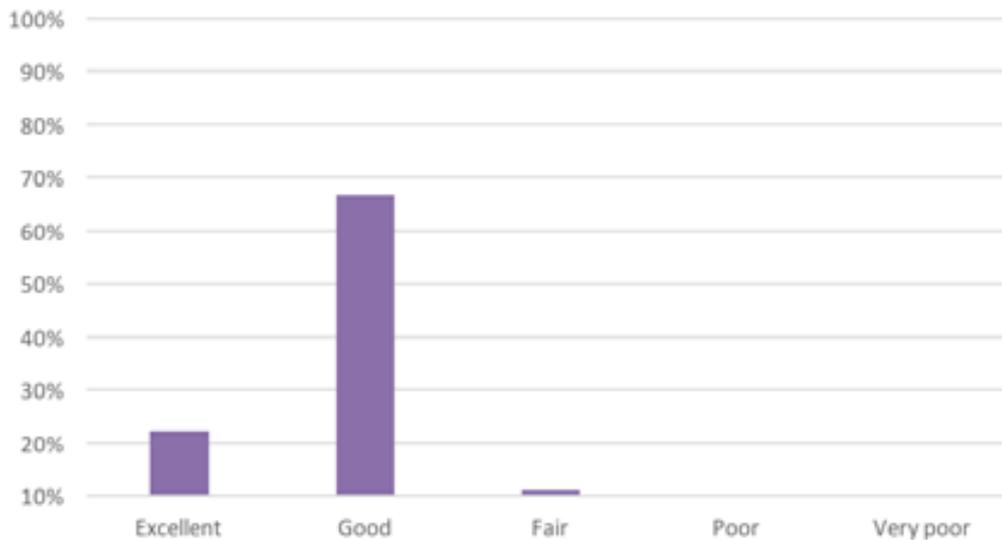
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	11%
Good	67%
Fair	11%
Poor	11%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- Study/Research days are allocated close to deadlines to allow adequate time to complete assignments. I have only had to work the occasion evening/weekend so far.
- So far, I have not had to give up weekends, except to do some reading now and again. I have heard that the course gets more intense in second year but for first year it is very manageable.
- The course is extremely demanding and I haven't always been able to apply boundaries between work and life balance due to the limited number of study days and academic demands
- Difficult at times, but generally good.
- It comes down to your commitment to making a work life balance. Work can take over if you let it or you're not disciplined. At times you will have to work longer than 9-5 but on the whole it's felt manageable.
- Okay if you don't have many other commitments outside of the course.
- There are busier times when it gets harder to juggle everything but in general if you use your time wisely it's possible to have a very good work life balance.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Travelling adds up and depending on where you live will impact how much you can claim through expenses
- Band 6 salary, which I feel is pretty decent.
- Being salaried is a huge bonus, particularly as many trainees have families and mortgages to pay due to the time it can take to get onto training
- What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?
- Very reflective, small cohort, friendly and supportive staff.
- The reflective nature of the course, how approachable and friendly the staff are and how varied and interactive the teaching has been.
- I enjoy the placements the most
- Reflective and supportive ethos. Great cohort and supportive staff team, who treat us like equals
- The cohort. Coventry only has 10 trainees per year and this means you can hopefully form close bonds - this has meant a lot to me and made training so enjoyable.
- The cohort and choosing final year placements in areas you want to specialise in. Research teaching has been pretty solid throughout.
- Being such a small cohort (10) makes it feel very supportive; we all get on well as a group and can turn to each other for support but also teaching can be more tailored to our needs than it might be with a much bigger group.

### Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?

- More of an emphasis on critical and community psychology from the start would be beneficial, in my view.
- Some of the teaching can be repetitive or not really pitched at our present needs. This is due to the large amount of visiting lecturers who are not familiar with our learning needs or what we have done in previous teaching. I think this is a big issue and can reduce morale if a teaching day doesn't feel particularly useful
- I would thoroughly recommend Coventry/Warwick as a very reflective and supportive course.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Interview and Group Task

For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.

Teaching	Year 1: 2 days (14hrs) per week + 4 week Full Time induction block (140hrs), Year 2: 1 day (7hrs) per week + 2 x 1 week full time blocks (70hrs) , Year 3: 1 day (7hrs) per week for 2 terms + 1 week FT block (35 hrs)
Placement	3 days per week
Personal Study	1/2 day a week in placement time plus - Year 1: 1 day/week outside term-time + 10 extra days, Year 2: 1 day week + 10 additional days, Year 3 - 1 day/week Term 1&2, 2 days/week Term 3 + 20 additional days
Research	Included in above

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# University of East London

29 responses (31% of 93 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	41%
Year 2	41%
Year 3	17%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	3%
25 – 29 years	69%
30 – 34 years	24%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	3%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	3%
Twice	41%
3 times	28%
4 times	14%
5 times	7%
6 times	7%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	10%
MA	10%
MSc	48%
MRes	0%
Diploma	10%
Post Graduate Certificate	21%
Conversion course	7%
None	21%
Other	3%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	7%
3 years	17%
4 years	31%
5 years	14%
6+ years	31%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	83%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	10%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	34%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	7%
Research Assistant	45%
Voluntary Research Assistant	24%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	59%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	31%
Other	14%

## The selection process

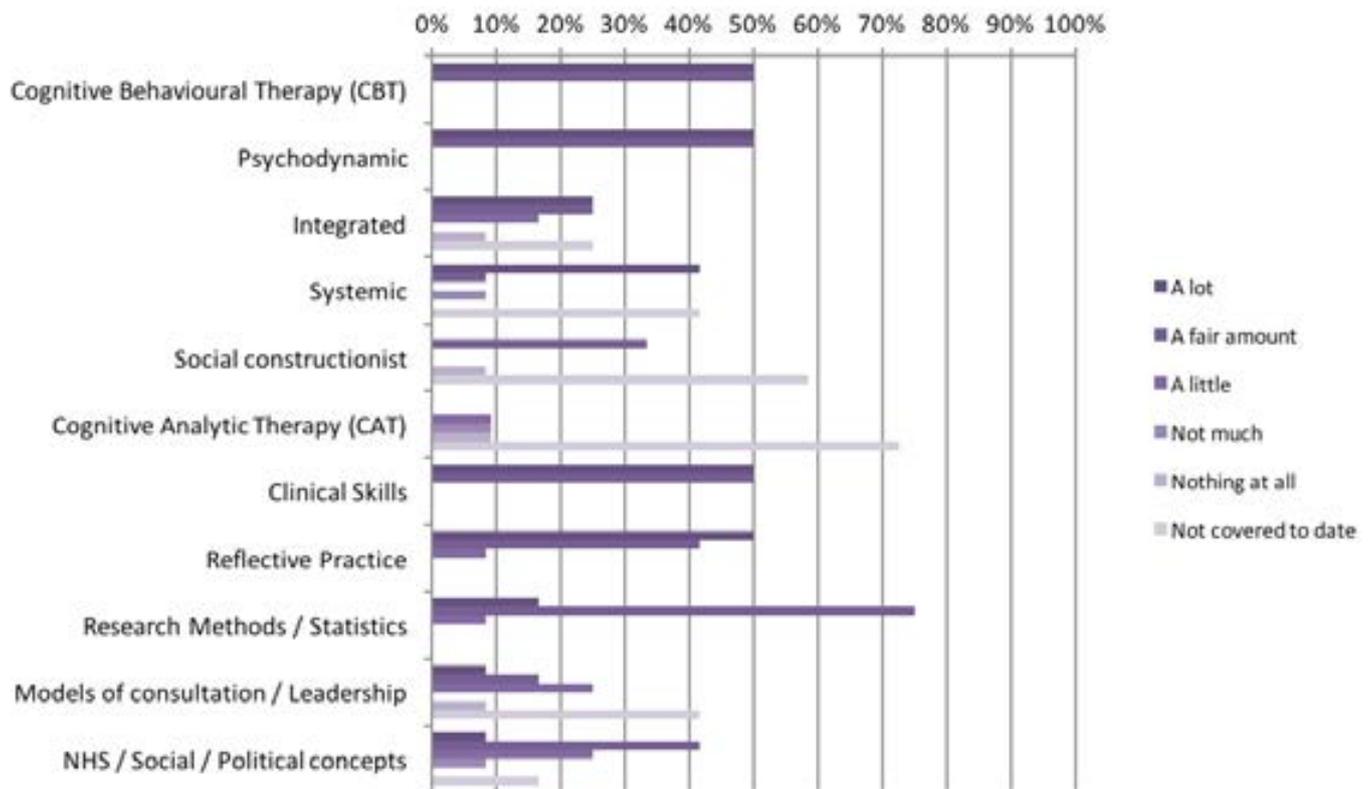
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Comfortable. The style of interview changed the year I interviewed- at this time it felt random and a bit clunky but I have heard it has improved.
- For our cohort the process was two panel interviews. The format changed for the 2015 cohort. It now includes a people's panel with service users and a computerised test. UEL have done a lot of work on improving the interviewees' experience of the interview process on the day.
- I interviewed twice. The experiences were different as they had changed the structure. However, they have really improved the structure again and it seems a lot nicer now, with all year 1 and 2 helping out, a buddy system, extensive plans on where to go when, etc. Even before that I felt it was very welcoming.
- I found the staff and buddies incredibly friendly and helpful. I liked having time to go and collect my thoughts by myself and I felt like the interviewers wanted to get the best from me. I felt the process was fair and at the end of the day I said to myself. If I don't get on here, I will definitely apply again next year because I enjoyed that process (as much as is possible for an interview!).
- I was interviewed in the old format. There was a research and clinical interview. Panel were warm.
- I found the buddy system supportive and helped to allay my anxieties of the day. The Peoples Panel involvement was genuine leading to a thought provoking group discussion which I valued. The interview had interesting questions which couldn't be prepared for which allowed me to show the panel my thought processes, as well as providing space for me to share my experience and knowledge.
- The interview was tough but friendly, staff worked to put you at ease, as did current students.
- I found the written information that UEL sent out very helpful as it clearly explained the format for the day - vignette, one to one interview, online test, group discussion. Although there was a central room where interviewees met together, interview times are staggered so that not everyone is doing the same task at the same time, which reduces the number of interviewees all sat together. Each interviewee was allocated a buddy from the 1st or 2nd year cohort, I found this very helpful in taking my mind off the interview nerves. My buddy took me between rooms/buildings for the different interview tasks, which prevented me from getting lost in unfamiliar surroundings. I felt that the interview panel wanted to get the best out of me and they were engaged and encouraging throughout the process. They were also clear about the deadline for hearing about interview results, which meant that I knew when I would hear back and wasn't constantly refreshing my emails in the interim. I think the only downside was that it was quite a long tiring day and there maybe should have been a longer break so that people could get food between the interview tasks.
- I thought it was a nicer one than some of the others I had, they wanted you to feel at ease and it felt like they wanted to get the best answers out of me. I found the different components to the selection process fair and it was nice that they gave service users power over the selection.
- I found it nerve-racking (of course), but splitting up into 3 separate parts helps disperse some of the anxiety. I found the general process positive but felt that I didn't need to have done all the prep work I did - they were interested in finding out about your way of thinking rather than directly asking about your experience
- Staff were friendly and encouraging.
- It is an intense day. The interview panel were friendly, but I felt disappointed as I wasn't sure I had been given a chance to show who I was. The group task wasn't as bad as I had been dreading.
- I thought the interviewers were warm and I felt they did want to get the best out of me. I thought the questions made sense and gave me opportunity to share myself and my ideas (however, I am also aware these were on the past questions which have now changed). I thought it made sense to have the situational judgement task but I am not sure about the utility of the other tasks.

- I remember it being very disorganised and quite stressful, but that the interviewers were welcoming, warm and gave me every opportunity to do well. The course have also been great at listening to trainee feedback on interviews and have made lots of changes since we started.
- The day was split into three sections: interview panel, group exercise and situational judgement task.
- The day was organised, appeared to go quite quickly and provision of refreshments was welcome.
- There was a superfluous talk about the course at the end of the day which could have been cut from the agenda to enable interviewees to leave and de-stress.
- I found the interview process very good. I felt supported by current trainees throughout and the process and it was nice to be paired up with another applicant as it was good to be able to debrief afterwards. Although I found the interview tested me, the panel was very encouraging. I found the atmosphere better than at other courses, seeming less competitive. It was nice they allowed time to chat to other applicants as it meant when we started the course there were a few familiar faces.
- Really good, very friendly (especially with buddies) and organised. Very helpful and comprehensive pre-interview information supplied before too.
- Supportive, having a buddy and time between sections was useful. It was a long day and felt draining, and stressful obviously, but it was nice the course had considered that.
- I felt welcomed right from the start and the buddy system offered me great reassurance as well as distraction. The day was well organised and the interview focused around a research and clinical vignette. The UEL interview was like no other I have attended. I felt they focused less on me saying 'all the right things' but my personal opinion, ability to think about wider factors and critical thinking. The People's Panel was the best part of it did not feel like an assessment but a relaxed conversation where I could be myself.
- I enjoyed it. I felt it drew on my clinical experience rather than just asking me to sell myself. I appreciated the service user led part of the interview as it showed how they are attempting to share the power by drawing on their lived experiences.
- The interview was quite straight forward. My specific learning disabilities were taken into account for the vignette portion (extra time), although not for the computer based task (critical thinking).
- The interview was a good mix of clinical and research questions. Current trainees were on hand to provide assistance throughout the day, they were very supportive and containing. Overall, I had a good feeling about the course.
- Short and sweet. They were really trying to understand your background and knowledge and views
- The interview was really hard but I liked the fact that it felt like they were trying to get real answers from candidates rather than rehearsed responses to predictable questions.
- It's changed now, but at the time it was two short interviews - one for research and one clinical. I had other interviews and this one was the most laid back and friendly. They had trainees to answer any questions you had which still happens now.
- Felt warm and welcoming. We had a buddy with us all day to show us around. I found the questions fair and even quite enjoyed the peoples' panel section.
- It was a bit chaotic, but the course do seem to be responding to our year's and the year below feedback as ours was the first year they tried a new system. Interviewers were warm. Questions were challenging and encouraged you to think on your feet in a positive way. I appreciated having service users involved in the selection process.

# Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



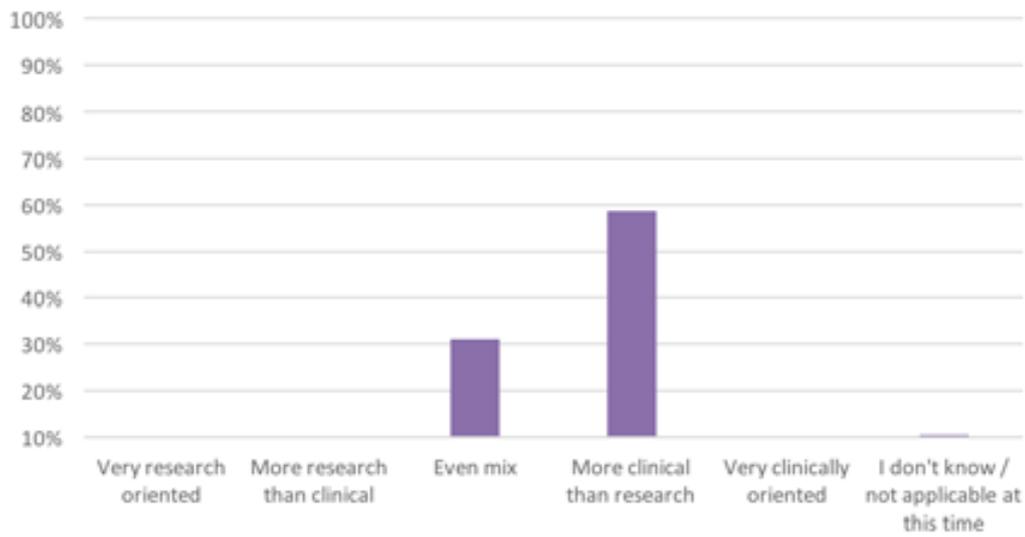
What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	75%
Mindfulness	64%
Schema Therapy	36%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	61%
Solution Focused Therapy	96%
Neuropsychology	93%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	82%
Other	50%

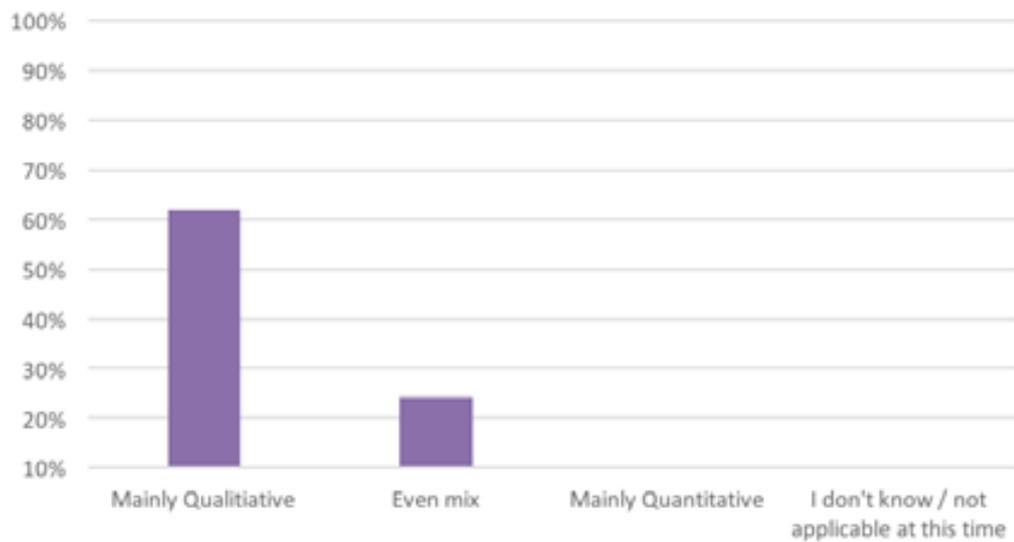
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- Not enough time was allocated to teaching in older adults, child and forensic. The older adult teaching was predominantly self-directed learning through online tasks, which was not an effective way to learn.
- The course is mainly focused on CBT and systemic working but there is opportunity to develop skills in other areas in 3rd year, particularly IPT and ACT. I think this balance reflects the work we do on placement.
- Some areas are covered in your final year through advanced practice seminars (e.g. schema therapy). Other areas are health board specific and so you cover through placement (eg compassion focused therapy).
- Emphasis is definitely on CBT, with introductory lectures on other models in 1-2 year, and then optional advanced practice lectures in third year (e.g. IPT, Schema etc.). There is quite an emphasis on ACT.
- Out of the teaching and focus is on CBT with a few lectures on other modalities. In my personal experience, there hasn't been a lot of opportunities to practice any other modalities other than CBT and the some systemic work but this usually depends on supervisor.
- A lot of time is spent on disorder specific teaching, assessment and formulation. CBT is the main model, although there are not many workshops and role plays dedicated to this. Many of the other models are briefly introduced and can be chosen in third year as advanced practice seminars where some more model specific lectures are given.
- I find the course very CBT focused, I would enjoy more systemic and psychodynamic teaching. We had one excellent day of teaching on psychodynamic but unfortunately the course appear to keep cutting this element every year. We are unable to learn other techniques such as ACT until our final year of study. However, if on placement a supervisor is trained in another discipline we can use this therapeutic technique under close supervision.
- More time should be devoted to each area to give a much deeper level of understanding and knowledge. Many areas are not covered in enough detail.
- This course is primarily CBT driven, although I felt the training in relation to CBT was less than adequate for those who had no experience of CBT prior to getting on the course. You can choose certain models that you wish to receive training on, so there is some flexibility.
- There was not enough time for research skills, a lab based set up or drop in sessions would have been helpful
- The course can be repetitive at times, although there have been changes made to the structure of the course for newer years.
- There is a focus on CBT, but as Edinburgh have a particular focus on ACT we have had much opportunity to get teaching on this.
- ACT and Systemic teaching is very good, CBT teaching assumes a lot of knowledge and experience.
- Academically CBT is the main approach for the first two years although people can get a taste of other approaches from placement supervisors. In the final year there is a choice of what other approaches people want to attend teaching on.
- IPT

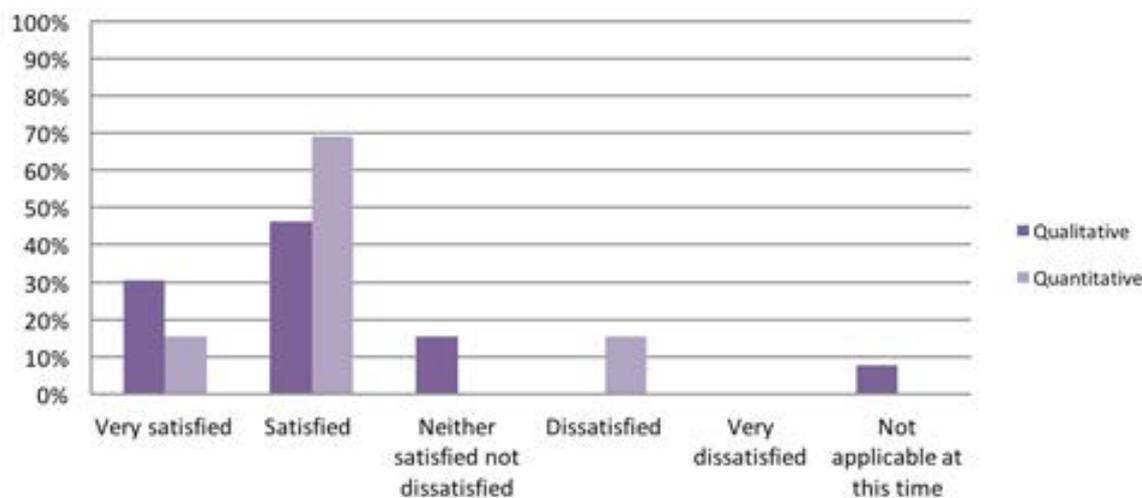
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



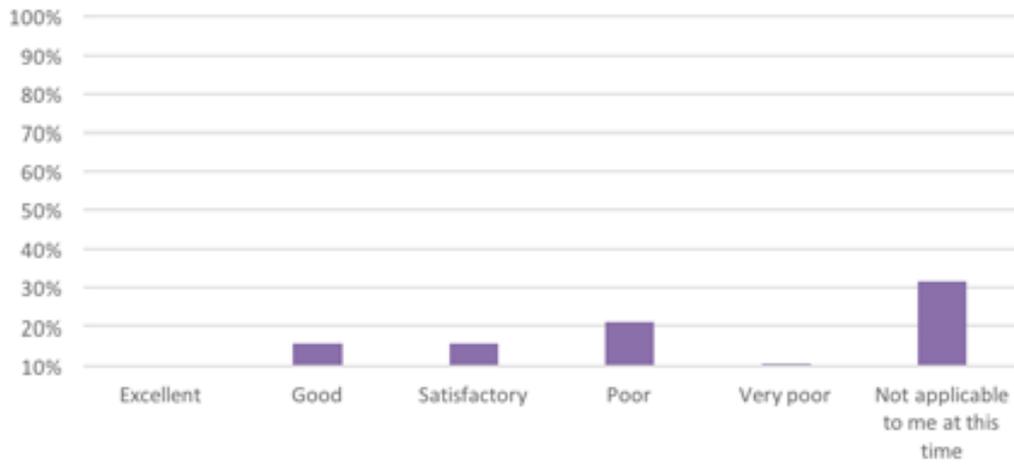
## Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



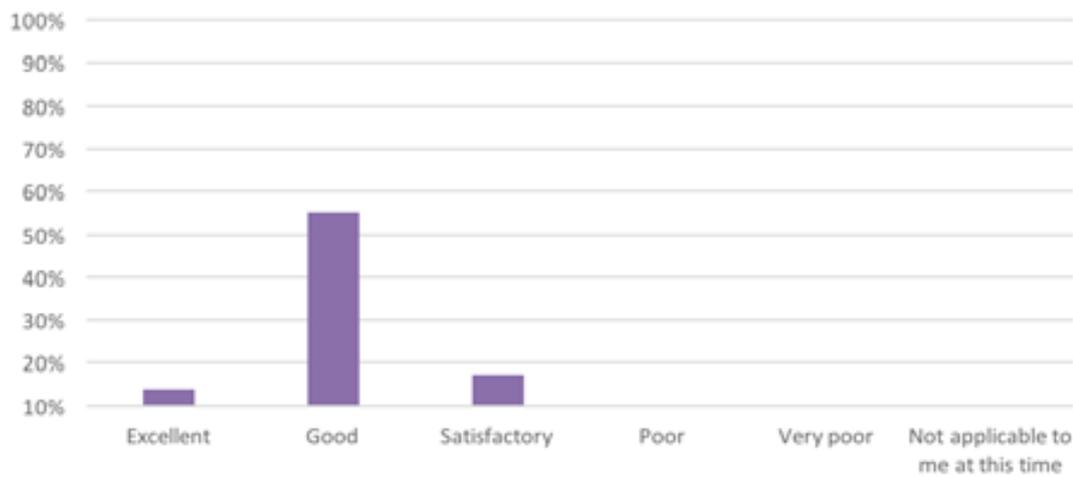
## Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- The quantitative teaching did not cover complex analyses however there is excellent 1:1 support for quantitative theses
- In the first and second terms we receive a little bit of research methods teaching. Most of it comes in the first term of second year. I feel satisfied with the teaching we have had so far and have liked the focus on clinical teaching.
- We have looked at the history of research which has been helpful to situate our understanding today
- It's intense but the lecturers are great, which makes it all better
- Again, the research is viewed from a constructionist position so there are lots of discussions of epistemology and ontology. This can be overwhelming but I think is very helpful overall and I really value this.
- We have lots of research teaching on epistemology and qualitative methods. Quantitative teaching is provided in the form of self-led workshops, but we get what we need.
- Good grounding in applied critical research methods.
- We start thinking about the thesis very early on
- Had very little research teaching so far in year 1
- It feels like we get a lot of research teaching.

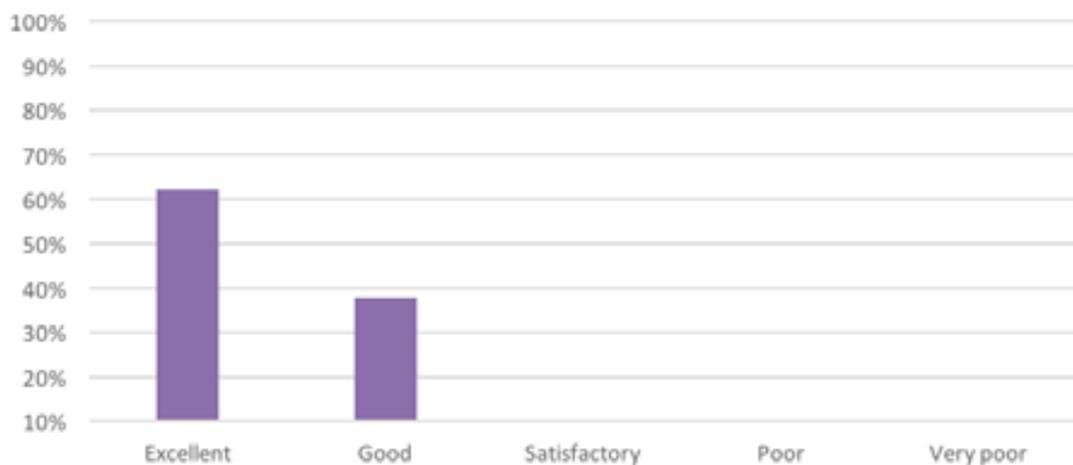
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



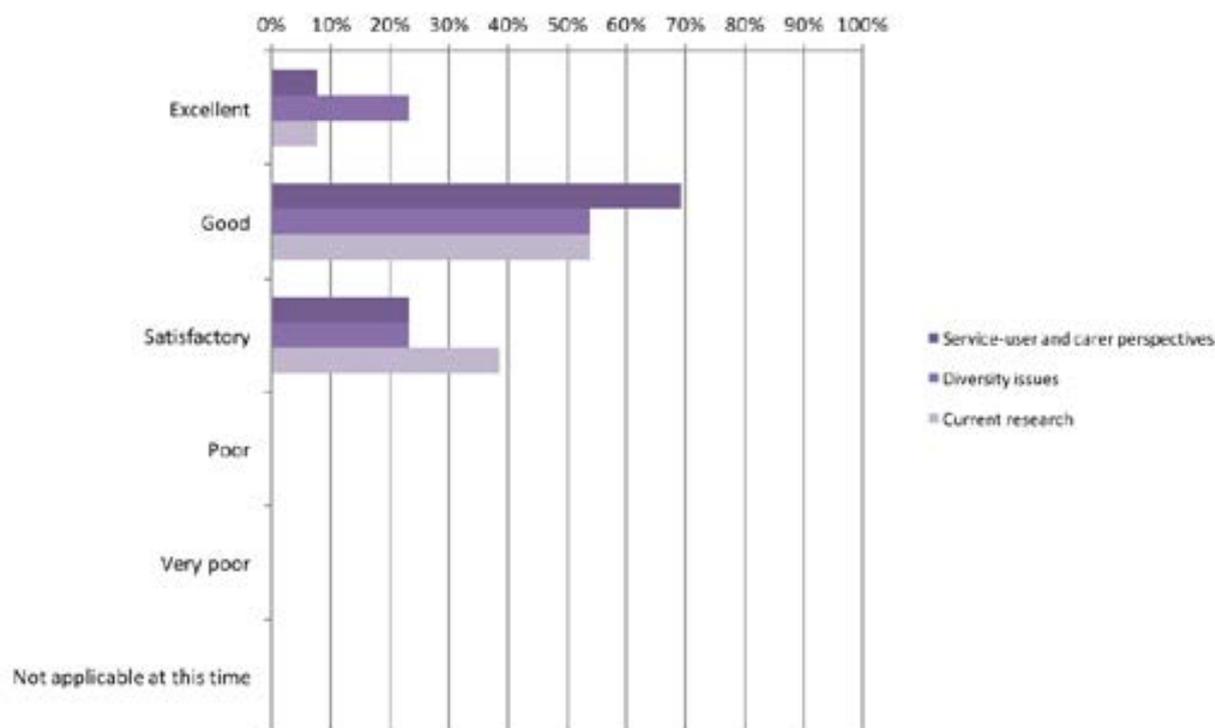
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

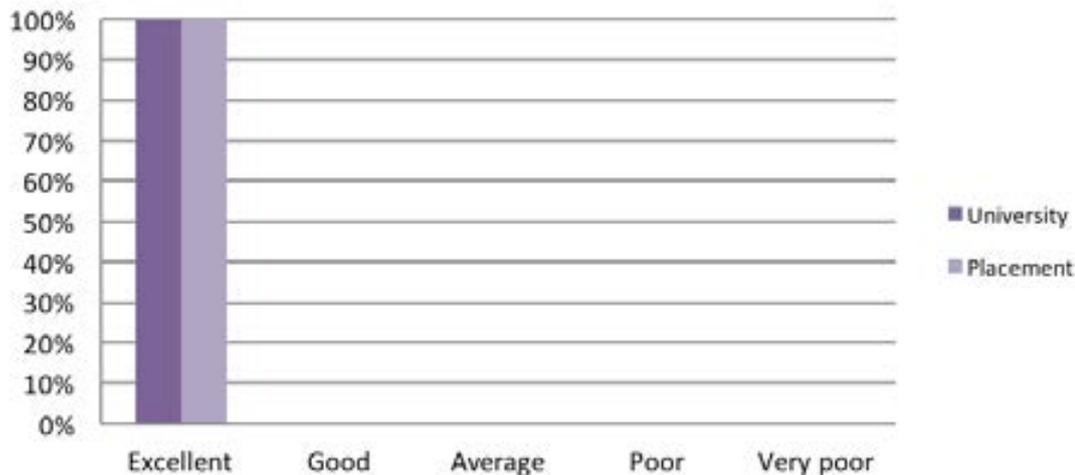
- Current research is not always emphasised. I've always found this is something I can easily look up myself and have benefited more from the emphasis on critical thinking and wider discussion of theory.
- The teaching we have had has been consistently good and thought provoking. There are a lot of external speakers who are exceptional and really challenge us to think about the work we do as trainees.
- The variety of external lecturers is excellent, and several of the programs staff are especially inspirational.
- We have some really thought-provoking teaching on working with difference/diversity, issues of oppression and power.
- I think we have some key experts in the field at UEL and the guest lecturers tend to be of great quality.
- The teaching is engaging and of a very high quality. We think very critically about current concepts and this is very stimulating.
- I think the teaching overall is fantastic, we are encouraged to think very broadly and in an advanced, significant and context based manner that gives the people we work with and ourselves the best opportunity at helpful change.
- Teaching has mostly been of excellent quality. When teaching has been of poorer quality the course have been quick to act on this too! The diversity of teaching we receive is excellent too.
- Quality of teaching is excellent from the stance of people you'd hope to hear from at UEL.
- I found the teaching at UEL great, we've had lots of inspiring lectures, which give you a lot of food for thought. It can feel a little overwhelming at times, but not in a negative way.
- Lectures are less 'chalk and talk' but trainees are encouraged to be critical and reflective of what they are hearing. Both internal and external lecturers teach at UEL and feedback is welcome.
- It was deeply saddening that after a challenging but helpful session on understanding the impact of privilege and difference that the course chose to withdraw further sessions.
- I think most universities include aspects of diversity into teaching but more could definitely be done
- We regularly will have teaching from service users/experts by experience

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

17 % of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- UEL as a University has a lot of requirements for assignments and exams so the UEL course feels more assessed than the other North Thames region courses. It's tough but everyone gets through it. Whereas the other courses operate pass / fail grades for assignments UEL gives % marks and some people push themselves to achieve highly.
- The balance with life demands are tough, especially when everything happens at the same time (course deadlines sometimes come in quick succession), this is getting more challenging as thesis work is increasing
- I have found meeting deadlines and completing reading for placement outside of placement/ University time difficult because I want to maintain a life outside of the doctorate. This is possible, but towards deadlines I have had to sacrifice personal time to get things done. It comes in waves though and for me it's about maximising those quieter times for personal endeavours to make it worthwhile.
- Managing deadlines and revising for exams
- Balancing the different components- academic assessments (exam, practical report), placement and lecture readings.
- I think juggling so many different things is a tricky part of training, but also is completely expected considering it is a doctorate training course.
- Second year is particularly demanding as you have the same amount of work that was expected of you in the first year, but have to be working on your thesis on top of this.

- Sometimes the timings of things aren't great (end of placement coinciding with practical report due date coinciding with NHS ethics application being due).
- Trying to juggle multiple demands at once can be tough - but you get through it day by day.
- We seem to have a higher pass rate than other courses-60% to pass each piece of work. The exams ask a lot of us with very large and challenging questions needing a lot of revision. There are times when some deadlines feel too close together and work piles up.
- Being a trainee is hard work! Whilst everything is completely manageable, balancing multiple demands and actually having a life is hard at certain pinch points. This will be true for every course though!
- It's a professional doctorate where you are balancing competing demands of University and placement.
- Time management (not specific to UEL)
- UEL places particular emphasis on locating mental health difficulties within the social context and it has been challenging (but ultimately incredibly rewarding) to integrate this into my pre-training experiences plus the current NHS context.
- It seems like we have a few more coursework deadlines earlier than other courses, but we do get a longer much more chilled out summer, so guess it's swings and roundabouts.
- In comparison to other North Thames courses it feels like the workload is particularly higher with assignments.
- Administrative cuts and also limited library access.
- Hand-ins, end of placement, exams and selecting a thesis topic/supervisor all happen in a concentrated period (<3 months) which is difficult to balance.
- When one has to think about a number of projects/roles simultaneously it can be difficult to keep it all in mind.
- Trying to get used to short-note exam questions and develop enough understanding about all the things covered throughout the year to pass the exams.
- Time management and reading. Although we can ask for 'essential reading' in line with the disability policies, these lists are still very long, especially for CBT
- Meeting deadlines and work life balance was really hard but I also had other commitments outside University and work which makes things harder.
- The course is demanding full stop really. It peaks at times, especially when deadlines and placement demands collide, but then it does let up at other times so you have to take the rough with the smooth.
- There are waves of very high stress around deadlines as you are juggling a lot and with very little time free. At other points it feels quite relaxed and without too much pressure.

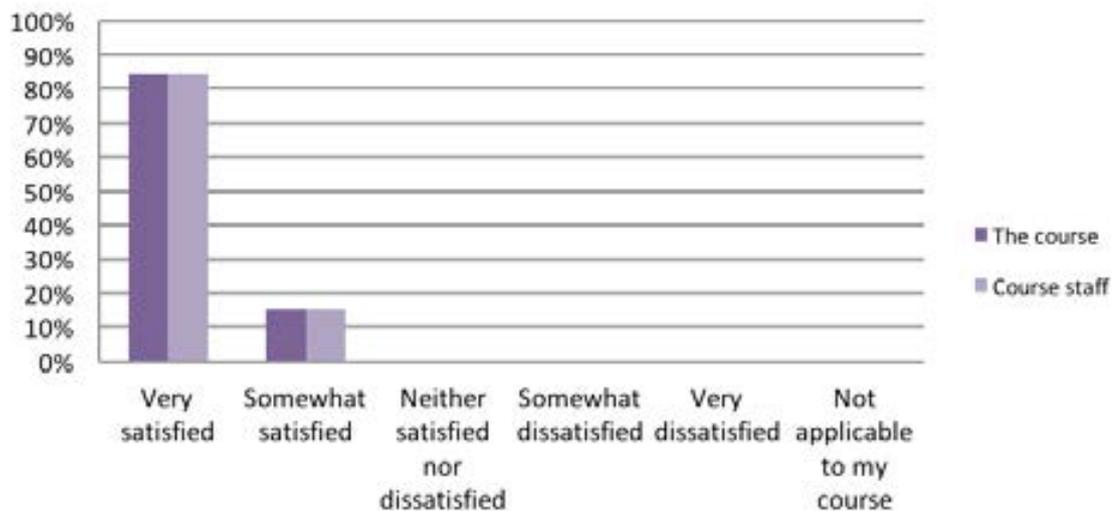
**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	86%
“Buddy”	93%
Manager	46%
Placement Supervisor	89%
Librarian	57%
Professional Mentor	29%
Personal Tutor	93%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	68%
Independent personal advisor	54%
Other	7%

**Under “Other”, responses included:**

- Personal and professional development groups (PPD)
- Other trainees in the cohort are the biggest support system!
- Cohort led study groups

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

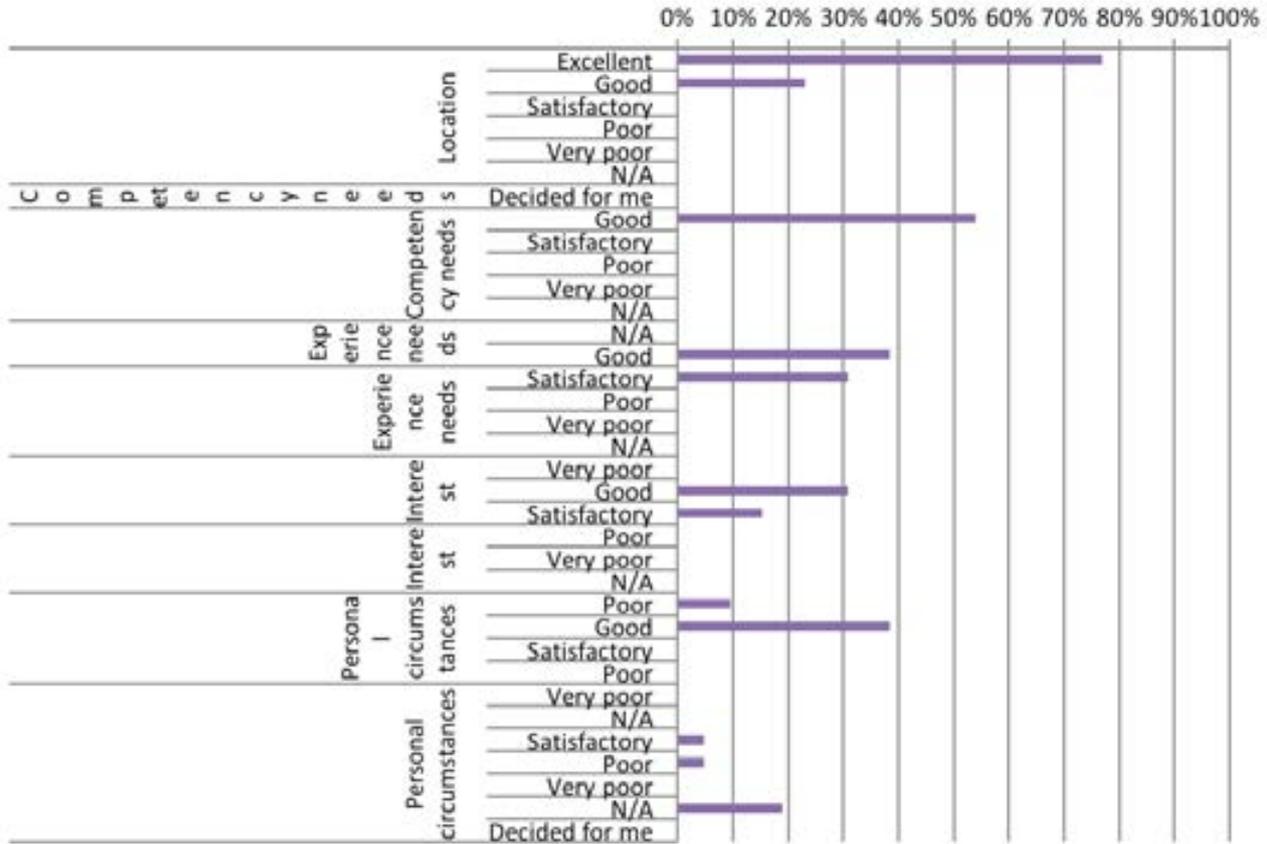


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

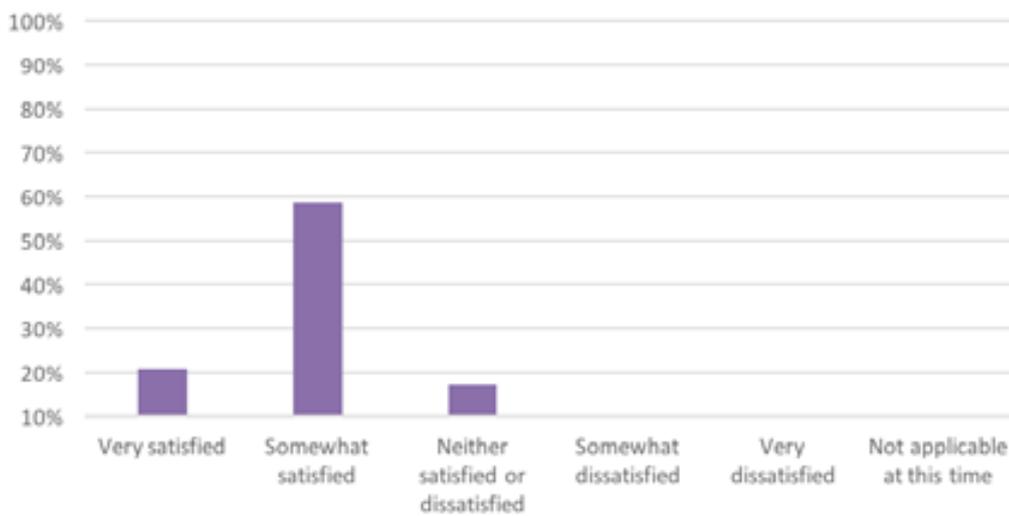
- The staff that I have spoken to have been helpful and supportive. They are invested in you doing well and genuinely care.
- The support I have received has been positive, however it can be tricky scheduling meeting to see course staff due to their busy schedules/limited days at the University.
- I was particularly stressed during my first term and I found UEL, and my personal tutor/clinical supervisor on placement really supportive. I felt like everyone was genuine and was available for me to meet with them as and when I needed them to so I have felt supported by the whole staff team.
- All very helpful
- It has been mixed. I had a devastating bereavement during my training and I was supported in some ways and not in others. The course are often quite disorganized and would make often very upsetting mistakes due to mismanagement of things or 'forgetting' which felt rather insensitive. However, in other ways they have been very supportive and flexible.
- Whenever I've needed support it's been provided quickly and sensitively.
- Course team are extremely approachable, available and helpful
- We have a "buddy system" with the year above, but this is not monitored so if you do not have a proactive buddy it is not as useful. Also I have found it personally difficult to meet with my individual tutor (this is not the case for everyone). There are more means of regular support thought, we have a tutor meeting fortnightly, personal and professional development groups (a reflective space) three times per semester and the other years are very supportive.
- Course staff make me feel well supported and appear to be perceptive of trainee needs. Feedback is taken very seriously and issues addressed if possible.
- It's minimal, extra time in exams and that is about it
- Staff would ask or follow up with you but then nothing in terms of support was offered and neither was I given any options to consider
- I found that support from the course team was very hit and miss, and it took a long time to work out who to go to (based on who was likely to be supportive).

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



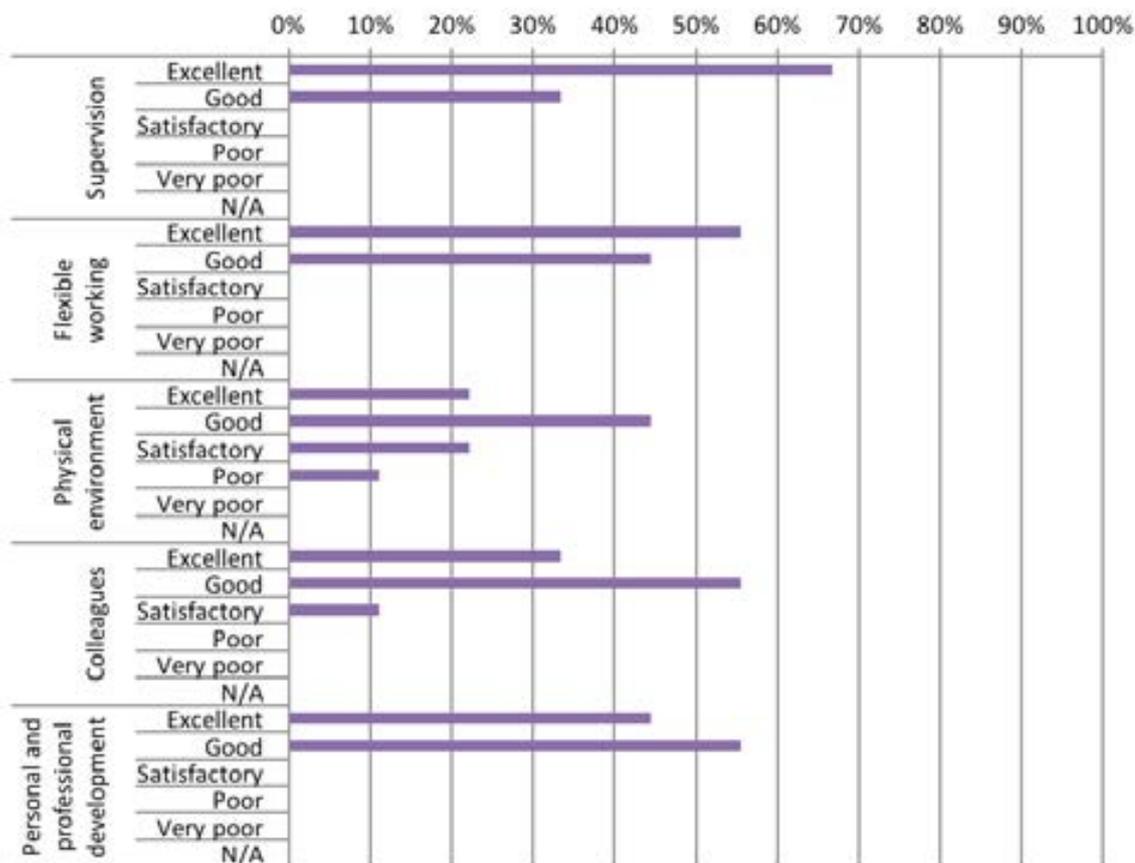
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- Our cohort have given feedback that there needs to be more time for the practice of clinical skills.
- There wasn't much preparation for placements and the teaching we had did not relate to my specific placement.
- The initial written information that we received on our first day was quite scarce but we had an opportunity to meet our placement supervisor for a pre-placement visit.
- Considering everyone is on such varied placements, I think it is a hard thing to do,
- You can give a lot of input into the type of placement that you're interested in. The course will do its best to find you something suitable, or as close to what you've asked for as possible. Preparation is variable as people are on different placements to each other, so for example some may be on child placements while others are on older adults placements, but the teaching should at the very least be running alongside your placement if not before it. You also get time before your placement starts to meet with your new supervisor, which helps.
- It may have been more helpful to have had some more practical skills training before starting the first placement, rather than a social constructionist focus. However, I do understand that the whole framework makes sense within this context. The actor's workshops have been invaluable and very appreciated.
- Whilst placements are fully coordinated and well-managed by the University, there is little in the way of connection between the academic curriculum and placements.
- We have an opportunity to meet our supervisor before we start, but in year 1 all placements are decided for you and usually a year so there is limited input.
- Common anxieties are addressed on the first day of teaching which I felt was very helpful.
- The practical sessions were helpful for alleviating the anxiety around being observed by supervisors.
- We have less CBT teaching than other courses, so you initially can feel unprepared for the first adult mental health placement. You soon learn on the job though and I prefer having the breadth of knowledge about other approaches.
- I have always felt very well prepared by the course for placements with regards to teaching and providing us with information about the placement.

## In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- My experience on placement has been difficult, but the University has been incredibly supportive and I know most other people on the course have had good experiences.
- University have been supportive with placement
- I feel that the service's needs are prioritised before trainee's needs, which makes meeting your personal and professional development needs difficult.
- Some placements are difficult and some are brilliant. But at least you're able to give feedback about this!
- The placements have been very good in general, lots of experiences and opportunities and working with fantastic clinicians. The environments have not been good-I have spent two years in windowless cellars and often without my own computer or one to hotdesk on. This is clearly a bigger NHS issue not a clinical psychology issue.
- Placement experience is very much dependent on the relationship you develop with the supervisor. Systems are in place to support trainees with placement experiences if needed.
- Placement is about being given somewhere to work. You didn't choose and making the most out of it with the hope of acquiring skills transferable to an area where you might like to work in future.
- There is an obvious disparity between UEL teaching and NHS working. This can be initially quite overwhelming and hope dwindles. However, conversations amongst the cohort and creative working can help overcome the initial shock and we learn how change is still possible.
- Although being placed in services undergoing change can be an insight into working in the wider NHS, the atmosphere and dynamics created can be difficult to navigate.

- Space is an issue. I don't have a desk or computer to work from on some days
- My first (yearlong) placement was not good at all and my supervision was really bad. The course had concerns and provided some support but I think it's difficult for them to intervene in a helpful way. It's very much the luck of the draw with supervisors. I've had a better experience with my recent placement.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	100%
No	0%
Don't know	0%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in London, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent and Surrey.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

## How do you find the work life balance on your course?

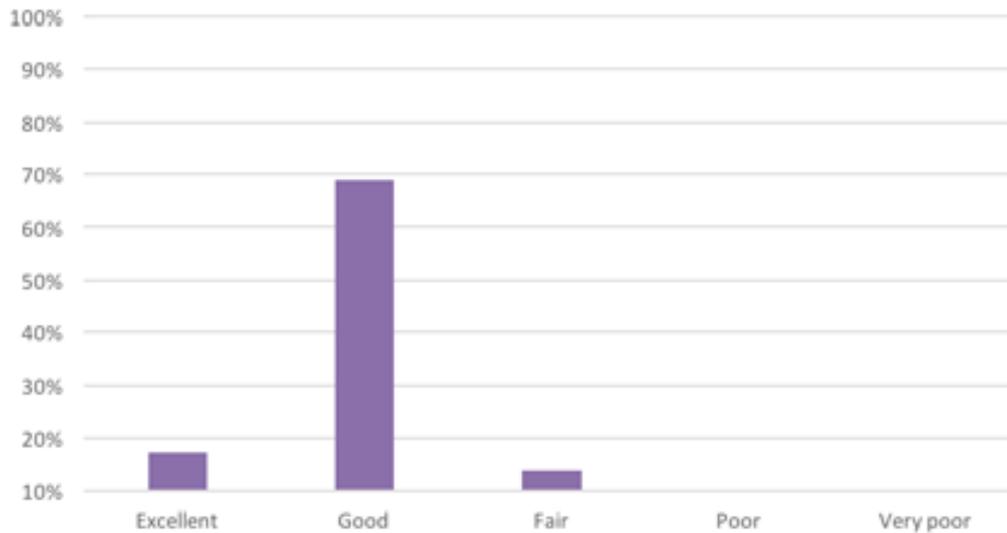
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	7%
Good	36%
Fair	39%
Poor	18%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- Once you're on the course I think it's more helpful to take a 'good enough' approach. You had to strive to be the best to get onto training but it's not possible to maintain that standard and have a work life balance at the same time.
- The demands of training perhaps do not lend itself to a good work-life balance, but it is manageable.
- We have a half-day earmarked for study every week which is helpful but I don't find this enough time to cover all our academic demands so occasionally I find myself doing bits of work at the weekend to keep up with the workload. This tends to happen in the lead up to assignments such as the essay and practical report.
- I think you just have to be very organised when it comes to training, but as long as you make the most of your regular study time then it is certainly doable.
- There are periods of there being no balance at all and it's all work-work-work, and periods where it's great. Summer tends to make up for it! And to be fair, I don't mind having to do work at home - I like the course and appreciate being there. It's never going to be easy achieving a qualification at this level.
- 1/2 a day a week is not enough time for assessments, thesis work, exam revision and reading for placement so I always work weekends equals poor life work balance.
- This varies throughout the year there are times of year where I work every day (including weekends) for a month at a time. Then there are other times of year where we get a lot of study days and can have a much healthier work/life balance - so there is some give and take.
- There is a lot of work to do and I often find myself working many weekends and evenings. This may just be my way of managing it but I also know some of the parents on the course have really struggled with this.
- Things ebb and flow a lot. At times things are great! At certain pinch points where everything comes at once it's awful. On balance it works out pretty ok though.
- Ups & downs. Time management is key
- Only in first year so may be different later, it's stressful around deadlines, but I think the course try to protect you from getting too overwhelmed, especially on placement where they try to ensure supervisors aren't giving you too much work.
- Depending on deadlines it can be poor, I live further away which impacts on mine though
- It comes in peaks and troughs.
- The profession does a lot of lip service about maintaining balance, which the demands of the course directly contradict.

- There is a lot of emphasis on work/life balance and self-care. However, this is quite aggressive and unrealistic. It would not be possible to attend required teaching, along with the work for assignments and exams within a normal 37.5 hour working week.
- It's very hard at times to have a balance at all but then at other times it eases off and you can achieve more of work life balance.
- There are stages when you don't have much University work, which make up for the stages where you're coming up to a deadline!
- It is what you make of it. Sometimes there is an awful lot of work and you don't have time, sometimes it's gentler. You will have to give up some evenings and weekends around deadlines.
- I think the work life balance is as good as can be expected for clinical psychology training with regards to the work load. I also value having half a day study leave each week. I've found tutors to be less good at supporting a good work/life balance and taking personal circumstances into account.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- We get paid well!
- Living in London is expensive but the band 6 salary and Inner London weighting helps. There has been some confusion about whether we are eligible for the Widening Access Scheme, having this tax rebate would help to improve financial quality of life but this is now looking unlikely.
- No problems.
- It was great until we got news that we might have to pay back the tax we were refunded.
- I think it is very justified that we are paid a salary as we work just as hard as our colleagues and really give a lot of input into services, often helping to clear waiting lists etc. I think the profession of clinical psychology would become even more elitist if the funding was cut as you would only receive trainees who would work for free and this will be a very limited number of wealthy people who do not represent the masses. I think the salary is appropriate and well reflects the work we do.
- We're paid a fair wage for the work we are doing in the NHS, and this is above the average wage in London so can't complain. It's a comfortable amount to live on.
- Obviously London is expensive but it's manageable with the salary.
- Deeply disappointed by the lack of support from the wider profession about the changes to tax exemption under the widening access scheme.
- There has been a lot of confusion about the Widening Access Scheme scheme and where we fit within it. This has had a knock-on effect about whether we think about ourselves as students or employees.
- We get London weighting on top of the band 6 wage which helps!

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Political and societal awareness brought in to most of our teaching.
- Clinical skills focus on diversity and difference.
- The teaching. The course do a lot of work to help the cohorts develop a group dynamic that is supportive and non-competitive.

- There is a wide variety of different aspects of clinical psychology taught on the course, often linked with really thinking about social inequalities and becoming aware of societal issues. Reflection and self-awareness is really valued.
- The standard of teaching, the supportive and lovely cohort, and the way we are encouraged to think and question our practice and systems.
- The broad range of theoretical approaches taught and valued. That they teach us to be critical and considerate of the socio-political context of the work that we do and that there is diversity amongst trainees (with regards to age, professional background, ethnicity, sexuality and gender).
- The learning environment (staff and cohort) allowing one to take up multiple positions to examine different theoretical approaches. Also the integrity with which lecturers share their personal clinical experiences.
- The teaching and the other trainees in my year.
- The course's ethos of challenging traditional approaches to Psychology and Psychiatry and providing critical alternatives. The thought-provoking discussions that are facilitated by teaching staff and external lecturers about issues such as difference/diversity and power which might not be covered in as much detail on other courses.
- The teaching is amazing. The cohort are great too.
- The course staff are friendly and engaging, and the external lecturers that come in are of such high quality. I love the social constructionist aspect of the course - it has really shaped ethos in a very positive way. Even when it's hard and I'm having a tough time with all that is expected of me, I never stop enjoying and appreciating it. The course is also set up to allow the cohort to be very cohesive, which is a great source of support.
- Supportive and political focus.
- It has really changed the way I think about things - the teaching is so stimulating and there are some really inspirational people that come to give lectures. Also the support of the cohort is great - it is nice knowing there are 30 other people in this with you.
- The teaching is fantastic and I really do look forward to most of our lectures. They get us to think in a very different way that both provides us with excellent skills as a psychologist but also changes the way I look and think about my own life and context and how political my environment is at all times.
- Broad variety of topics/ models/ ideas covered by high quality lecturers. The course introduces interesting, challenging and critical ideas from the outset which is really valuable in working as a psychologist.
- Our cohort! But also everything else.
- The ethos. UEL's approaching locating mental health difficulties in the social context from the outset of teaching.
- The variety of teaching and the quality of teaching, with most people being really passionate about their topic. For the critical and reflective nature is something I value most about UEL, I feel the specific disorder specific treatments can be learnt out of a book and through placement, but UEL gives you the critical perspective which I think will be invaluable after we're qualified.
- I feel the support from the cohort has been great, and UEL has given us the opportunity to get to know different people by varying group's e.g. clinical skills and PPD.
- Critical elements, incorporating social and political elements, encourages you to think flexibly and creatively, not wedded to one way of thinking and approaching things.
- Varied teaching, my cohort.
- The cohort and teaching.
- I fully enjoyed the first term where a great deal of time was devoted to helping us develop our critical thinking, especially towards accepted beliefs and practices within the profession. It was

greatly liberating to reflect on the repressive and disempowering experiences endured in pursuit of professional development.

- Teaching on wide range of social issues and how they may affect wellbeing.
- External and internal lecturers were very experienced. We had clinical skills actor workshops which were the highlight of the course
- The workload.
- The fact that this course gets to question everything rather than taking things at face value. I feel as though UEL really gets you to think about the personal, social and cultural circumstances which may have led someone to have a particular outlook on life. In that way, I've found that the teaching has not only really helped my clinical work, but it has changed the way I think in everyday life.
- The teaching is challenging, engaging and of a really high quality. The staff are involved and willing to help out. We all get on really well as a cohort so can support each other.
- The content of the teaching, the critical aspect feels really important. I'm really glad that I've had teaching on mainstream clinical psychology as well as alternatives to this as it allows me to make my own informed decisions on where I position myself. There is also lots of space to meet and talk with like-minded people.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- The assignments and exams are really tough but the exposure to different ways of thinking and working are more than worth it. Lots of the teaching is really inspiring and the lecturers are very open to talking more about ideas and encouraging you to bring them into placement.
- Sometimes some of the theoretical aspects of most common models and skills are not covered extensively, which may make working in the every-day context harder at times.
- I think UEL has a lot of myths around it because it has such a different ethos, but actually I think lots of trainees and clinical psychologists have a similar view but don't realise they are taking the constructionist approach. I think everyone should go to UEL!
- Why in post grad do we still have exams? Evidence suggests they are pointless at this level (i.e. they are for setting not for learning).
- I think improvements could be that UEL improved their communication with each other, their organisation and their forward thinking. I think it is a shame these elements can be frustrating as it undermines the fantastic work they are doing overall. These are easy enough things to fix.
- On the other hand, I think UEL is a fantastic course, and I am very proud to have been trained here. I think we come out at the end feeling different as trainees and thinking in a broader, constructionist way and this is incredible. I think people who want to come here need to be prepared to 'take the Matrix red pill' and have their way of thinking changed for good. And to me, this is a brilliant thing but it isn't for everyone (or you may already be there anyway!). If you come here, enjoy!
- Lots of things about the course are frustrating, but they listen to trainee feedback and are always looking for ways to improve. On reflection, I wouldn't want to be training anywhere else.
- Functionality of UEL as an environment for students is inadequate. Poor quality of the rooms (noise / temperature / mould) or furniture (poor quality / no back support) can impact upon engagement with what can be long days of thought provoking teaching. The environment within the library is also poor with computers often non-functional and 'silent zones' full of chatter. There is also limited recreational / relaxing space for students with designated areas lacking comforts you would expect from universities.

- I know other courses offer less space for reflection and PPD which I particularly find really useful. Also the critical perspective can feel a little destabilising especially at the beginning.
- Very inspiring teaching
- If you think more critically and want greater variety in approaches, UEL is a great choice.
- UEL staff did an excellent job in containing trainees in the first weeks of training. Initial anxieties and possible arising issues within the cohort were openly discussed. I felt reassured and respected by all.
- I appreciate the little that the course is doing to address the continued lack of diversity on the course and subsequently the profession.
- It's good to be realistic about how much extra time the course takes outside of working hours.
- The UEL course is a really good one, I would really recommend it. I really think that more courses should adopt a critical and social constructionist stance as it leads you to be a better practitioner.
- UEL is a great course to attend to train you up to work in London. I've learnt a lot, have a really nice cohort, and have enjoyed being at UEL (despite the hard work!)
- This course takes a critical stance towards psychology and psychiatry. There is a lot of thinking about the impact of broader social issues on distress.
- I'm quite critical of the course, but I would still choose to apply and come here again!

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

One interview with a panel of clinical psychologists and a meeting with our service-user panel. Currently, candidates re-sit the online situational judgement test but this re-sitting is being phased out.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.

Teaching	15 hours
Placement	18.5 hours
Personal Study	3.5 hours
Research	The structure varies across the years so later in training there is more protected research time.

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Edinburgh

25 responses (83% of 30 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	24%
Year 2	36%
Year 3	36%
Other	4%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	68%
30 – 34 years	24%
35 – 39 years	8%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	40%
Twice	24%
3 times	28%
4 times	4%
5 times	4%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	16%
MA	16%
MSc	60%
MRes	0%
Diploma	4%
Post Graduate Certificate	8%
Conversion course	16%
None	12%
Other	8%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	8%
3 years	21%
4 years	13%
5 years	17%
6+ years	42%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	52%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	4%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	28%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	16%
Research Assistant	64%
Voluntary Research Assistant	16%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	60%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	0%
Other	52%

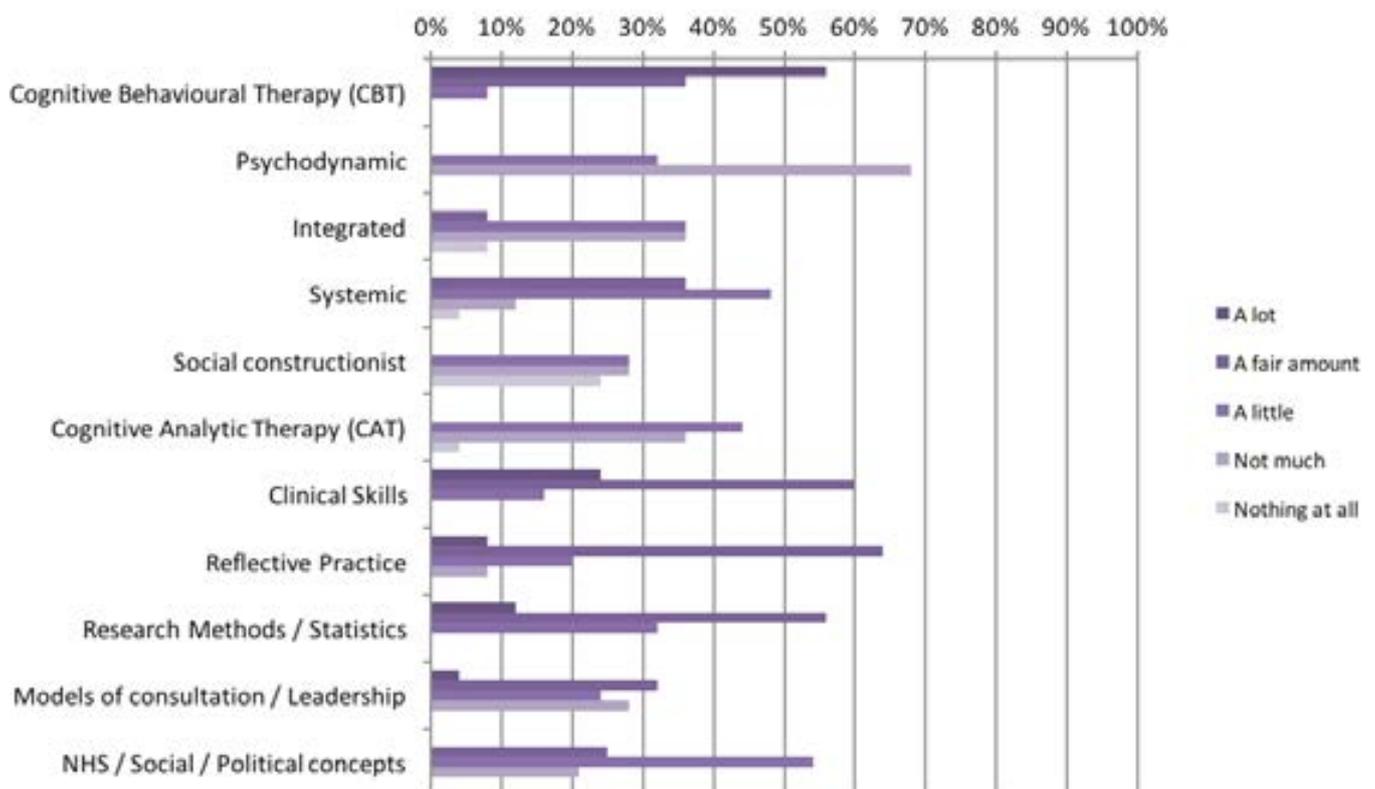
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Welcoming and friendly. However, the wait between interviews and tasks was quite long
- I found the interview very anxiety provoking in light of all the elements on the day, i.e. 2 interviews, written task and role-plays. It makes the day feel very long and quite tiring by the end.
- I enjoyed the process, was made to feel very welcome and it was a calming environment
- I thought the panel were trying to get the best out of me and found them to be really nice. It was a positive atmosphere. The process on the day was clear and I knew what was expected of me.
- Long (4 hours) and extremely thorough. There was a friendly atmosphere though, and I felt like they wanted to get the best from me.
- The Edinburgh interviews were well-planned to support candidates and help them relax with trainees acting as facilitators in between interviews. Panels were challenging but it felt like you were being encouraged to do your best and have a discussion about topics of interest rather than an interrogation.
- Mostly really good: they have separate interviews (clinical, research/academic, a role play and a written task on a computer). For the written task there were two of us in the room, and we started and finished at the same time. I think the other person I was paired with found me distracting, however: I have a fast typing speed whereas he was quite slow and kept looking at me. So if you find that kind of thing distracting it might put you off a bit.
- Very nerve racking! I had attended a number of post-doc interviews at the same time but I found the setup of this interview much more challenging. Some of the panels were very professional and got on with the task whereas some spent a few minutes putting you at ease with small talk.
- Followed a clear structure and provided various ways of being able to show different skills.
- The interview process was very well organised. It was conducted across several floors simultaneously and ran on time. The process consisted of 4 parts (academic panel, clinical panel, role play and written task). First years were around to help out and have a chat. They were calming and friendly. At the start and the end there was a room where you could sit and talk to others while waiting or sit in a quiet area if you wanted to collect your thoughts. This was quite a nice arrangement.
- I found the Edinburgh interview quite exhausting. Prior to interview there is the additional essay questions and decision making tasks. On the day there is an academic interview, clinical interview, filmed role play which you then reflect upon, a written task and you are asked again about which areas you would consider being placed in. I enjoyed the role-play and clinical interview but found the questions in the academic interview quite hard to interpret, very specific and I didn't feel very comfortable with the panel. This is in contrast to the clinical interview where I felt much more at ease. I felt more able to show my knowledge, expertise and experience during another interview though, as I felt interview questions were rather closed and specific. The process lasted 3 hours which I found to be much too long and was exhausting.
- I found the interview process to be relatively pleasant, considering I don't tend to find interview pleasant. It was well organised and everyone was very friendly. You were provided with a timetable of each of the tasks you were to complete, and placed in a waiting area where there were drinks, snack, and current trainees on hand for some support. The interviewers were generally friendly, and tried to help you answer the question appropriately.
- Positive, I was given an interview from the waiting list so did not have long to prepare / get stressed about it. I enjoyed talking to current trainees on the day. All staff were very warm, welcoming and made me feel at ease.
- The interview process was a positive experience. Although challenging, it felt appropriately so, and we were well supported by friendly staff and current trainees during the day.

- The interview was split into four parts, and I found the initial academic interview was the most challenging. However, the rest of the interview was an enjoyable experience and the support provided by trainees was really good. On arriving at interview, there was space to sit and be quiet which I used to collect myself and then the opportunity to chat to other interviewees and current trainees. Overall, the process was somewhat anxiety provoking but I felt I had the opportunity to demonstrate my knowledge and skills as well as the things I wanted to get from training.
- Extensive assessment of skills capacities and performance under pressure.
- The interviews were relatively short and I thought that the panel tried to put me at ease. I also found the presence of current trainees when we were waiting around to be helpful.
- It was a very supportive and positive experience.
- Useful, mostly enjoyable experience. Quite intense as the process seems quite drawn out.
- Pleasant
- I enjoyed the half day interview. There was always someone else completing the same part of the interview as you so there was someone to debrief with immediately afterwards. Everyone was encouraged to talk to each other in between while waiting to be called. It was a friendly atmosphere.
- Course content and teaching

### How much teaching is there on different models?



**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	92%
Mindfulness	36%
Schema Therapy	60%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	20%
Solution Focused Therapy	8%
Neuropsychology	72%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	12%
Other	16%

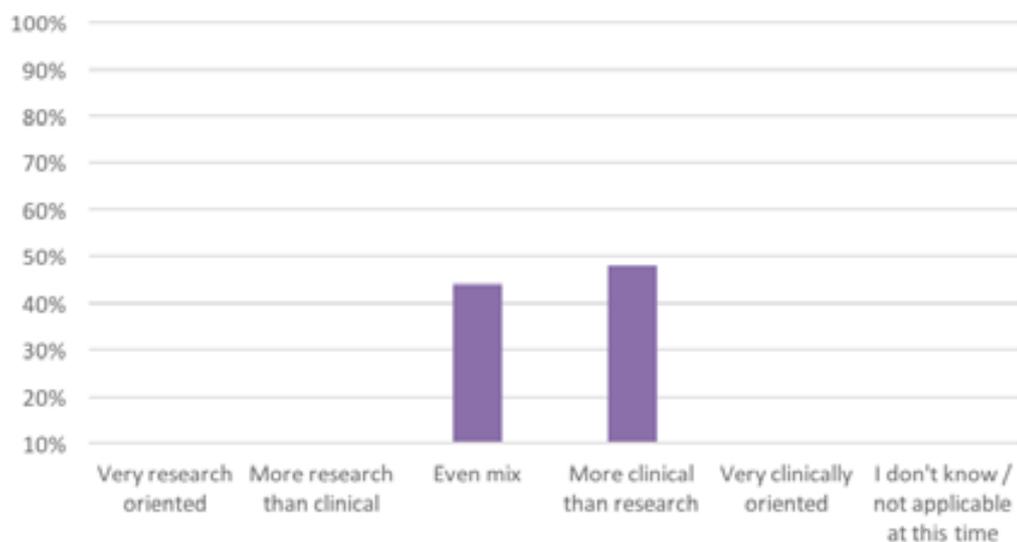
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- Not enough time was allocated to teaching in older adults, child and forensic. The older adult teaching was predominantly self-directed learning through online tasks, which was not an effective way to learn.
- The course is mainly focused on CBT and systemic working but there is opportunity to develop skills in other areas in 3rd year, particularly IPT and ACT. I think this balance reflects the work we do on placement.
- Some areas are covered in your final year through advanced practice seminars (e.g. schema therapy). Other areas are health board specific and so you cover through placement (eg compassion focused therapy).
- Emphasis is definitely on CBT, with introductory lectures on other models in 1-2 year, and then optional advanced practice lectures in third year (e.g. IPT, Schema etc.). There is quite an emphasis on ACT.
- Out of the teaching and focus is on CBT with a few lectures on other modalities. In my personal experience, there hasn't been a lot of opportunities to practice any other modalities other than CBT and the some systemic work but this usually depends on supervisor.
- A lot of time is spent on disorder specific teaching, assessment and formulation. CBT is the main model, although there are not many workshops and role plays dedicated to this. Many of the other models are briefly introduced and can be chosen in third year as advanced practice seminars where some more model specific lectures are given.
- I find the course very CBT focused, I would enjoy more systemic and psychodynamic teaching. We had one excellent day of teaching on psychodynamic but unfortunately the course appear to keep cutting this element every year. We are unable to learn other techniques such as ACT until our final year of study. However, if on placement a supervisor is trained in another discipline we can use this therapeutic technique under close supervision.
- More time should be devoted to each area to give a much deeper level of understanding and knowledge. Many areas are not covered in enough detail.
- This course is primarily CBT driven, although I felt the training in relation to CBT was less than adequate for those who had no experience of CBT prior to getting on the course. You can choose certain models that you wish to receive training on, so there is some flexibility.
- There was not enough time for research skills, a lab based set up or drop in sessions would have been helpful
- The course can be repetitive at times, although there have been changes made to the structure of

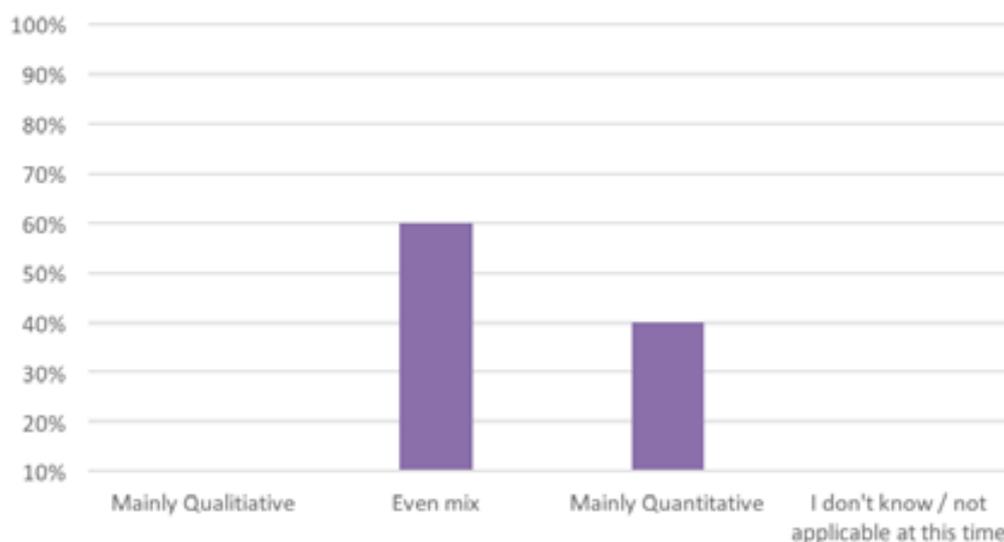
the course for newer years.

- There is a focus on CBT, but as Edinburgh have a particular focus on ACT we have had much opportunity to get teaching on this.
- ACT and Systemic teaching is very good, CBT teaching assumes a lot of knowledge and experience.
- Academically CBT is the main approach for the first two years although people can get a taste of other approaches from placement supervisors. In the final year there is a choice of what other approaches people want to attend teaching on.
- IPT
- CBT heavy (as expected). There is sometimes an implicit assumption that people have prior CBT knowledge. I had to learn the basic concepts outside of formal teaching.

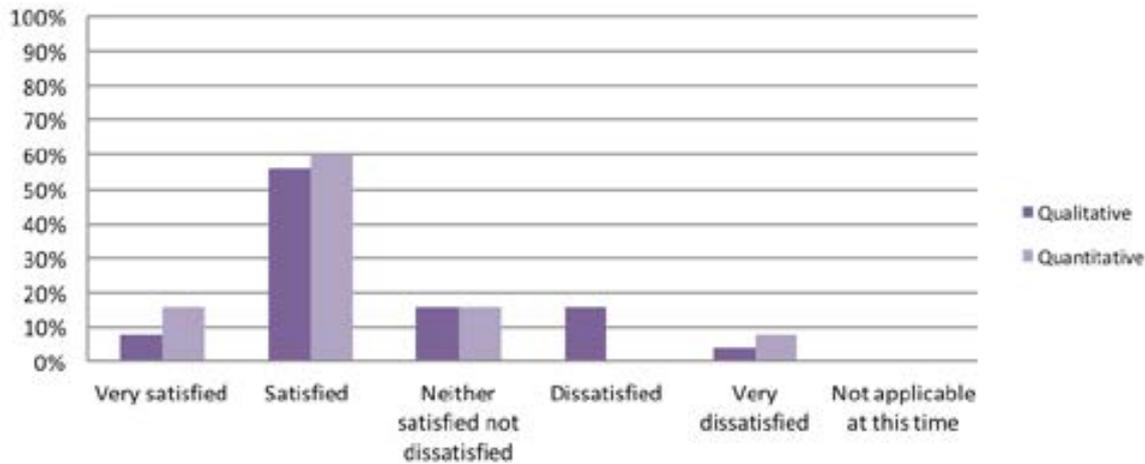
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



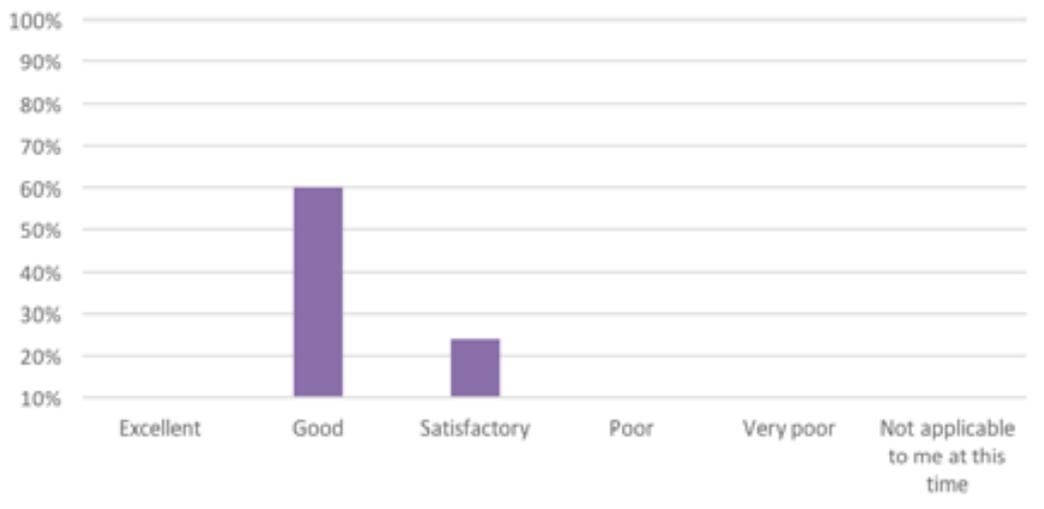
## Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



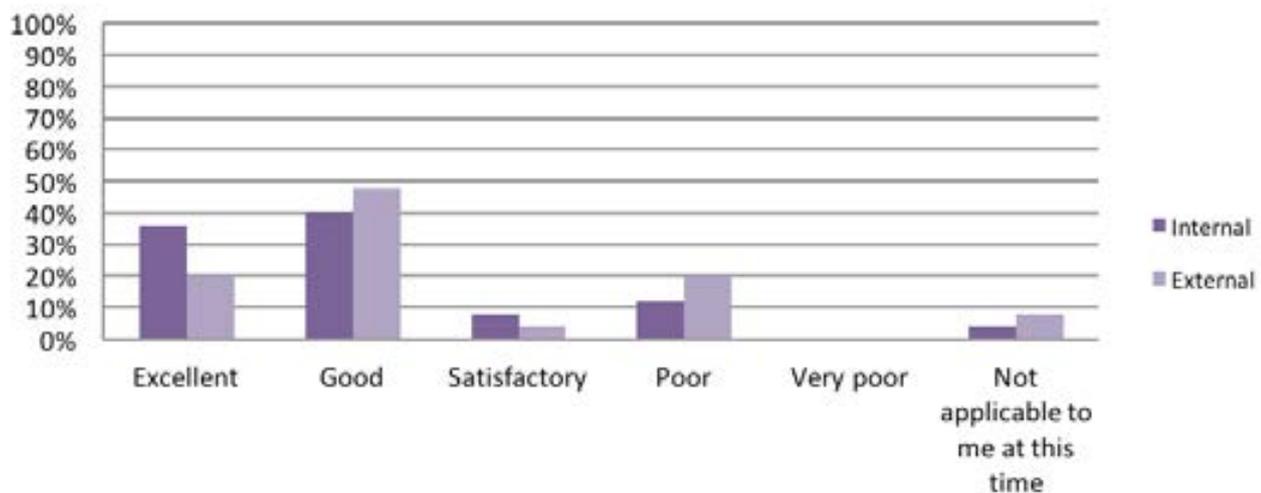
## Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Most of the research teaching, particularly around stats is delivered at the start of the programme; however, it would be more helpful to have this during data collection or thesis write up time when we have actual data to analyse. Stats clinics or workshops later on in training would be helpful.
- The research teaching has been good in relation to our systematic review and empirical project.
- You complete a small scale research project in second year (which I loved) and then the thesis in third year. Stats lectures weren't great - either covered really basic things that I already knew, or quite complex models. Level of expertise in our cohort was very varied.
- Really enjoyed the research teaching. Very thorough and lots of help if required
- I found it stressful that Edinburgh University expect us to pick thesis topics very early on in the course (first 3 months)
- A higher level of knowledge and understanding was assumed by the course, therefore teaching often not pitched to right level
- I felt the teaching could have been more thorough, and more practical.
- More support is needed in terms of statistical analysis. Too much prior knowledge is expected, particularly for those whom it has been a long time since undergrad stats teaching
- Choosing a thesis topic was difficult - essentially it was a compromise between local NHS research strategies and the current research interests of the academic team

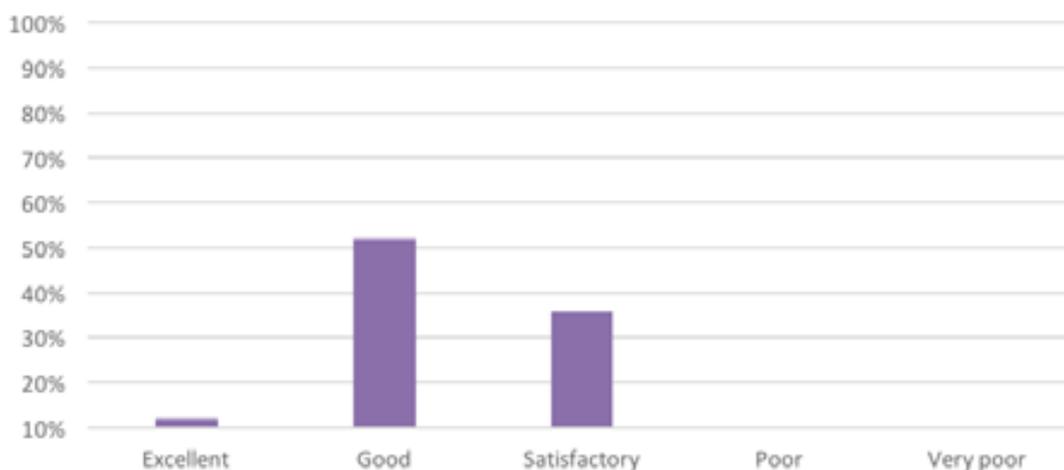
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



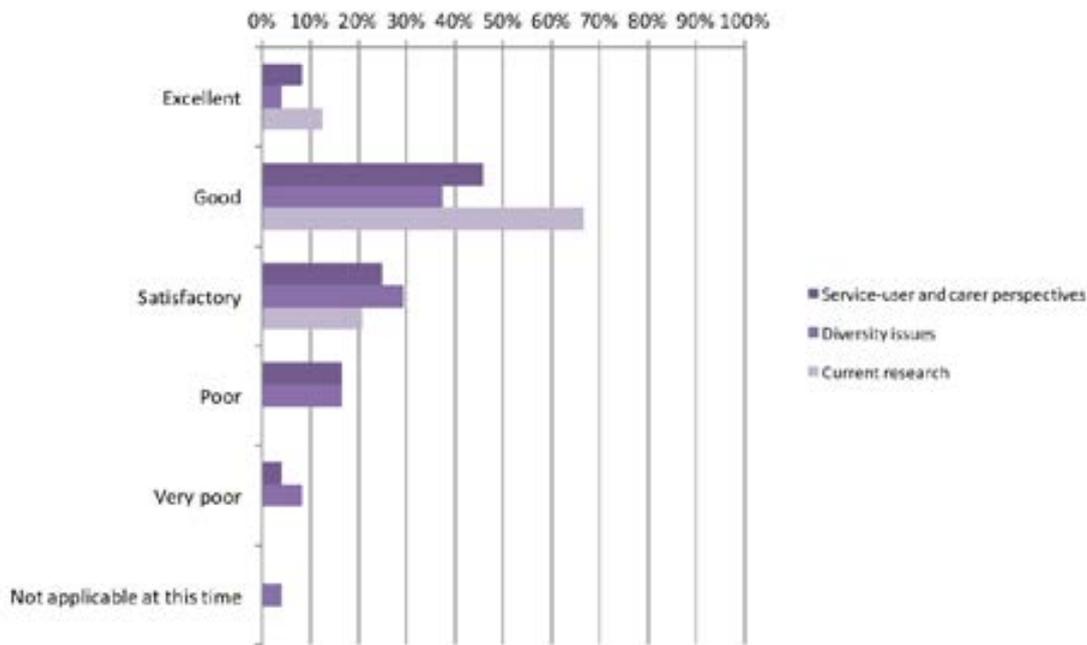
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

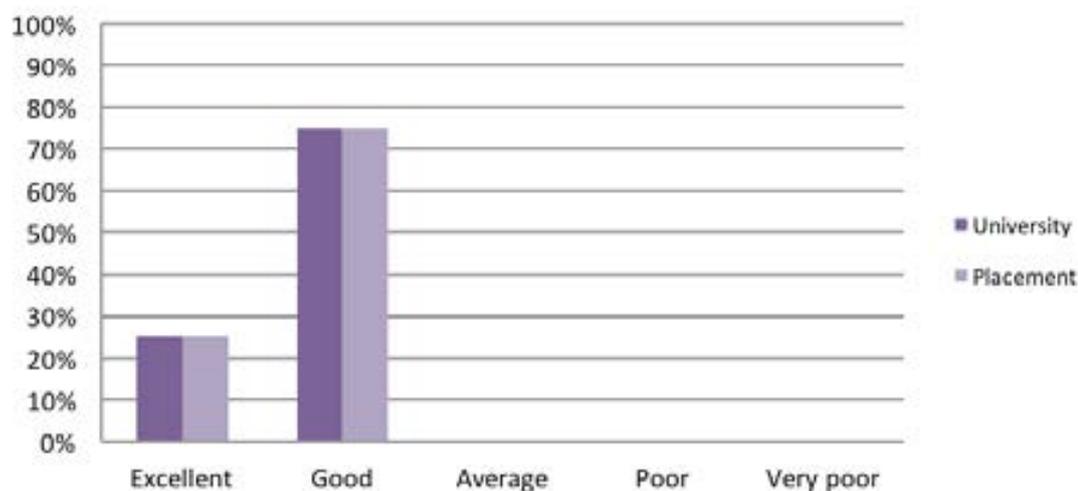
- I think there should be more involvement with experts by experience but that overall the teaching is of high standard. Effort is made to get professionals of different disciplines in from across Scotland who work in those areas.
- The course has moved towards teaching psychological theories and principles as they apply across client groups/presentations. Although this works over the long-term, it can mean that teaching session content doesn't always match with your placement area.
- I think there could be better integration of diversity issues, service user and career perspectives into the course e.g. looking at how each of these issues might effect a clinical presentation.
- Lecturing by specialised clinicians has largely been good to excellent, outside of this the teaching can be quite partial, especially teaching given on CBT techniques and skills. There has been a change in structure this year and some important teaching has been cancelled and moved meaning we get the essential teaching required after we have completed a placement, which is frustrating.
- Teaching is often cancelled which is a shame as it leads to feeling under prepared for placements. However, the course try really hard to get us a diverse range of topics from external clinicians working the NHS which is a big plus.
- There have been some difficulties with CAMHS teaching being cancelled for our cohort, which has been disappointing and has led to a reliance on placement supervisors for catching up on relevant areas for self-directed study.
- Excellent incorporation of service users, some difficulties scheduling appropriate timing of teaching. I.e. much CAMHS teaching after CAMHS placement for half the year group etc.
- Teaching quality is generally high, particularly that from working clinicians. Remote sites view this teaching on a television, which provides a very poor experience.
- Teaching has been very engaging although heavy at times during blocks. Most months we only have 3 days of teaching but we are currently in the middle of a 3 week block in between placements.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

16 % of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Support provided by academic supervisors with regards to thesis has been poor.
- Learning all the systems for placement when you're split over 2 or 3 sites for clinics can be difficult. It took me a while to feel settled as a result.
- Being older and having children while being a trainee.
- Long distances to travel seem to be quite common in our cohort. Little consideration is given to where you live and it is expected that you will move or travel for placements. Some health boards are better at taking this into account than others. Usually a lot of driving is required as many placements are in rural areas.
- I found having to pick a thesis idea so early on challenging at first, however, my stress levels around this have come down.
- thesis
- Like all courses, the support you receive will largely be dependent on your academic and clinical supervisors. I have found this varies widely on this course, with some people receiving lots of support and others receiving very little.
- The first half third year when thesis deadline is fast approaching yet we are required to give 100% to a demanding specialist placement. For some reason, this year is the only one that doesn't have a study break between placements, and it is the time when it would be most needed. The support systems are available, but are not always the most supportive!
- The course is a demanding one, but this is appropriate to the level of training.

- I have been given placements in remote areas, so have done a large amount of driving with a subsequent knock on effect on my personal time. While the course recognise this, and talk about self-care, it is difficult in this context. This is an ongoing issue.
- Split between placement locations and teaching locations and the management of this, Video conferencing is used effectively however daily commuting or weeks away is detrimental to family life/supportive activities like voluntary work or other social commitments,
- Juggling demands of course and family.
- Initial 6 week block, quite intense due to trying to attend to lectures and be sociable at break times.
- I felt quite de-skilled at the start of placement due to having minimal CBT experience. I found the CBT teaching quite basic and had to supplement my knowledge outside of lectures. Juggling coursework on teaching weeks when we don't have study days can be difficult.

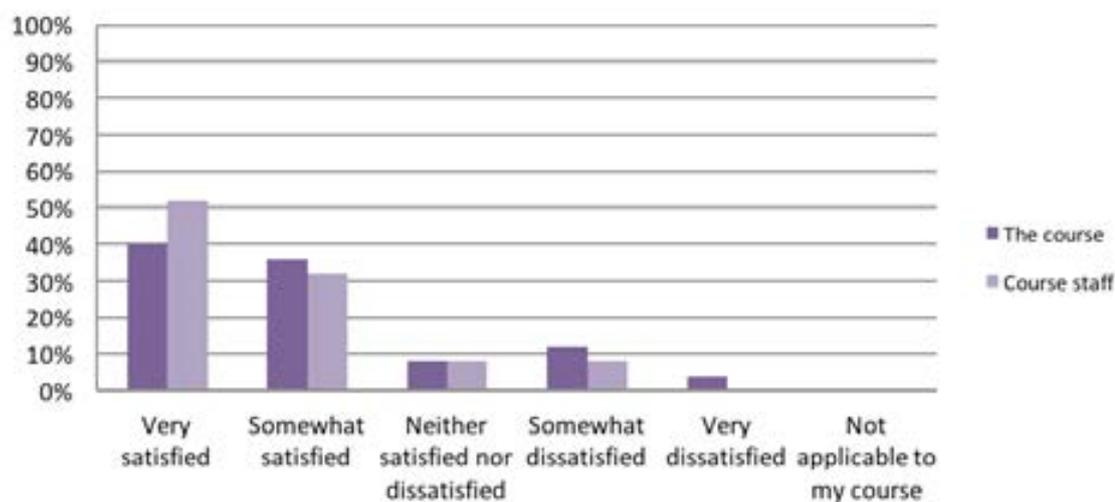
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	79%
"Buddy"	88%
Manager	83%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	42%
Professional Mentor	71%
Personal Tutor	96%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	92%
Independent personal advisor	8%
Other	38%

### Under "Other", responses included:

- The other trainees are a great source of support (x3)
- Clinical and Local Area Tutors (3)
- Peer supervision
- Also Local tutor available in each NHs board

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

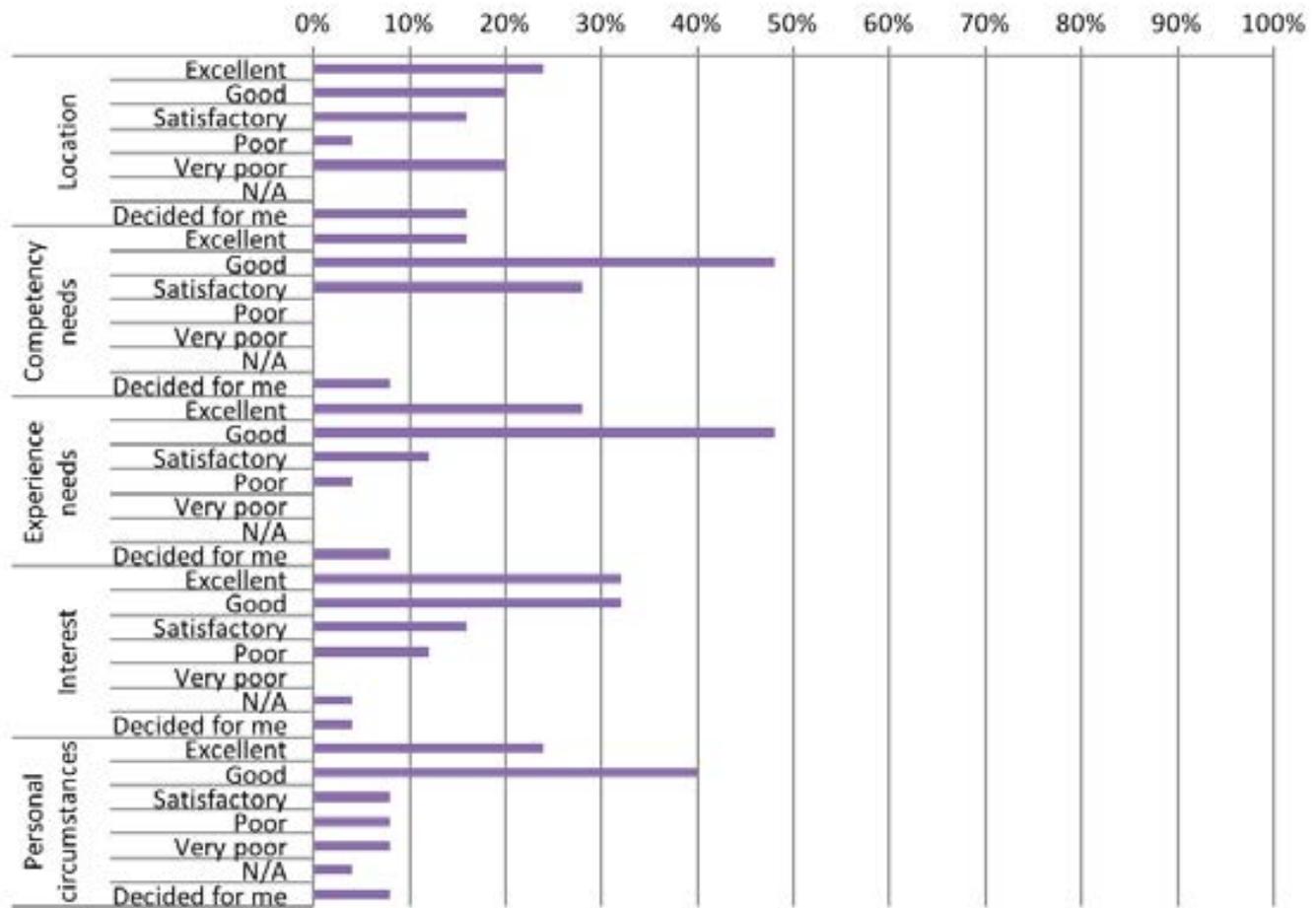


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

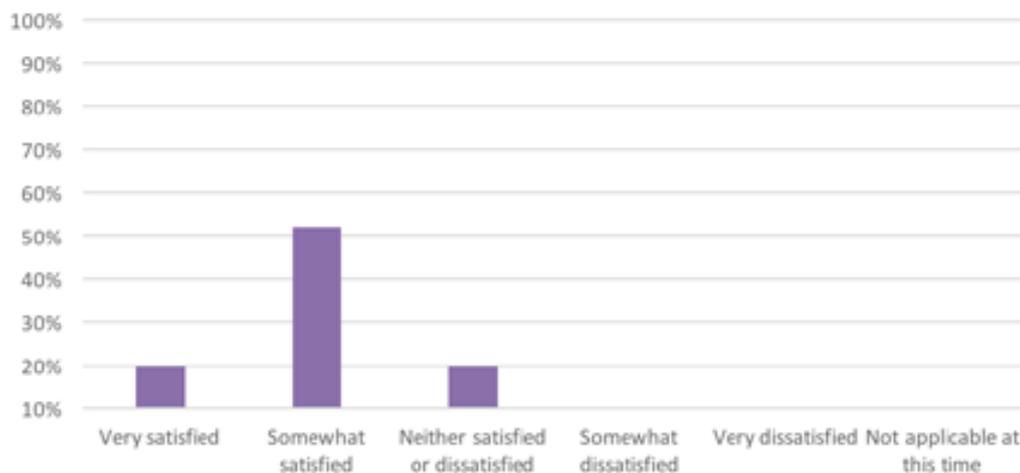
- I have found the course staff to be really supportive when I found aspects of training challenging.
- I have so many contacts for people who can offer support, I wonder whether I have remembered them all.
- I am very disappointed with how the course deals with trainees experiencing difficulties. I don't feel that we get sufficient support (e.g. when conflicts arise between supervisor and trainee, the supervisor's opinion appears to be given much greater weight than the trainee's).
- In contrast, we are all allocated a mentor, who a qualified clinical psychologist is working in another health board. I have found my mentor to be a great source of support, although think there is variability in how available/supportive they can be (but mine has been great).
- I think the university staff work very hard at resolving placement issues. Reports from other trainees, however, suggest that at times they have felt pathologies when bringing up an issue or have to argue their case hard. Some of the clinical supervisors have very limited experience as they are newly qualified whereas as others are very rigid and concrete in their approaches. There are also some very good supervisors depending on the health board you are allocated to. Experiences tend to vary.
- I found the clinical and local area tutors very friendly and approachable. The admin support Rosie Wayte is amazing, efficient, kind and genuine. I have found some academic staff more intimidating to approach or speak to.
- I think the course is good at helping trainees to overcome significant barriers / milestones / stressors, but perhaps less so with supporting the everyday common demands of training.
- I feel very supported in this course
- Support has been adequate, although during a particularly challenging supervisory experience I felt strongly that I sorted the issues out independently via direct feedback to the supervisor in question, with little intervention by the course team. It would have been helpful to have had more back up from the course here in particular.
- Experiential self-management workshops in induction would be good, perhaps involving service users

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



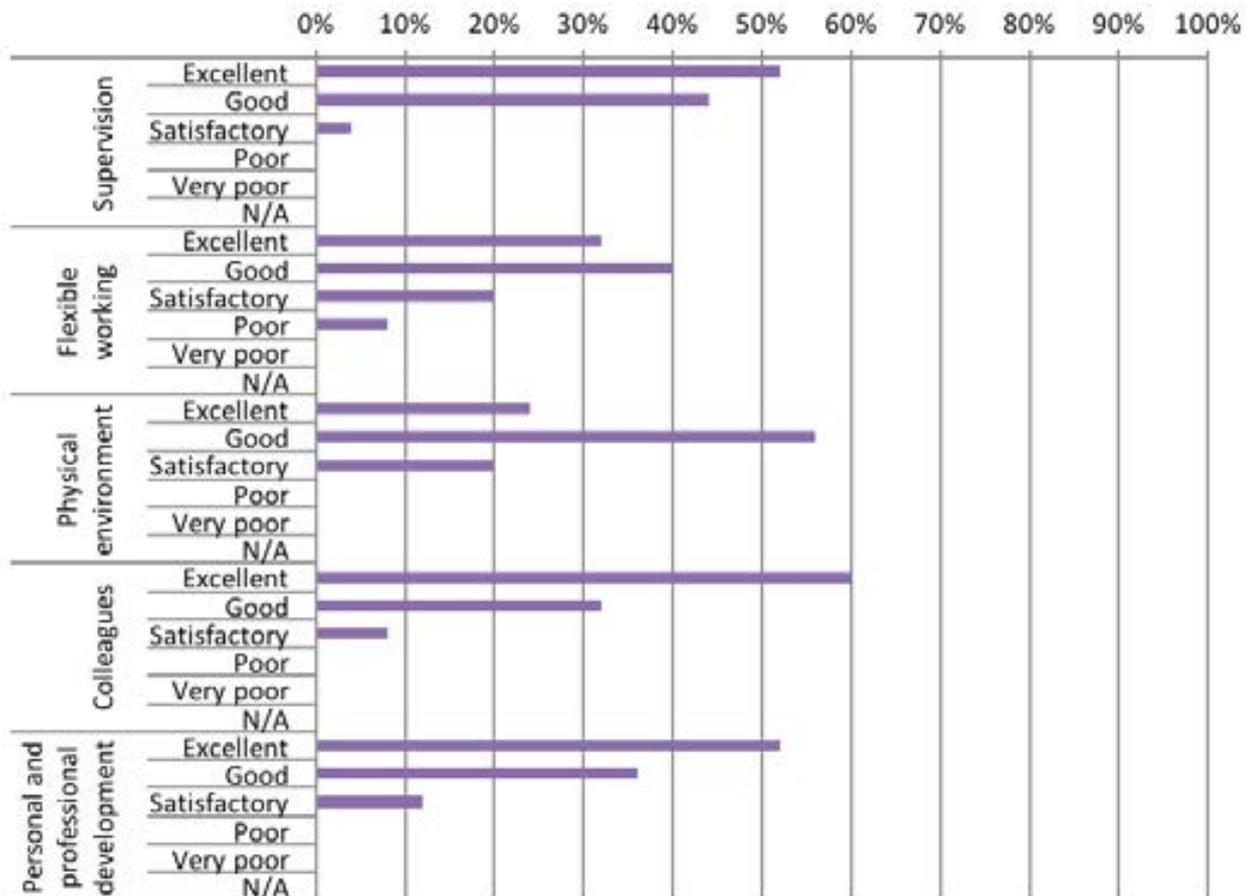
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares yo



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- Teaching on CBT skills was not comprehensive. Had I not already had considerable experience in this therapy clinical placement would have been very difficult
- I think it can be difficult to balance the teaching we get before we go on placement but that overall we are prepared for placement.
- We were prepared for what paperwork needed completing, just not how to complete it.
- Half of the year completes a placement and then we swap (e.g. in first year is adult or LD, then we switch around for placement 2). Because of the timing of teaching, this means sometimes relevant teaching doesn't occur until after the placement has finished, which is frustrating.
- Again, experiences vary depending on health board and supervisors. Some supervisors were very supportive of having a trainee that didn't fit the stereotypical mould whereas others found it more challenging. Similarly some supervisors were very aware of caring roles and diversity issues whereas others definitely needed more training on this.
- I have issue with some of the teaching we received in regards to CBT techniques and skills, I felt these were lacking. I appreciated the opportunity to role-play various aspects during teaching. I believe more reflective practice sessions would be beneficial.
- Teaching is provided in blocks. E.g. before your first placement you will have received a 6 week block of teaching. I felt this was overwhelming and not helpful to retain information for placement.
- Our local tutor has been absolutely fantastic in trying to get core (1-2nd year) placements to suit trainees in terms of learning, circumstance and experience. They have been a great asset to my learning experience. Third year specialist placements for aligned trainees are fixed however, and can therefore be quite rigid in terms of trainees being able to have any input. I feel that there should be some degree of choice, as there is for non-aligned trainees, as this would make it easier for us to have an input re our training needs. I do however think this is quite varied across specialist placements.
- Specifically in relation to CAMHS, there has been little teaching. However the adult and LD teaching was helpful for my core placements.
- This is has been very variable, sometimes excellent, it depends if you're lucky to be placed prior to the teaching or after. Demanding to adapt if not had the teaching content yet

## In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- All of my placements and supervisors were excellent. They were considerate of work/life balance particularly when the thesis was due in
- I think this is difficult to generalise considering we go on several placements. Some have been better than others. My experience on one particular placement was very poor and the supervision provided was inadequate.
- Placement experience can vary wildly depending on the supervisor within the same department, and this difference can broaden within the same health board. With this in mind, the variability across all the health boards covered by Edinburgh is massive.
- Varied hugely depending on supervisors. Some supervisors were welcoming, empathic and open whereas others were not. So very difficult to comment accurately on this.
- NHS Fife is a very friendly integrated team. I have only had one supervisor so far and they were excellent, I am sure this experience will vary. Sometimes resources are lacking and logistics around getting to clinic are a bit tricky.
- Experience on placement varies from placement to placement, and dependent on your supervisor.
- All of the above have been excellent on at least one placement
- I have had 2 really good placements, and one utterly appalling one. The difficult one was good in terms of the actual client work, however the supervisor was very challenging to work with. But, overall I have had a good range of cases, have been able to take on additional neuro cases on request to develop my competency here and have worked with some really good clinicians who have been very good role models.

- The staff in the system and 95% of qualified staff in health boards are excellent. Brilliant quality of supervisor's for the most part.
- I have found the course and health boards willing to consider out of area placements and to consider placements relevant to my personal needs
- Placements in Aberdeen have generally been excellent.
- Most of my learning was facilitated on placement and through individual/group supervision.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	52%
No	40%
Don't know	8%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	36%
No	60%
Don't know	4%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Aberdeen.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	33%
No	63%
Don't know	4%

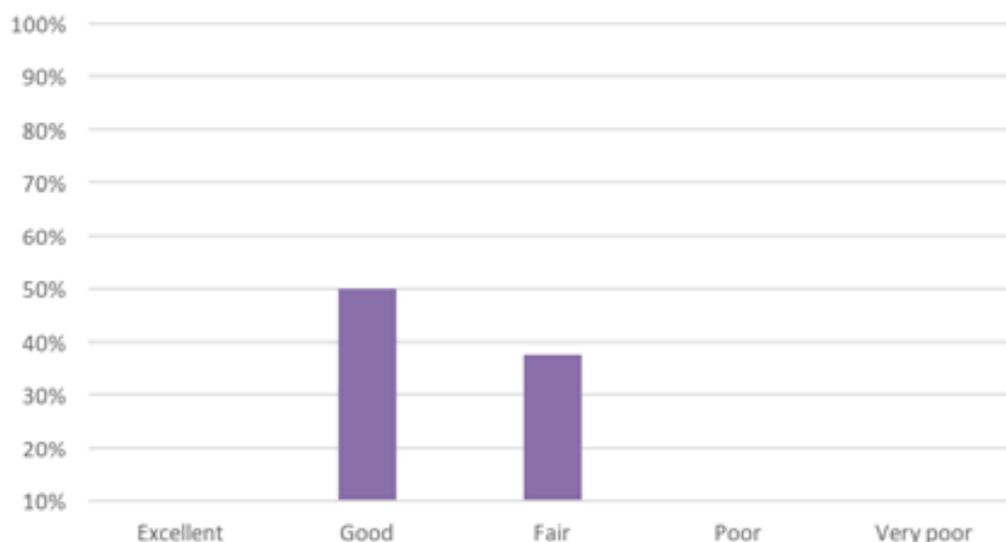
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	42%
Good	33%
Fair	21%
Poor	0%
Very poor	42%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- It can be difficult with travelling to maintain social relationships.
- There are busier times than others but that we are given enough study time while on placement to have a good work life balance.
- I spend a lot of time travelling during teaching blocks but placement works out really well.
- My work-life balance has varied across placements. The health board which I am in has not taken much of my personal circumstances into account for the allocation of placements and as such I have had to stay away from home due to commuting distances from home being too great. This understandably takes a toll when there are already plenty of work stresses. However, I am aware that other health boards make more effort to consider the welfare of their trainees.
- Very very hard to maintain especially when there are additional placement pressures, other responsibilities outside of the course etc. Not good and very much a struggle but it seems to be accepted that this is the way. Most of annual leave is used for thesis rather than time away.
- There are periods where the balance is challenging, but this is expected and generally the balance is good.
- So far in my first placement I have been strongly encouraged not to work late and to make sure I am keeping on top of self-care.
- This varies depending on deadlines. But overall I have managed a good work life balance.
- The balance has been good for the first two years, but fair at best in the final year so far.
- Very difficult due to all the travelling.
- Felt had to sacrifice voluntary work, can't take kids to clubs on a regular basis etc. Academic demands hard to fit with family life
- Obviously at thesis hand in time there is a bit of pressure on your time but other than this I felt that it was manageable to complete work within allocated study time.
- Difficult managing the commute, it is slightly frustrating that in terms of location, some of the trainees would benefit hugely from a board swap. I'm finding the cost and time of the commute really difficult but am reluctant to leave my support network behind to make it more manageable.
- I have a long commute through personal choice. The first half of first year has been academically light.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- I don't get travel expenses therefore it can be costly due to the travelling required.
- I relocated with my family to rural area which meant a massive drop in wages until my partner was in paid employment of some sort ( min. wage). Still more financially disadvantaged compared to when I started the course because of a drop in my wages and my partner's income. The student support centre are really helpful though
- A lot of my salary is spent on travel.
- Because of the increase in living expenses I haven't really experienced a big increase in my salary, I also have previous debt which can make things harder to manage.
- My financial quality of life is worse than it could be as I have to live out of area and spend around £600 a month on travel and accommodation (none of which is reimbursed as I choose to live out of area). This would not be a problem if I could live in Edinburgh, but this is not possible due to home commitments. The course has tried to help with this by placing me as close as possible to home throughout second year, but has been difficult to manage in final year, when I have spent 2-3 nights away from home a week.
- Trainees in Scotland now earn 2% more than trainees in the rest of the UK due to cost of living rises.
- Petrol/commute costs are increasingly difficult to manage

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Clinical placements
- Peer support has been very good and some of the placements have been really enjoyable.
- being with other trainees, placement
- The course is heavily CBT orientated but I've felt there is plenty of room for other orientations and I've been encouraged to gain other experiences during placement. Reflective practice and critical psychology feels valued by this course.
- I am fortunate to have a lovely cohort, and getting to know them has definitely been the most rewarding aspect of the course.

- My understanding is that Edinburgh has reduced the academic component of the course in recent years. We complete two case conceptualisations, one small scale research project and our thesis. This gives you the opportunity to use study days to do placement-relevant work, which I have found to be really helpful.
- Being able to choose teaching that interests you in third year.
- Great experience on placements. Supportive colleagues.
- Our cohort is great. Really supportive and friendly. We often socialise together and are also really good at working together. People are respectful and attentive and this makes training so much easier.
- Learning and developing during placement. An approachable and friendly team at Edinburgh Uni.
- Peers in the class and the support they provide.
- My cohort. They are fantastic. So supportive, friendly, fun, inspiring, just a great bunch of people and I've made many lifelong friends.
- Clinical Placements
- The client work.
- The staff who are a part of my team including tutors and supervisors. Also peer relationships. Fundamentally a very successful process of developing skills and competence in an all-encompassing way.
- Having a large class group to draw on for support.
- Learning new skills
- Clinical placement, particularly in the final two years.
- The breadth of experience gained from placements has been thoroughly enjoyable. I feel like the course inspires you to develop services and impact wider change in our future careers.
- Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?
- Course organisation could be improved. Also communication between staff and trainees at university could also be improved
- I really like training at Edinburgh and find the course team to be helpful and supportive
- Don't indicate you would be prepared to take a placement in a health board if you don't want to work there. Even if you rank it low, you could still be placed there and this has caused lots of trainee's difficulty. It does not impact your likelihood of getting on the course.
- Really consider which health boards you would be willing to work and live in before accepting a place on the course. For example, some years only have one trainee in Elgin, which is geographically remote from areas other trainees are in. This can cause difficulties. Similarly, if you accept an aligned place (e.g. older adults, CAMHS, LD, forensic, research), then your thesis will have to be with this clinical group. So consider carefully which areas you would want to work in. My understanding from the research-aligned trainees is that they haven't enjoyed their final year placements, as have been given very little choice over the projects they are working on. Our year was the first to have this alignment, however, so it may have improved in subsequent years. Similarly, anyone who has completed the CAAP training only gets 2.5 years on the course, and the organisation involving these positions (e.g. when they hand in their theses) has been poor during our year.
- To be fair to the course team, however, they do seem to listen to feedback and make changes when they can (although more often than not nothing is able to be done). For example, I think they have changed first year, so that instead of a 6 week block of teaching at the start of the year (which was too much to take in), you now have 2 weeks on placement first and then go in to teaching. The reflective sessions they hold (as part of professional issues teaching) are also good, but my main criticism would be that trainees' voices seem to be ignored/discounted when difficulties arise within placements.

- It is very challenging if you have a family and have to relocate. Due to the geographical layout of health boards, there can be a lot of staying away which isn't a problem when you don't have kids. In hindsight, I wish I had been more aware of the impact of relocation on lots of different levels and the length of time you need to be away for teaching. I probably would have chosen differently. It can be done, though, but be prepared.
- Think carefully before selecting the health boards you're willing to work/live in.
- I would enjoy more service-user involvement in both interviews and lectures. This course has no exams which I really appreciate and I think it helps foster a non-competitive atmosphere. The course could benefit from teaching a wider range of therapeutic techniques.
- More skills should be taught on how to actually do therapy e.g. CBT, rather than it being glossed over in teaching and relying on your placement/supervisor to teach you how to do CBT.
- When asked what areas you would be open to be aligned to, ensure that you choose areas in which you are genuinely interested in. Once aligned, some trainees have had minimal choice over their involvement in the area and the experience they will receive.
- Prepare for a grim third year with lots of hard work in 2nd year!
- Make sure you can drive!
- Longer duration of CBT teaching with more practical elements, read up before you start.
- The course uses video conferencing for some health board areas, if you think you don't want to do this then exclude the relevant health boards at the choosing phase.
- Be sure you're willing to live in the region you choose.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Candidates sit two interviews, one with an Academic/Research focus and one with a Clinical/Professional focus. The panels interviewing each applicant consist of representatives of the Programme Academic staff and Clinical Practise staff as well as representatives from NHS areas.
- There is also a short written task that each candidate receives information about when invited for interview as well as an interpersonal task.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.

Teaching	The academic teaching structure does not conform to this as it consists of teaching blocks spaced across years of training and interspersed with placements in linked areas. Further details about the academic teaching structure can be found in the handbook which can be downloaded from the university website ( <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate">http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate</a> ).
Placement	Time on placements vary depending on whether or not trainees are on a teaching week, on placement full time, in their final year of training or on the Recognition of Prior Learning route. Further details regarding placement structure can be found in the handbook which can be downloaded from the university website ( <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate">http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate</a> ).
Personal Study	Trainees have protected personal study time throughout their training. However, this varies depending on whether trainees are on a teaching week, on placement full time and their stage of training. Further details regarding personal study can be found in the handbook which can be downloaded from the university website ( <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate">http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate</a> ).
Research	Dedicated time is available for research throughout training. However, the amount of time varies according to the progression of the trainees' research in line with their stage of training. Further details regarding research can be found in the handbook which can be downloaded from the website ( <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate">http://www.ed.ac.uk/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate</a> ).

**What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)**

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	0%
Essays	0%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CP?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Essex University

9 responses (30% of 30 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	44%
Year 2	56%
Year 3	0%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	67%
30 – 34 years	11%
35 – 39 years	22%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	0%
Twice	22%
3 times	56%
4 times	22%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	56%
MRes	0%
Diploma	22%
Post Graduate Certificate	0%
Conversion course	11%
None	11%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	0%
3 years	0%
4 years	0%
5 years	56%
6+ years	44%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	67%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	22%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	33%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	44%
Voluntary Research Assistant	22%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	100%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	0%
Other	33%

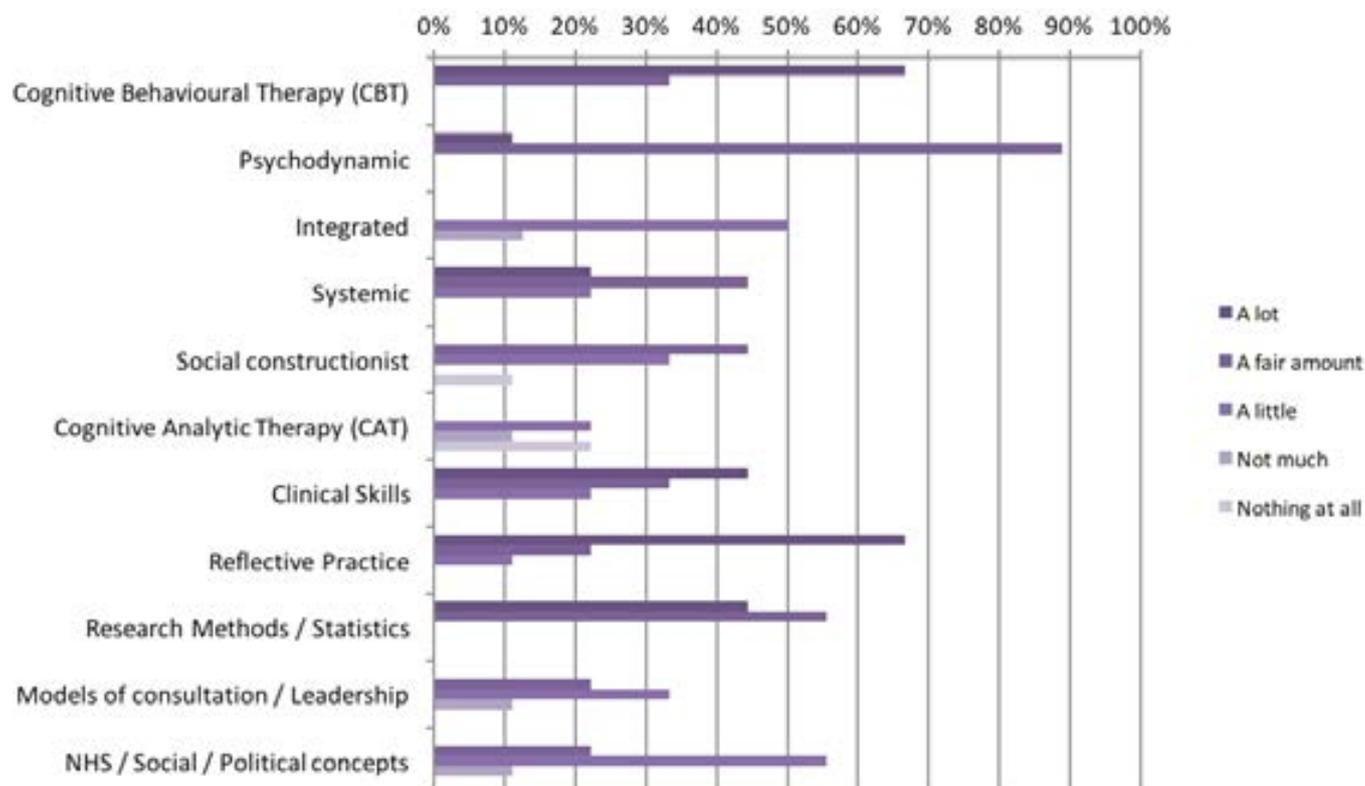
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- The interview was quite long but I much preferred only having one longer interview. The panel were very friendly and I felt encouraged me throughout. I found the literacy and numeracy test difficult. I also liked the opportunity to demonstrate my research knowledge through writing a research proposal as I found this much more realistic.
- Really full day - had numeracy and literacy tests, vignette and role play and interview all in one day - but the team and other trainees were really supportive and used humour to put us at ease.
- Challenging but fair. I felt like the questions got me to really think about practice and the challenges I might face on training. However I felt supported to reflect in stressful circumstances, so I felt like they were really trying to get the best out of me. There was a good mix of research/clinical/personal questions and the process felt quite smooth. The role play was better than I thought it would be, I ended up actually enjoying it! The whole morning was quite exhausting, but that's natural. The literacy & numeracy test was the hardest part of the day...maybe because it's harder to prepare yourself for that beforehand. I really thought that hadn't gone well at all, so I had to try really hard to just go for a walk after & leave that to one side to be able to focus on individual interview.
- Panel were really warm and encouraging, I liked the combined research and personal interview and that the research was around your own proposal and interests. This was something interviews at other universities lacked and I think it reflected the course in being supportive in developing your own ideas and interests.
- Long day but pleasant and panel were very warm.
- The interview was pretty laid back, it was nice to have current trainees to talk to and no unexpected questions.
- The day was very tiring and overwhelming as there were many different tasks and lots of other applicants. The interview was split into three parts and although it was challenging I think the course ultimately wanted to find out about who I was which really helped with my anxiety. Compared to other interviews, the course team and staff on my panel were warm, interested and seemed to want to get the best out of me.
- Although anxiety provoking, the interview process seemed fair. I left the Maths test feeling like I hadn't done very well, but this was most peoples' experience too. I felt the interviewers wanted to get the best out of me in the clinical interview and made me feel at ease which helped me by myself. There were about 12 people in the group task which they trialled my year of applying. The course staff seemed friendly and approachable.
- Prior to interview, we had to submit a research proposal, which was a little daunting but useful. We had a group exercise which was co-produced by a staff member with lived experience of mental health difficulties and a service user - the questions we were asked to discuss by the service user were really thought provoking and interesting. We then completed a literacy and numeracy test, which was quite challenging but clearly designed to be. We were also interviewed by a panel comprising lecturers and local clinical psychologists. All the staff and interviewers were friendly, and there were no curveball questions. All in all, I felt it was a very rigorous but well-designed day. I thought that this interview process more accurately reflected the demands of the course in terms of both clinical and research skills than other places I've interviewed at.

## Course content and teaching

### How much teaching is there on different models?



### What other topics are covered by your course?

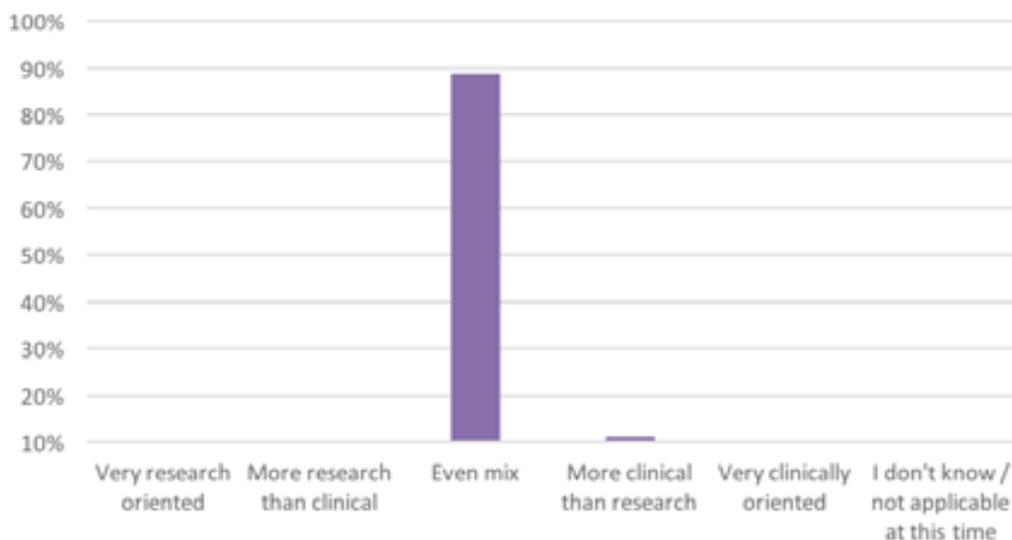
Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	56%
Mindfulness	67%
Schema Therapy	11%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	89%
Solution Focused Therapy	22%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	67%
Other	0%

### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

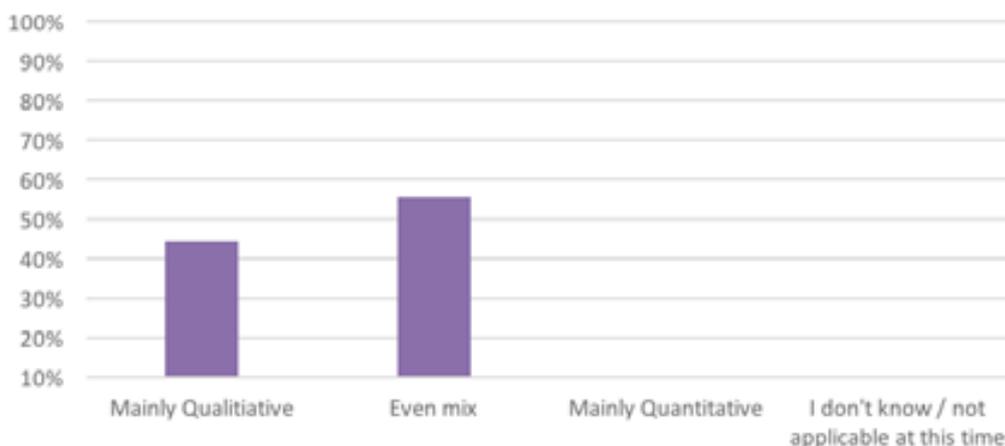
- We have a lot of teaching in the first year on CBT and in the second year a lot on Systemic therapy. We also had four days on DIT training at the Tavistock which I really enjoyed. We've also had teaching on other therapies (e.g. DBT) but this has been very short (only 1/2 say per therapy).
- There's different focus across each year for the 3 main approaches (CBT, psychodynamic, systemic). However it will only be say, one morning, for CFT/DBT. It's really hard to cover it all, so you end up just learning more based on what your placement supervisor works with.

- There has been a really good range of teaching so far. Have really enjoyed carer and service user involvement in some of the teaching we have had.
- Brilliant psychodynamic teaching at the Tavistock and good systemic teaching in 2nd year.
- At this stage of training (first year) it is hard to say about what topics have been covered. The course teaches broadly and I know that whatever has not been covered will be covered in the second and third year. The teaching between CBT and psychodynamic in the first year has been fairly split which I think is a unique aspect of the Essex course.
- There is a lot of CBT teaching in the first year. Having said that, I like that the course values other models alongside CBT, such as the psychodynamic approach. The teaching at the Tavistock has been excellent.
- It feels like we're getting a really well-rounded education in terms of developing the skills we need in order to help us to become competent psychologists able to understand and work with different approaches as needed.

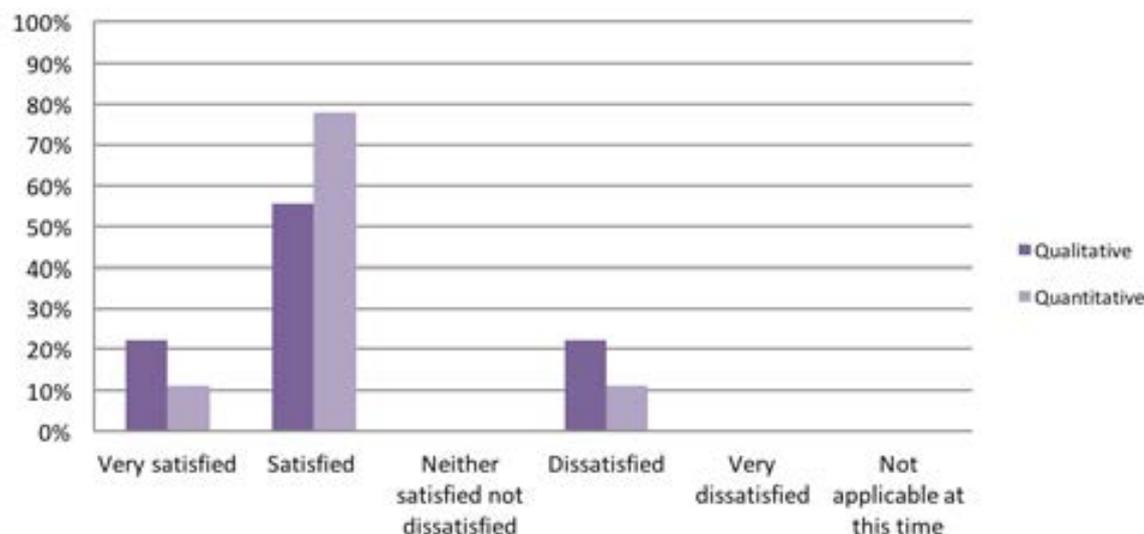
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



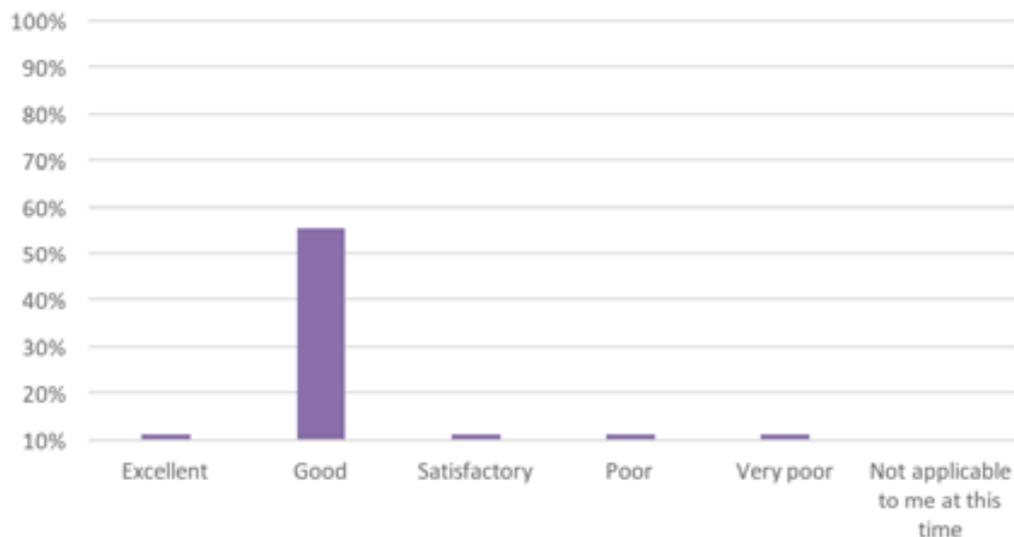
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



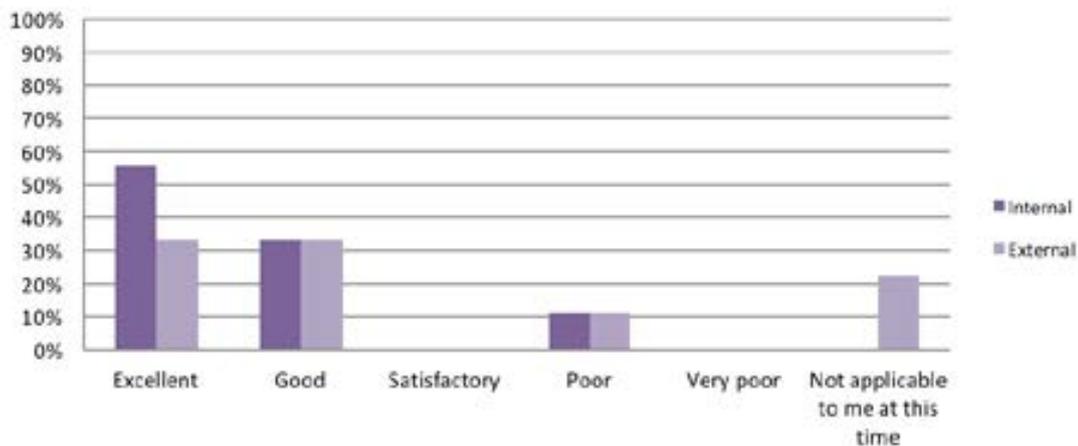
#### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- We have requested more teaching on qualitative research analysis which the course have been open to.
- Research is mainly online or self-taught - would be better if parts were taught by lecturers
- A lot related to undergrad level research methods, so it's a good refresher. It doesn't cover your specific thesis methods in depth, but we have funding to go on external workshops for that (most useful way to do it really!).
- Research methods teaching is directed around our assignments and our thesis; it is more peer led discussions rather than teaching stats which I think makes its much more relevant.
- There are opportunities for conducting quantitative research and many trainees do their major research project in this area however, the course is critical/social constructivist and so many of the course team are interested in qualitative research.
- First year has been quite demanding - we had about 9 weeks to complete a systematic review with a deadline just after New Year, and have been working on our thesis and service-related project proposals pretty much from the get-go. I think this is good, though, as it means that we're being supported to stay on top of everything, which will hopefully make years 2 and 3 less stressful.

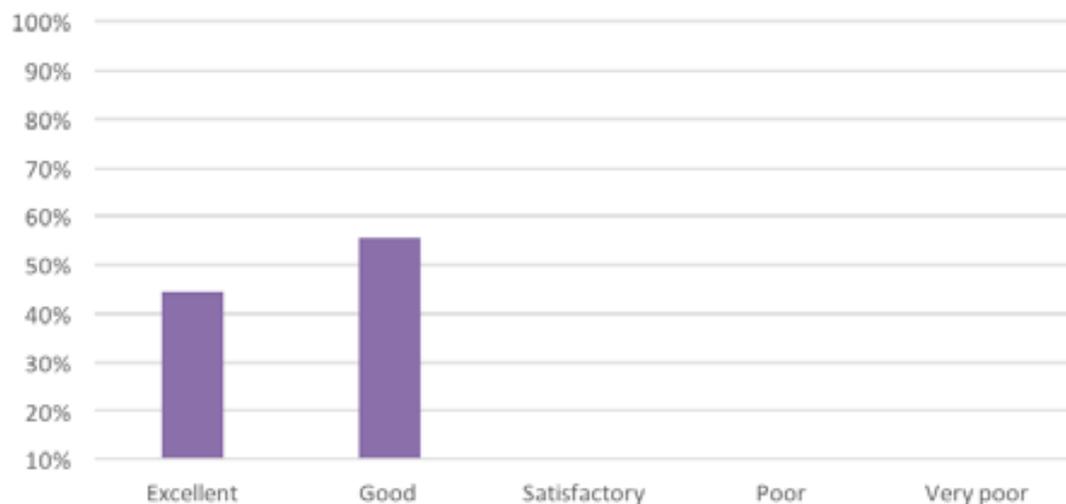
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



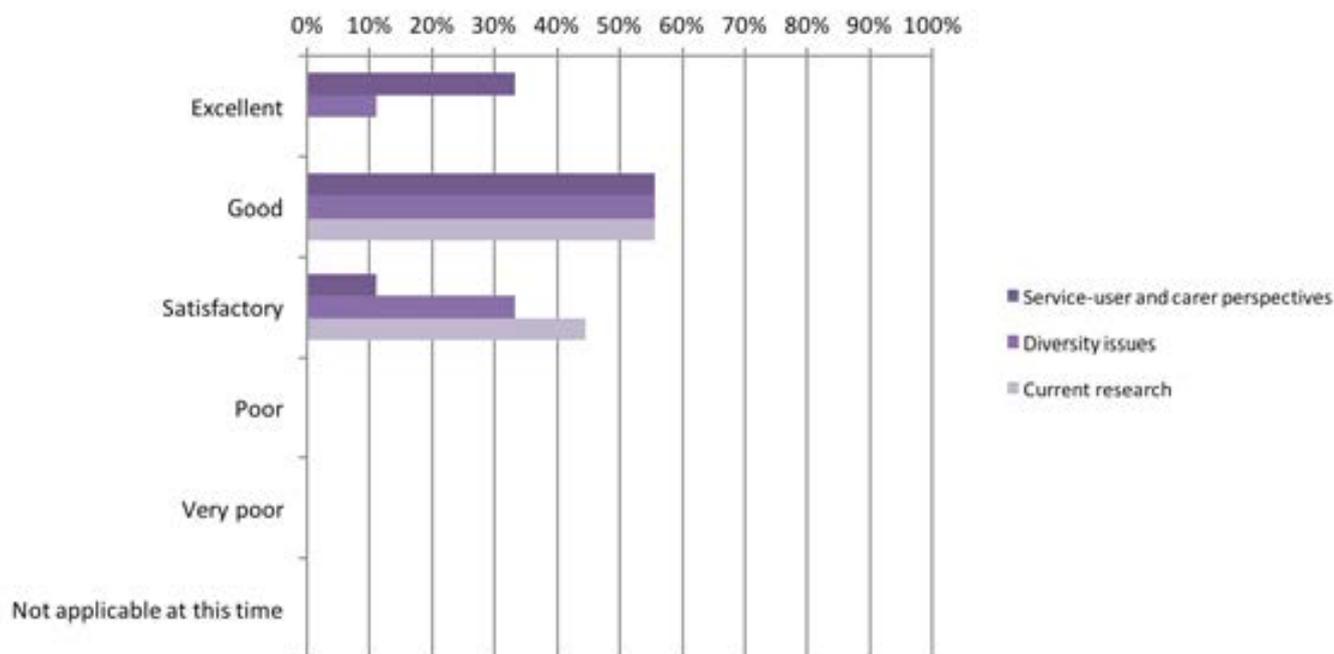
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

- Teaching is split between Essex & Tavistock. You go to the Tavistock a lot in first year, then only a couple of days in second year. They cover psychodynamic module and also the diversity module. Some people prefer the teaching at the Tavi, but for me I prefer Essex. It's all just a matter of preference.
- We have many qualified psychologists who work in different areas come and teach us along with the members of the course team which provides some diversity in approach and style. The diversity teaching is excellent and this teaching is provided by the Tavistock which is taught in a very thought provoking way. As we are a small cohort we are encouraged to be involved in teaching which I think is valuable in the skills needed to be a clinical psychologist. The service-user and carer perspectives have been very powerful!
- We've had a really varied mix of local clinical psychologists coming in to deliver teaching, in addition to the teaching done by the course lecturers. This has helped us to understand local services and all of the different roles carried out by clinical psychologists in the area.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

0% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

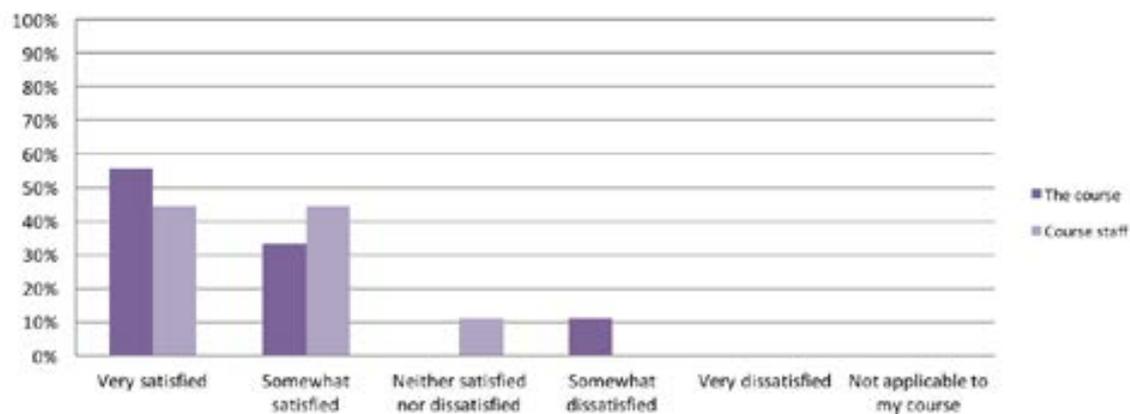
### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- We had a lot of research assignments in the first year which were scheduled very close together. However, the course has now changed this following our feedback. I also felt the course did not help very much with the initial stages of designing our thesis which felt very stressful. However, now I have developed a protocol and been allocated a supervisor I feel I have a lot of support.
- Thesis -the organisation of this and ethics and travel placements are far
- Coping with being watched and feeling like you have to tick boxes to meet competencies. I find I end up quite obsessed with this and it stops the placements being a genuine learning experience and to let myself be freer when working with clients. The workload in itself is naturally one of the hardest things, but generally manageable (that said, it can feel unmanageable in certain blocks of time).
- The literature review deadline was very early and didn't give much time to be able to fully learn the process etc., especially if hadn't done research since undergrad many years ago. Since then however I think deadlines have been fairly spread to be able to manage workload.
- When a few pieces of work are in, juggling this, the thesis ongoing work and placement if it is particularly demanding can be very difficult, but there are less busy times.
- The course is demanding and is initially quite difficult to adjust to, I found the first term particularly challenging. It is manageable but requires you to 'ride the wave' - there are times when there is a lot of work and times where there is less and you just have to go with it!
- Essex is a big county and there can be long commutes for placements. The course do try to take your home base into consideration, but this is not always possible.
- It's been a steep learning curve, but nothing has been too demanding.

### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	100%
"Buddy"	100%
Manager	11%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	56%
Professional Mentor	0%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	89%
Independent personal advisor	0%
Other	0%

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

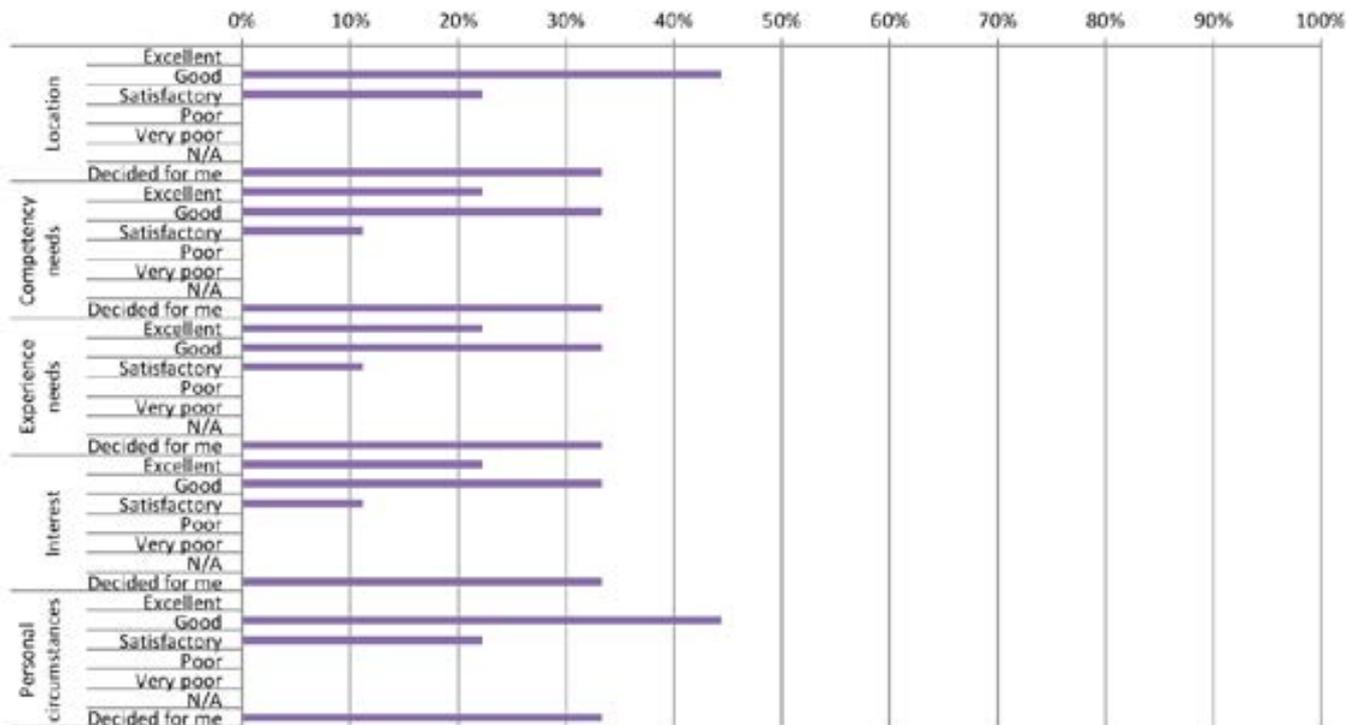


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

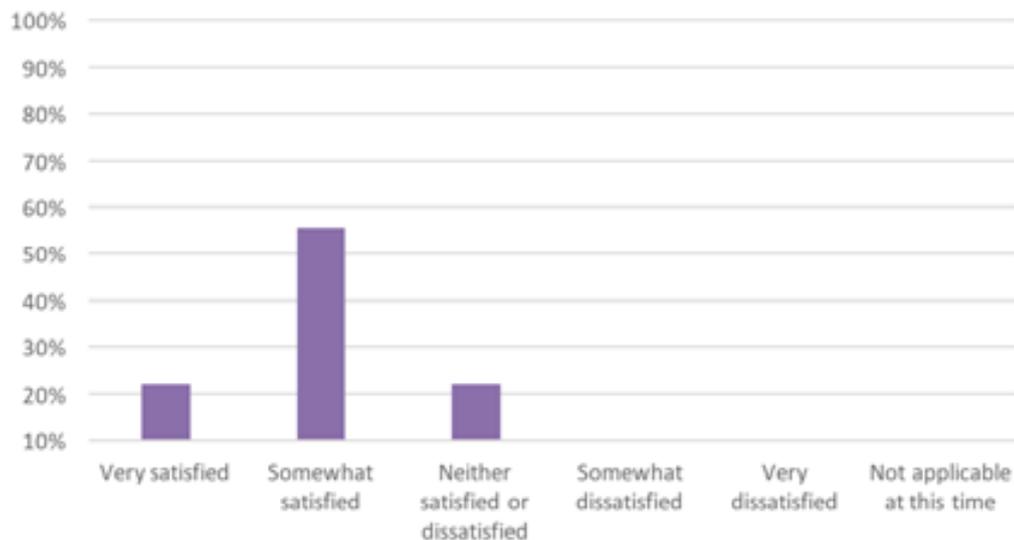
- I do feel well supported generally. I think it's hard to "offload" on the stress without feeling like you're just moaning about what training was always going to feel like. In that sense I can feel quite ungrateful so I might be more hesitant to seek support. But the tutors are all psychologists so they've all been through it! My research tutor is incredible, I would be lost without her generally - she's a big confidence & motivation booster!
- Staff have been very supportive to date
- The course team are approachable and supportive despite them being very busy. I had difficulties on clinical placement and they were available when I needed them and concerned about me.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



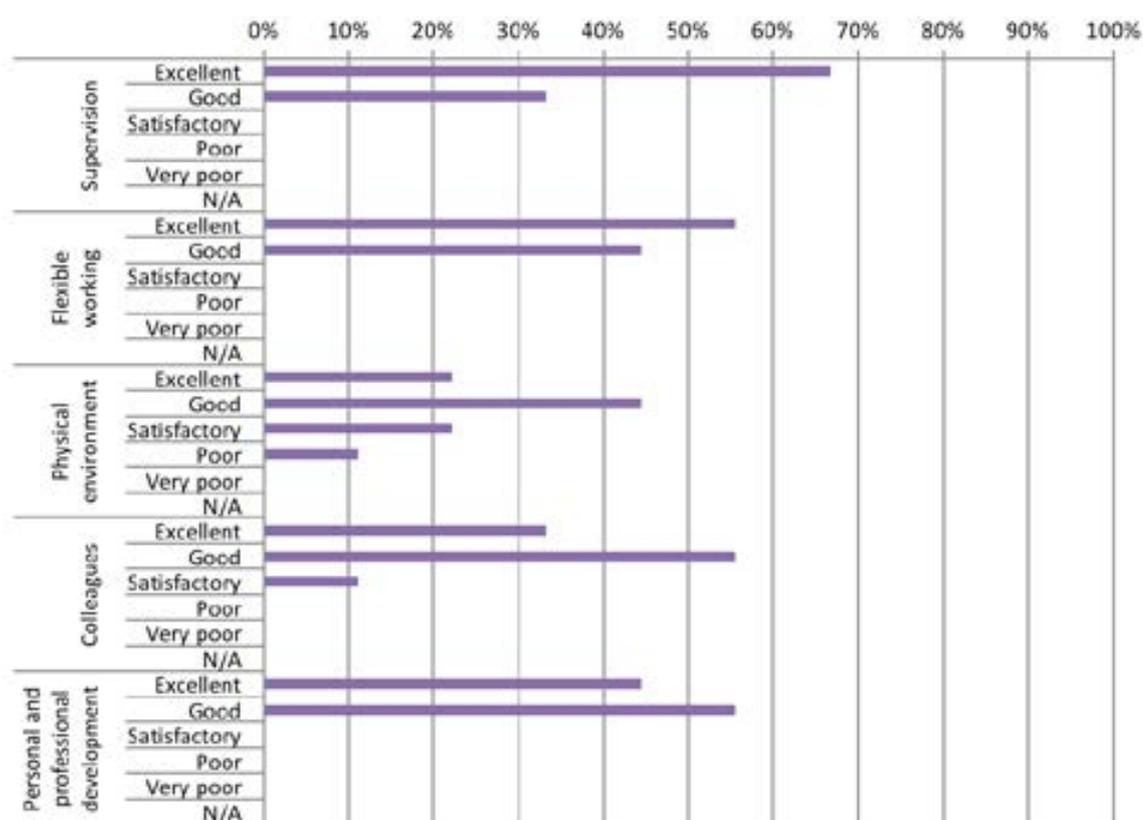
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- Your training for each placement is split across the year. I've been lucky in that my placements have fallen at good times for what is being covered on teaching. We had a teaching block at the start of each year so that's always a nice prep time. There were issues this year in sorting out our second placements, so we haven't had enough time to make all the preparations & arrangements that go into pre-placement.
- teaching is an even mix of older adults/adults to reflect our first year placements
- Lots of our CBT teaching came towards the end of the first placement. As most of us were delivering CBT with either adults or older adults, this would have been more helpful in the first term. Aside from that, the focus has generally been on developing knowledge and skills that we need to use with the client groups and approaches we're encountering in the first year, which has been appropriate.

### In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



### Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).

- Placements are the best bit about training. I've been lucky in that mine have all been great quality. Be prepared to drive!! But most supervisors are understanding about your journey in and where you are placed without much control (I think the lack of control & input is what I hate the most). I found that the placements have sometimes been a process of working out where I don't want to work, as well as seeing what would be possible to work in after qualifying.
- Essex covers a large area so you can be placed anywhere. The Trust has, and is going through, a restructure which brings with it a lot of anxiety, frustration, and burnout which I think is evident in

some teams, though not all. I don't think this is unique to Essex but more a reflection of the current issues within the NHS and society, and that becoming more able to deal with these issues are part of developing yourself as a clinical psychologist.

- Placement supervisor has been great!
- I've put the physical environment for the placement as poor for a few reasons. It wasn't awful or anything, but the car park at the hospital where I worked wasn't big enough for staff and patients, which meant late/missed appointments, and unnecessary anxiety and stress. You had to climb on furniture to adjust the windows. The temperature regulation was awful. There was random junk in a therapy room that was still there when I left, despite requesting it to be removed at the start of my placement. We had to take our own tissues into therapy rooms (a budget issue, apparently). Most importantly, there was no space for staff to meet or relax. A makeshift meeting area was made on a landing with lift access, which meant you were disturbed by patients and staff if the other lift was broken (which happened quite a lot). The room booking system was antiquated and not fit for purpose, and was ignored by one particular consultant psychiatrist anyway, who interrupted a therapy session then wished me 'good luck' with using a room I'd booked (that he wanted) later that afternoon. I'm sure this is pretty standard NHS stuff but much of it is totally unnecessary.
- Also, as there is seemingly zero communication between different Trust HR departments, managing induction procedures and mandatory training when we have placements in different Trusts has been a joke. We have our employer Trust asking us to read policies we don't have access to, and the placement Trust essentially viewing us as invisible, so not providing any training at all for e.g. the clinical record system.
- Fortunately, the staff I worked with were great - really helpful, supportive and personable, which meant that these niggles were just that."

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	78%
No	22%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	33%
No	56%
Don't know	11%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Colchester, Chelmsford and London.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	89%
Don't know	11%

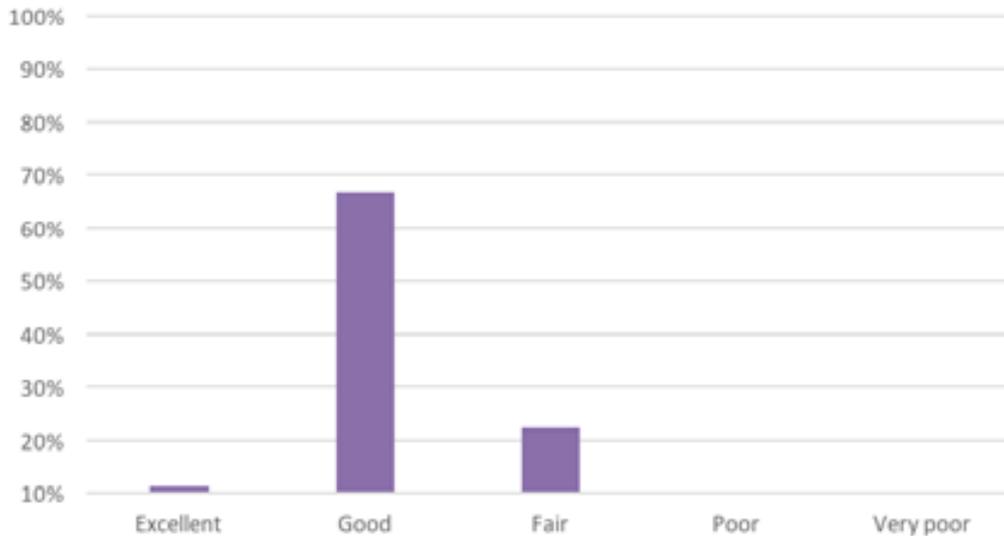
### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	11%
Good	44%
Fair	44%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

#### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- This varies depending on the assignments but generally it is not too bad.
- It's just your decision really on how you manage your workload and to have boundaries placed around things. Sometimes the workload is so high that you might have to prioritise the work in order to ensure you can actually sleep, eat etc. So for instance I would prioritise my thesis over pre-lecture reading, unfortunately it's just a choice I have to make. I do what I have to do (rather than extra out of interest for psychology) as a way to manage. Some months you have no weekends, then it balances out again. I think you need to ensure those around you are supportive & understand why you're doing the course. I try to protect my own time off because otherwise I can't cope with the academic side or placement.
- It needs to be expected that at times you will need to sacrifice some things to get your deadlines met however overall I have been able to manage a good work life balance.
- Training is hard and can consume your life if you allow it to. There are times when the course is very demanding with lots of deadlines and there are times when there isn't so much work - but there is always work to be done. I manage this by the knowledge that the assignments are pass/fail and this makes it easier to get by and maintain some quality of life. There are some people on the course that find this more difficult.
- Balance is worse near deadlines, but more than manageable outside of this.
- I think everyone goes on about how you'll have no life on the course, but that's rubbish (so far). The first term was probably the most intense.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- I live in Colchester which is generally a bit cheaper. It's an NHS salary so you're not rolling in it. But I'd say we are pretty fortunate. I also pay for personal therapy alongside training, so that takes a chunk out of it!
- You don't get any additional money or weighting for training in Essex. I was working in inner London before so I took a pay cut. However, as trainee clinical psychologists we are in a privileged position being on a Band 6 pay which many of the colleagues we work with are not so it is not too bad.
- I'm grateful to have an NHS-funded place, I would not be able to afford it otherwise. Reimbursement of travel expenses is better if you live near the University.
- It would have been great if they'd support us a bit more with travel to placements. As I live closer to my placements than university, I get no support and fuel costs are a significant part of my monthly spend.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- My favourite aspect is that we only have 12 people on our course which means in lectures I feel very comfortable discussing topics and there is a lot of opportunity to do group work/role play which I would imagine would be more difficult in a bigger group. I like the teaching on many different therapies. We also had many specialist lectures/training days from the Tavistock which I found very helpful. I also value the clinical seminars we have every 2 weeks during which we all present a case.
- Psychodynamic teaching at the Tavistock and CAMHS placement.
- Placements as you can be fairly directive about what you want to do for client work. The supervisors are there to ensure your learning needs are met. I also value the amount of time we have for reflective practice.
- Support in developing your own thesis interest.
- Clinical seminar as this allows you to reflect on your placement work and ask for support and ideas from your cohort on specific cases.
- Placements and placement supervisors
- The thesis project I have enjoyed, the lectures and seminars, a couple of the placements have been brilliant.

- There are many things I love about being an Essex trainee. I have felt very welcome by the course team and you get to know them and the other trainees quite well given the course is so small. The teaching at the Tavistock has been a real highlight and is such a valuable learning experience which requires one to think about themselves in relation to the clinical work and other relevant issues working in the NHS. The course is thoughtful about diversity and this is reflected in the difference in trainees (their experience, interests, culture, religion, and clinical style), teaching and lecturers. I think it is important to feel accepted for who you are and the type of clinical psychologist you aspire to be and Essex really encourages this.
- Teaching at the Tavistock, placements and being part of a small cohort.
- The small cohort and the quality of the teaching and research support.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- The course is whatever you make it. Think about your time management, plan your assignments across the year. Start them early, even if it's just having a think & some notes about what you want to write, then it all is less overwhelming. They encourage you to have personal therapy alongside training, which I would suggest you do. This stuff is hard, it shapes you as a person - it's good to have somewhere that you can process that.
- Due to the location of the course many of the trainees either live in Essex or London which can make social events and bonding more difficult than perhaps some of the other courses where people may live in close proximity.
- There are lots of changes going on both within the Trust and at the University and it would be more helpful if they were more 'joined-up'. Placements need to be planned better with trainees and placement supervisors across the county.
- Essex library does not have access to the range of journals I've come to expect from a university. You can request inter-library loans, but they sometimes take a while, which doesn't work when you've got imminent deadlines.

# Courses Survey Results

## Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

## What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Interview, literacy and numeracy test and group task.

## For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	9 hours
Placement	22.5 hours
Personal Study	6 hours
Research	

## What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	0%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

## Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Exeter University

15 responses (34% of 44 trainees)

## About the trainee

**What is your current year of training?**

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	47%
Year 2	27%
Year 3	27%

**What was your age when you started training?**

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	80%
30 – 34 years	13%
35 – 39 years	7%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

**How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?**

Attempts	Percent
Once	27%
Twice	27%
3 times	20%
4 times	13%
5 times	7%
6 times	7%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	33%
MA	7%
MSc	73%
MRes	0%
Diploma	7%
Post Graduate Certificate	13%
Conversion course	0%
None	0%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	33%
3 years	13%
4 years	20%
5 years	7%
6+ years	27%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	67%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	47%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	40%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	13%
Research Assistant	67%
Voluntary Research Assistant	13%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	67%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	20%
Other	7%

## The selection process

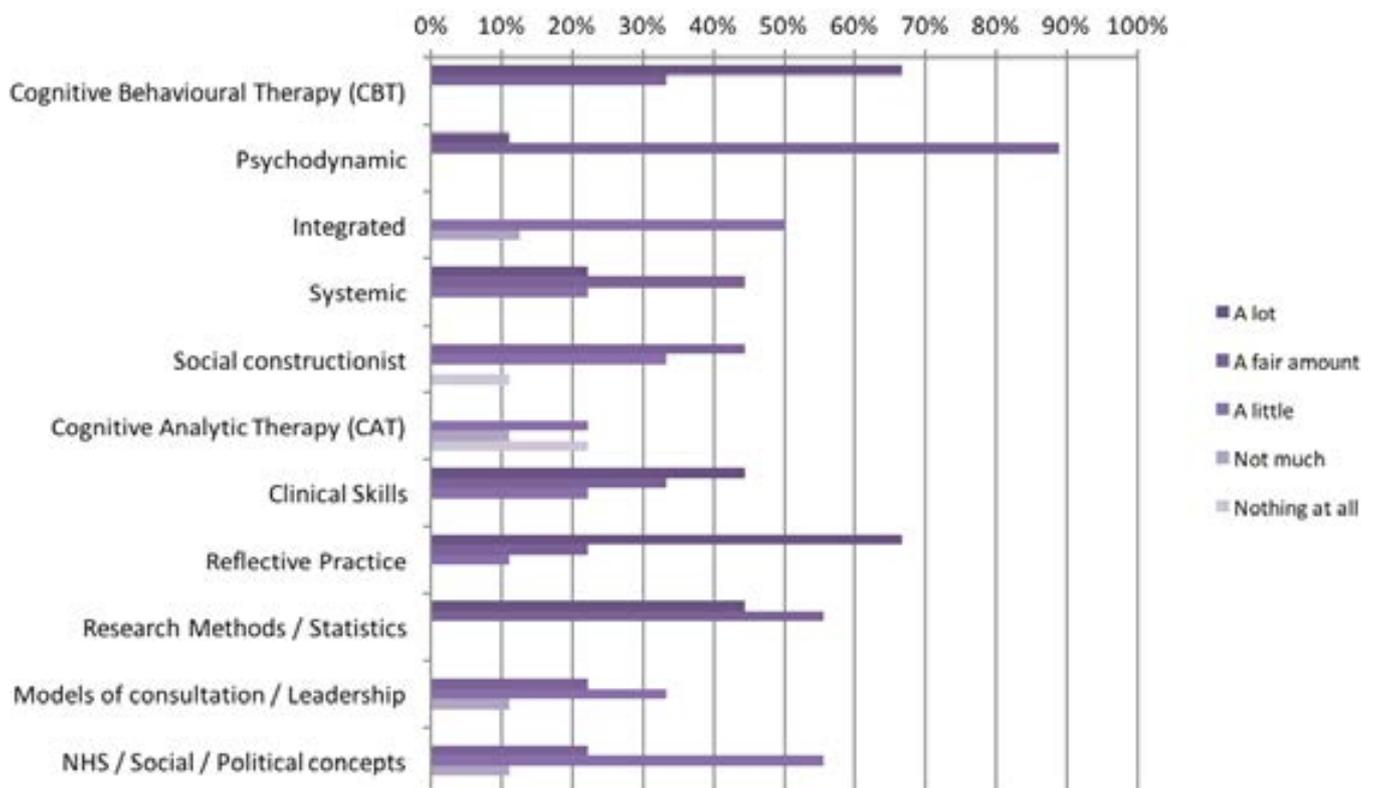
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- On the whole, I found the interview process to be quite supportive and it was clear that they wanted to get the best out of us. However I did find the academic interview was quite challenging and stressful at times. The buddy system was excellent. My buddy really helped to put me at ease and gave me a really positive impression of the course.
- Supported by a buddy which was helpful
- Research interview was the hardest out of the four courses I applied for - really felt like I had to know my stuff.
- I found the staff mostly friendly and interested. Some of the questions were challenging (i.e. Challenged the views/ideas I put forward) but asked in a spirit of seeking to see how I would respond and think on my feet/defend my position.
- Supportive and asked useful questions. Did not go too much into the personal side of things. Grilling on research but also focused on clinical examples.
- Very structured process with a good buddying system to make it feel a bit less stressful.
- Exeter have a buddy system where candidates are placed with current trainees for the duration of the interview process; this made the interview process surprisingly enjoyable and relaxing!
- The three-stage process (although it has since changed to a two-stage process) was challenging but supportive. Exeter operates a buddy system, which both helped me and seems to be really valued by the other trainees and applicants.
- The interview consisted of two separate interviews (psychological practice and research) and a group task. The two interview panels were friendly and encouraging. The group task was nerve-racking but better once I concentrated on the discussion going on rather than my anxieties.
- Very positive, the interviews felt very relaxed and the buddy system helps to alleviate nerves.
- Exeter had a very well organised and enjoyable interview process, you are paired with a buddy who guide you through the whole process. This takes much of the pressure of time keeping off and also is a great opportunity to ask a your buddy who is a 1st or 2nd year trainee questions about what it is like to study at Exeter.
- I thought that the interview process was generally really well-managed. The room used as a base between interviews had a relaxed and supportive atmosphere despite the context, with current trainees there to support you. It was a relief to have a trainee holding the responsibility of taking you to and from the interviews, instead of having the additional stress of navigating around an unfamiliar building.
- My only criticism of the process is that the research interview felt far too interrogative. As a result, I definitely didn't perform to the best of my abilities. However, I do acknowledge that this was influenced by my subjective experience and lack of confidence, and, from talking to fellow trainees, this was not an issue across other research panels.
- The interview process has changed this year to a combined research and clinical interview, and a group exercise, so I'm not sure how this will affect the process."
- I had a really pleasant experience of the interviewing process at Exeter. I felt I was put at ease by having the buddy system which was carried through throughout the day. Other Unis I visited had a buddy system but it was less well implemented as it can feel quite intimidating to be buddied by someone who's already kind of 'made it' in your eyes. Exeter didn't feel this way. I also appreciated having someone with lived experience throughout all three components as I felt this demonstrated the courses commitment to understanding difficulties from the service-users perspective and I felt I could be more myself with them there as I could speak to my experience of working with clients.

One thing I would advise is to read up/study which placement base you would like to attend prior to interview. I put my number 1 choice as where my buddy was living, she kind of persuaded me and moving from abroad and being in that position I was quite easily persuaded. Looking back it was the wrong choice for me and I wish I'd made this decision completely for myself.

- The interview day was one of the best I have been to. There buddy system works well and everyone is very friendly.
- It was extremely well executed, particularly compared to another course where I had an interview that caused immeasurable stress. The administrator was very prompt at getting back to us with interview letters and then offer of a place letters - the morning after the final day of interviewing! - and the day itself was exemplary in terms of making us feel as at ease as we could in this highly stressful situation. The buddy system is really great and helped me feel much more at ease - it's just nice having someone there to support you.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	33%
Mindfulness	53%
Schema Therapy	33%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	40%
Solution Focused Therapy	20%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	27%
Other	7%

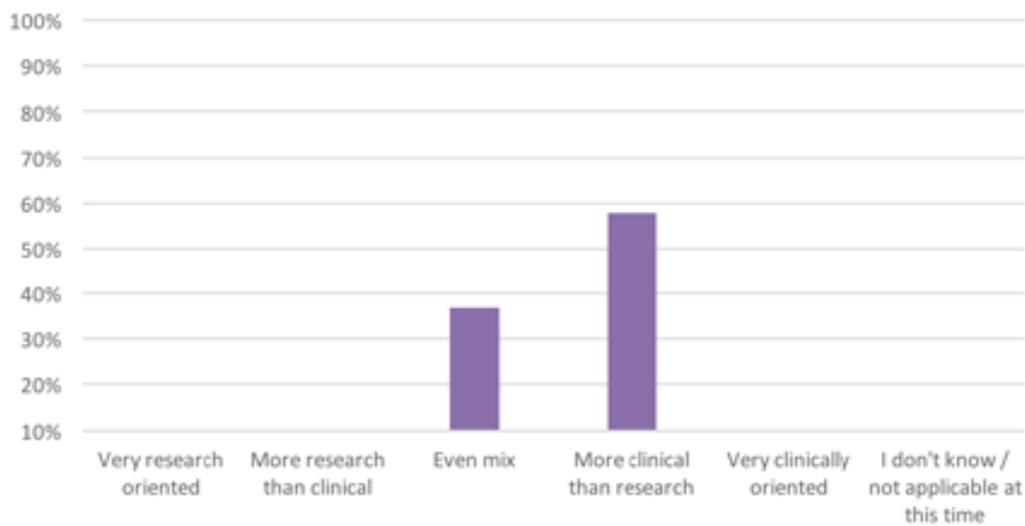
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- The first year has been focussed mainly on CBT and Systemic teaching so far, with quite a bit of neuropsychology too. I know there is a lot more teaching coming up on psychodynamic, and CAT etc.
- Having completed that question I recognise that the Exeter course spreads itself pretty well across the relevant areas. There is increasing inclusion of CAT as a model on the course, with lots of local expertise and enthusiasm.
- Much of the material on a topic is delivered around the same time, while this helps with holding on to concepts it can mean that something gets a lot of attention in first or second year but is never mentioned again!
- The course is trying to give us more options for other types of accreditation as well as the DClin e.g. BABCP and AFT. However, the balance is always being changed to meet current needs of the trainees
- There was quite a lot of neuropsychology in the first year, but this has settled now, and feels like more of a mixture of different areas covered.
- Exeter is heavily focused on CBT, Neuropsychology and Systemic models.
- Year 1 is heavily weighted towards LD, child and CBT teaching as these are the first placements. The course is BABCP accredited, meaning the taught CBT content is sufficient to demonstrate CBT competence. There is support for those interested in gaining BABCP accreditation and trainees are encouraged from an early stage to think about whether this interests them. The course also teaches a reasonable amount of systemic therapy and delivers CAT teaching equivalent to the foundation accreditation level with ACAT, though we have only just begun CAT lectures (6 months into year one) so the majority of this learning occurs in years two and three.
- The course does not favour any one model over another, it feels very integrative in the way different models are presented.
- One of the strengths of the Exeter course is the range of models that we are exposed to. Contrary to my expectations, the psychodynamic teaching has been fantastic and very useful.
- Although I ticked things like 'schema' therapy and 'Compassionate Focused Therapy' the teaching on 'newer' models is fairly scant, maybe one or two sessions. However, the core models: CBT, systemic, psychodynamic and CAT in fairness I think have been covered quite well by the course and hearing experiences from trainees in other courses I think we have been quite lucky in this respect. Exeter is pretty balanced in terms of what it 'recommends' you should be using and allows for trainees to make decisions about the way they would like to work themselves rather than

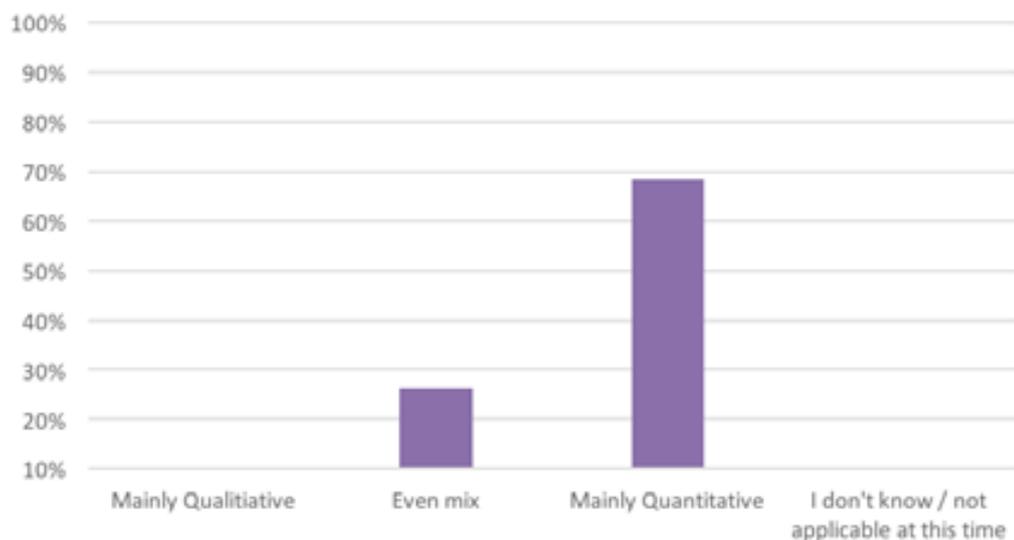
ramming any one particular model down your throat. I would have liked more social constructionist and community psychology taught sessions as traditionally this is what Exeter was known for. The shift I think has really been towards neuropsychology and leadership now which has been a large focus of our teaching.

- I think the balance and diversity is really great relative to other courses I've heard about. I would say we cover CBT, psychodynamic, systemic, and CAT in reasonable depth and then get additional teaching on ISTDP and other newer modalities which is great. We distinctly lack mindfulness approaches though I feel.

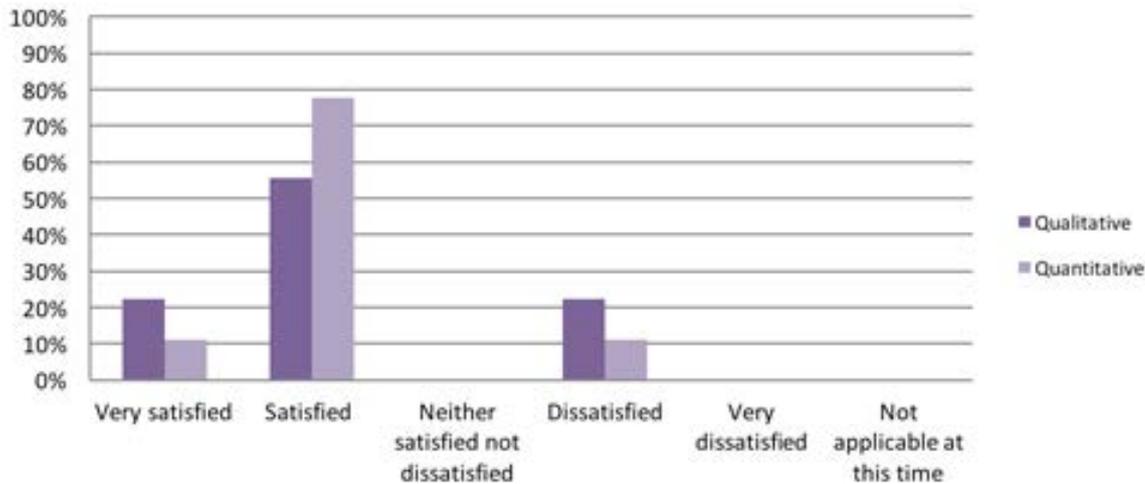
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



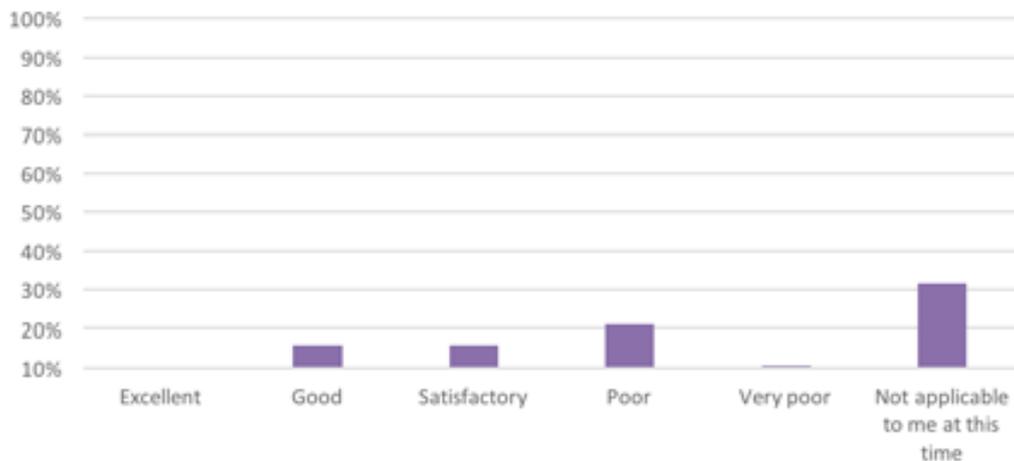
## Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



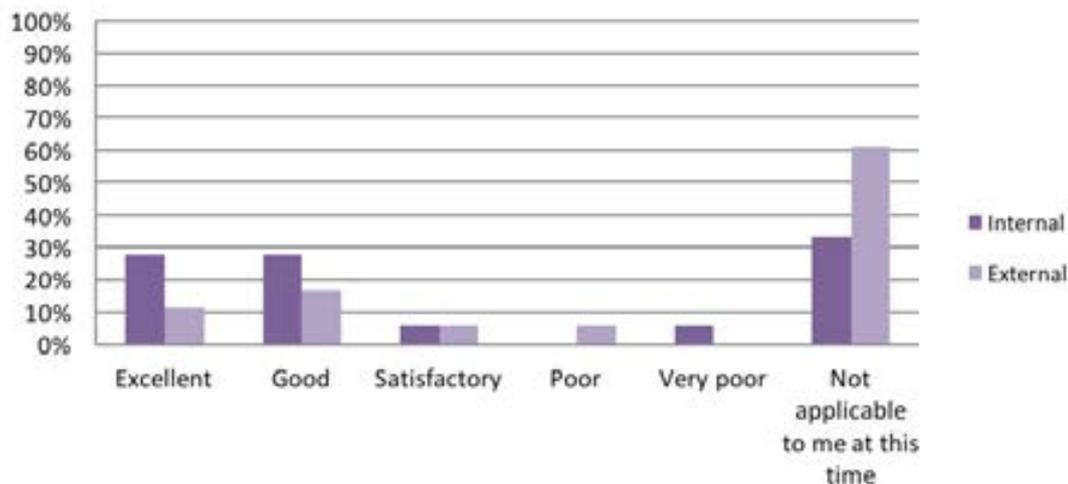
## Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Research staff are very supportive
- There is more focus on quantitative research within the faculty, which can make it difficult if a few people on the cohort would like to complete a qualitative thesis project. .
- It's being pushed at Exeter. Majority of us have PhDs.
- As there is only one member of qualitative staff people several people could not pursue their research interests
- The course requires trainees to think about their third year major project from very early - month three of year one. I feel research is strongly integrated into this course and the bias is heavily in favour of quantitative methods. We have received three qualitative lectures. There are no more within the core curriculum.
- At the time that we were choosing our major research projects, there was only one person available to supervise qualitative research. I believe that the course has increased its qualitative provision since, but there is definitely a greater focus on qualitative methodologies. I also found that the options were more limited by the research interests of the supervisors than I had anticipated.
- Exeter has a big emphasis on research however, I feel this would be the same no matter where you study. One criticism I would have is that the levels of expectation from research supervisors can move beyond the scope of a DClin towards a traditional PhD. Coming from a PhD background, I found the research component of Exeter far more taxing than my PhD mainly because of the juggling act that's going on, i.e. balancing full-time employment with testing/writing etc.
- It's relative research-y on our course. But it is manageable and not too much.

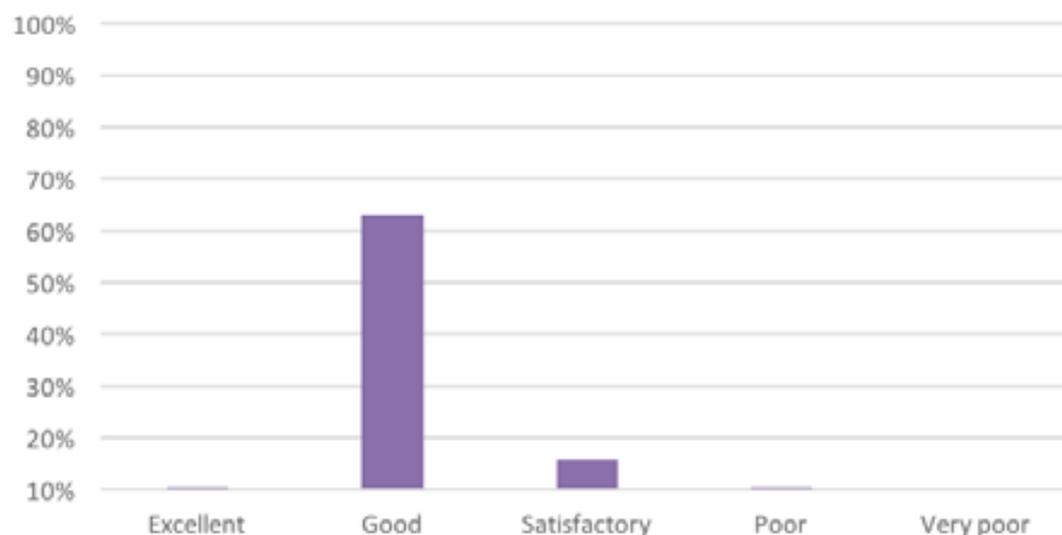
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



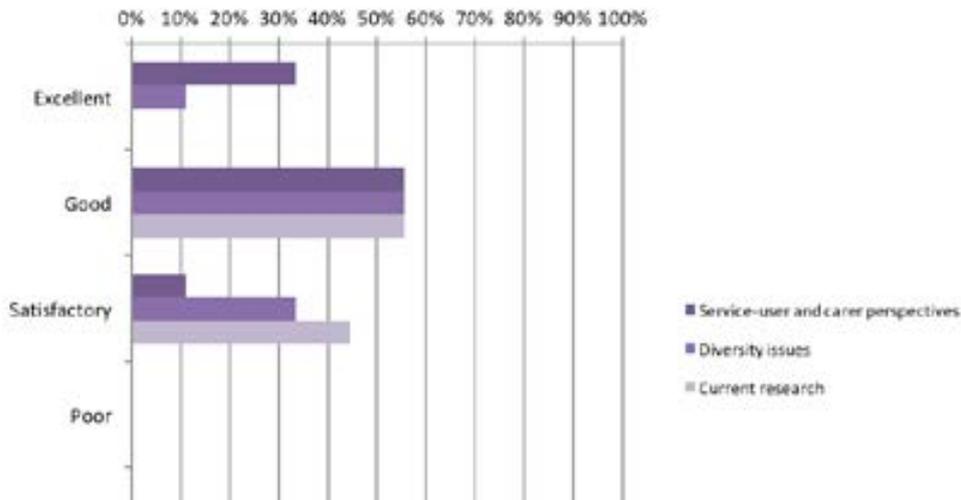
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

- All of the teaching has been to an exceptionally high standard so far and is mostly delivered by practicing clinicians.
- Teaching is delivered by local clinicians. Quality is very variable, a number of sessions are 3 hours of PowerPoint presentation covering out of date research.
- DBT teaching is excellent.
- Teaching is largely provided by local clinicians
- More teaching on diversity and social constructionism/ critical approaches would be valued.
- Good teaching from local clinicians

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

- 0% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- There have been times when there are numerous deadlines for academic work in a short period of time, along with other pressures from on-going work and selecting a thesis supervisor etc. At these times, it has felt difficult to manage a work-life balance. However, at other times this has felt quite achievable.
- The balance is the hardest bit - feels like a lot of plates up in the air most of the time.
- I have also really struggled with the commute. The course area is large and it feels like there is a lot

of travelling. The other sad aspect to this is it means you live very geographically spread out from course mates.”

- Managing the stress of the major research project alongside placement demands, teaching and other academic work.
- Coursework deadlines.
- Impact of clinical work.
- Travel commitments.
- Juggling all the demands of the course is sometimes difficult, but all the staff are very supportive and there is a lot of emphasis on building resilience and self-care in the first year.
- The workload is, predictably, intense. There seems to be the expectation that you complete assignments outside working hours. The problem-based learning (PBL) exercises (there are five throughout the three years) are particularly time-consuming and present a logistical challenge when arranging to meet your group members outside of lecture hours.
- I think the main difficulty of the course is managing the different demands of the academic, research, and clinical strands.
- There are times in the year where the workload feels more stressful, however, it is always manageable and there is a general pulse to the workload.
- Living on the furthest side of the Exeter catchment has meant that the travelling has been particularly demanding. On a teaching week, I will do a minimum of 11 hours driving, excluding any home visits/travel to supervision/off-site meetings. When the workload is manageable, this can be lovely as the countryside is beautiful and I appreciate having some time and space between work and home to process the day. However, when the demands are stacking up and every hour counts, it can be frustrating and tiring to be spending so much time in the car.
- It can also be challenging to balance all the competing demands of the course and feel like you are doing ‘good enough’, but I very much accept that this is part of training and being a slightly frazzled trainee.
- Yes. Juggling the research demands alongside working full-time alongside 2 full days of teaching in Exeter which is 2 hours from my placement base has been challenging.
- The commuting is also difficult as Exeter covers a large geographical area.
- I think the course is great so long as you have no other demands outside of the course, e.g. personal. Once you add personal demands in to the mix it can become overwhelming.
- Lots of competing deadlines. Found contacting potential research supervisors and planning for this difficult.
- There are points in the timetable where we have a high number of academic deadlines at once, but on one occasion the course were good at rejigging things a bit when we had more than several due in in one month.

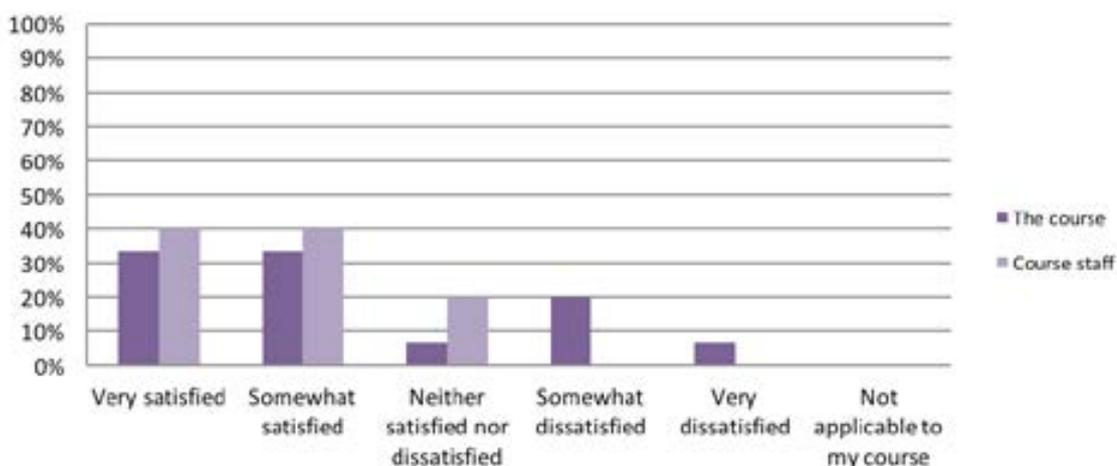
**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	47%
“Buddy”	47%
Manager	7%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	40%
Professional Mentor	0%
Personal Tutor	47%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	0%
Other	33%

**Under “Other”, responses included:**

- Clinical tutor (x2)
- academic supervisor (e.g. assignments)
- Academic tutor, Appraiser (x3)
- We also have a clinical tutor, an appraiser, and an experiential group.
- Appraiser is there for support however a number of my cohort have found this difficult as reaching out to your ‘appraiser’ for support can feel daunting/difficult
- For some reason have not been assigned a buddy from the year above

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

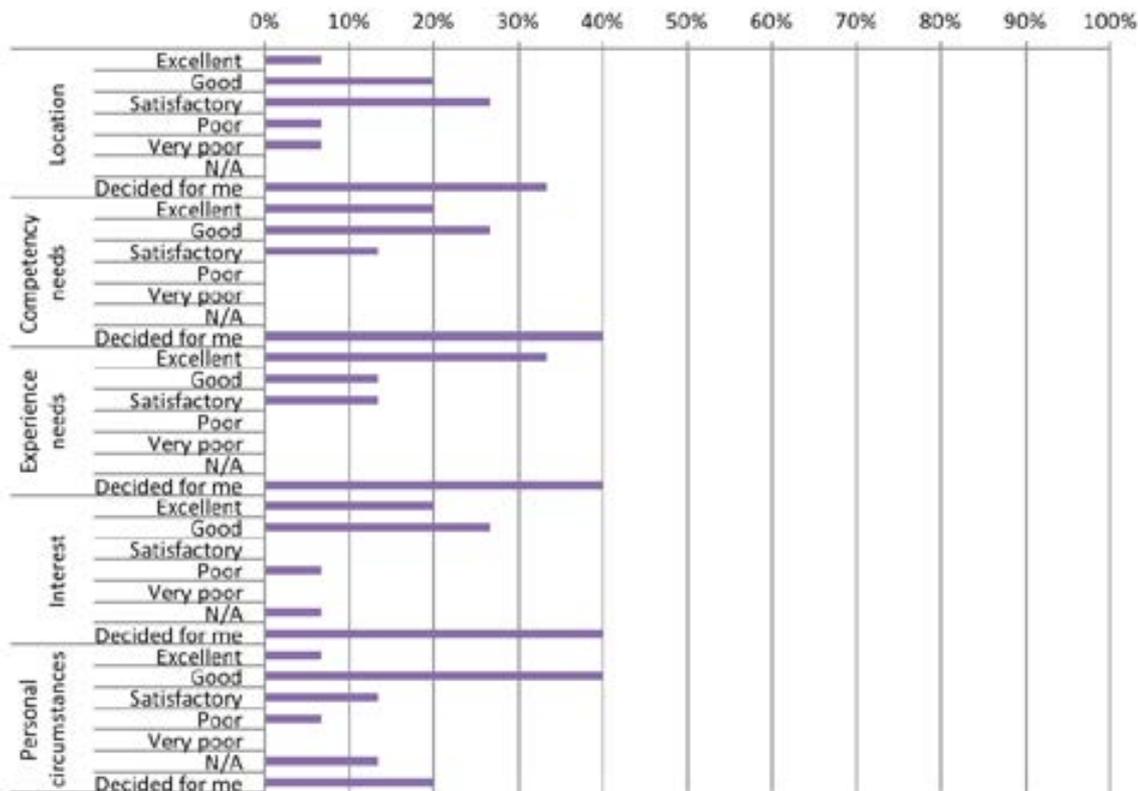


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

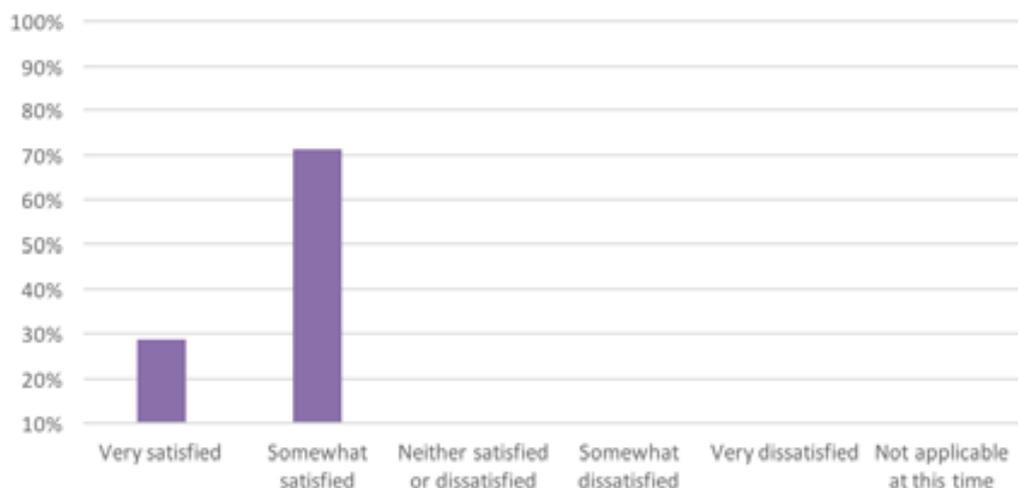
- There are a lot of different people assigned to offer support for different aspects of the course.
- When I have sought support it has been good but onus is on you as a trainee to find it.
- I really feel that the course could do with introducing a more pastoral support network for trainees - most of your contact comes from your appraiser who obviously holds an evaluative role, and it can therefore be difficult to be open with them.
- When distress is evident and support requested it is forthcoming and helpful. However, without explicit request or if presenting a brace face support is minimal
- Course seem to have a policy of 'you call us'. They are quite non-proactive when it comes to support and how they have dealt with some of my colleagues about flexible working is appalling.
- The staff have been really supportive, but there are lots of different staff allocated for different areas of support, so it is sometimes hard to know who to go to, or to feel that there is a consistent person to go to. I have received really helpful support from my clinical tutor, academic tutor and appraiser though.
- The staff are available and responsive. They clearly want to help and, more so, pre-empt any difficulties from developing. The course operates a buddy system for new trainees but, for some reason, this did not happen for us. The course have acknowledged its omission and I understand it will be in place for the next cohort.
- There has always been a staff member available when I've had any queries or concerns. I've felt very supported by all the staff on the course I have had contact with.
- The level of pastoral support at Exeter seems to be an ongoing issue, particularly surrounding maternity leave/return to work and challenging personal circumstances. Despite there being multiple support roles, it can unclear about which person is the right person to go to. Due to the nature of having multiple tutors/supervisors, it is hard to build a trusting relationship with them (despite them being lovely people) as the level of contact is so sporadic - maybe once or twice annually for half an hour. This is further compounded by some people holding dual roles; for example, both appraisers and supervisors are meant to be sources of pastoral support but also hold the powerful role of assessing your progress through the programme.
- One of the main criticisms I have of the course is the lack of obvious support that exists for trainees. So long as you actively reach out and make real effort to find support it is there. However, like any doctorate this training is difficult and often trainees are doing their best to keep up with the demands across all three domains: clinical, academic, research. Having spoken to trainees from other courses their ability to access support is more obvious/clear, e.g. they have a personal tutor who checks in with them regularly and is not there to appraise their work but instead is there as a support the whole way through. I have found it difficult to access support from my clinical tutor at times who might typically occupy this role. Once you reach out and let the course know they are very helpful and accommodating but it's very much left up to the trainees at Exeter to seek and ask for the support they need.
- Obviously busy academics are sometimes busy and people are part-time. There is always somebody around when the need arises but your appraiser, for example, could be part-time which can make fitting it in a bit tricky - but generally okay.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



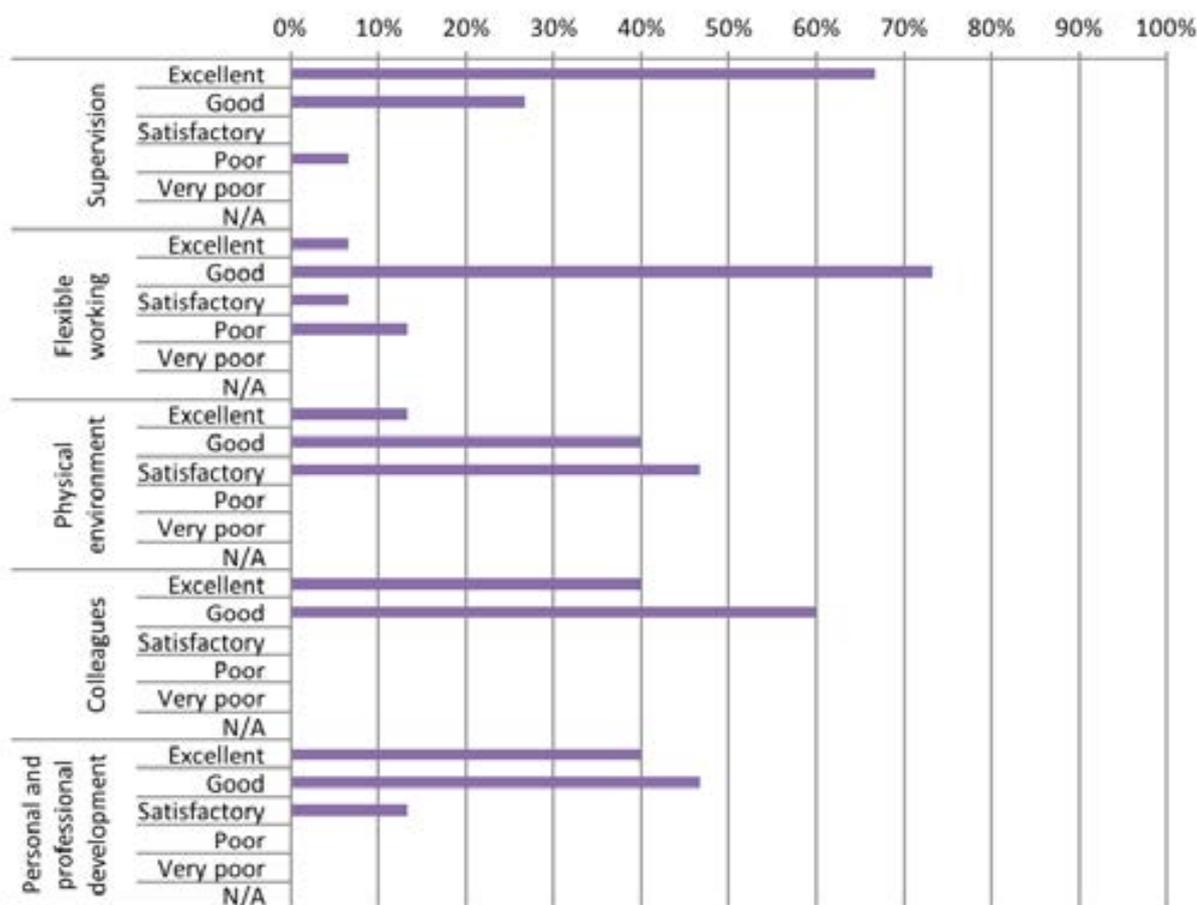
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- In the first year our placements were decided for us, but I believe that we get to have more input in future years. We were informed of both first years' placements before starting the course, which was great.
- All pretty good.
- My placement supervisor is clearly interested in trying to provide placements that are of interest to and will develop me. Trainees provide placement preferences when attending their interview and extenuating personal circumstances disclosed are taken into account where possible. Preferences do not affect any offers that are made following the interview.
- This is a strength of the course. We are given some teaching and resources on preparing for placement and go on a theory-practice visit to our placements in advance of starting, which gives you the opportunity to meet your supervisor and get a sense of the service.
- In first year you get a 6 week block of teaching which I think prepares you quite well in that, in the end you are ready to get going and start meeting clients.
- The clinical skills sessions are invaluable in the first year, I only wish they repeated them in years 2 and 3 however, I understand this is a challenge for the academic team.
- I felt somewhat out of depth in a specialist service in the first year, but subsequent placements have been well prepared for. It's just tricky because half of us do child and half LD - and so sometimes teaching has covered an area and sometimes it hasn't.

### In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- My first placement has been very enjoyable and rewarding. I feel that the workload etc has been pitched at the right level given my stage in training.
- Course is not yet very innovative regarding providing placements outside of the norm and no real practical support for attempts to do something different at points of choice (e.g. third year). However, if you do the organising they seem open to alternative options.
- My experience was very variable across placements
- I've felt very supported by my supervisor on placement which made my experience in the service a very enjoyable one.
- I have loved my placements so far and have learnt a lot from them. The course decides where you are going for the first two years, which has generally worked out ok for me. I have only had one placement so far which I would have changed if I had the option, as it was in an area in which I had extensive experience prior to training. However, I have still learnt a lot so it has not been a wasted opportunity. We are currently in the process of choosing our third year placements, which has felt flexible and has given us plenty of autonomy in deciding where to go. Placements abroad are generally discouraged but I believe that some people have gone in the past.
- I have had wonderful experiences on placement across all three years. I think I have been very lucky to have supervisors who have been accommodating, flexible, supportive and experienced. I feel the environment has also been supportive and I have made life-long friends within the teams I have worked. I am really pleased with the experience and exposure to complex cases I have received and all of my placements have been interesting and engaging.
- There are obvious pressures within the NHS at the moment, however I have felt very protected from these pressures throughout all 3 years. I wouldn't change much about my placements to date and I think they are by far the most exciting parts of clinical training.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	100%
No	0%
Don't know	0.

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	13%
No	80%
Don't know	7%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Exeter, Bristol, Bournemouth, Dorset, Plymouth and Somerset.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	20%
No	73%
Don't know	7%

### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

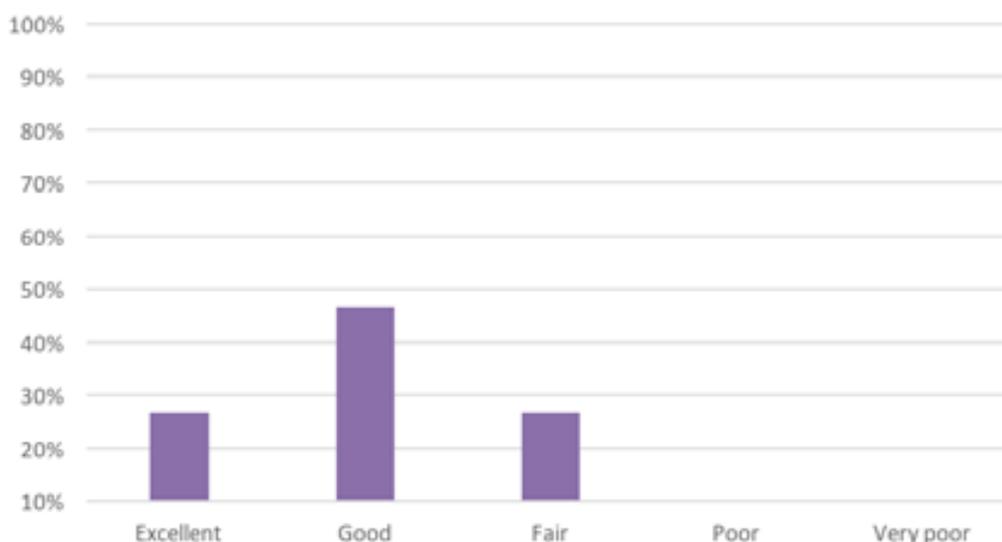
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	7%
Fair	73%
Poor	20%
Very poor	0%

#### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- So far I feel that a work-life balance has been achievable most of the time. I have had to work occasional weekends and evenings, but this is what I had been expecting.
- Commuting takes a big chunk out of the life section.
- The importance of work life balance is strongly reinforced on the course, but practical steps requested (e.g. For placement bases or flexible/part time hours) are not facilitated
- My work life balance has massively suffered under the course despite me trying to keep it. I work all weekend and sometimes in the evenings but I am 6 weeks from my thesis hand in. However, throughout the course I have worked at least one extra day a week.
- A lot of time travelling which can be very tiring. University is 2 hours away from home, and placement is 1 hour away from home, so lots of time driving.
- I am a diligent worker who starts assignments early and (hopefully) doesn't have a problem with perfectionism. I have felt the academic requirements to be immense. The quantity of work required and the number of different assignments that need to be juggled simultaneously can be seriously cognitively demanding. I have worked on assignments every study day and more than a handful of weekend days.
- The work life balance is generally good. The majority of the time I have evenings and weekends free, although this does change if there is an imminent deadline (for example, I have just worked every weekend for a month, but not necessary all day, sometimes just a few hours in the morning). Personality factors and level of organisation definitely play a role here, as do family and caring responsibilities.

- This is difficult as I feel it might be the same for most courses but the work life balance is definitely poor. In 3rd year you are in teaching most weeks, Mondays/Tuesdays. For those not living in Exeter this means staying overnight in a B&B every Monday night and a long commute Mondays/Tuesdays (i.e. not much room for research). The rest of the week you are mostly on placement with a set number of study days to use for academic/research demands. At times, I have struggled to juggle these elements as I also see many clients at home which means lots of driving. I have struggled to complete academic work/research deadlines on time and they have required me to work late evenings and weekends. However, others on my cohort may be more boundaries in these areas and this is a particularly testing team as our thesis is due in a couple of weeks' time.
- Finding end up doing a lot of work on weekends and annual leave.
- Both second and first years have been a juggle at times, and on occasion work life balance is just impossible - when starting busy placements and learning new things, sometimes which require prepping for at home, and then also having to juggle a heavy academic schedule - but I have found I have got in to the flow of it more now.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Although I took a substantial drop in salary It is excellent for the role I have as a trainee.
- The cost of living in the south west is not too high and course salary more than covers my mortgage, out goings and my regular saving.
- To be finally paid what feels like a decent wage after years of SW/AP salary feels like paradise, even though I still (as a healthcare professional in a seriously underfunded health system) earn substantially less than my friends in different sectors.
- Generally it's ok. As I do not live in my allocated placement area due to finding a mutually convenient place to live for myself and my partner, I do not receive expenses for all of my journey, which does add up.
- I think we are in a very privileged position to be paid in the way we are. I understand this might not be the case for future trainees therefore I am extremely grateful for the payment we receive and I feel that it is more than ample for the stage of training we are at.
- The salary will not make you rich, without the Widening Access scheme things have been tight at times, but everyone's situation is different.
- What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

**I have really enjoyed the balance between teaching and placement. Some of the teaching has been excellent and really enjoyable, and being able to apply this to practise has been really rewarding.**

- Getting to sample lots of different areas of work
- They seem to pick really nice folks, so cohort has been a big plus for me.”
- The clinical placements
- Therapy teaching
- Really varied teaching and tutors, lots of different placement experiences available.
- Finally being taught how to be a psychologist
- There are lots of aspects I really enjoy about the course. The teaching is great and it gives you the opportunity to meet a lot of different clinicians working in the field. Having placements in your living area is helpful. It has also been great getting to know the cohort.
- I love the variety and getting to meet lots of new and inspirational people everyday. The teaching is interesting and as a cohort we have lots of fascinating discussions. The social side is great; we're a very tight knit group and the support is amazing.
- Clinical placements by far. I have loved each of them but particularly my specialist's placements in third year. I feel the course have been really accommodating in helping to find interesting and engaging placements in the third year and I am really grateful to them for that and for the amazing experiences I have received during this element of the course.
- Enjoying placement and the clients I am working with. Rest of the course are lovely!
- The learning on placement and working in NHS teams. My learning on placement has been invaluable and I have also absolutely loved some of our teaching, when things go like this I feel very privileged.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- Great career but course requires a lot of work.
- Overall, I'm loving training at Exeter and definitely recommend it as a course. It is a great course if you are interested in learning about a range of therapeutic models and developing your leadership skills in a beautiful part of the country. In terms of improvements, the pastoral support definitely could be better, but is still sufficient if you are lucky enough to get through the course without any major life challenges.
- I feel the course are really supportive in helping us to think about the wider systemic/organisational issues going on within the NHS at the moment. They have been very encouraging of me engaging with activities which move beyond just clinical training and they seem genuinely interested in where we see ourselves and the issues we happening with the current NHS.
- I think it is a very challenging time but also a very interesting time to be training and I think the course do a good job of recognising these changes/demands.
- No sure why the buddy system was removed this would have been good.
- Not much choice for research projects and this process felt rushed and unorganised.
- My main major criticism is around selected thesis topic - there was very little personal choice - we were basically given a list of potential projects/supervisors, and had to pick. If I had known this back when I applied I may not have applied. Fortunately there was a research interest on the specified list that I was interested in.

# Courses Survey Results

## Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

## What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Candidates will be required to take part in one interview (evaluating research and clinical experience) and a group task developed by staff and people who have experience of services. A written task may also be required. We intend the time candidates spend with us to be respectful, constructive and supportive, and all candidates will be given a clear brief about what to expect when they are invited for interview. All selection tasks are designed to give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the required competencies and values required for entry into the programme.
- For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?
- Weeks vary depending on what time of the year. First and second year both start with a teaching block (of 4 teaching days and one study day), then placement days are Wed-Fri with the remaining part of the week being for teaching, study or research. From July onwards there is no scheduled teaching.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Teaching	82	80	48.5
Placement	112	37	63
Personal Study & Independent research	21	98	106

## What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

### Academic:

- Problem based learning where trainees need to work in groups to develop their thinking around a clinical or leadership scenario, they then to a group presentation and an individual write up.
- Clinical Case Reports.
- Essays.

### Research:

- Service Evaluation Critique, where trainees review and critique a service-related project.
- Small-scale Service-related Research Project.
- Research Proposal for the Major Research Project.
- Major Research Project, consisting of a Systematic Literature Review and an Empirical paper. This is examined by presentation of a dissertation and viva voce.

## Clinical:

- In line with the British Psychological Society's (BPS; 2014) requirements for clinical psychology training and the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC Standards of Education and Training Guidance), we have a core competence model of training. Throughout the three years, three main areas are assessed: competence, experience and reflection.
- Whilst on placement trainees will be given opportunities to develop their competence through a balanced range of experiences across settings and client groups. This involves exposure to clients, carers and families with a range of presenting problems, resources and abilities across the life span, based in a range of service delivery systems or settings, working at a number of different levels (direct, indirect, and within multi-disciplinary teams) and using and integrating more than one psychological approach. At the end of each placement, trainees are assessed by their supervisor on the following competencies - generalizable meta-competencies, psychological assessment; psychological formulation; psychological intervention; evaluation; research; personal and professional skills and values; communicating and teaching; and organisational and systemic influence, and leadership.
- Trainees are also required to engage in critical reflection on self and context as they develop their professional, practitioner, scientist/researcher and personal identities as clinical psychologists. Trainees are expected to draw upon this experience for supervision, appraisals and academic assessments.
- Trainees submit a portfolio of clinical activity, observation and supervisor evaluation of competence.

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Glasgow University

30 responses (64% of 47 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	32%
Year 2	43%
Year 3	21%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	7%
25 – 29 years	77%
30 – 34 years	7%
35 – 39 years	3%
40 – 44 years	3%
45 – 49 years	3%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	27%
Twice	43%
3 times	20%
4 times	10%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	17%
MA	0%
MSc	50%
MRes	7%
Diploma	3%
Post Graduate Certificate	7%
Conversion course	7%
None	27%
Other	7%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	13%
3 years	23%
4 years	30%
5 years	17%
6+ years	17%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	57%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	23%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	30%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	10%
Research Assistant	47%
Voluntary Research Assistant	27%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	43%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	10%
Other	30%

# The selection process

## What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

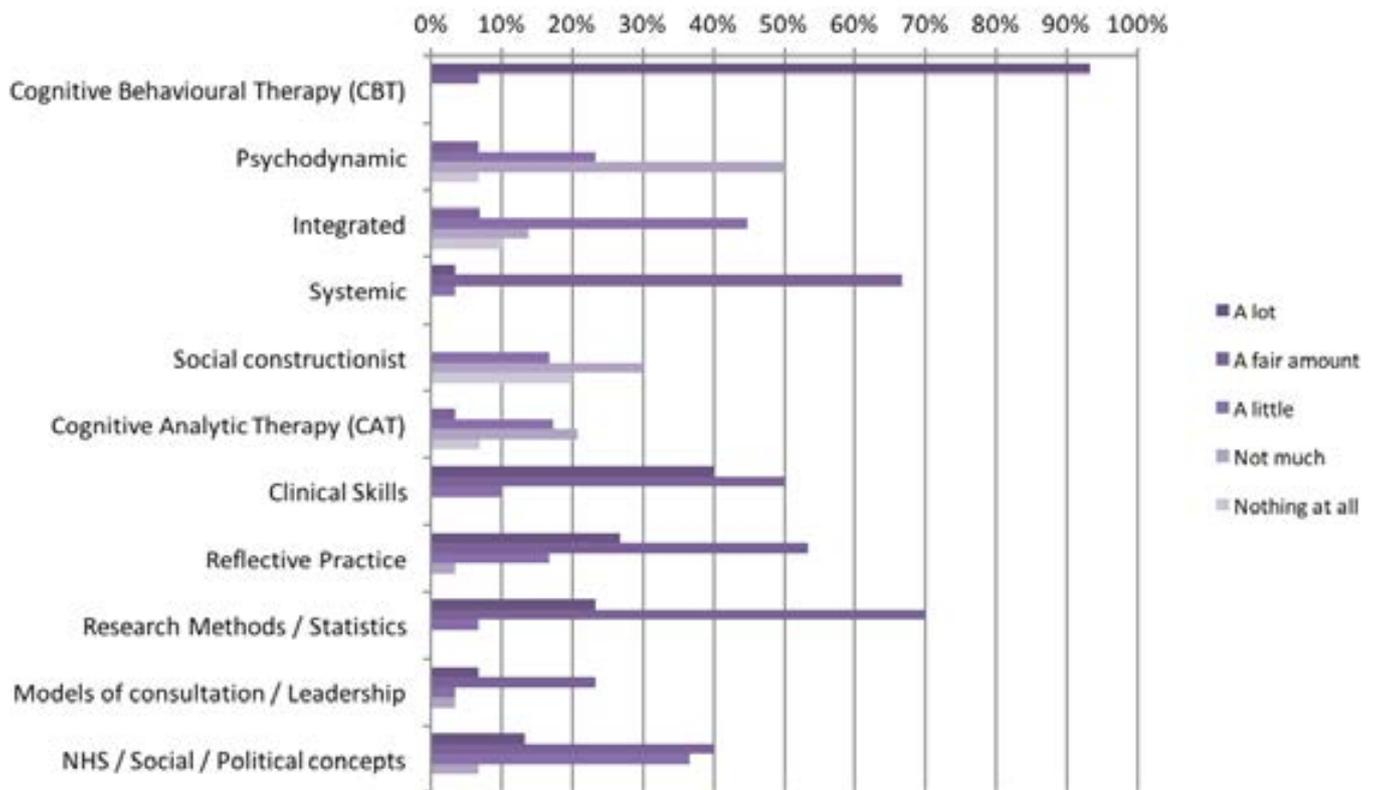
- A very positive experience. Interview panel were encouraging and questions were easy to interpret and therefore made answering much easier than other interviews.
- There were two interviews (clinical and research) and a role play. Both interview panels were very friendly and they provided prompts when nerves got the best of you or you hadn't fully answered the question. The role play was helpful to show generic clinical skills in a non-clinical context - helpful to demonstrate your personal skills.
- Very warm and encouraging. I thought it was a fair process, that elicited your strengths where possible.
- Interviewers put me at ease. The day was very well organised.
- Positive
- Very well set up and run interview day. There was plenty of instructions about the day prior to attending. Waiting area was friendly and welcoming with current trainees to talk to. Interview panels were also welcoming and attentive. I found the questions relevant and not complex. Service user involvement was also a good point I received feedback very quickly which was also a real positive.
- My experience of the interview experience was very positive. It was well organised, with current trainees there to answer any questions/offer support. The interviewers were warm and supportive and the questions allowed me to speak about my experiences, without feeling on the spot.
- Organised and supportive environment
- Greeted by admin staff who were friendly. Very helpful to have current trainees present to share their experience on training and answer any questions. Initially, had clinical interview. Interviewees were quite friendly, although I remember struggling with a couple of the questions. Research interviewees were also very friendly. Finished a role play at the end, with reflection after. Observers were warm and engaging, and helped ease my feelings in quite an unfamiliar and unusual situation.
- The interviews were, of course, nerve-wracking. However, I felt the interviewing panel and all staff involved were welcoming and friendly. I felt the panel wanted to elicit the best from me and so they often reframed questions or asked for clarification. I felt they were genuinely interested in me, and in the DClin.
- The interview process at Glasgow was fairly straight forward. The arrangements for the interview seemed to be well set up. I felt it offered the opportunity for me to show my strengths without putting particular undue pressure on me. The interview process was composed of an academic/research interview, a clinical interview and a role play.
- Overall very positive experience of the interview. All panels were very friendly, encouraging and did prompt if they felt I could expand on my answer. I felt that there was a good amount of time between each panel but I have heard that if you were in the morning then there was less time. As I was in the afternoon the panels were a little bit out of sync but this meant I had time to process. Trainees on the day were also very welcoming and were able to answer my questions. The only negative thing for me was having four people on the clinical panel. This did very a little intimidating than compared to having three people on the research panel.
- I found the interviews more relaxed than other courses - the panel were mostly encouraging and tried to get the best out of me. The interview process is relatively short (it was all over with within an hour) which was good too.
- Friendly trainees available to chat with in between assessments/interviews. Friendly panels, felt that they encouraged you/gave you ample opportunity to give the 'right' answer. Slightly disorganised - when I arrived they were still setting up the interview rooms.
- Really positive. Everyone was very friendly, encouraging and supportive throughout the processes.

I felt the interview panels wanted to support me to perform to my best and have a good opportunity to answer questions to the best of my ability. Having current trainees in the waiting room really helped me to relax and allowed me to ask questions about the course.

- I attended 3 interviews and Glasgow was by far the shortest. It had 3 sections- a clinical interview, a research interview and a non-clinical role play (speaking to a colleague about a work problem), but I think I was done in about half an hour from start to finish. Interview was relatively pleasant with reasonable and relevant questions
- It felt more straightforward than some of the other interviews, comprising of two interview panels and a role play. The panels were helpful in prompting me for more details in some of my answers. Some of the other interviews I attended felt less formal than Glasgow but on the other hand it was that nice that the Glasgow set up was more of a traditional interview structure with panels and clear questions so that I could know what to expect.
- Very positive, interview staff were warm and understanding of the nerves associated with these interviews. Questions were relevant and seemed to be based around assessing you as a person and your values, which I feel is more important for becoming a clinical psychologist than looking for someone who already has lots of experience of CBT etc.
- I liked the format of having separate interviews for clinical and academic (in addition to a role play and questions). I felt that I knew what to talk about in each section and that I was able to prepare for it well as it was very clear.
- Other interviews had everything all in one, I don't think that worked very well for me.
- Additionally, I was given paper during the academic interview to just jot down some points so I could structure my answers better. This really helped me as I am dyslexic and sometimes find it difficult to structure well on the spot. Other course centres did not allow this for interview and I felt that held me back.
- Overall, the interview process was what I expected. The types of questions asked in both the clinical and academic panels were what I had prepared for. Generally the atmosphere was quite supportive.
- Challenging but supportive. Unlike other interviews which were intimidating and interrogative I was asked questions to demonstrate my skills and abilities from my own experiences as opposed to directive and closed questions which were looking for specific answers.
- Was a nice process, made to feel relaxed and welcome. There were trainees from the course at the interview which was nice for asking questions and calming the nerves. There was a research interview and a clinical interview, and a roleplay.
- Very well paced and relaxed, did not feel that there was much 'waiting around'. On the whole it was over very quickly, despite two interviews and a role play. Panel were very friendly and I felt that they really took an interest in you as a person.
- It was fair and no surprise nasty questions! A couple of difficult research and clinical questions but that is to be expected. Every member of staff was kind, welcoming and supportive on the day and appeared to be trying to get the best out of us as interviewees.
- It is a long application process so the interview process itself went by extremely quickly. It is only twenty minutes for an academic interview followed by a twenty minute clinical interview and finally a role play situation for about fifteen minutes. There was very little time to gather my thoughts in between these, which in a way helped to avoid overthinking answers already given in previous sections and reducing any worry about what was to come - however it was necessary to feel able to go at this quick pace and keep up.
- I am emphasising the time because the questions asked by the Glasgow panels can initially seem quite wide ranging, however they do provide follow up questions as prompts. This helped direct my thinking when feeling nervous and generally both panels were very encouraging and gave positive non-verbal feedback throughout.

- The interview was clear and transparent. I more or less got the questions I expected and had prepared for. The interviews are inevitably quite stressful and intimidating but I think they do make an effort to make them friendly in what is quite a formal process.
- Very pleasant, very supportive.
- Elements were stressful but generally supportive. The role play enabled you to show your interpersonal skills.
- Very supportive.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



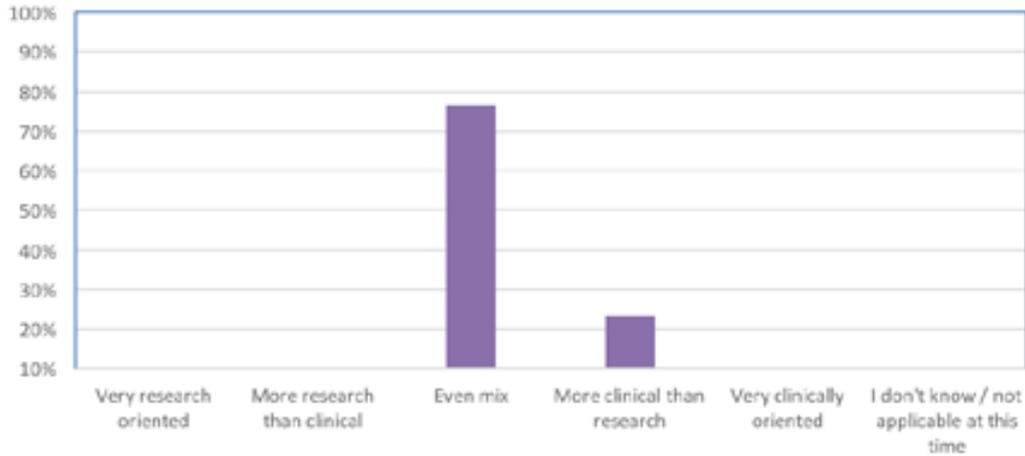
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	76%
Mindfulness	79%
Schema Therapy	14%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	28%
Solution Focused Therapy	3%
Neuropsychology	90%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	24%
Other	17%

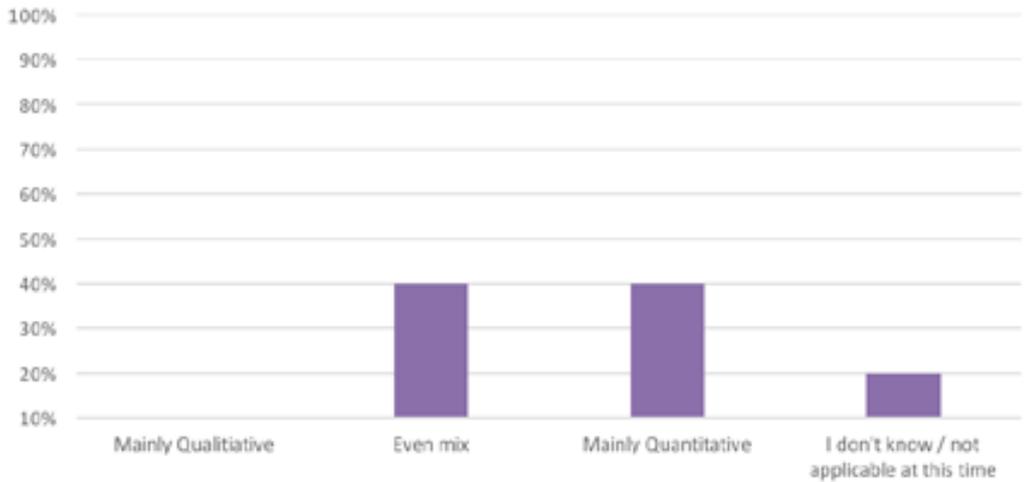
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- It's really helpful that the course provide an opportunity for trainees to choose the content of three full days of training in your third year. We've chosen to focus two of these on third wave therapies (outlined above) that aren't covered as part of the programme course which has been a fantastic opportunity.
- There could be more time devoted to alternative therapies, other than CBT. We requested DBT and CFT teaching as our optional teaching
- Very CBT focused so far with some elements of other areas (e.g. ACT, IPT). As this is first year this seems appropriate right now, I will hope for more as the course progresses.
- In final year, there are three days dedicated to optional teaching. Trainees can choose the format for these days, with most usually organising training in other modalities not specifically covered by the course (e.g. ACT, DBT, CFT)
- CFT and DBT are optional teaching days that must be selected by trainees.
- I wish there were more opportunities for CFT/DBT/CAT; however this would have to come at the expense of other teaching - of which there are some subjects that seem flogged to death, e.g. research methods etc.
- Very CBT-heavy course
- Would like more on third wave therapies but when you speak with supervisors they tend to have been trained in these post-qualification so it doesn't feel like a major issue.
- The main focus of first year is CBT with comprehensive teaching from a mixture of academic and NHS staff about CBT for different presenting problems. This was really helpful in building a good grounding in a therapeutic approach before broadening skills to consider other approaches.
- Optional teaching in third year - we chose CFT, DBT and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.
- Huge focus on CBT.
- CBT and IPT in first year, although there is opportunity to cover other things depending on your clinical supervisor (my clinical work is also touching on CFT and some other trainees are using areas from ACT or DBT). I've been happy to do lots of CBT teaching to start with to get a good grounding in one technique before learning others.
- So far only a small amount of material on the third wave therapies, would be useful to have more of this as it is really relevant clinically. However, the focus on CBT is useful and has been interesting and thorough.
- We have recently had an accredited course of teaching in IPT, this is the first step to becoming accredited as an IPT therapist which we are able to do it we would like to.
- Generally the course is focused on developing and consolidating your CBT skills in the first year. IPT is introduced though this is not ideal as there are very few IPT accredited trainers in Scotland. You are given the option in 3rd year to choose additional topics, such as ACT, CAT, or DBT.
- Whilst CBT is the evidence based treatment it would be really good to have more teaching on third wave therapies.
- I would also have liked to have more schema therapy teaching.
- At times it has felt a little CBT, and later systemic, heavy. More variation would be welcomed. However the teaching offered has been of high quality. You get a really good feel for the topics covered.
- In the first half of teaching it is all related to learning CBT which helps to feel grounded in a particular approach. We have a 5 day awareness training course on IPT, which seems very relevant and a useful alternative to CBT, however there seems to be a lack of IPT trained supervisors on placement, therefore it is perhaps a struggle to utilise the knowledge gained from the training.
- I think at the start of the course it could have been helpful to have a workshop on generic therapeutic skills before launching straight into techniques of specific therapeutic approaches.
- Significant amount of CBT teaching in first year - to be expected.

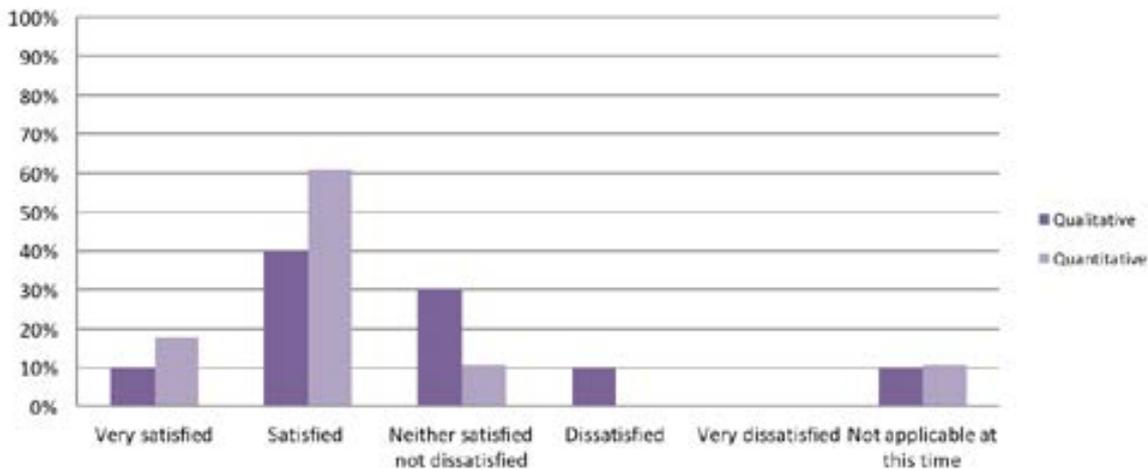
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



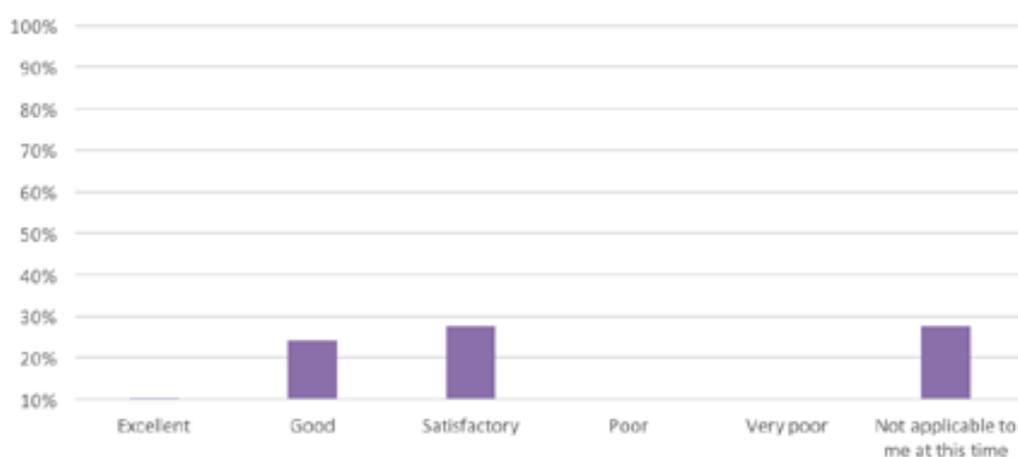
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



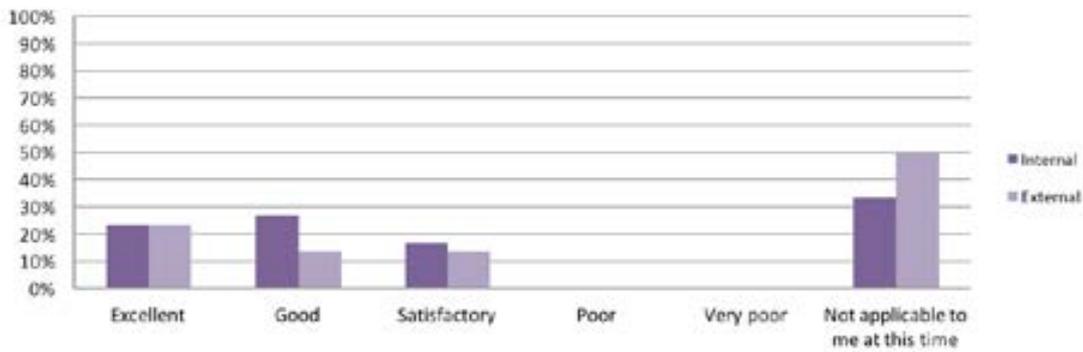
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- I would have preferred a more even balance of quantitative and qualitative teaching.
- Haphazard arrangement of how research projects are delegated. Our audit projects seem almost shambolic at times; many in our year have been disappointed with the huge disparity in what we've been asked to do to meet course competencies.
- Research projects have been difficult to secure. The course operates an approach in which a booklet of potential topics is sent round to trainees. This helps projects to be well planned typically. However, if trainees are unable to find a project within this booklet there is a lot of emphasis on the trainee to develop their own project which course arrangements are not really set up for.
- Course values research (high proportion of major research projects goes on to be published). Also values research experience in trainees
- Pressures between clinical and research components is variable at different stages in the course. In second year quite a lot of pressure on your research as this is when you sort out your MRP.
- It is positive that the deadlines for starting the main research elements of training are being moved earlier in the timetable to reduce pressure on submission.
- The department are very enthusiastic about research and encourage trainees to publish their work.
- Overall, there is a good balance between clinical and research training.
- I have been really well supported by my supervisors in this area and they have been excellent teachers as this is an area I feel is not a strength and as such have received the support I required to understand this better
- I think the academic staff have personal interests in qualitative research. However this has not in any way affected the teaching provided. Very well balanced.
- I would like more opportunity and teaching on qualitative methods. Perhaps also encouraging more mixed methods design teaching would be helpful

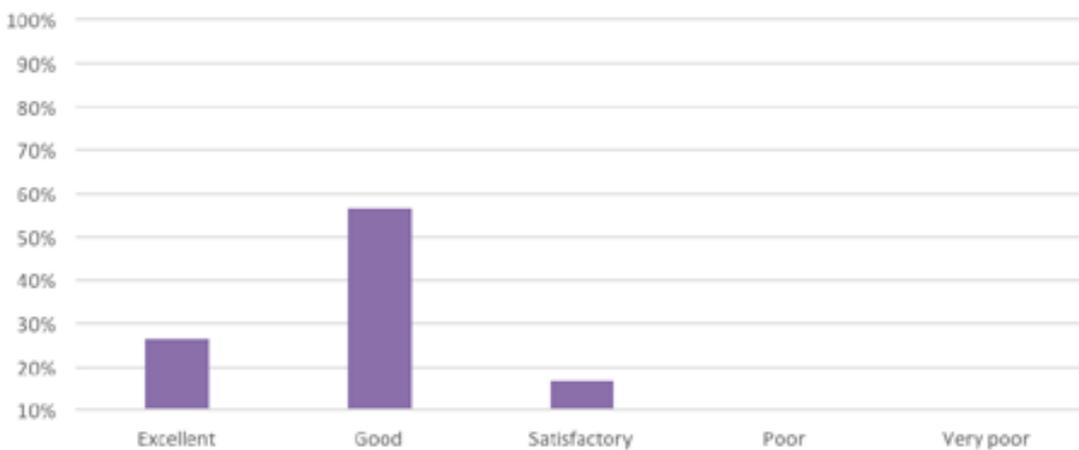
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



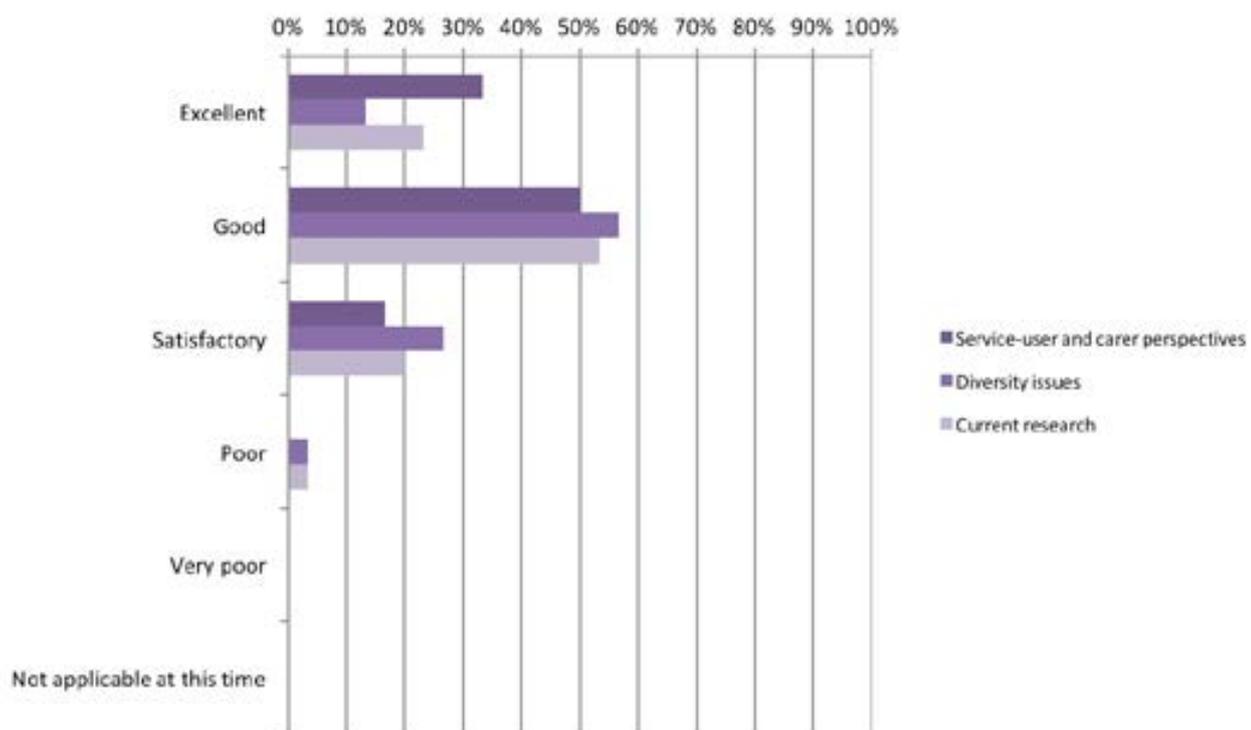
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

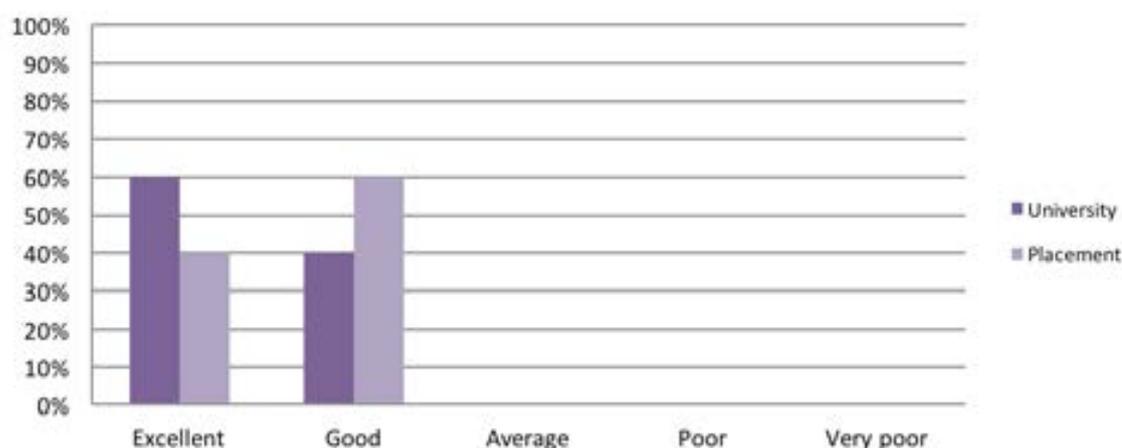
- I think we've really benefitted from having a policy and leadership focussed module in our final year, which lots of course aren't able to offer. This has felt particularly important as I'm getting closer to qualifying.
- Service user organisation CUSP and carer perspectives are involved in many of the teaching streams, as well as wider course organisation structures.
- Huge variety in teaching. I really appreciate the efforts some of the staff go to to address feedback they've had - some workshops on systemic formulation this year have been restructured off the back of recent feedback and worked really well latterly.
- Teaching quality can be variable and typically relies on clinicians working within the health board giving up their own time to come in to teach. Some teaching is excellent. Organisation of lectures can be a little chaotic.
- Teaching is generally a very high standard but often hear about slides not being updated, and not sure if stats are up to date etc. result of some very busy clinicians.
- What we have had of teaching in service-user perspectives and diversity issues so far in first year have been good but there hasn't been much of it yet.
- The quality of teaching varies widely. The teaching is mostly by professionals in and around the area who are clearly very competent as clinicians/leaders in the NHS.
- There has at times been some overlaps which has felt somewhat repetitive and the time could have been used for another guest lecturer to attend and for the majority of lectures it has been good.
- Quality of teaching has been high. Having guest lecturers/speakers who work in the NHS has been very helpful to gain insight into what it is like on the ground and to learn the more practical applications of theory.
- There is a balance in that it is helpful to have clinicians who have direct experience which is very helpful but they are also trying to design teaching sessions in the midst of their busy clinical role.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

16.7% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- At times, juggling multiple research, academic and clinical commitments. However, time management has been key in managing these demands well.
- I think most trainees find the juggle between placement and academic demands difficult, at times, to manage! However being organised and planning your time well really helps! We benefit from having quite a close knit year group, with a shared experience, who we can discuss difficulties with, as well as a good supportive network within the NHS and University.
- Work load, rather than content.
- We have a five essays exam (5 hours long) which was exhausting to manage.”
- Coursework deadlines during second year can be close together compared to first year, creating additional pressure, particularly if there are exams around the same time also.
- The course can be particularly demanding at times when deadlines for academic and placement work coincide, however, these are usually well spaced out.
- In relation to research not enough time is given to collect data. Many trainees have to do this in their own time
- Both research and systematic review have to be completed alongside each other...whilst demanding it can also help trainee to build better time management skills which will be essential for working within the NHS
- Juggling different tasks/deadlines. There are peaks and troughs to how busy you are, as with any job, however I sometimes think the course are not as flexible as they could be. The course take a very long time to feedback on assignments which is frustrating when they expect that we stick to deadlines.
- Time management and trying to find a work life balance can be challenging, particularly at times of competing deadlines.
- Having exams throughout the course is demanding however I do feel that this has encouraged me to ensure I do the essential reading and therefore have a good foundational knowledge of all aspects covered in the teaching.
- The Glasgow course has a large number of exams rather than submitted course work. However, in my opinion these actually take up less time - studying for an hour-long exam seems less onerous than trying to put together a 3000 word essay.
- Juggling clinical, academic (exams), and research - pretty intense in 2nd year.
- The Glasgow course does have a high number of examinations compared to other courses which can feel stressful at the time. However, on reflection I found this positive in helping me focus my reading and keep on top of tasks throughout teaching.
- Juggling the various deadlines and at time inevitably there are several required at once. Even with good organisational skills this is a challenge.
- Having placement, teaching and research all in one week in first year has been challenging as you are constantly moving between roles, locations and time demands. I sometimes feel like my head is in three places at once. I think this is more challenging at some times than others, such as at the start of new placements or when nearing exams.
- Overall, not excessively demanding but can be very busy as would be expected for a doctorate level course!
- Extremely long reading lists, but this is to be expected.
- I think having exams throughout training, whilst helpful for consolidating theory/knowledge, adds an additional level of stress, as compared to other courses that do not have exams. Finding a balance is not always easy and it can feel a little pressured trying to juggle it all. I understand the

importance of these exams and do feel they are helpful, but it is demanding. We are expected to do our systematic review and major research project at the same time which is also quite demanding.

- Being away from my family has been the hardest and impacted on a lot of aspects. However in relation to the course in general I feel I have been able to manage the workload well and meet deadlines as required. The research part has been more difficult as I have not really had previous experience however my supervisors have been extremely supportive and provided me with the advice and guidance I need to build this skill set.
- Doing extra work outside placement for exams etc.
- As it would be with any course, managing changes constantly has been somewhat demanding: changing placements/ongoing deadlines and/or exams. Otherwise, it has been manageable.
- Nothing beyond what is expected- it is difficult to manage demands of teaching, supervisors and placement. This can become more difficult when for example research projects are introduced and if there are any difficulties in this process then it can be hard to find the time to address these.
- Dealing with the simultaneous demands of a heavy academic workload and clinical caseload/developing good clinical practice varies at different times and can be very demanding. However, I do think it quickly hones your skills at managing several different spinning plates and prioritising your work.
- Clinical responsibility

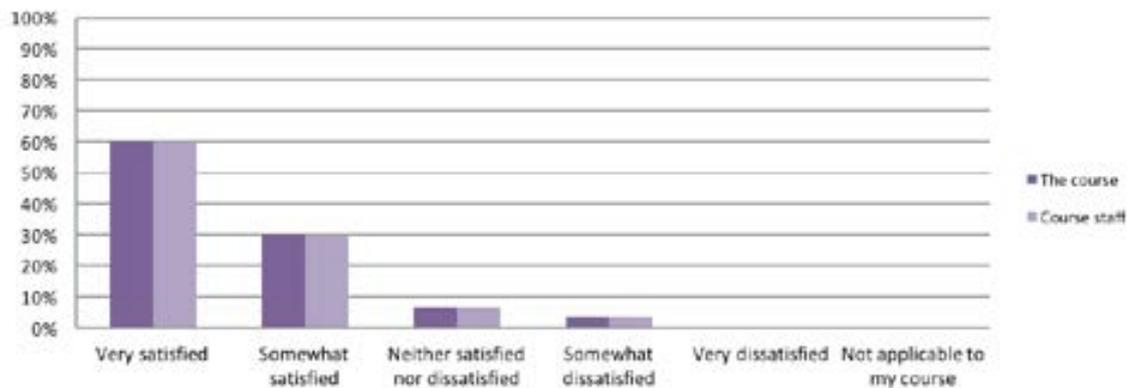
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	63%
“Buddy”	13%
Manager	37%
Placement Supervisor	93%
Librarian	53%
Professional Mentor	23%
Personal Tutor	67%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	83%
Independent personal advisor	27%
Other	20%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- University advisor and a clinical tutor also available for support
- Any member of the clinical team, you have a university adviser also who has been very supportive to me.
- Local area tutor
- We also get information about external supports such as counselling and OH.
- I have made a few friends in my year group and also whilst on placement which have been an excellent source of support. My family back home are my main support system.
- University advisor, Clinical Tutor, other university staff members are approachable, Local Area Tutor
- Peers

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

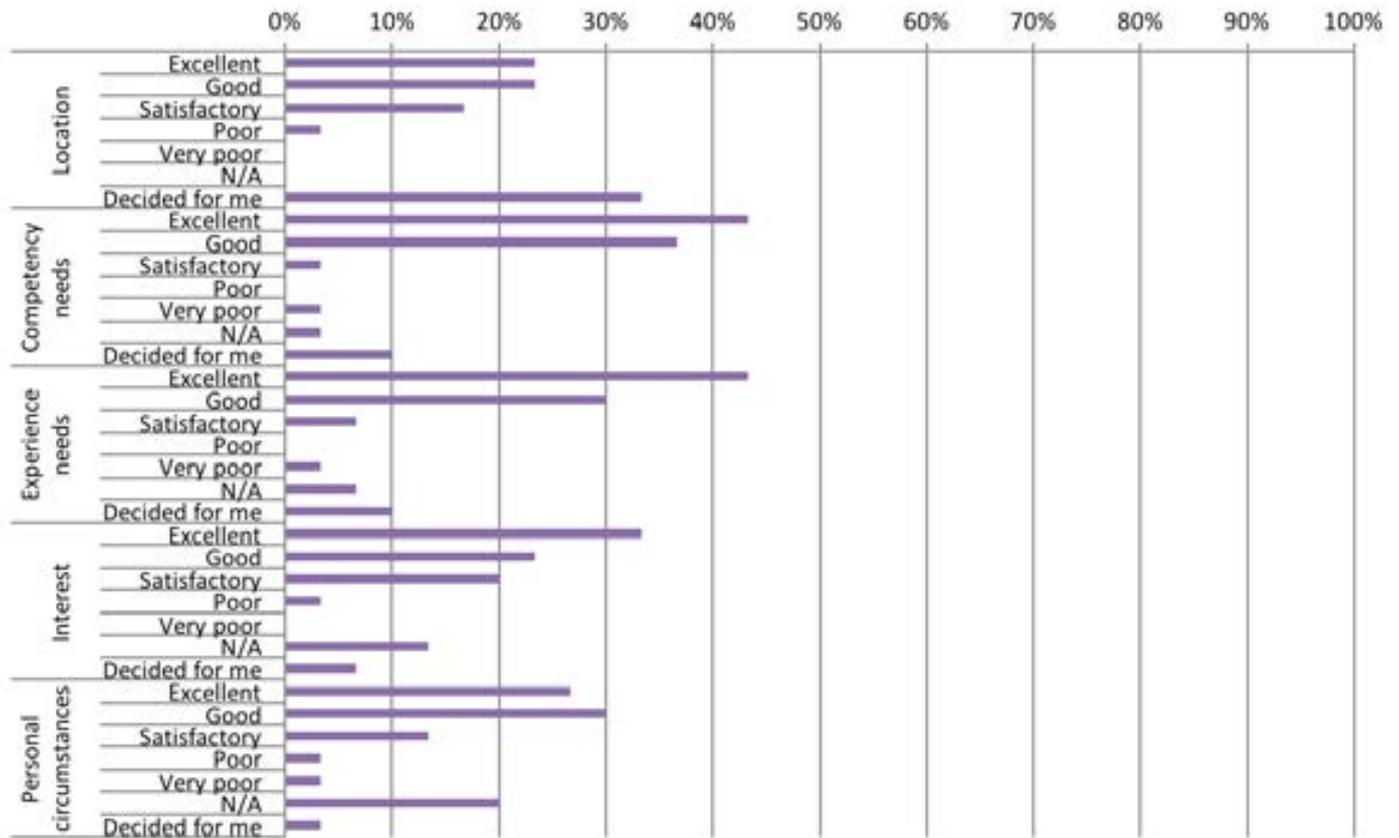


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

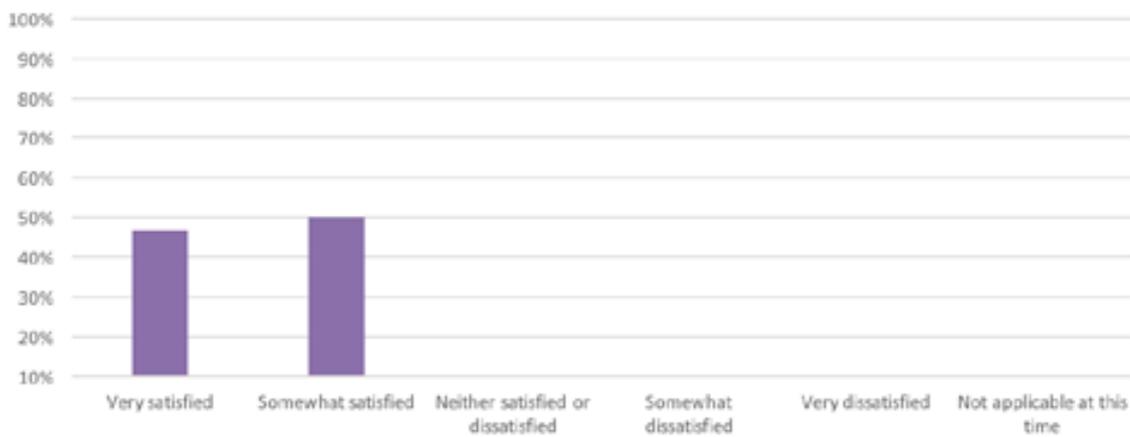
- All feedback from those who have sought support in the past has always been very positive!
- Clinical team are very supportive and encourage help seeking if a trainee is struggling with any part of their work.
- Varies with staff. Some are less than interested; some are brilliant. I imagine this is the case with any course.
- My views of the support from the course are mixed. Highland trainees feel very much detached from the course, particularly over the past year.
- Available and responsive - very happy with the support. You are given a number of people to go to - supervisor, clinical tutor, local area tutor and university adviser so it's always possible to find someone you find comfortable speaking to.
- So many people at the start which can seem overwhelming, but its great really once you work out who to go to when or who you feel particularly able to talk to
- I have felt very supported when personal issues arose that I needed to discuss with the course. And I'm been really happy with the supervision I have received as well. The only difficulty I have found is that, because many of the course staff are part-time, and also very busy, it has sometimes been challenging to arrange meetings when I have needed them.
- Very supportive staff, placement supervisor has been wonderful and has really helped me develop; I am able to approach her with any issues that arise. Similarly, my clinical tutor has been very supportive and understanding of the common stresses of being a trainee.
- Dr Alison Jackson has been very supportive in her role as Student Disability Co-ordinator. I received an email from her prior to the start of the course to ensure suitable arrangements were made.
- I have been extremely well supported by the staff at university, especially the clinical practice team.
- I do not consider the reflective practice groups a support system although I attend these.
- You have access to ongoing support at the university, and also on placement. Course staff are very supportive and available for advice.
- When have needed time off for compassionate leave they have been very accommodating.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



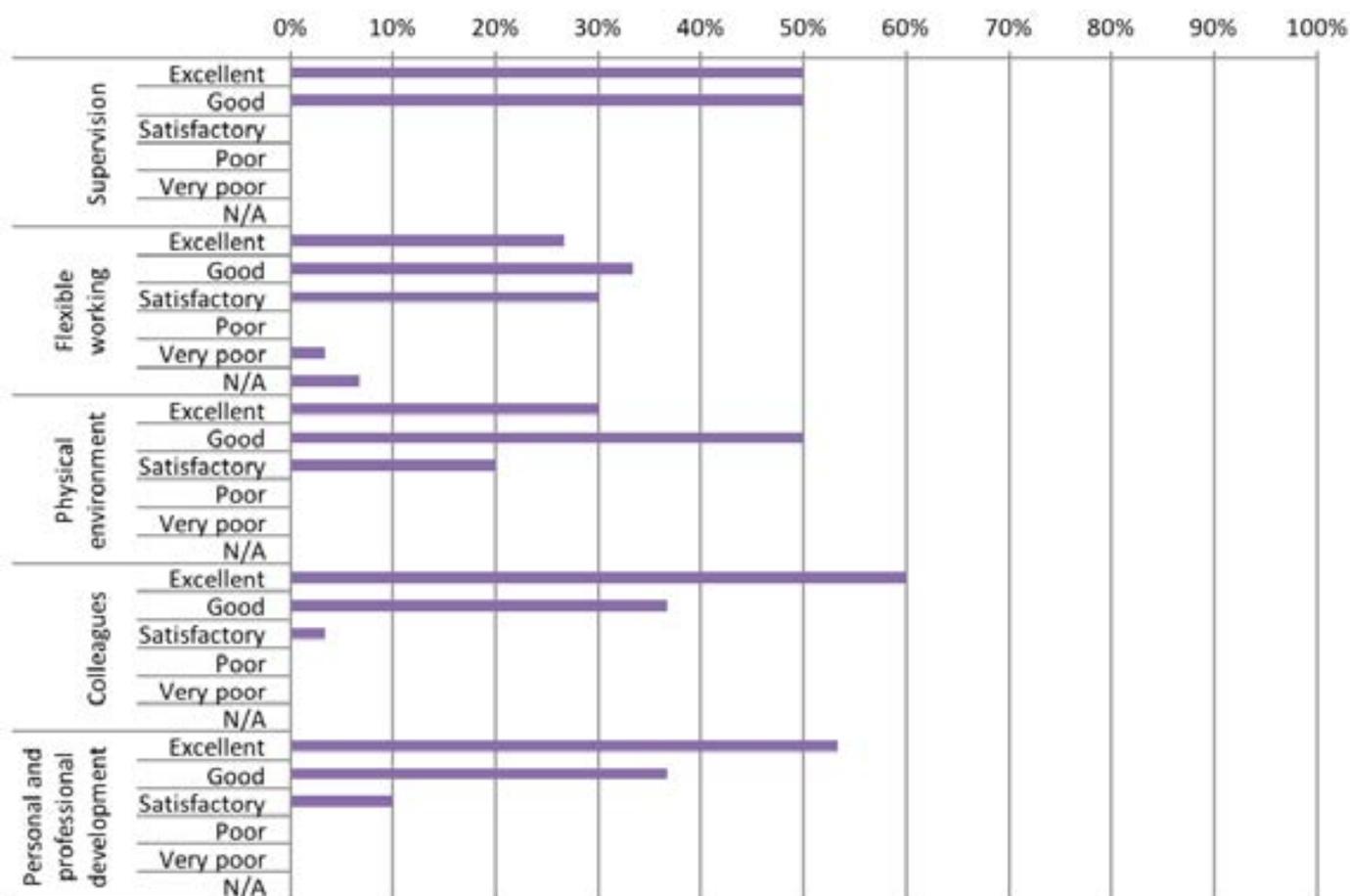
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### **Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- Regarding my answer to 'interest' above, I simple put this as our placement areas to date have been compulsory (compared to 3rd year where we can chose areas of interest to work in).
- The course considers your commute and any personal factors (childcare, disability etc.) when determining your placement.
- I think the teaching and placements are very well structured. For example, we usually have a block of teaching before placements so have had some teaching in the area before beginning placement. I also like the sequence of placements (adult mental health in first year, more systemic placements in second year).
- The course allow you to contact them with special requests (e.g. location, no car) and will make every effort possible to be flexible with placement requests. In the case that adaptations cannot be made, this is communicated clearly. The clinical team will hold mid placement visits to check in and ensure competencies for placement are being met and more recently the clinical team have begun end of placement meetings. This is an opportunity to reflect back on the placement and to raise any concerns that might need to be addressed in future placements.
- I am part of a small health board and I think this is a benefit as the local tutor for our area appears to put in a lot of effort finding interesting and worthwhile placements. Unlike some of my peers in larger health boards, I feel like trainees are treated with respect, and their learning experience is seen as very important.
- Placements are chose for you in first year, but you are asked for preferences around specialities in third year. This is also balanced with your competency needs.
- I felt very prepared for placement. A lot of the learning is done on placement but this is to be expected as part of clinical training. We received lots of information about what was expected of us prior to starting placement.
- I feel the course have supported this well and as the majority of my experience has been in a clinical setting therefore I felt more comfortable about starting on placements.
- Placement details are released a little late, but understandable practical reasons.
- Teaching block before placement. Core CBT skills are taught early which is helpful.

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).

- I've really enjoyed all of my placements and the varied placements offered and have valued the supervision provided.
- Supervision is variable.
- Excellent supervision. Approachable clinical staff, even in the face of huge caseloads. I have enjoyed my placements so much thus far. Excellent consideration is given to what kind of cases/ type of placement I would like in third year.
- Placements are good - I can't drive and the course accommodated this
- I have thoroughly enjoyed all my placements on the course thus far. All the teams have been very welcoming and my supervisors knowledgeable, encouraging and supportive.
- Supervisors are very mixed, in particular to the amount of time they have and how much they value reflection versus session discussion in supervision
- I think people's experience on placement varies a lot depending on how much clinical experience they had prior to starting training. I have felt much supported by my supervisor throughout.
- Very positive experience on placement, learning new things every day, feel very supported and encouraged to stretch myself without feeling out of my depth. Able to discuss any issues that arise with my supervisor and also have very positive relationships with all of the team on placement.
- I'm based in A&A within a wonderfully supportive and friendly team.
- My supervisors to date have been fantastic and all my placements have been really beneficial and supportive experiences to help me develop my professional and personal skills as a trainee.

- Placements have been very positive so far. Reviews throughout the year allow for the opportunity to raise any concerns. In my experience the clinical team take interest in their trainees, their development and experiences. Quality of placement can potentially be variable, but for reasons beyond the courses control.
- Access to rooms not the easiest at my placement

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	53%
No	43%
Don't know	3%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	60%
No	33%
Don't know	7%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Glasgow.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	23%
No	77%
Don't know	0%

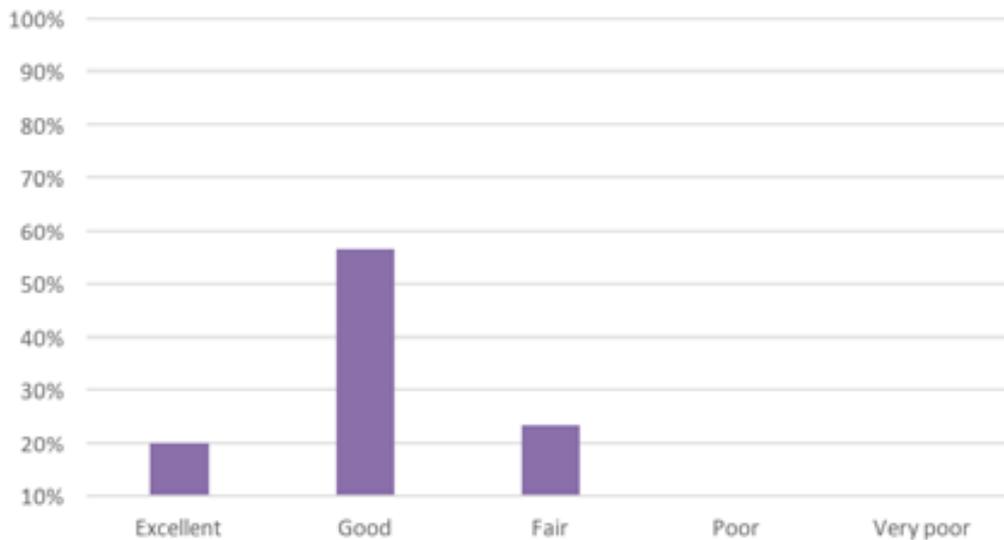
## How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	7%
Good	40%
Fair	43%
Poor	10%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- As mentioned before, you can strike a work-life balance providing you are organised and plan your time well. I think it becomes a bit more of an issue when you're in third year with competing demands but I'm still managing to strike a balance!
- Most of the time I have been able to achieve a good work life balance but at times it becomes more difficult.
- Sometimes tend to be busier than others, especially around end of placement if exams/research deadlines are present.
- It varies massively. Peaks and troughs. Just accept that you will have very busy and massively stressful times. But at other times you can relax.
- At times work life balance can be very poor with lots of competing demands in both clinical and academic settings. At times there is an expectation from the course that you work out with normal working hours. However, at other times the schedule can be a little quieter.
- It can be difficult to juggle being on placement and teaching each week with completing work on research and studying for exams. Having a study day most weeks does help a lot with this.
- It's a big challenge, and I also have children, but it's manageable so long as you use the supports available and identify (and speak about) any difficulties before they become too big.
- It is very easy to become overwhelmed with the amount of work on the course, particularly with the number of exams. However, all course staff are supportive and clear about the expectations of the course and to ensure we have a good work life balance. Weekly teaching for much of the year meant our class bonded well and there is an ethos of supporting each other to have a good work life balance, from study groups to celebrating successes such as hand in dates.
- I find it challenging to maintain a work life balance but I think this varies between people. Sometimes have felt quite manageable, particularly if you are good at managing your time, but around deadlines and exams I think most people need to work evenings and weekends.
- Busy but to be expected!
- Better than prior to the course!
- Although I live away from my family home Monday to Friday and this makes my work life balance feel horrendous from an emotional perspective, from a practical perspective I can leave Glasgow every weekend and completely switch off and have family only time. I have yet to work at a weekend which has been essential in maintaining this.
- It is very manageable, but of course depends on your stage of life.
- It is for the trainees to prioritise their work to allow for this, I wouldn't say it is particularly built into the course.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Although I took a substantial drop in salary It is excellent for the role I have as a trainee.
- I think Glasgow has one of the best pay/cost of living scenarios. It was a huge plus for me when choosing to live here or South England. Many on the course find this; many of us have recently bought our first homes and I do not think that's unconnected to the financial quality of life the course affords.
- Glasgow/Scotland is a cheap place to live
- DClinPsy training is very privileged in that you receive a good salary for a training post - can't complain.
- Finances are more difficult, but this is due to purchasing a first property!
- Very well paid for the position we are in.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Variety e.g. the opportunity to be taught by experts in their prospective fields and to work in a range of settings and with a range of clinical populations.
- The wide variety of learning opportunities provided by expert clinicians in the field!
- When you have a good supervisor, the supervisory experience in relation to development and learning.
- Placements.
- Overall excellent
- Getting to experience of different placements, teams, client groups and supervisors. Also, teaching being provided by clinical psychologists currently working within NHS, which makes teaching more interesting.
- Experiencing new and varied work whilst improving and learning skills that will be valuable come qualification.
- Placement.
- I like how the week is divided up between teaching, placement, and study. This provides an opportunity to check in with your class mates and the weeks tend to fly in. The clinical team are also very supportive, and will make every effort possible to ensure you finish training a competent and confident clinical psychologist.

- Placements by far. I have also enjoyed selecting my own major research project - which I'm really interested in.
- Other trainees. Having the opportunity to experience some excellent teaching from very experienced clinicians.
- It is good to have teaching each week so that it is easier to keep in contact with the trainees from your year
- Range of interesting placements available - especially in Glasgow. Friendly and supportive staff. Good, vibrant research ethos.
- Clinical work, meeting clinicians and clients that inspire you.
- Weekly teaching and the relationships and support networks I have built with my classmates. I feel really supported and contained during times of stress. I have also thoroughly enjoyed my placements and the choices available for my third year specialist placements.
- There is a strong emphasis on personal and professional development especially in third year which is helpful in preparing you for going into your first qualified post.
- The balance of one study day, 3 placement and 1 teaching day, love the variety and support from my class
- As teaching and placement are concurrent, it is nice to be able to see the other trainees regularly at teaching days.
- Time on placement and the experiential learning gained through seeing patients.
- I feel like the course really sets you up to be an excellent clinician post-qualification.
- Having had a supportive environment to develop skills clinically, and some really interesting lectures.
- Course staff are very nice. The teaching/placement structure and spread is very good. Quality of teaching is excellent. Placements are good. Outside of the teaching blocks, trainees have access to a study day pretty much all the time - and this is very helpful in making the work-life balance, and ongoing changing demands, more manageable.
- The mix of teaching and ability to pursue different areas of interest in third year in teaching and on placement.
- Opportunities for learning and development.
- Teaching is great, and the placements are the right amount of challenging

### **Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- The exams are manageable if that's what makes Glasgow less appealing to people.
- Main therapeutic models focused on throughout training is CBT and systemic therapy. Trainees complete the initial training in interpersonal psychotherapy however it is often difficult to get the experience required to becoming an accredited IPT practitioner. Almost all modules are assessed through a written exam, which may not suit everyone. However, it is very rare for trainees to fail the exams.
- Genuinely, whilst I think the course may not be the best for organisation/teaching (in some cases), I do honestly believe the overall training is of a high quality. However, the caveat to this is that I am based in a small health-board (Ayrshire and Arran) where our training is taken seriously, and we are much nurtured. Hearsay from peers is that this is not comparable to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde experience.
- Be aware that you can be aligned to different health boards (most trainees are aligned to Glasgow, but you can also be aligned to Highland, Lanarkshire or Ayrshire). You can select at the interview stage which health boards you want to be considered for (you can select all of them if you want). If you are based in Highland, you will be placed there with 2 other trainees from your year and will attend lectures via videolink (which not everyone likes). Also, if you are placed in any health board other than Glasgow, you will need a driving license and car as they cover large geographical distances with little public transport.
- Glasgow has a reputation for being a bit disorganised - tend to be very slow getting assessment grades out. This is true to an extent, but not a major issue (I think).
- A bit restrictive on when you can take leave. Not allowed to miss teaching days and because you have teaching one day a week (except for Christmas/summer/Easter) it can be hard to arrange holidays without these times.
- Early teaching is very CBT focussed, but I think this has been helpful in establishing a good grounding. I worried before starting here that we would be too focussed on CBT and not gain exposure to other therapeutic modalities but that doesn't feel the case so far.
- I have found the exams helpful in consolidating my learning as I go along.
- I would have liked a little more of a critical approach in our teaching, or more focus on reflection, but perhaps we will get more of this in second and third year.
- Teaching skills workshop for guest lecturers may improve the quality and consistency of teaching.
- Being given the handbook to read a month or more before attending the course as preparation. There is so much information when you start it is overwhelming and being able to process some of the procedures before starting would be really helpful.
- Heavy emphasis on CBT in the first year (on teaching and placement), but this does change in the second year. There is some exposure to other approaches, such as third wave therapies.
- For the thesis, choice of topics can be limited. If you have strong personal research interests, and they do not match that of the academic staff, then pursuing that topic can become challenging although not impossible. If you are aligned, placement opportunities/research activity can be effected to some (or great) extent, depending on your personal preferences etc. - however you have the option to opt out of alignments you do not want at the interview stage.
- People make Glasgow and the same can be said about the doctorate course here. NHS and University Staff and trainees from other year groups are all supportive, kind and passionate about clinical psychology.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Clinical and academic interviews. Role-play scenario

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Hertfordshire University

20 responses (43% of 46 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	50%
Year 2	25%
Year 3	25%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	70%
30 – 34 years	15%
35 – 39 years	5%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	5%
50+ years	5%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	10%
Twice	30%
3 times	30%
4 times	25%
5 times	5%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	5%
MSc	75%
MRes	0%
Diploma	15%
Post Graduate Certificate	25%
Conversion course	15%
None	20%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	10%
3 years	10%
4 years	10%
5 years	45%
6+ years	25%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	55%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	35%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	30%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	15%
Research Assistant	40%
Voluntary Research Assistant	20%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	70%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	25%
Other	35%

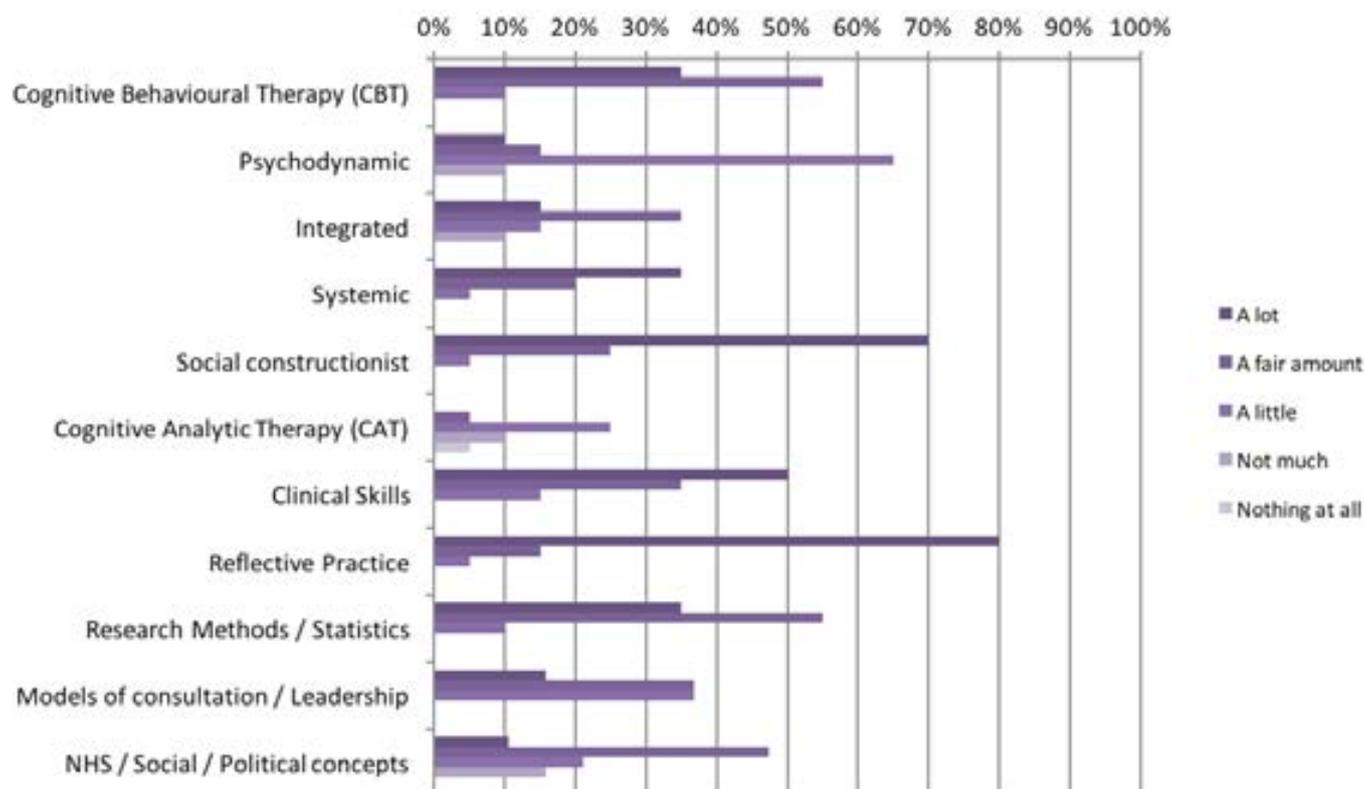
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- It was a busy half day process with a written task, group task and individual interview. The course team were welcoming and friendly. I came away feeling comfortable with the experience.
- It was a relatively full on half a day, but it was structured and organised well. It was a fluid movement from one task to the next. Trainees on the day were helpful and supportive.
- I was interviewed here twice. The first time I found it very stressful. I did not know what to expect. They use a group discussion with other candidates as part of the selection process which the first time round felt like a dog-eat-dog situation. However, I came back a year later with more experience and knowing what to expect made it easier. It was not all bad though. I like how they use a range of techniques - written essay, group discussion, individual interview so if you struggle with one you can do better elsewhere. I also like how they have current trainees there throughout the day, who are really friendly and supportive. I was surprised that they asked few research questions. However, the other questions felt suitable and appropriate and also interesting to answer. On balance, I would say the interview process was good.
- The interview was well organised, and there was no waiting to go from one task to the other. It felt like a very full-on half a day, and I think the questions set were designed to get to know you. The group task felt slightly artificial.
- It was a great experience! It took the better part of the day and felt like you had a lot of opportunities to show who you really are. There was a written task which looked at writing a paper on a few papers you had in advance to read, an interview with a course team member and an outside psychologist, and a group exercise with other applicants.
- All of the interviews I had were extremely daunting, but at Herts I felt as though they were trying to find out who I am as a person and am I the kind of person they want to work with on the course (in terms of values for example). Although it was just as demanding academically, there were also opportunities to show creativity.
- The interview was half a day long and included a written task, an interview (with a member of the course team and a local clinical psychologist) and a group task.
- It was exhausting, but I felt they really got a sense of me throughout the process.
- It was so lovely having current trainees there, they really put my mind at rest and were really welcoming.
- The interview itself was lovely, they were understanding when I needed space to think. I got the sense they weren't trying to 'catch me out' on anything, I think they wanted the best out of me.
- Although overwhelming and tiring, the interview wasn't too bad at all.
- Generally friendly and welcoming, particularly valued the containment of older trainees. The questions were a bit convoluted and had multiple parts, so I had to ask for them to be repeated several times but the interviewers were very understanding of this. I felt that they were seeking the best, rather than trying to trick me or trip me up.
- Although there are a few hurdles to get through in the day, I thought course staff was really nice and encouraging. This made me feel at ease and perform better.
- Although the interview process was daunting, with several aspects to it, I felt the course team were very supportive and helped me feel as relaxed as I could be. The trainees I met during the day were really friendly, and this also put me at ease.
- I did not enjoy the interview for Herts at all! In fact it was a nightmare, and I was shocked they offered me a place. The questions were very off-the-wall. However I happen to know that they had a new admissions tutor that year and it was her first time doing it and she has now left so it will be different going forward.

- I found the Herts interview as friendly as I could have hoped for. The group task was anxiety-provoking but really interesting, and a different idea to the interviews I had in other places. You got a chance to really show interpersonal skills.
- Made to feel welcome by both staff and current trainees, and also felt that the interviewers wanted to see the best of me. By far the warmest interview day I experienced out of three courses I interviewed with.
- Very supportive and helpful. It felt like they were trying to get the best from candidates, and were trying to put us at ease as much as possible.
- Excellent, so supportive and friendly and so representative of the course.
- The interview at Herts was split in three parts. On one hand this may seem like a lot or that the day is very long because you are there for a few hours but on the other hand in case that you don't feel like you performed your best at one of the tasks there are two more opportunities to shine! The interview panel was very supportive and made me feel that they wanted to get the best out of me. For the written task we were sent some relevant material to read beforehand which reduced the anxiety on the day. For the group task I was not sure what to expect and I guess it depends on the group of people you are with but overall it was a positive experience.
- This was a while ago for me now, but I found it to be a lot more comfortable than other courses that I interviewed for (which were a few). There was a range of activities that could capture you in your 'good enough' mode and there was an atmosphere created in which you did not have to be perfect or performing at your best: they understood it was stressful, and understood that all applicants could make for great psychologists. They also fostered an environment of peer-support rather than competition - fellow applicants could become your trainee peers, so through reminding us of this and supporting us on the day, the staff did a great job of welcoming you to the Herts approach in training.
- I found it quite exhausting - we had to answer complex, multi-faceted questions in all three parts (the written exercise, interview and group exercise), which required thinking hard throughout. But everyone was very nice, both the course staff and students who were there to help out, and I felt by the end of the day that they had got a good sense of who I was, and that it would therefore be a fair decision.
- The day was very anxiety provoking but I think that is to be expected. The current trainees who attended the interview day to help out really made a massive difference in making the experience more comfortable.
- Course content and teaching

## How much teaching is there on different models?



## What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	60%
Mindfulness	90%
Schema Therapy	25%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	0%
Solution Focused Therapy	20%
Neuropsychology	90%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	5%
Other	20%

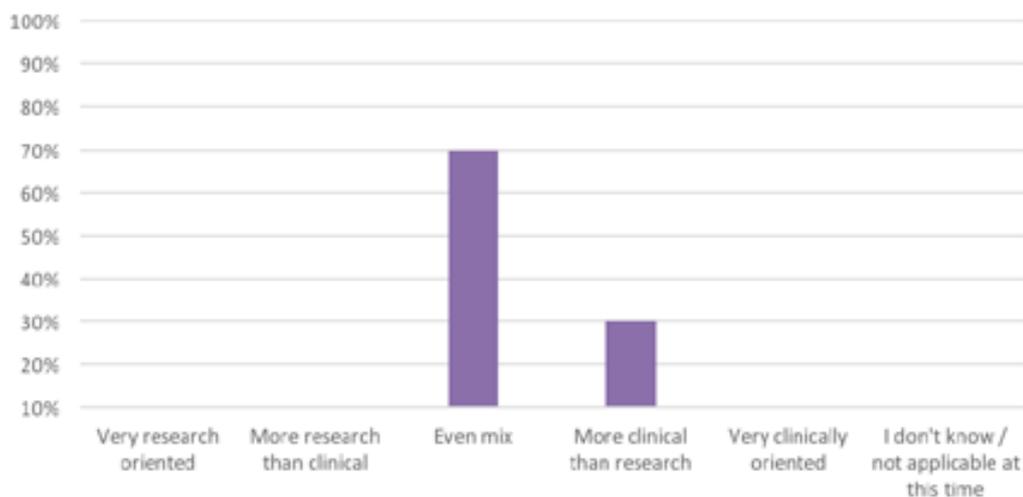
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- It is often felt amongst class members that more CBT teaching would be useful. We get a fair amount at first but when we go off to placement it mostly stops. There is a lot of reflective practice and diversity training, which is useful. However, at times it feels a little repetitive and so perhaps we could have more training on how to use clinical models such as CBT, psychodynamic and ACT on placements.
- Out CBT teaching felt a little short- bearing in mind that generally we are using CBT in our first placements.
- There is a heavy focus on one modality each year, with additional teaching on at least two more-- then the next year, the heavy focus modality changes. So in the first year, it is was mainly CBT with

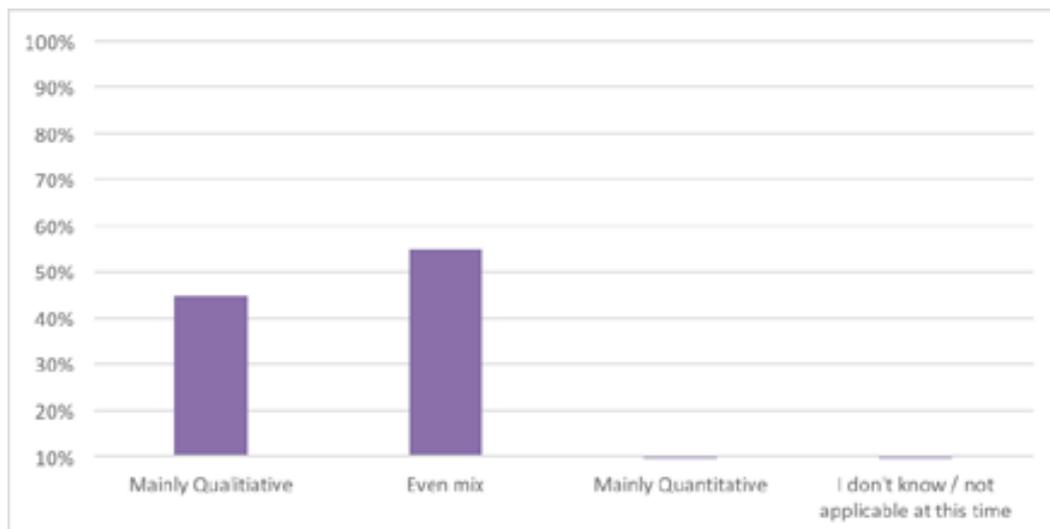
some additional teaching on psychodynamic and systemic. In the second year, the primary focus has been on Systemic with additional teaching on psychodynamic and CBT. For all years, there are additional classes on other topics like neuropsychology or mindfulness.

- The course is largely trans-diagnostic so the teaching is more clinical-skills based rather than disorder-specific. We had a good balance between CBT and other models in the first 2 years (CBT, systemic, psychodynamic, integrative), as well as PCP (personal construct psychotherapy). In the final year you can choose advanced workshops and advanced clinical modules (e.g. we chose to do a whole modules on Narrative Therapy, advanced CBT, and more systemic). We also chose to have introductions to CAT and schema therapy.
- There is quite a lot of repetition between modules but I understand there is a course review going on which is looking at streamlining things and minimising overlap.
- A lot of time in first year on Epistemology and Social Constructionism. It is a very reflective course! Not much CBT teaching and the statistics teaching is very poor.
- In third year you can pick models you would like more teaching in which is good.
- Most models described above are covered, but some only through those you select in your final year. For example, the CAT teaching was great - but not a core model of course, so only came in that final year when we asked for it. Other models were presented through a range of 1-3 odd sessions, usually in the context of particular difficulties (e.g. CFT was taught in relation to self-esteem).

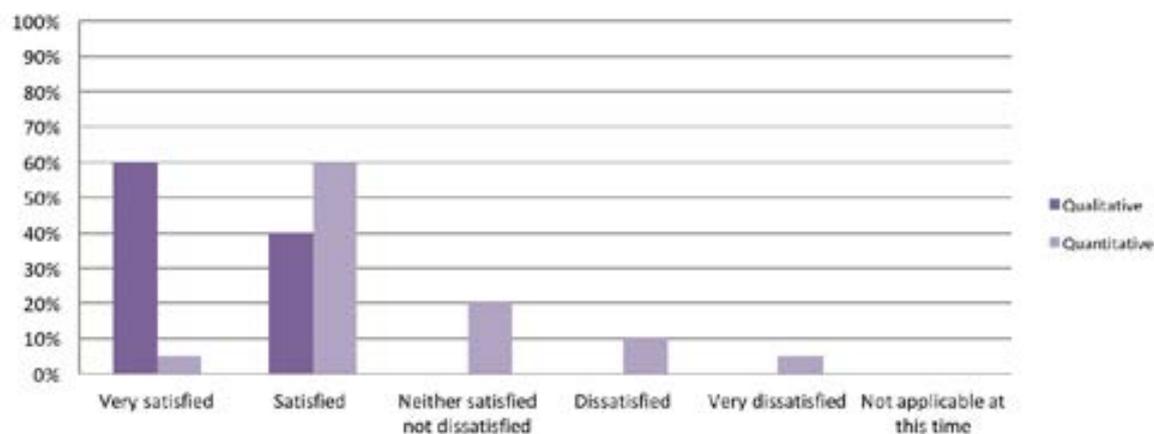
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



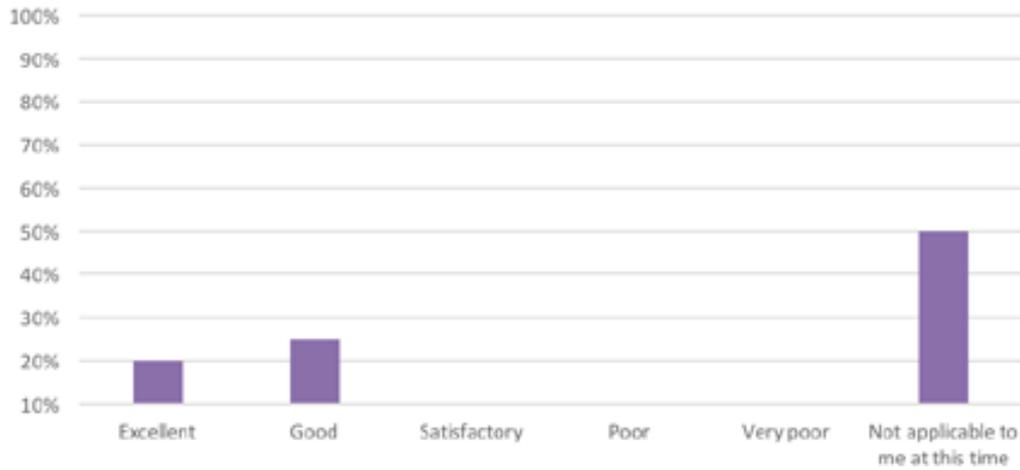
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



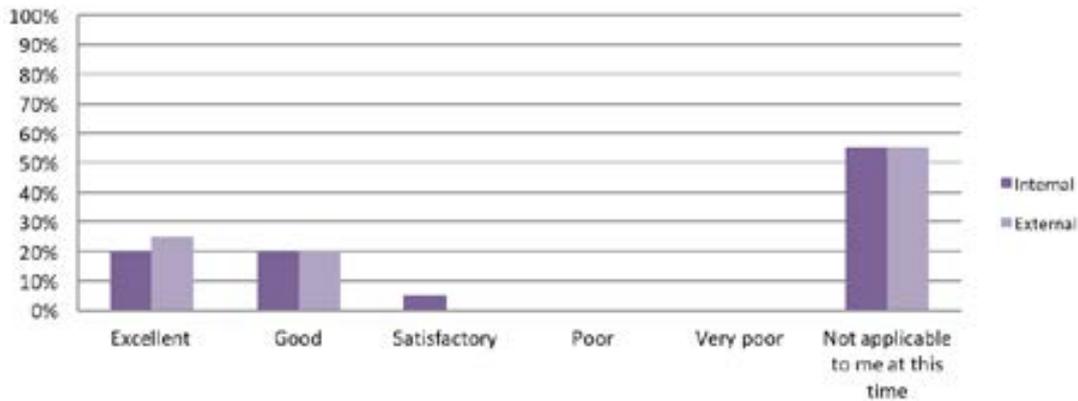
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- The tutors are passionate about research, and I think that this has helped with my concerns about it.
- There is perhaps slightly more focus on the qualitative teaching, as there is an assumption that we have a foundation of knowledge of quantitative.
- 2 years ago there were some staff changes so we were slow in getting started with the research, however we have been consulted on our experience and the research is now being introduced earlier to give trainees more time to complete their research.
- The deadlines have been spread out evenly, so the research workload has been manageable so far. I think a trainee's confidence with research prior to getting onto training would have an impact on their experience of research and research teaching on the course.
- As someone who is interested in both quantitative and qualitative methods, I would love the opportunity for further teaching on quantitative methods.
- Very very helpful and supportive research team (for qual research)
- Plenty of opportunity for quantitative projects, though many opt for qualitative due to epistemological positions

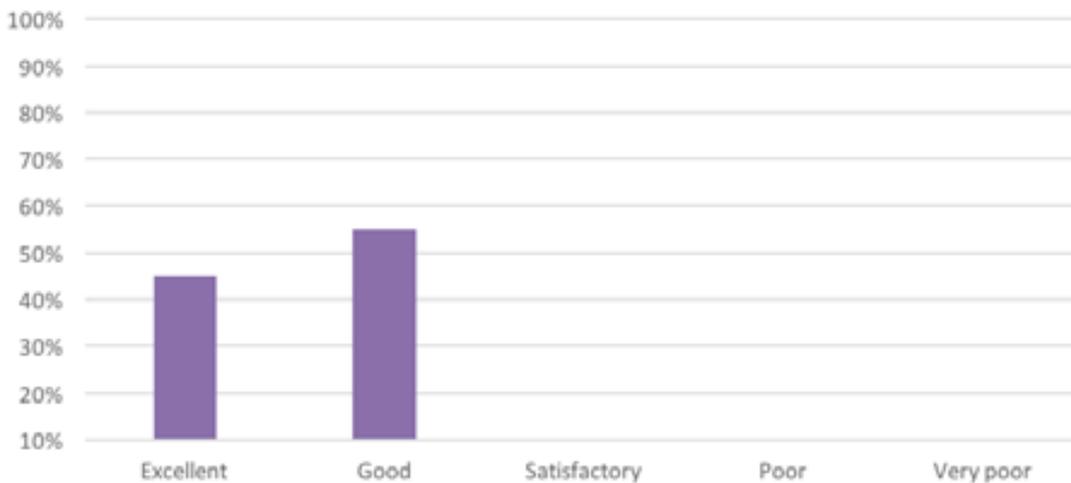
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



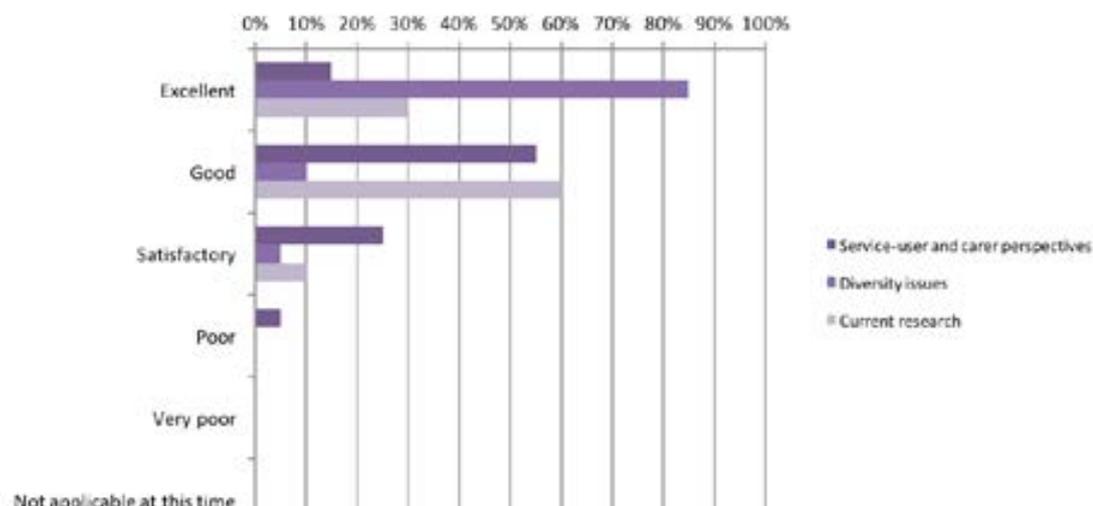
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

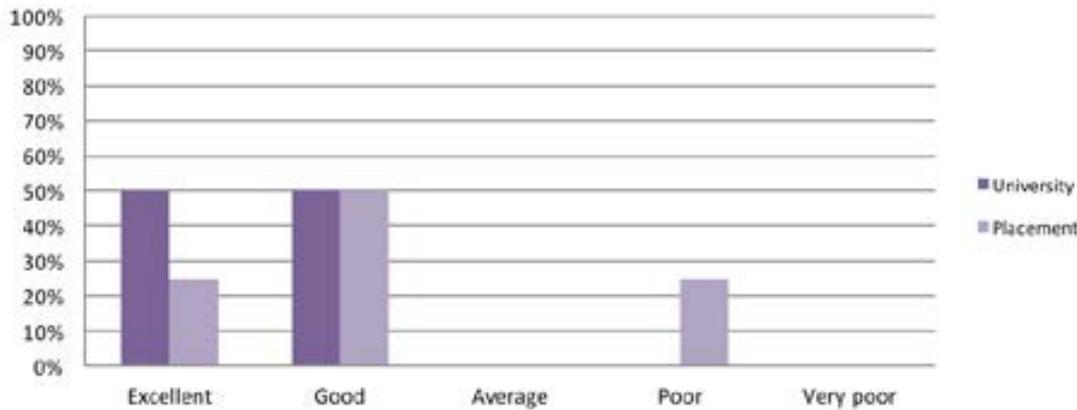
- We have a good mix of internal course tutors and external teaching. They have a very good stable of experts and specialists in the community who come in to teach. The teaching is a good balance of experiential learning and didactic.
- I have really enjoyed most of the teaching, as there is a balance between didactic teaching with group work (PBL), simulation, and facilitated small group discussion.
- The teaching is of a high standard, and there is a lot of it, which I think is a real bonus of this course.
- The third year specialist teaching has been great; those teaching the sessions have facilitated them well and I feel my learning really developed further this year.
- There has been some lovely service-user involvement across the three years, though there could be more.
- A good mix of internal and external speakers. Naturally, some seem to have a better understanding of where we are at in terms of our learning but there is a big emphasis on feedback and major concerns are generally taken on board. We do have a lot of teaching compared to other courses (1 month block and then 2 days a week), but I find this enjoyable and a relaxed atmosphere. The only downside is this limits the amount of annual leave we can practically take.
- The course are very responsive to feedback and ask for it regularly. The 15-person cohort size means all lectures are like seminars, which is an excellent learning environment.
- We had some excellent and inspiring lectures so far but also some repetitive teaching has also happened. The course is constantly seeking feedback on the teaching and I know that they take it into account and working on it.
- Considering diversity, difference and commonality is a significant element of the clinical training at Herts. This is a great strength of the course that fosters a real awareness of the relational, socio-political and ethical components of our work. The personal is very much present in training at Herts and self-care naturally follows.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

20% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Balancing work - life balance.
- Time constraints during personal difficulties.
- Not really. For me, there is a nice balance between uni times (2 days) and placement days (2.5 days). At times, it can be difficult to take annual leave. However, if you find the right student in the years above you get good advice! Problem-based learning ('PBL'; group presentation work) can be challenging, but there are plenty of opportunities to reflect on this and each group has a tutor as a facilitator which is really helpful. Coursework is manageable. Of course you will have to do work on some evenings and weekends at times, but as this is Doctorate level teaching I expected that! It is easily possible to get a work-life balance if you make it happen.
- Trying to balance multiple demands on time- however I do not think that this is relative to Herts.
- PBL (problem based learning) can feel time consuming and frustrating at times."
- It's all about the juggling! We complete a small scale service related research project before our major research project, so you are always balancing clinical work with research (which is an excellent lesson for how to manage both when we are qualified!) and the emotional demands of the course. If you pace yourself and ensure that you are always doing a little bit, though, it is completely manageable. I haven't felt overwhelmed, just like I sometimes have to really work!
- My research project is demanding because I chose a particularly challenging group to reach out to, but I am so pleased to have the opportunity and encouragement to pursue a topic that was of interest to me.

- Reflecting back, I think the course has been demanding for different reasons at different times.
- The first year was a shock to the system for me and it took me a while to get my head round things. However I was well supported by the course team which made things easier.
- The second year was challenging in that there was so much to juggle at times, though this was to be expected on a doctorate course.
- Writing up my thesis is extremely demanding and life has pretty much stopped at the moment. But then it's only for a short period of time and part of the process of passing the course.
- The work-life balance is what you make of it. I've always tried to protect my weekends and not let work take over. This is different for us all. At busier times work takes priority but I'm here to train and expect to be busy.
- I haven't found the level of the work too challenging, just the amount, and managing multiple things at once (e.g. placement related reading/work, research and academic work). We are encouraged by the marking scheme to do things to a 'good enough' standard but this can sometimes feel like I am compromising my standards to get things completed which I know I could do better.
- It can be very revealing at times! Too much to cover in the first 6 months!
- I have found the course to be in keeping with expectations I had concerning doctoral level study. The most demanding aspect for me concerns juggling the learning required while on placement alongside academic assignments. There are periods when the workload seems very manageable during normal working hours, and other times when I have worked a lot throughout weekends.
- PBL.
- Switching between clinical, academic and research activities every week is demanding, and takes time to adjust to, but this is the nature of training on any course. The PBL group work on the Herts course can be demanding at times, but is a unique learning opportunity and I think will stand me in good stead for working in teams in the future.
- Juggling everything - but this is the same for all courses; and there has been a lot of support and understanding for this (eg access to personal advisors).
- Second year has been difficult in balancing competing demands.
- What I have found particularly challenging so far is balancing all the course demands with my everyday life and interests outside of the course as well as the travelling of long distances to get to placement.
- The final year has become quite tough, but this is within the mix of personal changes too and job searching, etc. The main difficulty is juggling time when you wish to specialise and develop on your skills in your specialist placement but any free time has to be directed onto your thesis...So it can be disheartening to not take all of the opportunities to develop and challenge yourself on placement because of the lack of time to dive into a book in preparation...You find the time for some, but it gets difficult holding onto so many hats when the thesis storm is brewing.

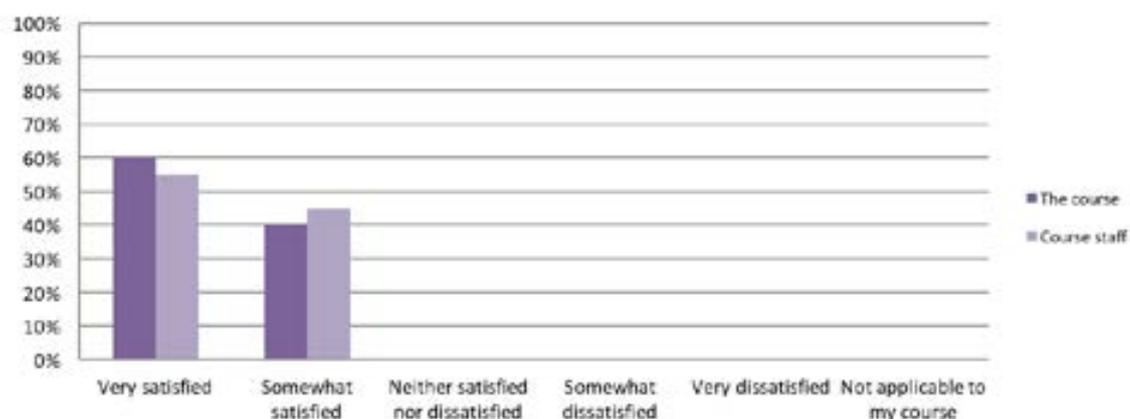
**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	100%
“Buddy”	100%
Manager	35%
Placement Supervisor	95%
Librarian	55%
Professional Mentor	35%
Personal Tutor	95%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	85%
Independent personal advisor	65%
Other	15%

**Under “Other”, responses included:**

- My cohort and my PBL group
- Research buddy, academic supervisor, external research supervisor
- The cohorts of trainees
- Your peers will become the heart of Herts during your training

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

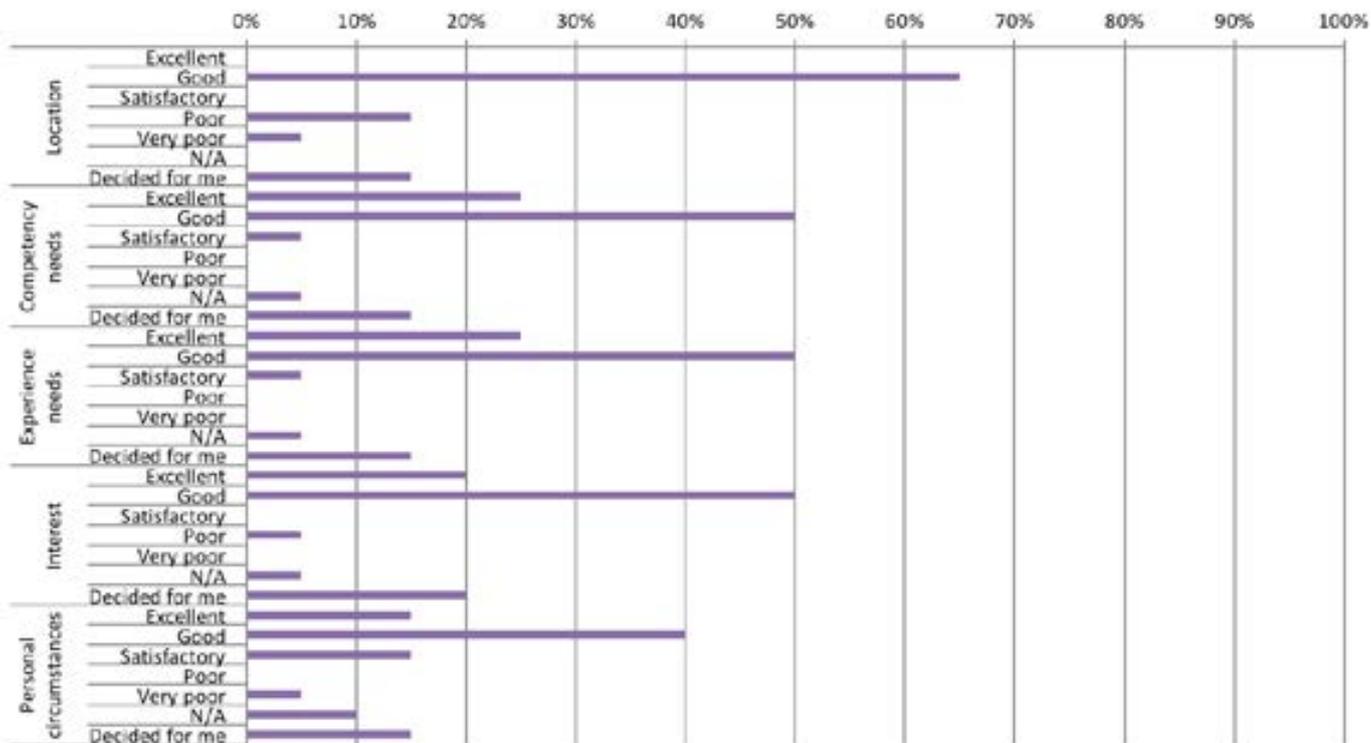


**Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

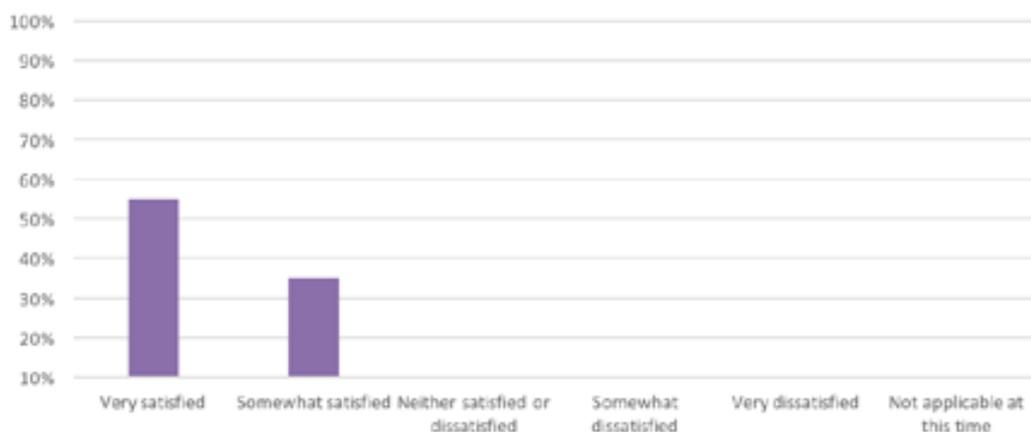
- My clinical tutor who arranges first year placements is particularly supportive and responds timely when needed. However, the personal tutors can at times be slow to respond or do not work on all of the days we are in uni so are seen less often. The buddy system is excellent. We had a second year research buddy and separate second year personal buddy. We also have peer assisted learning, in which we discuss papers and cases in a small group with third years. Further, students in older years are always happy to help, even if they are not your buddy. They often have knowledge of placements as they've done them before you and will happily talk to you about them or coursework if needed.
- You do sometimes have to be pro-active for seeking out support--there are a lot of support networks to hand, but you need to let them know that you need help, rather than wait for them to check on you. I really appreciate the independent personal advisor we have been matched with and our course personal tutors are wonderful. We also have a good buddy system where first year students are matched with second year students--both personal and for research--which is great.
- My personal tutor has been supportive and nurturing during times that I experienced personal difficulties, and "the door is always open".
- Due to the size of the cohort, it is easy to make close friends and socialise together.
- We have 2 buddy systems - one for when 1st years start, and then later a research buddy. The inter-cohort events also facilitates making friends with those in other years.
- My independent personal advisor was not particularly approachable so I only met them once.
- Whenever I've needed help, someone has always been there. I can't really fault the course for that.
- All the staff are generally supportive and there always seems to be someone available. I feel informal peer support to be most effective, but this could be made more formal. Sometimes the number of different support systems can feel overwhelming, as there are a number of people to check-in with but I think people find one or two key support systems and utilise those relationships which work best for them.
- I have found the course team to be very approachable and supportive; their approach has really helped me manage the demands of the course alongside my parenting responsibilities.
- I have felt very well supported and that staff are available when needed. I have felt that Herts course staff have a realistic attitude to the emotional pressures on trainees and take a personal approach to support.
- Support from course team is invaluable.
- Again I think that this is a very individual experience and depends a lot on who the clinical/personal tutors are allocated to you. Some people have a good experience so far and some others do not.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



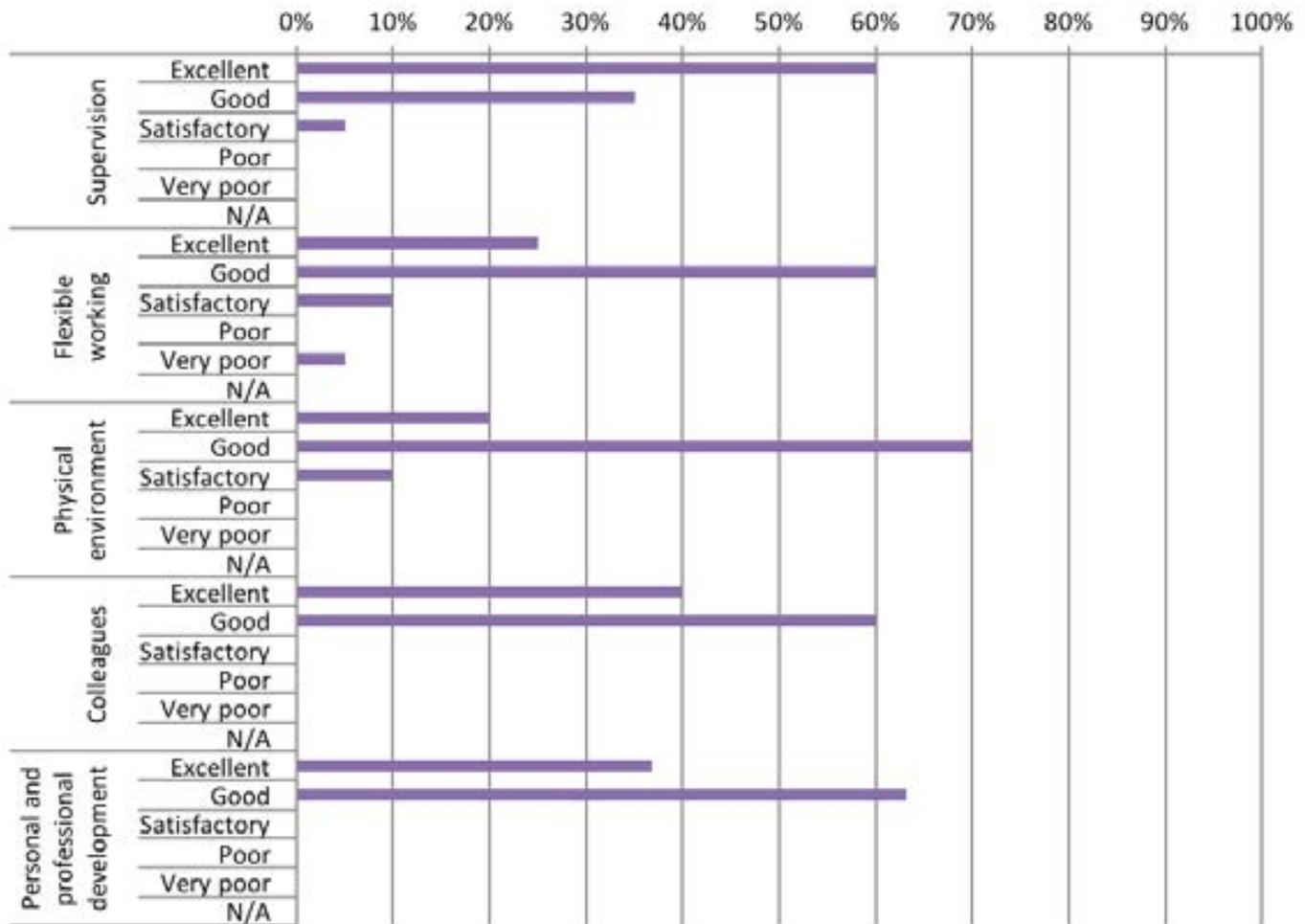
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- More support in completing placement logs would be useful at more frequent intervals, possibly even one-to-one with a tutor.
- I have been fortunate in that my needs (childcare and disability) have been taken into account when I have been allocated a placement.
- Because there are two specialisations for each year--Adult and Older Adult in first year, Children/ Young People and Learning Disability in the second--you sometimes may feel that you're starting a placement without enough teaching under your belt. Because necessarily, the teaching in the induction block has to focus on both specialisations, no one gets a big dose of teaching for their individual placement type, but it works. You just have to depend on your placement supervisor to guide you and your own ability to seek out the learning you need at each point.
- It is never possible to be fully prepared for placements, there will always be an element of anxiety. I think we were generally well-prepared.
- The process of placement allocation is not very transparent. We can express needs and preferences but these don't seem to be held of particular high importance or cannot be met, perhaps because a lot of people are hoping for placements in the same areas (closer to London). For our second placement, we weren't given a lot of notice (5 weeks) which was somewhat unsettling. We have pre-placement meetings which helps with acclimatising, and feels less like turning up to your first day in a new job at the start of placement. Apart from in the induction period of teaching prior to the first placement, there was very little by way of formal preparation for placement however.
- They try to give lectures in a logical order, so that particular topics have been covered early in placements or during teaching block. When things could be improved, they are keen to have this feedback and try to accommodate it.
- I think the course did their best to prepare me before starting on my first placement however since it was the first one and given the anxiety involved I would have never felt 100% ready anyway. Sometimes you just need to take the plunge.
- The course have a fantastic group of local clinicians (many who trained at Herts), who give up their time to come and offer simulation sessions in the faux-hospital - with actors as clients, screens to observe one another and the opportunity for live supervision in a safe place to experiment with styles and techniques. A real strength of the course - this helps get your prepared for placements throughout training.

## In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- There are many experienced and friendly supervisors offering placements across a wide geographical area. Clinical tutors work hard to find placements that fit both your travel needs and experience needs.
- I have found it difficult as a trainee to book clinic rooms, as placements often do not have the 'space' for a trainee.
- Placements are always a bit variable, but they all offer a great deal for personal and professional development if you work to get everything out of the experience that you can. I have been very fortunate to get a more specialist placement in my second year that was exactly what I wanted and really helped me to narrow down on my long term specialisation interests.
- Placements gave excellent opportunities to learn and put skills into practice. I was able to meet all the competency requirements by the end of 2nd year, so in 3rd year could choose what else I wanted to focus on or do more of.
- I've been really lucky with my placements as I haven't had to travel too far for any of them.
- The catchment area for Herts is pretty big though so some people have been less lucky.
- I've also been lucky in that I've had excellent supervisors throughout my training. I think some of my peers have struggled at times with supervisors.

- I had support in choosing my specialist placement and got the one I wanted.
- Placements on the whole seem to offer adequate opportunities to help you meet your core competencies.
- My first placement has been an excellent experience, could not have had a better first placement! Loved it.
- The course covers Hertfordshire, Essex and Bedfordshire. You may need to do a long travel for some placements, and/or a lot of driving.
- My first placement was excellent and I learnt a lot. I was very lucky to have a very experienced and flexible supervisor. Not everyone was so lucky therefore the placement experiences can vary and a lot depends on the relationship with the supervisor.
- A lot of what you get out of placement relies on the relationships you establish and the opportunities you seek. So many people's experiences will be different. I have always found supervisors to be keen to explore things with me, even if they perhaps have different ideas about what could be helpful in particular situations. I've sought out a lot of systemic specialist experiences too, which the course and placement staff have been very supportive of.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	80%
No	10%
Don't know	10%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	10%
No	70%
Don't know	20%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in London, Essex and Hertfordshire.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	95%
Don't know	5%

**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

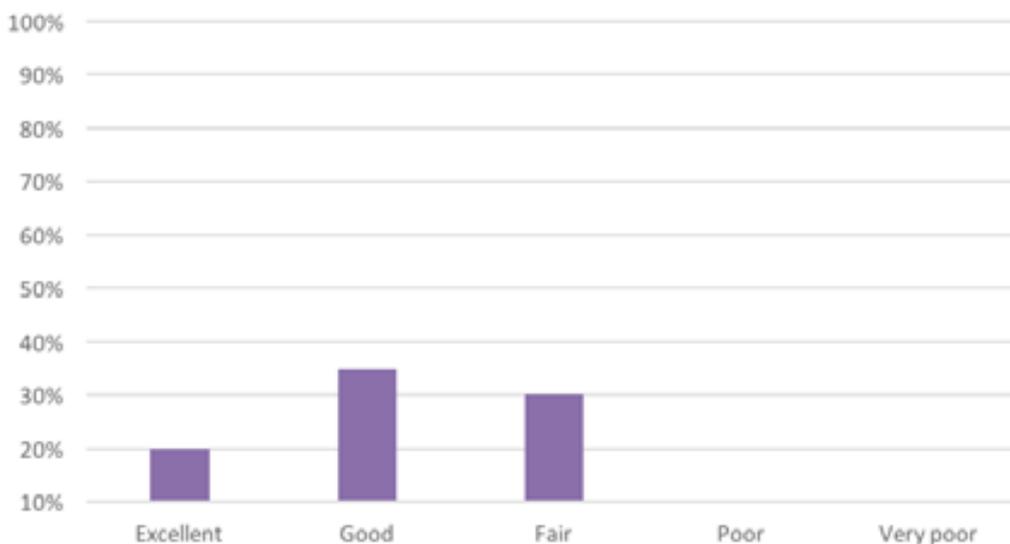
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	15%
Good	35%
Fair	45%
Poor	5%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- I find the work-life balance very good. I aim to take at least one evening and weekend day off a week and can often take a lot more than this. As the year goes on, we also seem to get more and more academic study time, which you can use to do essays and case reports, therefore freeing up even more time for work-life balance. I still find time to exercise, read, watch all my favourite TV programmes, go out for dinner etc. If you have other commitments like voluntary work outside of uni or you live far away from the course/placement regions this is of course harder so I would think about where you live for example to help yourself.
- I think it is to be expected on any course that a work/life balance will be difficult! However, I have found the course to be accommodating in terms of scheduling study leave in the timetable when there are deadlines approaching.
- Live in Hertfordshire! If you're looking to live in London during the course and stay there after you qualify, you'll really be missing out. A lot of my cohort do this and they are always the ones who are most tired and irritable about their work life balance. For those of us who live in the actual catchment area, though, we find that the placements are easy to get to and convenient and we are really able to integrate into the local services. Please don't come to Hertfordshire because you think it is "close enough to London"--this is a location that really benefits from people getting stuck into the area and staying here after qualification. The links with the university for post-qualification psychologists is amazing.
- I wanted to get the most out of my training so I tend to work quite a lot of evenings and one day at the weekend. I do notice other trainees going on more holidays than I do! We also have a good time and we manage to socialise together regularly.
- I think I've maintained fairly good boundaries throughout my training. I work hard in the week and generally don't tend to work at weekends.
- This of course depends on the workload but I made the decision not to let the course take over my life. This is different for us all though.
- My work life balance is pretty non-existent at the moment because I'm writing my thesis. But that's to be expected and it's not forever.

- It could be a lot better, it's a big culture shock coming from finishing at 5pm as an AP and having all evenings and weekends free, but I don't think that's specific to this course. There are competing systems in place with annual leave meaning it is very restrictive and it very difficult to take it all. Work life balance can be quite dependent on placement as well, for example how understanding your supervisor is, how long of a long commute you have or how much placement-specific related reading you are given.
- I had an expectation that the course would be a huge commitment in terms of the work required, and the amount of work matches up with this expectation. The amount of work tends to wax and wane, so there are times when things are less busy, and there is definitely time to maintain personal relationships outside of the course!
- It is possible to have one, but you have to accept there are crunch points when you have a lot of deadlines so it does fluctuate alongside these.
- It has been a massive challenge.
- Prior to the thesis, I would say my work-life balance was excellent. However, this has changed significantly and I am now having to do a lot of work at weekends and any given opportunity. This is just one of those things though, and is only temporary...And in year 1 and 2, this was not the case - I was strict with my workload and would rarely work in the evenings or weekends.
- Poor in the run up to submission of course work, but fine otherwise.
- It is a difficult thing to maintain on this course. I have really struggled.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### **Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?**

- We are lucky to be paid at a band 6 for training- however I know this is likely to change. Some people have financial difficulties in terms of travelling to placement if they are living in London and commuting to Bedfordshire/North Hertfordshire.
- We do lose out by not having greater London area weighting, but you get used to it.
- I think we get an amazing salary for training and earn more than I ever really imagined I would. However, house prices are also more than I ever imagined, so that's not ideal.
- We don't get any London weighting as we're employed by CPFT, which leaves those of us living in London at a disadvantage. That said, we're incredibly lucky to get a salary and I think it's a great salary. So not complaints from me.
- Moving further down south from the midlands has seen my outgoings rise very significantly. As a single person, this has left me much worse off per month, despite the slight pay increase from band 5 to band 6. I know some people find it difficult that we do not get London weighting, which I understand is because the course and placements are not within London. However, I live in Hertfordshire which is still very expensive and attracts a high cost of living, if I lived further north away from the course I might be able to find cheaper accommodation but would have increased transport costs. I know a number of the cohort are contemplating taking second jobs, which I would be very hesitant to even consider. I'm just about able to break even if I'm careful with my money (but obviously this is not ideal), and I'm trying to see the long game, knowing that things will be better when I qualify.
- As employees of CPFT there is no London weighting for trainees.
- I live in London but I don't get London weighting because I train in Herts therefore the financial quality of my life has taken a massive hit for the worse.
- We're on band 6 throughout training - so certainly cannot complain.
- Living in London makes finances a big challenge.

### **What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?**

- Regular contact with people in second and third years. Neuropsychology and cognitive assessment teaching. The clinical tutors support and understanding when organising placements. Peer assisted learning. The diversity and range of experience of our classmates. The friendly atmosphere. The locations (as a driver).
- I have found the course team incredibly supportive when I have experienced personal difficulties.
- I enjoy having local clinical psychologists teaching us and sharing their knowledge of the NHS.
- This is such a reflective course, which is a real strength. I find that I am not just doing the academic and clinical work, but I'm constantly thinking about how I fit into the greater scheme of psychology and what my work today will mean for my professional work in ten years. There is a lot of space for reflecting with your colleagues and your tutors. There is a lot of support and it's an intimate course where everyone knows you very well.
- I can't choose one thing - being with my cohort and hearing them have such intelligent conversations that makes me realise how much we've learned, the PBL presentations where we see the amazing and creative ideas that we all come up with, the fact that our course team are so warm (most of them) and want to work/publish with us (etc.)
- The small cohort size really makes Herts feel like a family.
- Strong relationships are developed with the course team and other cohorts.
- My cohort, I have made some amazing friends and I can't imagine getting through training without them. Meeting up weekly for lectures feels like coming home, back to the family.

- Team are very friendly, my fellow course members also lovely
- I love the fact that I am able to gain clinical experience with different client groups, which gives me a chance to see where I want to specialise after I qualify. I also appreciate being part of a small cohort - this leads to a lot of rich discussions during lectures, and means we get to know all the members of the course team well.
- The other trainees - they are amazing.
- Excellent diversity teaching.
- No exams.
- The teaching and openness to philosophy and epistemology is hugely beneficial in my opinion, and has not only brought me on professionally, but also personally and as an independent thinker.
- The way that critical thinking and valuing diversity is encouraged; the small cohorts (15ish) and inter-cohort events to build a real sense of community; the social constructionist ethos.
- Everything.
- Lectures, supportive cohort, good first placement
- Problem-Based Learning groups were majestic and we established a great trust in one another; built on our critical thinking skills and really worked towards the personal and professional meeting somewhere on an island of compassion and ethical practice.
- Lots of opportunities for reflection; politically and socially engaged cohort and staff team; encouragement of critical and independent thinking; lots of inter-cohort contact and peer led learning; innovative teaching methods, including Problem Based Learning and debates; small and supportive cohort.
- The social constructionist approach.
- The majority of staff are very supportive and approachable.
- Lectures are very stimulating, genuinely encouraging critical thinking.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- Don't think that just because Herts has a reputation for being reflective and social constructionist that it isn't rigorous! This course is like that placid duck on a pond who is frantically paddling below the water's surface--it may all look like we're having a great time (we often are!), but we are all also having to do a lot of work and reading and thinking behind that calm.
- I've cherished every minute of my training, and couldn't imagine training anywhere else.
- I've been supported throughout my experience at every stage.
- The size of the cohorts had made a huge difference. We're a close cohort and it's positively impacting upon my experience within teaching and experiential tasks.
- I'd 100% recommend Herts.
- It is a good course and I wouldn't choose somewhere else. We get the chance to think intellectually and creatively in a way that I think is not so actively encouraged with other courses, as far as I can tell.
- Sometimes it feels as though there is overlap between the content of lectures. My preference would be to have slightly less face to face teaching, leaving a bit more time for self-directed study.
- It is very social constructionist, very reflective and very qualitative and this might not suit everyone. It is quite anti-psychiatry, anti-CBT, anti-diagnosis, anti-medical model etc. and this gets a little tiresome.

- Even though driving is not a mandatory requirement, it is still a requirement therefore some of us who do not drive on the course have felt that we are being punished for that by being sent to really far away placements and we receive no compensation for the travel expenses. However, people who drive were given placements near their homes and they also claim expenses. Keep that in mind.
- Apply here, train here: never leave.
- I would say to avoid this course if you are not planning on driving.

# Courses Survey Results

## Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Panel interview (academic + professional and personal suitability); Group task (clinical focus); Written task (research focused)

**For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?**

Teaching	2 days
Placement	2.5 days
Personal Study	
Research	

**What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)**

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Hull University

3 responses (7% of 44 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	50%
Year 2	50%
Year 3	0%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	100%
25 – 29 years	0%
30 – 34 years	0%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	100%
Twice	0%
3 times	0%
4 times	0%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	0%
MRes	0%
Diploma	0%
Post Graduate Certificate	0%
Conversion course	0%
None	100%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	33%
Less than 1	33%
1 year	0%
2 years	0%
3 years	33%
4 years	0%
5 years	0%
6+ years	0%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

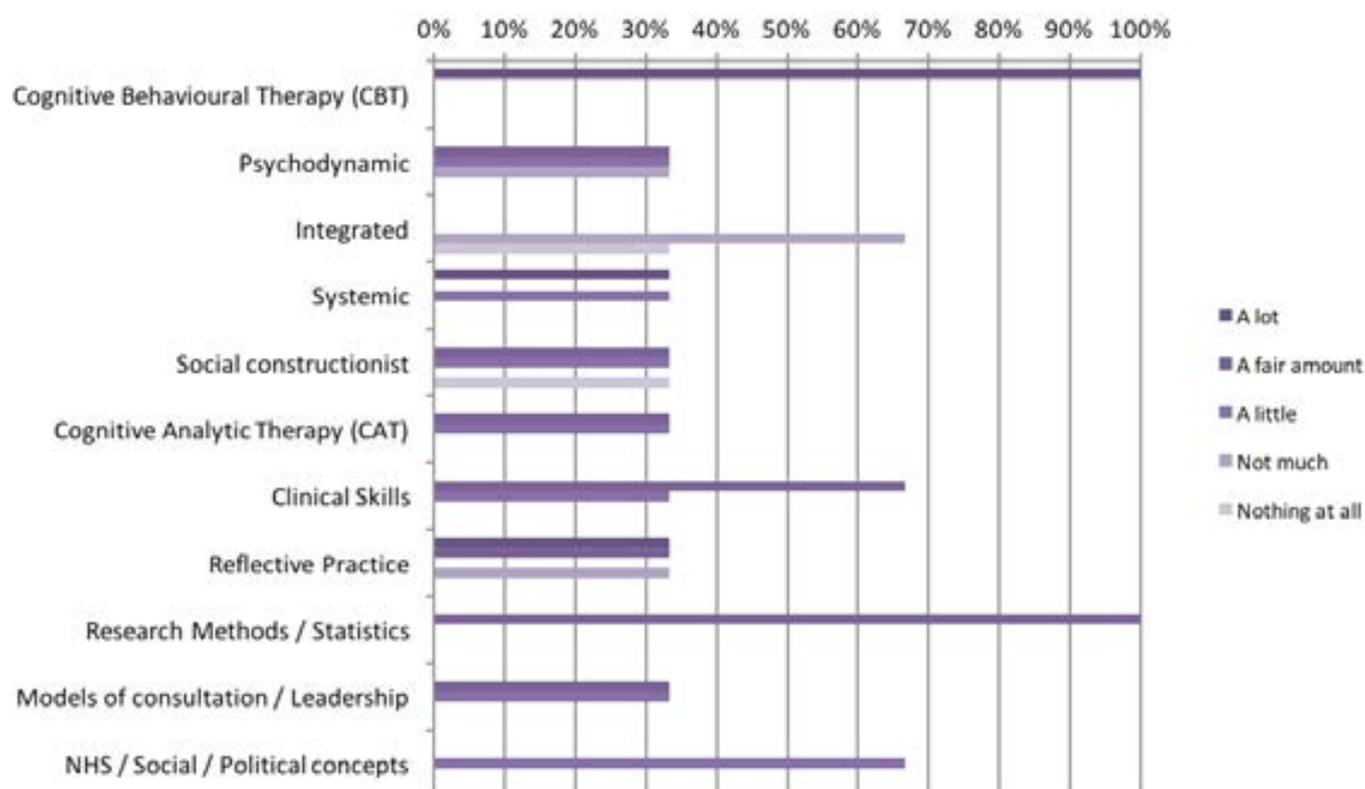
Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	0%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	0%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	0%
Voluntary Research Assistant	0%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	50%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	0%
Other	100%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Pleasant, the course had arranged for other trainee's in the years above to be around to help calm nerves and sit in the waiting room with applicants. Also the interview was a 2 stage process - service user informal questions (approx. 30 mins), and then a research presentation and academic panel (approx. 45 mins). The two separate components were entirely different which I think allowed for my personality to come across in a more natural setting (service user), but also demonstrate my ability to be professional when talking to senior consultants etc. (academic panel).
- It was a very good experience, I liked having two different panels to showcase different elements of skill.
- It was overall a positive experience. We had been told in advance what to expect and the two interviews and presentation were challenging but not too intimidating. Current trainees were around on the day who were reassuring and helpful.
- Course content and teaching

### How much teaching is there on different models?



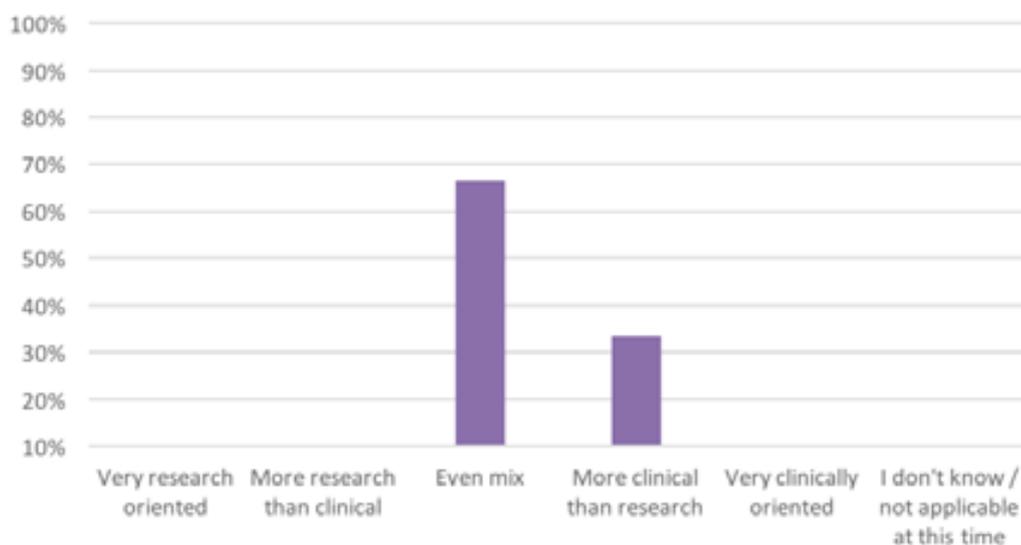
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	100%
Mindfulness	67%
Schema Therapy	33%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	67%
Solution Focused Therapy	67%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	100%
Other	0%

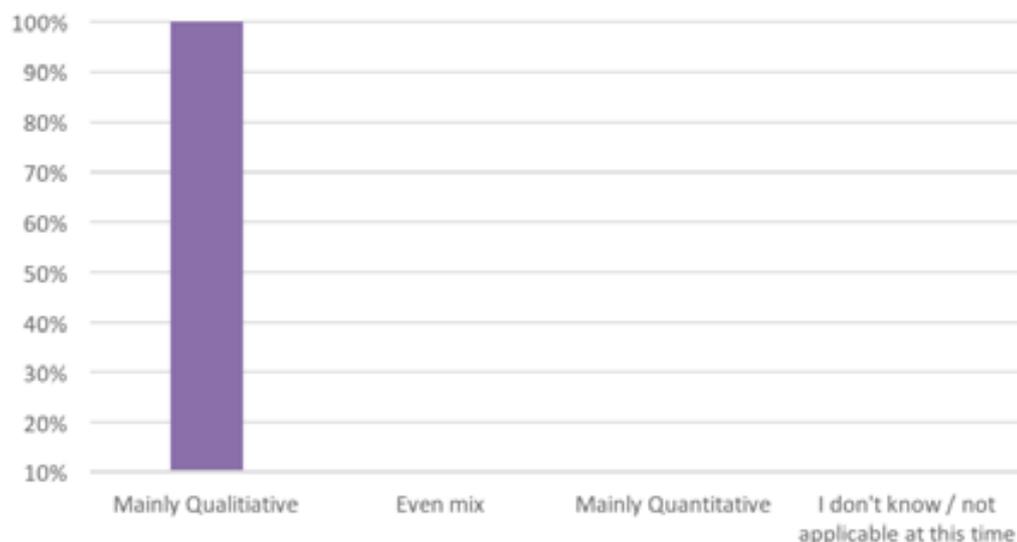
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- There is a lot of time devoted to CBT and not a lot to other models, it would be beneficial to have equal amounts of time spent on everything.
- The two main models focused on are CBT and systemic, therefore a significant amount of teaching is focused on these. Other topics are covered over a day or two, with additional workshops dedicated to adapting/working specifically with different client groups. There are a good range of models covered.

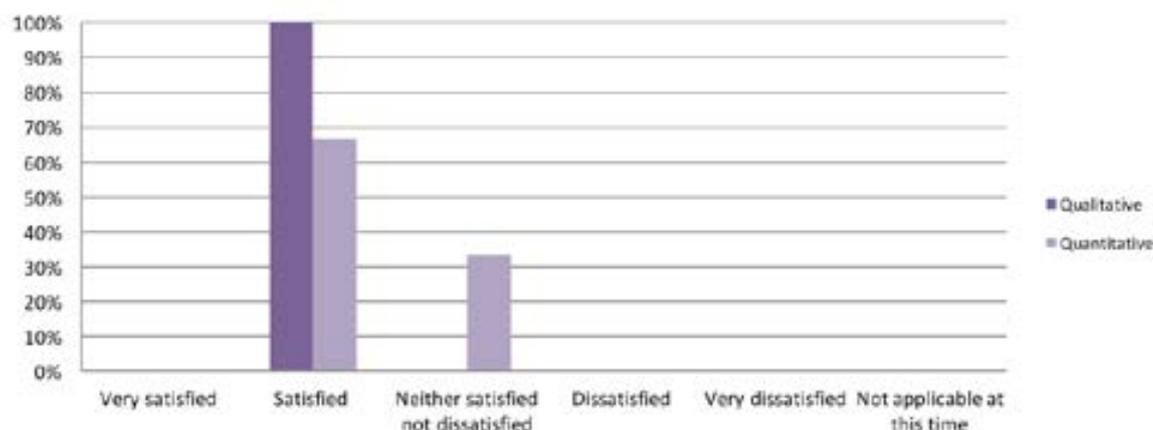
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



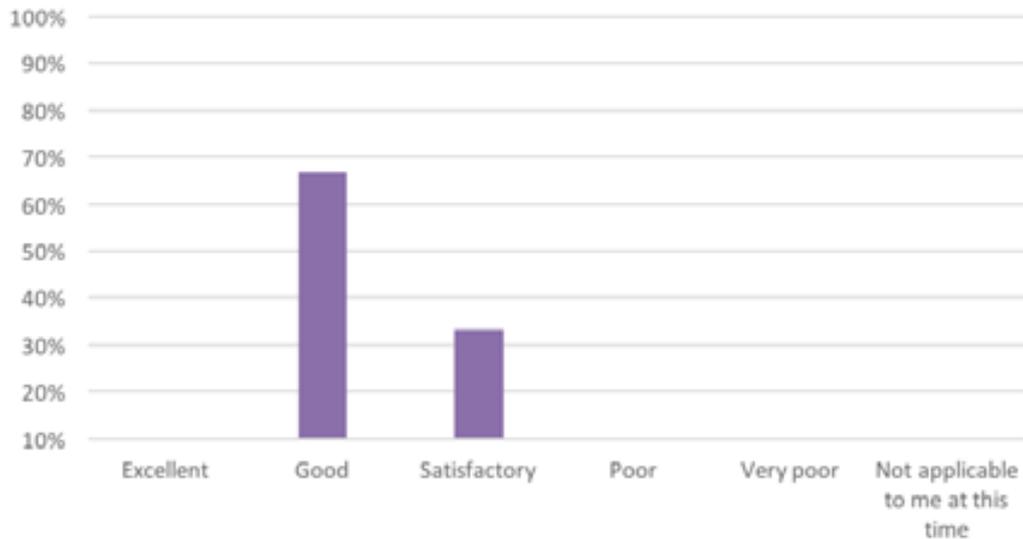
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



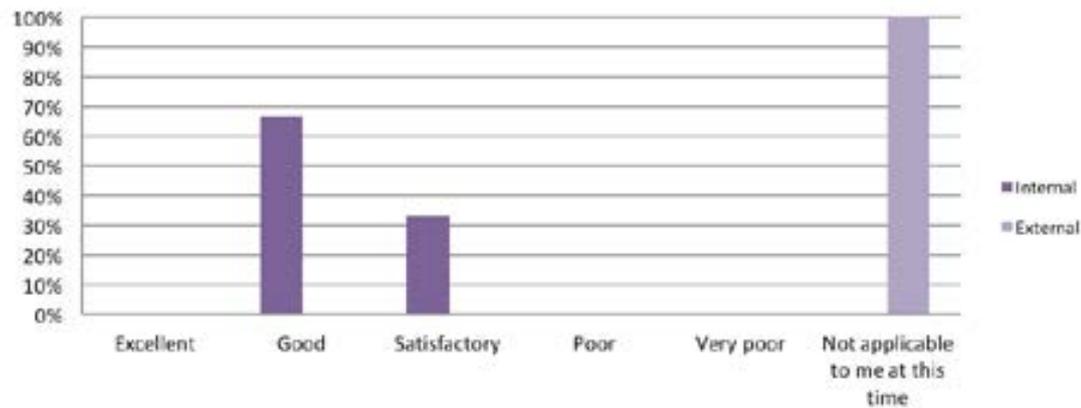
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Although I am only in my first year of training, the course is helping me take steps to begin thesis research, and also preparing us by including relevant clinical literature review work.
- There is enough research teaching to fulfil the course research demands and to think about how we would research as a qualified psychologist. Research teaching is well timed around different pieces of research work. There is more qualitative teaching, which I think balances the shift towards quantitative research that we had in undergrad. There is also helpful research and statistical supervision.

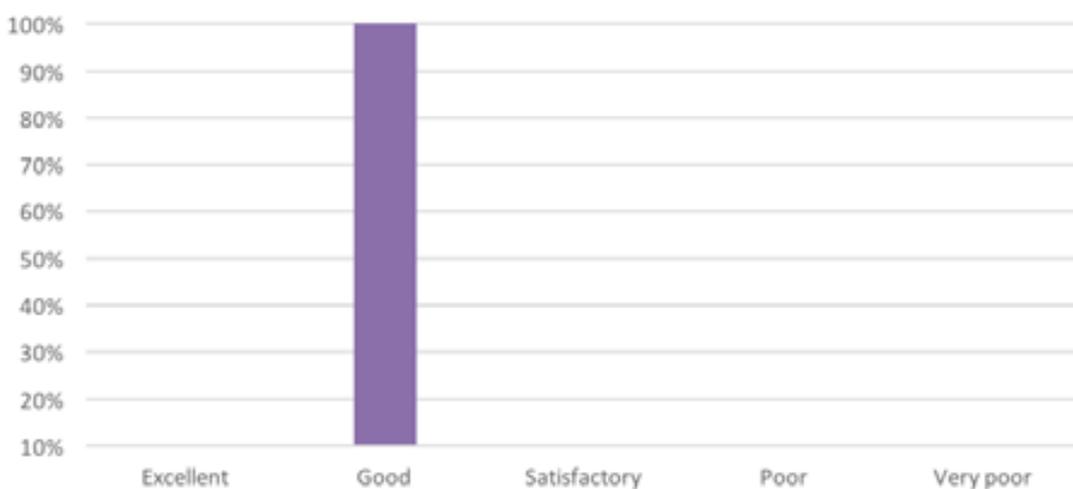
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



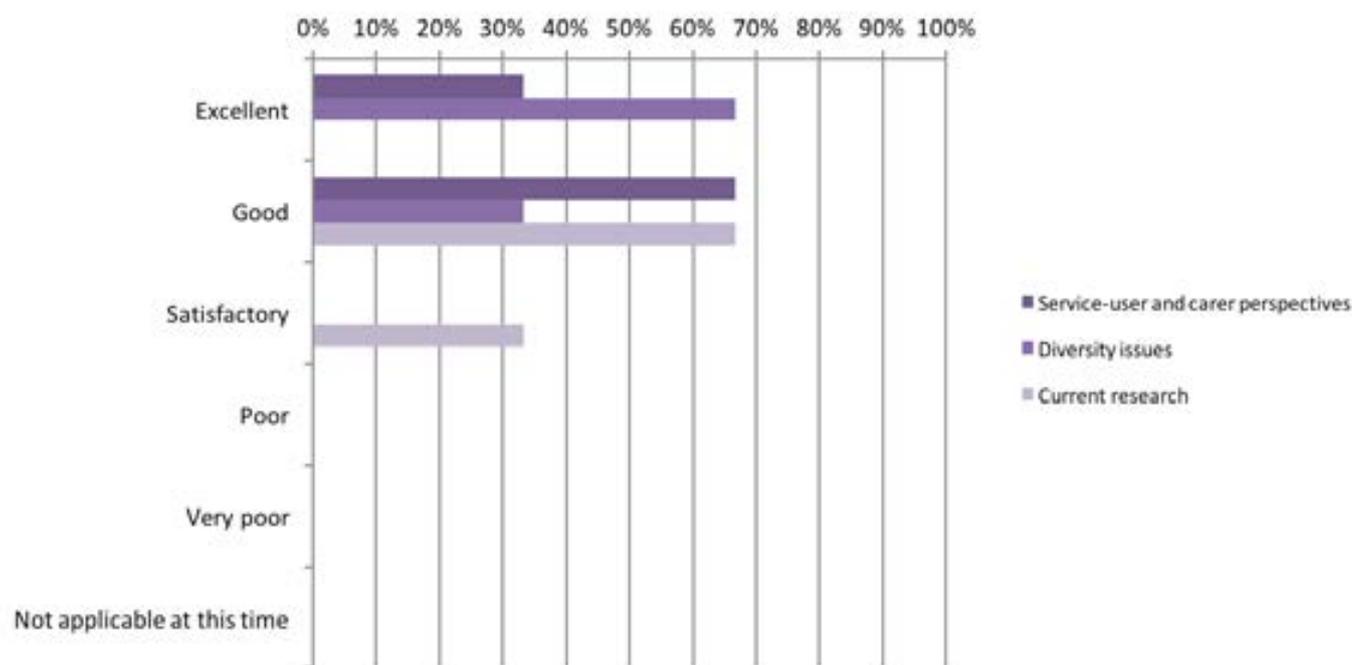
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



### How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



#### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

- Teaching is varied- we have a lot of external lecturers which brings a really nice diversity in approaches and ideas, although this does mean that teaching style and quality can be mixed. Overall, teaching is engaging, clear and interesting.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

0% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

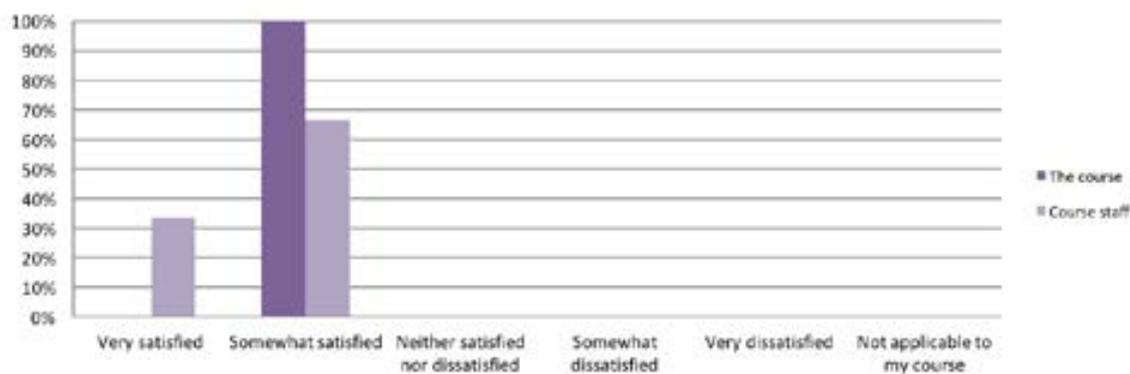
### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Time management
- Balancing all competing demands and thesis
- The sheer quantity of work and lack of study days to do this in has been particularly challenging. It would be helpful if we had designated study days around deadlines but this has not always been the case. A significant amount of evening and weekend work is expected and necessary to meet demands, which is understandable but makes it difficult to balance self-care/well-being, family life and the course.

**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	100%
“Buddy”	100%
Manager	67%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	0%
Professional Mentor	33%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	0%
Other	0%

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

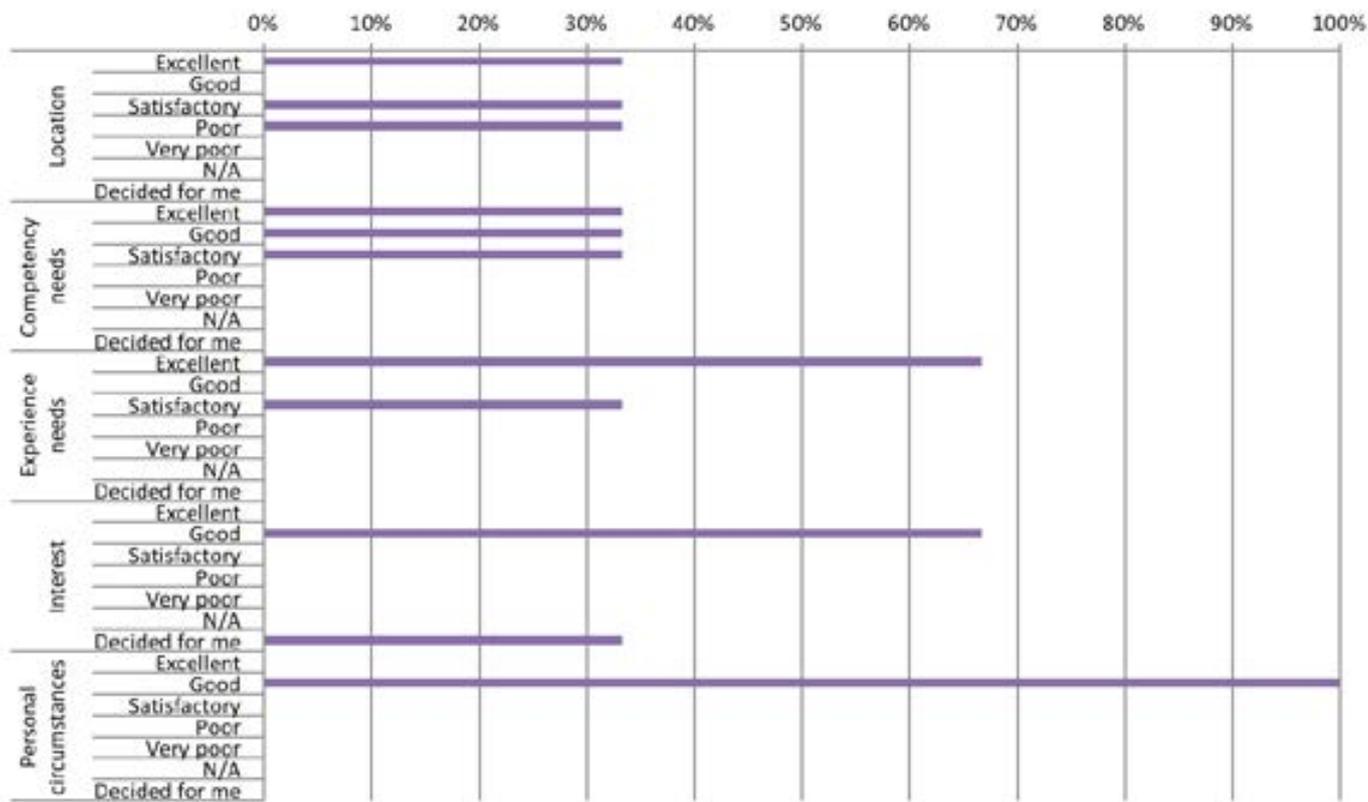


**Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

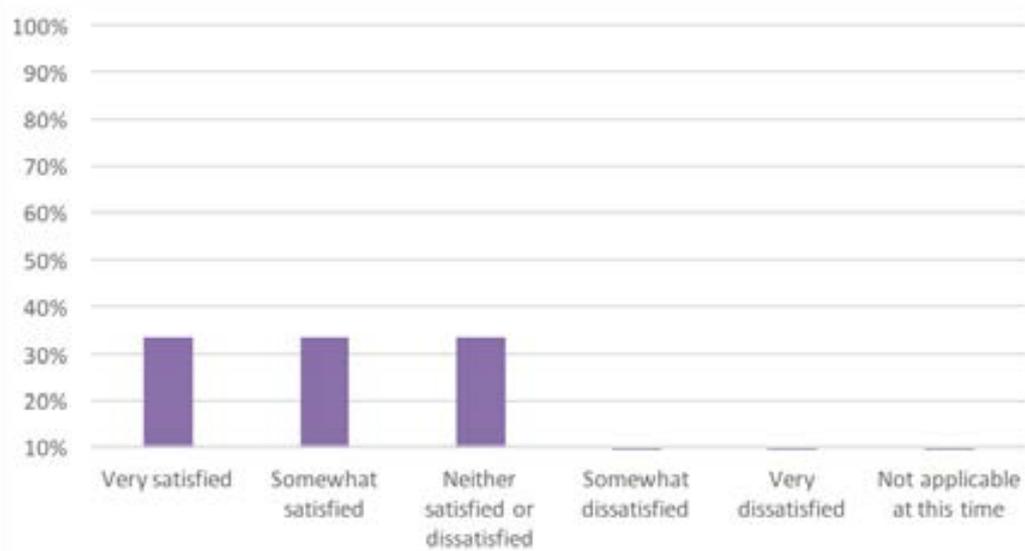
- I have received good support from staff, however only in response to difficulties, I feel perhaps difficulties could have been avoided if support was given routinely.
- Staff are available when support is needed and buddy systems and fellow trainees have been a valuable support network.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



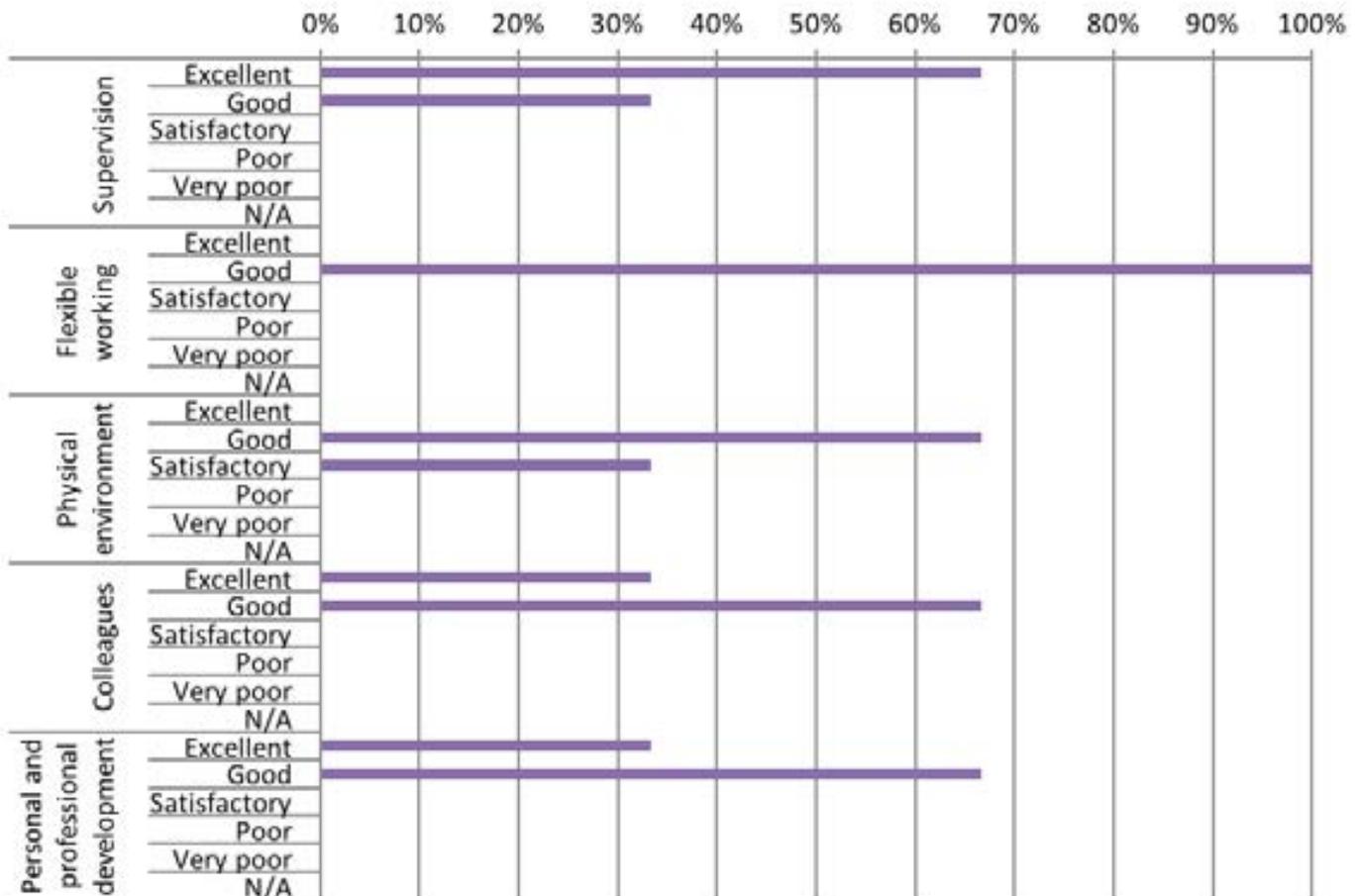
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- I feel that although placements are good, there is still a large gap of synergy between university and placements, and lack of consistency, some placements are excellent and know what is expected have good links with the university whereas others have not.
- We have had teaching related to most placements and can be given reading materials if not. We also had a specific lecture before going to our first placements about preparing/what to expect which was reassuring.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Placements have been great, lots of good experiences and helpful supervision. The only thing that has been difficult is travel- some placements for trainees have been 89 miles away from home and having a long commute makes it even more difficult to balance coursework that needs to be done on evenings/weekends and 'normal' life

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	67%
No	33%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	67%
No	0%
Don't know	33%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Hull.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	67%
Don't know	33%

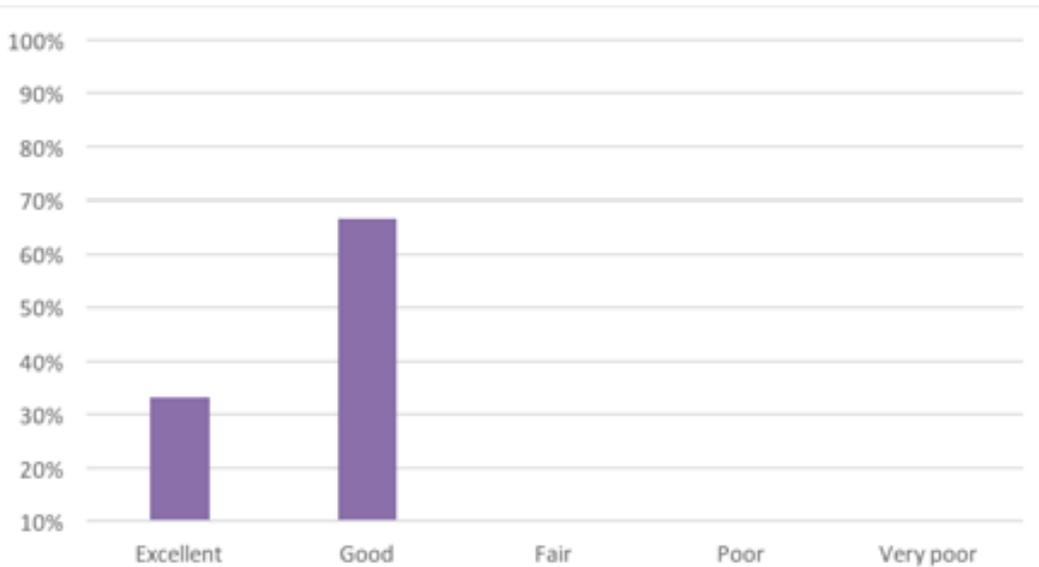
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	33%
Fair	33%
Poor	33%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- It can sometimes be hard to adequately balance everything due to very busy timetables, sometimes one thing has had to be sacrificed for another.
- Due to the lack of designated study days at certain periods there can be times where a significant amount of evening and weekend work is necessary. However there are other times where there are study days when we don't have much work to do, therefore this fluctuates. It might be helpful if study days are planned better around deadlines/workload fluctuations

**How do you rate your financial quality of life?**



**Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?**

- This is good as the area is a relatively affordable place to live and the salary is good

**What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?**

- Clinical Placement
- Being with the other trainees and placement
- Placements and clinical work. There is also a good atmosphere and camaraderie amongst trainees and staff are welcoming and supportive

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Undergraduate application from York or Hull University. Short-listed interview schedules unavailable at time of writing.

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience

18 responses (29% of trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	76%
Year 2	12%
Year 3	12%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	6%
25 – 29 years	72%
30 – 34 years	11%
35 – 39 years	11%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	33%
Twice	22%
3 times	22%
4 times	6%
5 times	17%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	28%
MA	6%
MSc	50%
MRes	6%
Diploma	17%
Post Graduate Certificate	11%
Conversion course	11%
None	11%
Other	6%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	6%
2 years	6%
3 years	28%
4 years	28%
5 years	17%
6+ years	17%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	44%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	17%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	33%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	17%
Research Assistant	44%
Voluntary Research Assistant	39%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	39%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	17%
Other	28%

## The selection process

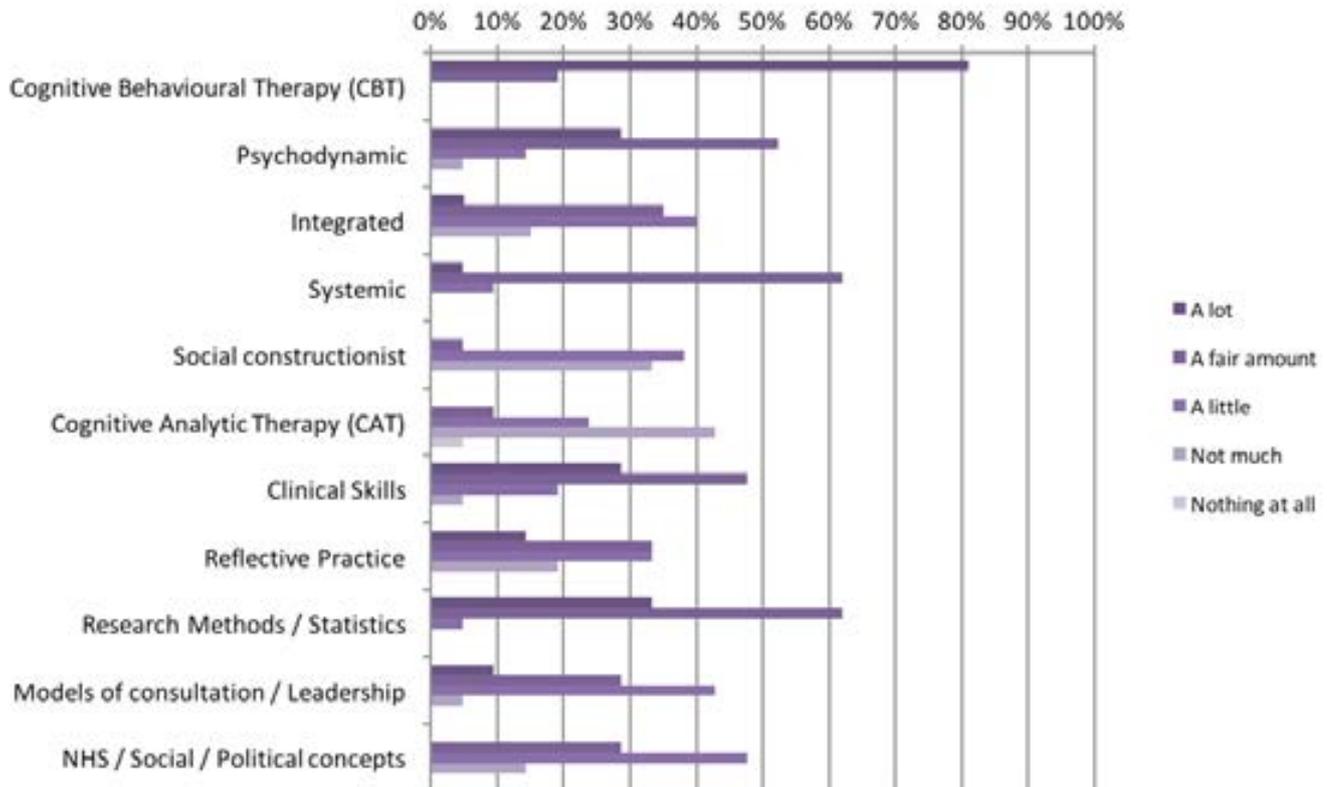
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- The interview was very forgiving and very similar to previous years which gave chance to practice answers. There wasn't much time to answer the questions but they seemed to appreciate being practiced, articulate and personable.
- Friendly, fair interview - prepared answers that I was able to give fully. Did not feel pressured or stressed by their style of questioning - happy to repeat questions.
- It's painless. 30 minutes, about 6 questions and no surprises.
- Looking back, it was a very pleasant process compared to other interviews. It was a relatively short interview (approx. 30 mins), which I found helpful as all the questions were straight forward (most quite predictable) and so I felt it was the fairest interview.
- The interview was direct and simple.
- Interview was around 30 minutes long, three clinical psychologists on the panel, fairly standard questions. Felt like they were trying to get the best out of me by asking prompt questions that helped me veer off the answers I had prepared (in a useful way!). The day felt well-organised, with lunch provided and talks from senior course staff, and there was a current trainee hanging around to chat with interviewees.
- I thought the interview was quite easy in comparison to other courses. There was a nice amount of research and clinical questions, no trick tasks/questions or feeling put on the spot as I found with other interviews. We had a tour which was really lovely at making us feel welcome, and I was able to ask questions.
- I had a positive interview experience. The interviewers were professional, courteous, and friendly.
- They asked me a number of questions which seemed to tap a variety of my relevant experience, but I also had a chance to show who I am as a person, my goals/aspirations, and my values.
- Very pleasant. It was 25 minutes, and reasonably friendly. They asked similar questions as previous years so it was quite easy to prepare for.
- I really enjoyed the interview process. The staff were very friendly and welcoming. I felt the interview gave me the chance to give an overview of who I am and what I could bring to training. They also didn't take long to let you know if you were successful or not.
- I found the King's interview process really straightforward, I was initially on the reserve list before being offered a place. On the day it felt very organised we were in very small groups so the collective anxiety wasn't overwhelming. My panel were really warm and seemed genuinely interested in what I had to say, it put me at ease and helped me to perform to the best of my ability.
- Very straightforward. There was an opportunity to have a tour of the campus but it was not mandatory. I was able to turn up shortly before the interview so I didn't have to spend too much excruciating time in the waiting area with the other candidates. The interview questions were the traditional types you would expect to be asked for a DCLin interview, no subtexts or ambiguous intentions. I had 2 people interviewing me and I felt they were both neutral and professional in their demeanour and really wanted to hear the best of what I could offer.
- Very straightforward. I found it to be less anxiety provoking than expected and felt I was able to present who I am along with the knowledge I have of Clinical Psychology. It was interesting to have a service-user researcher on the panel, who asked questions specifically around service-user and carer involvement.
- Interviewing for King's was friendly, straightforward and although obviously nerve-wracking, was the most pleasant interview I did. I was overseas so I did it on Skype and I think they made every effort to make me feel comfortable and ask me questions about myself, my clinical experience, my research experience, and my leadership experience. There was no "trick" questions and I appreciated how straightforward it was.

- One short interview with about 6/7 questions. The questions were straight forward with no big surprises and there was a panel of 3 people. The process seemed very straight forward and was fairly brief, which was good!
- The interview was brief and straightforward. This was positive in some ways, although it may have been nice to have had more of a conversation, or an opportunity to respond to a clinical vignette or research question. I really valued the experience of having a service user in the interview.

## Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



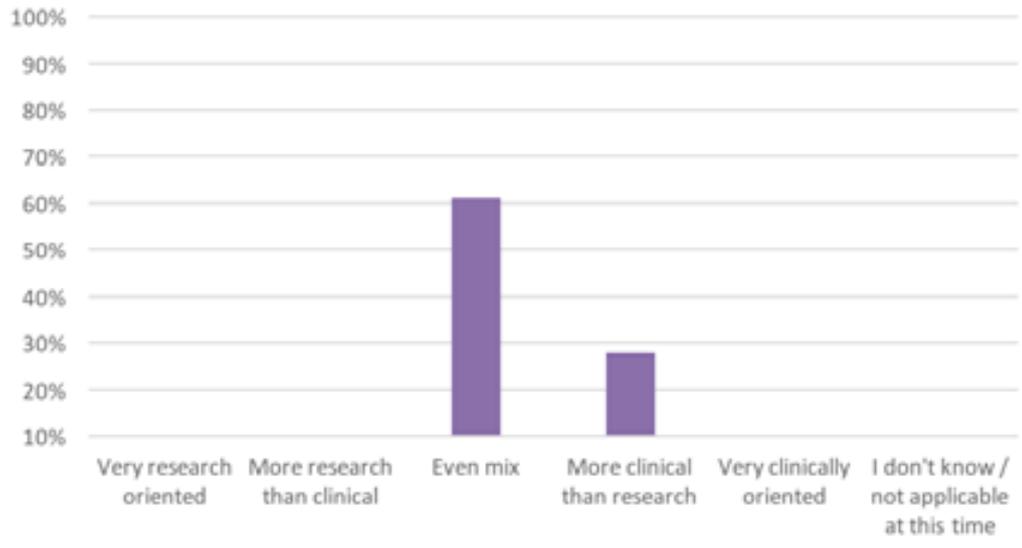
What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	56%
Mindfulness	94%
Schema Therapy	39%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	67%
Solution Focused Therapy	22%
Neuropsychology	89%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	22%
Other	0%

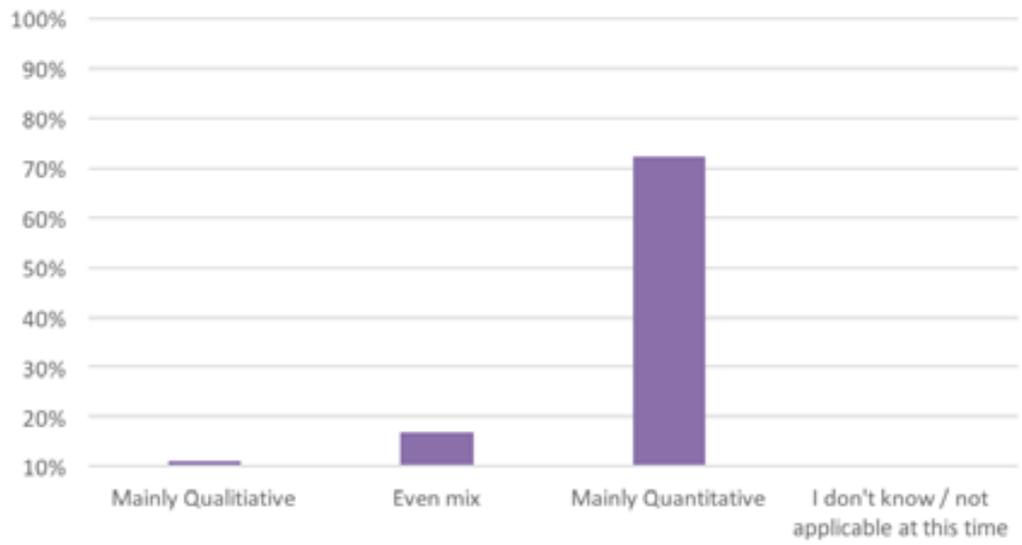
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- Very CBT heavy in the first year, but to be expected and helpful to have a good grounding in one model so you can extend out to other models. Would prefer more teaching on a variety of models however this is likely to come and you learn a lot on placement.
- The first year is very CBT and neuropsychology heavy, but there are some really interesting systemic workshops and introductions to other therapies including DBT and CAT.
- In first year there is a bigger emphasis on CBT - but I found this very helpful as I could build a foundation of skills quickly and feel more confident in at least one therapeutic approach whilst on placement. Later on in first year and in year 2 it decreases a lot.
- Our main modality is CBT but we have an increasing amount of teaching on family therapy delivered in conjunction with family therapy trainees
- Although IoPPN is well known for being a CBT course, I haven't felt overly pressured that way. I have had experience of different disciplines and most lecturers touch upon other ways of thinking. We also have seminars which touch upon topics like social constructivism. I think in 3rd year there are lectures on other types of therapy (e.g. DBT) too.
- I particularly chose this course because of my interest in neuropsychology and overall, I have been delighted with the level of teaching in this area. Plus, I'm excited about what else is yet to come.
- There was some systemic teaching at the beginning of the course which I enjoyed. However, this has waned a bit.
- We are also due some mindfulness training in Year 2 which I'm looking forward to.
- The course is mainly CBT but incorporates quite a lot of 3rd wave CBT including mindfulness, ACT and schema therapy.
- A majority of the teaching covers CBT. There is also a lot of teaching and tutorials on neuropsychology. Systemic therapy is also a main approach; we will receive more teaching on this in years 2 and 3.
- I have been really impressed with the quality of the systemic teaching in particular, it is combined with family therapy student teaching blocks and therefore it doesn't feel like an afterthought it feels like an integral part of our teaching and theirs.
- I expected the research methods teaching to be of a much higher standard at King's.
- This is a CBT institution. There are one or two lectures on systemic practice but they get pretty much lost in the ocean of CBT. What can be learnt outside of the world of CBT on placements is a bit of a lottery.
- It has been helpful to have a focus on CBT in the first year as this has helped my practice on placement. I have ticked only neuropsychology above as this is all that has currently been covered. We will explore other models of therapy over the 3 years.
- There is a lot of time devoted to CBT and systemic/family therapy teaching
- I chose the course partially due to the CBT focus, and I think that the balance of mainly CBT but with other orientations touched on is appropriate.

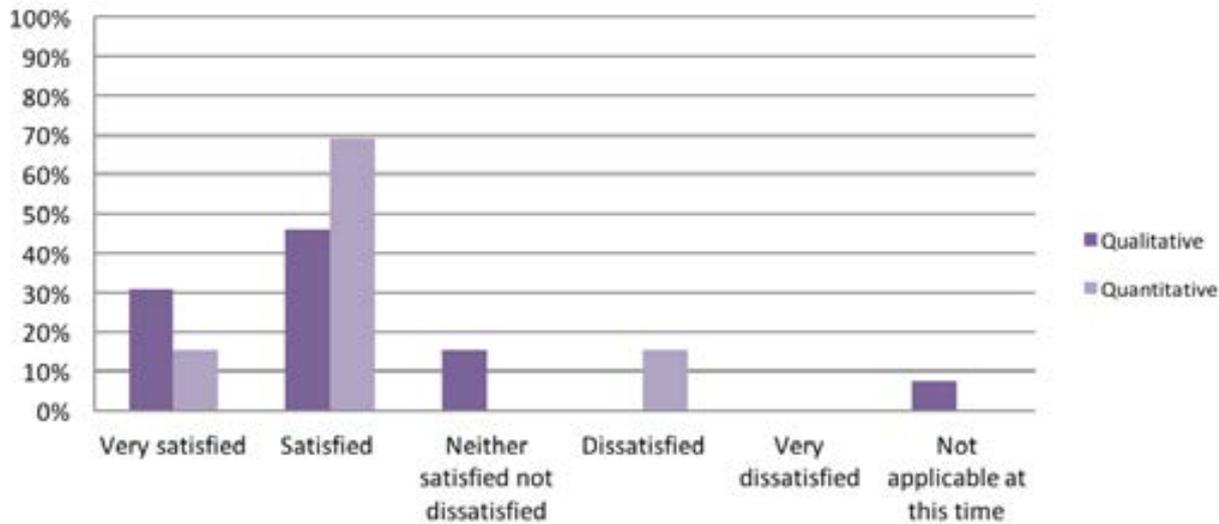
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



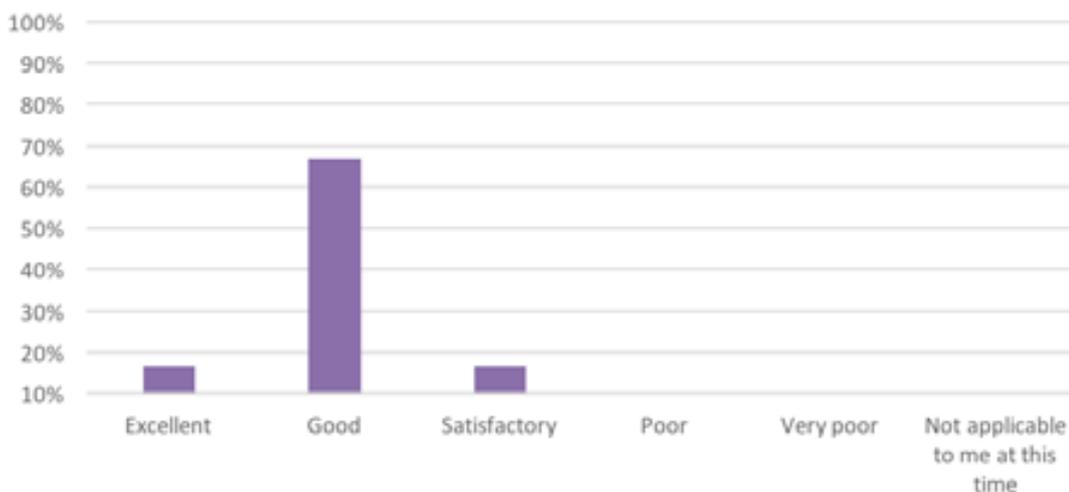
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



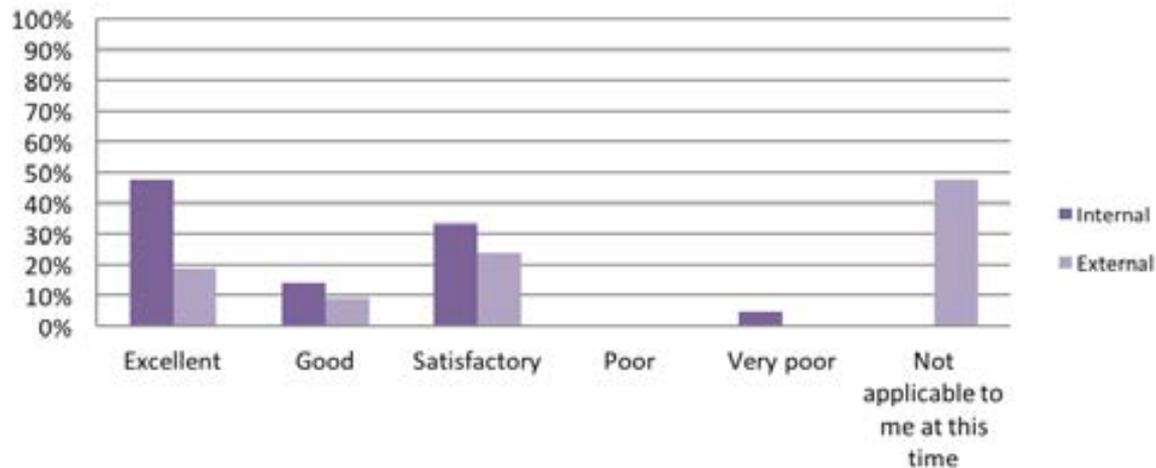
**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- Very little teaching on qualitative methods, which is reflected in the methodologies we choose for our systematic reviews and research projects (almost exclusively quantitative)
- Given the emphasis this course gives on research, I don't feel the teaching in statistics met with my expectations. Also, there isn't that much teaching on qualitative methods.
- There is a slight preponderance towards quantitative research on the course. However, the teaching thus far has covered quite basic topics. The qualitative teaching has been good, but somewhat time-limited.
- The teaching on quantitative research is very basic. We are expected to carry out a service evaluation project, main empirical project and a systematic review.
- I expected a much higher standard of research methods teaching at King's. The quantitative teaching has been of a very poor standard and there hasn't been enough qualitative teaching (1 lecture to date).
- It has been difficult identifying supervisors in the area of my interest - those who were identified by the course were either non-responsive or unable to supervise due to work constraints

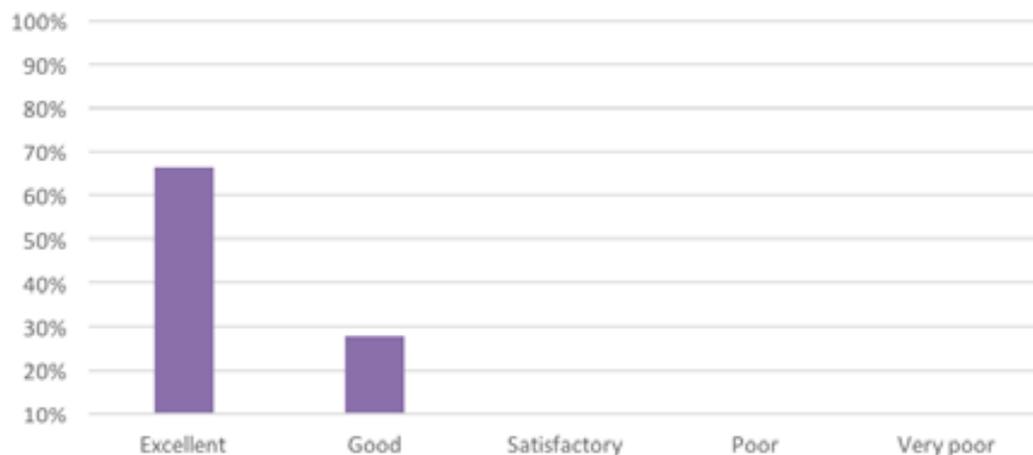
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



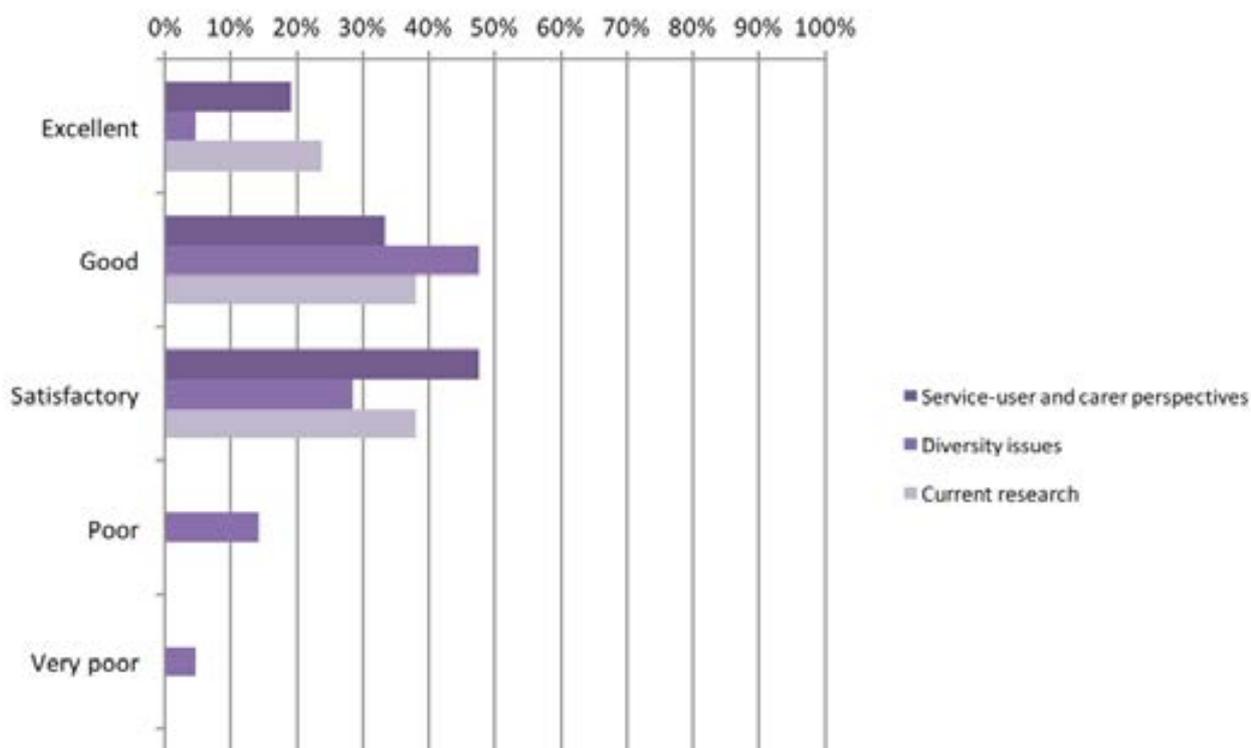
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

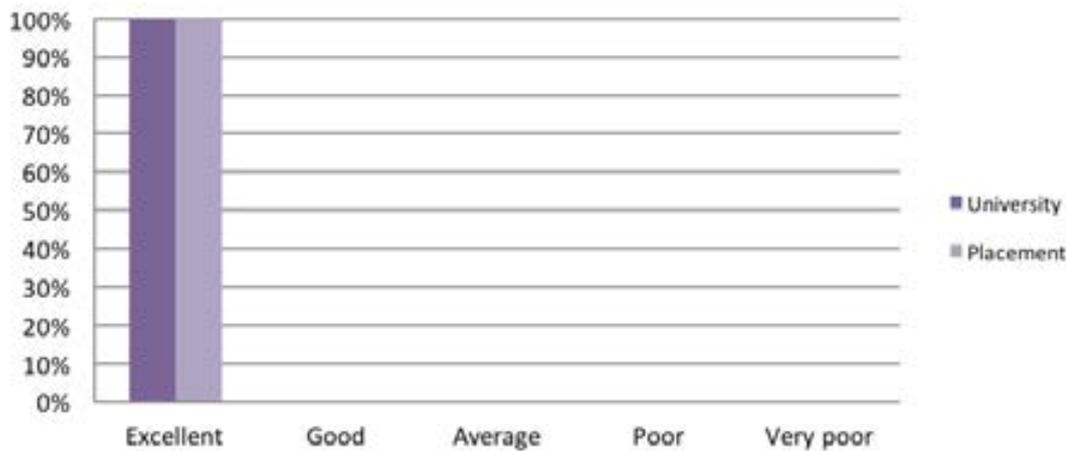
- Teaching quality varies significantly by lecturer, but we are taught by leading experts and clinicians in the field which is really helpful.
- Teaching is facilitated by the leaders in the field, so feel really privileged.
- The course is quite responsive to our feedback on teaching, and we provide feedback to the course after every lecture/workshop, as well as end-of-term and end-of-year feedback. We have seen some changes in the teaching timetable for the year below, based on our feedback, e.g. more frequent reflective practice sessions. Diversity issues are taught on the course, however they have tended to be limited to one-off “diversity” workshops rather than being treated as an important consideration for all our lectures/workshops
- I feel really honoured to have leaders in their fields coming to lecture us on different topics.
- The IoPPN, in my experience, does not have a strong reputation for service-user and cultural/social-constructionist considerations. However, I feel that the course is constantly trying to improve in this area and has already made good strides. I believe that as trainees, we are strongly encouraged to consider and formulate clients as holistic human beings with a wide variety of possible belief systems. Plus, the contribution of service users e.g., as co-lecturers, has thus far been invaluable.
- The teaching covers a wide range of topics, which is something at the cost of going into real detail, however, is useful in terms of breath.
- The IoPPN course benefits from having lecturers who are experts/leaders in a particular area. This is really great.
- A lot of the teaching is provided by scientist-practitioners working in the NHS or academics at King's so the current research feels like something which is readily incorporated into our teaching.
- We have had a variety of teaching on diversity (case discussion, seminar and lectures) these have been thought-provoking and engaging.
- In terms of service user and carer experiences, we have had ‘patient educator sessions’ and service users have been invited by lecturers to join teaching sessions, I do feel we could have more of this, particularly from a carer perspective which hasn't been discussed since our SLAM induction.
- There is little acknowledgement of political issues and the impact they have on the mental health system.
- Diversity issues are addressed, however, they are still not spoken about openly and is tip-toed around

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

11% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

- Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?
- There is a lot of reading, sometimes with little space between each tutorial or research meeting (as well as placement reading), which can be hard to keep up with. Placement can be heavy at first also and having mandatory annual leave means you can't just take a break which likely increases sickness.
- Not anything that I think would be different from any other course. It is more emotionally demanding than I had anticipated!
- Managing expectations from those who supervise me. Being neither a full-time researcher nor a full-time clinician, and having to do a "good enough" job in both domains, is both personally and professionally challenging, however most supervisors remember being in this position themselves and have been very supportive.
- Large workload can be difficult as you need to be very organised
- I found it difficult to adjust my performance anxiety over the first few months. However, I doubt that this would have been much different on any other course. The same goes for trying to wrap one's head around all the different demands for time (be it lectures/seminars, placement or research). Having said that, the course does offer sufficient support for anyone who is willing to take it up.
- Juggling research, coursework, placements and attending lectures is very demanding, especially if you enjoy life outside of work.
- We have quite a few tutorials which require us to read at least 4 papers. This can be demanding as we have a full teaching week and placement can be really busy, leaving little time to be able to read the papers. There is also a lot of admin to keep up with (log books, feedback etc.) along with trying to work on the research elements. There is a lot to juggle and may feel restricted as there isn't much flexibility with time.
- Having completed a Masters course where the work load was very much 'chunked' for you as you

progressed through the degree I have found the idea at Kings of simultaneously trying to start all of your assessed pieces of work in your first year somewhat overwhelming. You are expected to spin all of these plates with a full-time teaching schedule in the first year.

- Reading lists for tutorial are sometimes given out with very little time to actually do the reading. Tutorials sometimes scheduled to occur very closely together so there are time pressures on getting the reading done as well as being on placement mid-week. We are expected to have a lot of observations of our clinical work documented by placement supervisors but it can be hard at times to get an over-worked supervisor to find time to do this.
- Managing reading for tutorials and seminars alongside 2 full days of teaching and 3 full days on placement and also focussing on meeting deadlines for the service evaluation project and UCL competency scale at the end of first year.
- Fitting research in around clinical work. However I'm only in my first year and we get more allocated time for this later in the course.
- Juggling the clinical and research aspects of the course is demanding. However, I suspect this is the same on most courses.
- Juggling the course admin and deadlines, research, teaching, placement and placement tasks has been challenging.

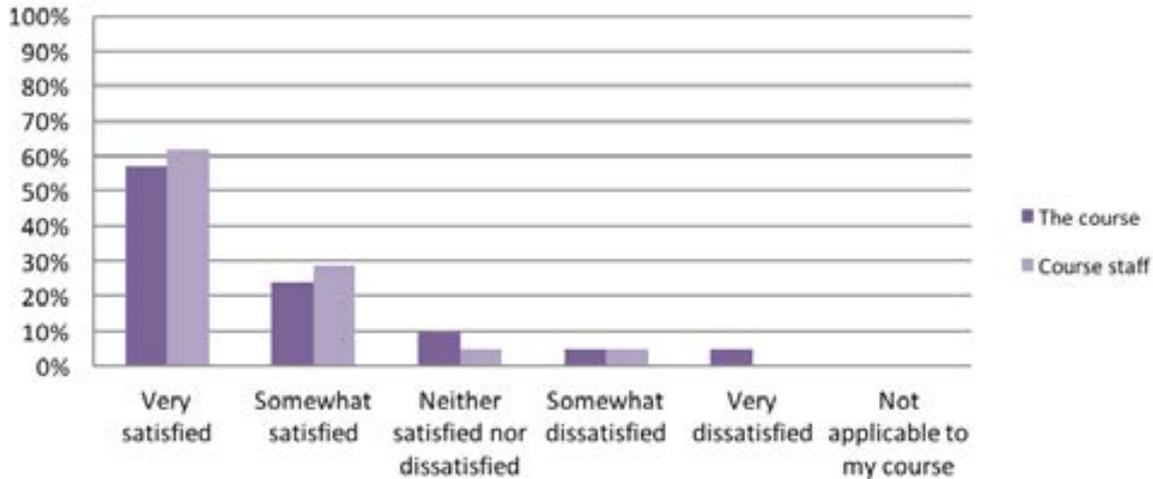
#### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	94%
"Buddy"	100%
Manager	50%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	22%
Professional Mentor	22%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	6%
Other	39%

Under "Other", responses included:

- Clinical tutor (x5)
- We don't have reflective groups in third year
- Informal reflective group
- We also have clinical tutors who complete our placement review and follow us from placement to placement across the span of the course.
- We had reflective practice in the first and second years but not the third year

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

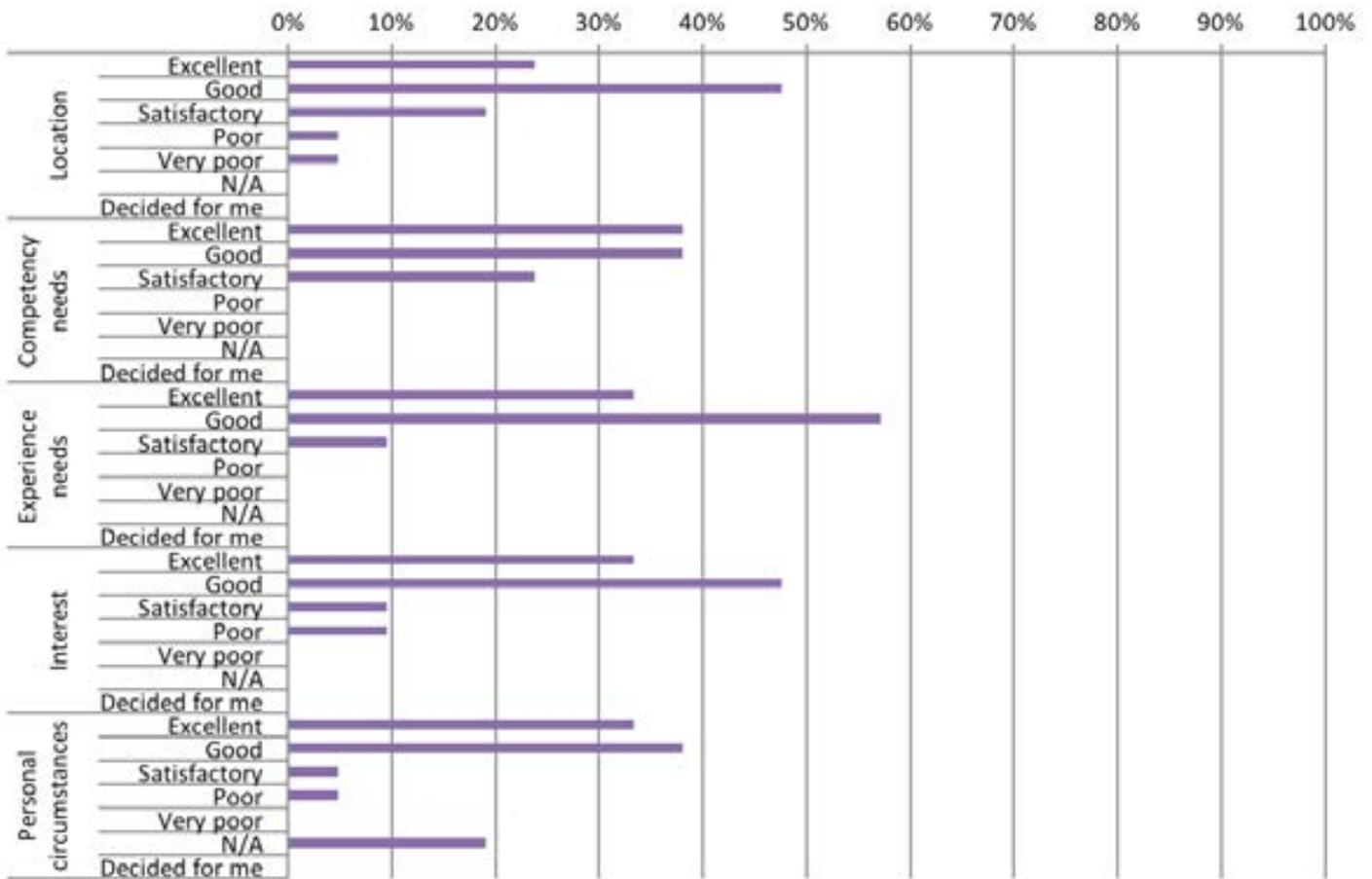


**Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

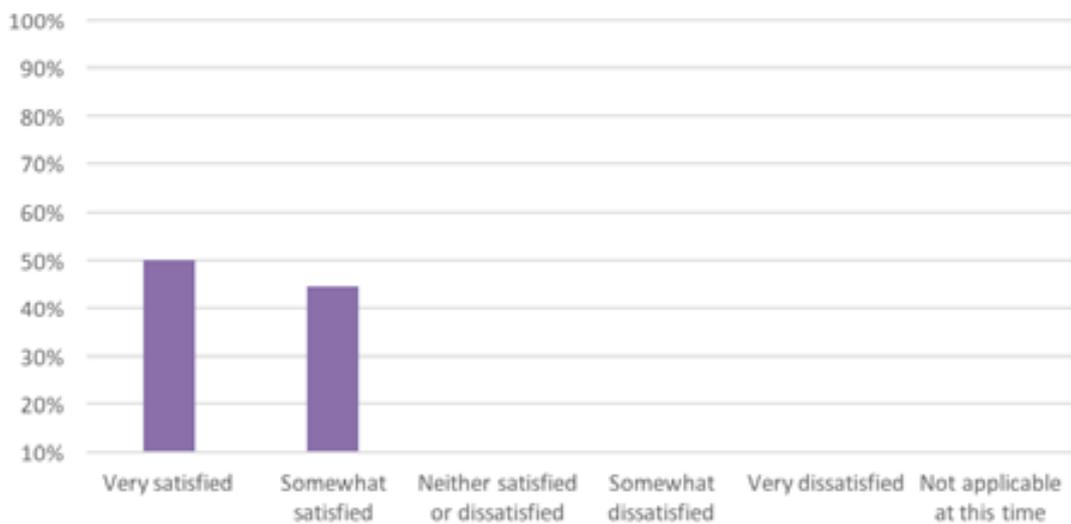
- Course staff are very accessible and reply to emails really fast. They are also friendly and willing to get to know you.
- Course staff are usually responsive to requests for support and I have found this helpful in the past, although I think the most valuable sources of support are my fellow trainees.
- The course staff are really supportive and have always been available and helpful whenever I've sought support.
- I feel that my personal support tutor and buddy have been excellent sources of support. The clinical tutor relationship feels very different, when people have experienced challenges on placement there has been a mixed response from the course and I'm not quite sure how much these tutors are there for us on placement and how much they are siding with our placement supervisors who are often also teaching on the course.
- Staff at the IoP are very approachable and supportive. I have been able to approach staff during times of stress and have always been met with empathy and helpful advice.
- We have a personal support tutor system where we have a named clinical psychologist who is a mentor over the 3 years. This has been an excellent source of support
- Diverse ways of getting support, course team very responsive and receptive to ideas and suggestions

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



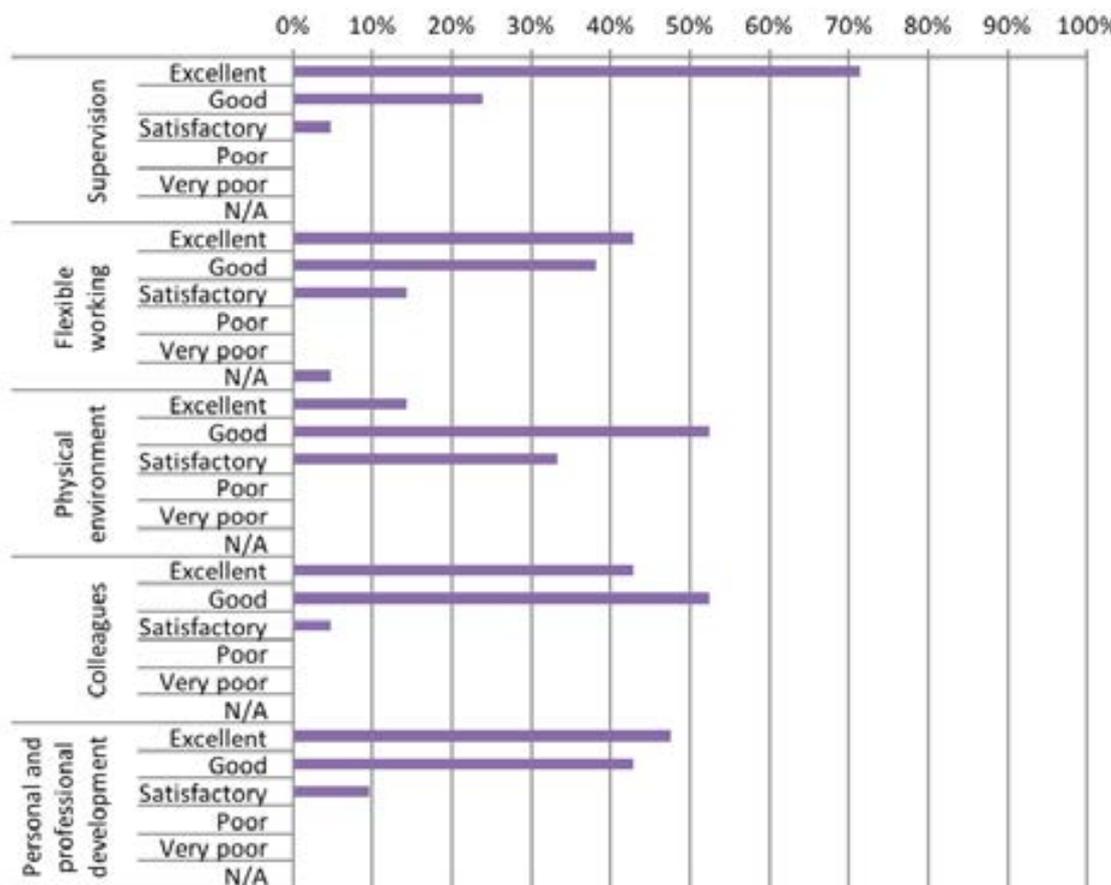
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- Very good at supporting us with skills to start placement with. It is a shame the teacher doesn't always line up with the placement work however there is no real solution to this.
- It does the best it can in the time there is, but this is balanced with less expectations on the first placement.
- I felt as prepared as I could be for my first placement.
- The course has a pretty detailed procedure for placement inductions in place and are keen that you and your supervisor follow this. You are also informed of your placement with a good amount of notice to be able to get in touch with your upcoming supervisor early.
- Placements at IoPPN are amazing.
- The first two weeks are spent preparing us for placements. There is a lot of teaching and workshops on clinical skills including role plays.
- Having completed our SLAM induction, we had all of the relevant information about our placements crammed into one day of teaching the day before our placements started, this did not feel very well thought through.
- Very well thought out - placements are allocated based on our CV's, in order to meet competencies we may not have had the opportunity to previously. At the same time, my placements have been in areas which are not totally unfamiliar to me, so this has helped me feel comfortable in what could have potentially been an anxiety provoking situation
- You do have very little teaching- there is a week of course induction and teaching in general clinical skills, a week of trust induction and then the placement starts. However, the liaison and organisation between course and placement means that I felt very supported and prepared at the start of my first placement, and I felt protected in terms of the clinical work itself.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Great supervisor and a great service, which allows for diverse experience.
- There are a wide range of national and specialist services available.
- We have six 6 month placements and have access to specialist services which is great. Placements are decided for us but the clinical team have long meetings to decide this, and based them (as much as possible) on location and developmental needs. Mine have all been relatively close and met my needs at that time.
- My experience on elective placement has surpassed the previous placements, so it's difficult to give a meaningful overall rating. In final year we choose from a very large range of specialist placements which has allowed me to work in exactly the area I wanted to, and the experience has been superb. First and second year placements are usually chosen for trainees and they do seem to take into account prior experience and competency needs. Trainees are placed in a mixture of generic and specialist placements from the beginning, which can feel daunting if you haven't had a lot of clinical experience prior.
- I have loved my placement so far, the supervisor has been wonderful and I have had the ability to be part of research trials, develop the service and lots of other opportunities. I really couldn't have asked for anything better.
- I was working in a national & specialist service which has a somewhat different funding structure than e.g., community psychological services. My experience (e.g., in terms of having a desk, working with extremely experienced colleagues, and being able to shadow other specialist teams) may not be reflective of all other available placements.
- On paper my first placement provides a variety of good trainee experiences, in practice I was sent there during a period of service change and I don't think that my supervisor should have agreed to take on a trainee whilst there was so much going on within the team.
- There seems to be a high degree of variation in people's experiences. Being on a split placement this has been my experience too, one half is brilliant with great supervision and lots of work with clients, the other side is very thin on either of these.
- My experience had been very positive - I am supervised by a counselling psychologist which has allowed me to use an integrated approach with my clients, using CBT with CAT and narrative therapy. Due to space constraints, my supervisor has been flexible in how/where I work and all issues are addressed in supervision, which I have found very containing. My colleagues are great and there is a fortnightly trainee group, where I am able to reflect on my experience with trainees from Salomon's, counselling psychology courses and psychotherapist trainees.
- My supervisor was very mindful of the balance of clinical experiences, opportunities for professional development, including a range of leadership skills, and meeting course requirements and training needs

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	100%
No	0%
Don't know	0%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly across South London.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	6%
No	94%
Don't know	0%

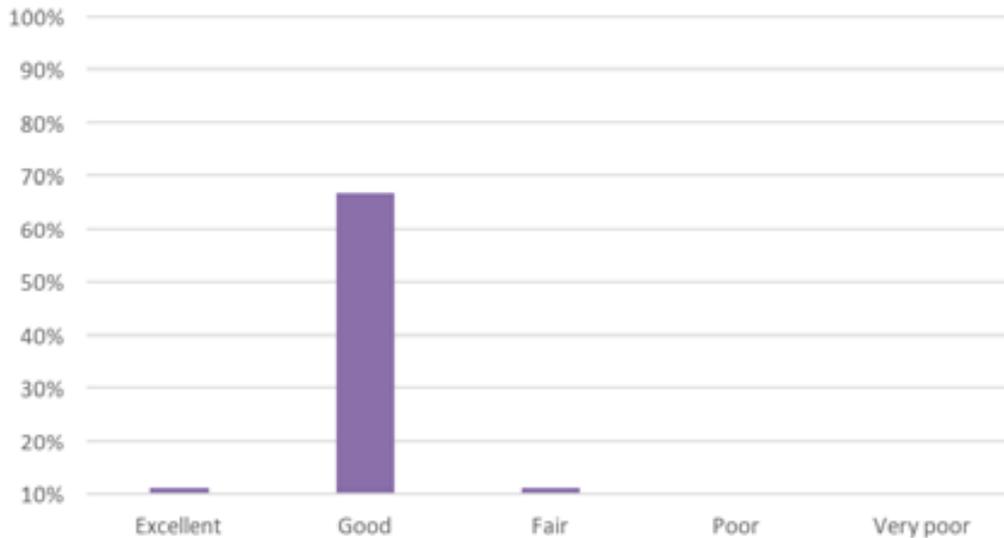
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	11%
Good	39%
Fair	44%
Poor	6%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- It can be difficult to keep a good work life balance with juggling academic, research and placement responsibilities, however it could be worse.
- If you start the coursework early you can have a good work life balance, it is very dependent on whether you are disciplined and committed enough.
- Depends on how you manage it. If you choose a research project that requires ethics approval, recruitment etc., as I did, then you can expect your work/life balance to be skewed towards work! Others have managed it very well and can keep it within normal office hours. Coming up to thesis submission, I think most people have acknowledged that work/life goes out the window.
- There is a lot of work to balance in the IOPPN course, they do put lots of work coming together. I have found myself doing at least something most weekends, and working some evenings. Saying that, I can still have an okay work-life balance. I think it is what you make of it
- I have currently found a good balance between getting my work done on campus/at placement and then leaving it there, while also making step-by-step progress on my research. How this is going to pan out over the next 2.5 years of training is currently a bit hard to predict. However, I don't feel like I'm falling behind.
- If you are organised it is perfectly possible to keep all work to working hours (Monday to Friday 9-5)
- It is very hard to get a work life balance as the course feels very busy in the first year. My experience is that this settles after a while but takes some getting used to.
- This term has been more challenging, we have a full time table of teaching 2 days a week, every week, (other courses have research days or reading weeks but you don't get those at King's until the summer of your first year). We have a full reading list for tutorials and seminars, we are reading and working on thesis ideas, we are organising service evaluation projects, we are winding up our first placements and the assessment of competencies, observations and clinical logs associated with those, we are preparing for our second placements with reading lists from our next supervisors and we have to submit feedback on all teaching sessions (6+ a week). It is difficult to keep King's out of my weekends at the moment.
- It is very restrictive to be told when to take your annual leave. We have only a tiny amount of autonomy to take some time off in the summer, otherwise our Christmas and Easter holiday periods are dictated to us. This results in periods of 3 months passing with no opportunity to take even a single day off. Aspects such as these make this course feel a little infantilising at times.
- So far, I have been able to manage a good balance - I sometimes read in the evenings or one day at the weekends, but am currently able to manage the workload 9-5
- It's a big adjustment, but the balance is steadily improving. At the moment, we have two teaching days and three days on placement, which leaves very little for research, admin etc. - next year we have a research day per week which I believe will help the work life balance

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Although I took a substantial drop in salary It is excellent for the role I have as a trainee.
- We are paid very well although London is very expensive.
- Very fair wage
- I feel so lucky to be paid well on this course! Its more than enough to live on in London
- The Widening Access Scheme tax rebate would be really helpful.
- I think the amount we receive is fair.
- There are ongoing issues regarding our tax returns - this of course is a political issue rather than the course. But has been frustrating.
- I am a self-funded international student and therefore I struggle to make ends meet on this course and am depending on loans to get through the course.
- What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?
- The placements are very interesting and diverse and we are taught by very experienced clinicians.
- Learning alongside the other trainees - I've learnt as much from them as from the lecturers. The wide range of placements available is also really good.
- The placements are really specialist and interesting, and it's nice that it's a small course.
- My colleagues - met a great group if friends and they are all very supportive.
- Focused on CBT
- The biggest selling point of the IoP is obviously the breadth of opportunities to work with highly skilled researchers and clinical experts. I have also really liked the emphasis on development of leadership skills on placement, as it's nice to break out of the therapy room and share clinical psychology skills with other groups.
- All the opportunities you can take up! The IoPPN offers so many events/research that you can get involved in!
- The course team is really friendly and supportive.
- The vast majority of placement supervisors are hand-selected and sensitive to what they can reasonably expect of you.
- The course cares about trainee feedback and wants to constantly improve.

- Placements.
- It's great to get together and have the support of the other trainees. The clinical placements are challenging but provide great opportunity for learning and for personal and professional growth.
- I really love my cohort we are small enough that everyone is friendly with each other, no one has people that they won't sit next to at lunch or in lectures, we are all so supportive of each other, if someone is on placement with a questions or in need of help everyone else rallies to find out the information or answer the question. We are also from a really wide range of backgrounds clinically/academically and socially/culturally, this collective pool of knowledge and experience has been so helpful to learn from each other.
- This for me validates the King's interview process that not only have the course thought individually about who should be on the course but how we fit together as a group and complement each other.
- The size of the cohort (currently 25) is just right for the group to remain a tight-knit community.
- The teaching, the excellent location of placements and the experts in the field who deliver our teaching
- The support from fellow trainees, the course support, and the excellent placement I have had so far. In all areas I have felt very supported and I find the teaching excellent.
- The clinical placements have been excellent
- Well-rounded in terms of the core design, but most importantly, the experience of being part of the cohort. Everyone is supportive and having a network of people with shared experiences is invaluable.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- The cohort size is great – perfect for getting to know everybody and making good friends with them. We do a lot together. Also the research opportunities are wide and similar with the placement opportunities. The IoPPN is also home to others who are working in mental health and developing treatments and research, which means you become part of a great community.
- Would highly recommend, especially if you live in South London as it is relatively easy to get to all placements.
- The IoPPN gets a bad reputation I feel as being a rigid, unfeeling course. Although you can only take holidays at certain times, that's the only thing I have felt is very rigid. There's lots of support, and they really try to look after you. They encourage you to be friendly in your cohort. It's really a wonderful place to study, and South London is very diverse.
- If you are considering to become a neuropsychologist or to learn more about neuropsychological theory / assessments / rehabilitation / research, this is probably the course for you!
- This is an amazing course for the placements. There are so many national and specialist services in SLaM and the course will try to arrange that you do the placements you really want to do.
- The course staff are very supportive and approachable. They recognise that the training is intense and they try to look after the trainees. The teaching so far in the first year has mostly been good and it's great to have access to lecturers who are experts in their own field. There are no research study days to begin with (an occasional 1/2 day) so it can feel very restrictive and difficult to stay on top of some aspects such as the research. However, the course is enjoyable and the placements are great.
- Don't think that you shouldn't apply to King's because you don't have a PhD, they do care about your clinical experience and your reflections on what you have learnt about yourself during your AP journey to interviews.
- I would have liked some more study says interspersed with teaching.
- More allocated time for research in the first term of teaching.
- The great thing about this course is that they are very amenable to suggestions for improvement. Trainees are embedded within the course design and evaluation process, we sit on committees, we develop good relationships with the course team and are given choice and options when there is an opportunity to change things about the course

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- 30-40 minute interview. The interview will consider a candidate's communication skills, suitability for the Programme and profession. An applicant's academic and research experience, clinical experience, capacity for self-reflection and knowledge of current issues affecting the NHS will also be covered. Interview panel consists of members of the Programme team Clinical Psychologists from Placement Providing Trusts and a service user researcher.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.

Teaching	14 hours in year 1, 7 hours in years 2 and 3
Placement	21 hours
Personal Study	2 hours
Research	7 hours in years 2 and 3

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	0%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Lancaster University

30 responses (41% of 72 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	57%
Year 2	7%
Year 3	37%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	10%
25 – 29 years	67%
30 – 34 years	13%
35 – 39 years	3%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	7%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	20%
Twice	33%
3 times	17%
4 times	17%
5 times	13%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	50%
MRes	0%
Diploma	3%
Post Graduate Certificate	13%
Conversion course	7%
None	33%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	7%
2 years	13%
3 years	33%
4 years	20%
5 years	10%
6+ years	17%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	57%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	30%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	33%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	10%
Research Assistant	13%
Voluntary Research Assistant	3%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	67%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	7%
Other	40%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Lancaster are very transparent about their interview process so you know what to expect on the day. I felt that the staff at Lancaster and other trainees really put you at ease on what could be one of the most nerve-wracking days of your life. Each of the different components of the interview allows you to demonstrate different skills. They're really looking for you to be yourself and demonstrate both personal and professional qualities. Members of the interview panel were warm and friendly.
- I left the interview thinking 'if I had to do that interview process again I would'. Everyone involved made me feel at ease, the length of the process was enough that I had time to relax and feel able to answer questions/complete the other tasks at a level I felt happy with. I felt like the process was trying to get the best out of me, to understand my potential, and I didn't once feel like I was being tested or judged. I was very impressed and I might even say I enjoyed it.
- I found the interview day quite stressful as we had to do a presentation but this has now changed.
- It was very relaxed and it was clear that the interviewers wanted you to have the best opportunity to show what you could do. It felt genuine and transparent - the interview process was made clear beforehand and it didn't feel like the interviews were designed to trip you up.
- I really enjoyed the interview process, the staff, trainees and members of the learning together group were really helpful and put interviewees at ease before the interview
- There were current first year trainees there on the day prior to going into the interview which I found really helpful, as it helped relax me and gave me the opportunity to ask questions about the course. I felt that Lancaster were very transparent about what the day would entail and the criteria they were looking for when choosing applicants so when I went into the interview, I felt much more prepared than I had in interviews for other courses. I had applied the previous year and didn't get onto the course. I used the feedback that they had given me, which helped me to get on this year.
- Really welcoming day. I liked that it was based at a hotel, as it felt like "neutral ground"!
- It was competency based which meant it was easier to explain how your experience has prepared you for the course. I felt the interview panels were friendly and welcoming, they were clearly trying to get the best out of you. I also felt they provided good feedback after the interview on unsuccessful occasions.
- I found the selections day to be a friendly and enjoyable experience. The staff and facilitators came across as really supportive, and the whole process was so transparent, it felt like they just wanted to get the best out of you and get to know who you were. They seemed interested in finding out about my values and experiences, how I relate to people and what kind of practitioner I wanted to be/what I would bring to training, rather than focusing on my knowledge of legislation, research methods etc. In addition, the process felt very inclusive, focusing on the selection test rather than how many AP positions I've had. My interview at Lancaster left me feeling like I had found the right course for me.
- I found the interview process at Lancaster University excellent. This was promoted by the course's transparency to applicants around how they conduct their interviews and what competencies they assess for at interview. All this information is presented in a clear and concise manner on the programme's website.
- The selections test (verbal and numerical reasoning) is the hardest part of the whole application process, but don't let this put you off! The whole purpose is to increase diversity, including race, socioeconomic background, culture. I think selections tests are a great way of showing your competencies if you are at all unsure about your written form or if you have an atypical route into training. Personally I never did any research, couldn't afford to do a MSc and just worked in Assistant Psychologist roles. Not having that ticked all the boxes in your CV doesn't mean you are less capable as a trainee in the eyes of Lancaster. Once you're through to interviews, the panel I experienced was warm and very smiley, and understood that it was an anxious day. No trick

questions or hidden agendas. Lancaster has always been very transparent in their processes. There were 1st year trainees and members of a service user group as hosts, admins were there all day and run like clockwork, they were always helpful if any questions came up.

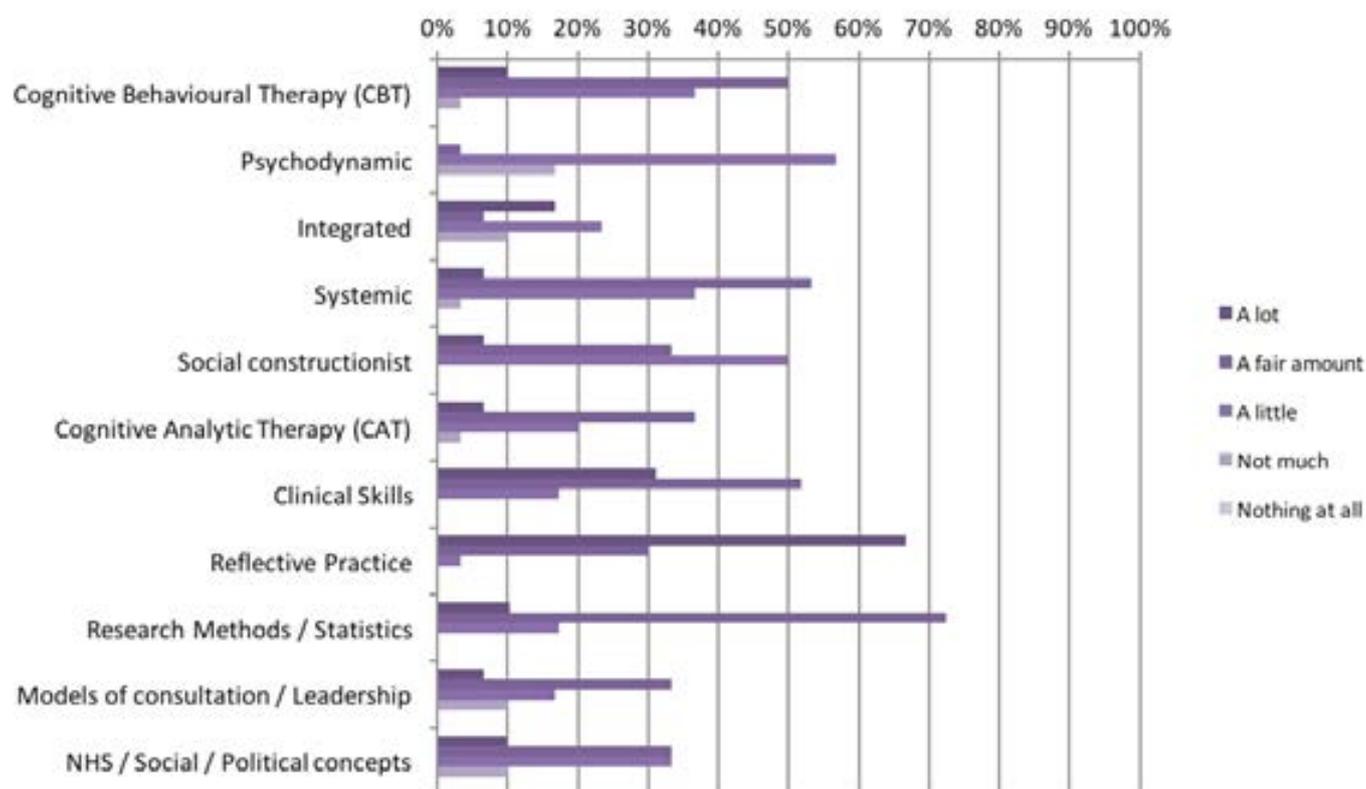
- The numerical and verbal reasoning tests were challenging, but I personally found them much less stressful than a written exam. The interview day itself was actually quite enjoyable. All of the staff were so welcoming and supportive. They did everything they could to make the interview process go as smoothly as possible and with minimal stress. I knew that if I didn't get in, Lancaster was the one place I would apply to again because I got such a good impression of the course on the interview day.
- It was good, though I was nervous the tutors and trainees made a real effort to reassure me. The two panels (interview and presentation) allowed me to demonstrate a range of skills and experiences.
- The interview process for Lancaster feels like it is designed to give applicants a level playing field and get the best out of you regardless of past experiences. Although the verbal and numerical reasoning tests are a bit daunting, being able to do them at home makes it feel more relaxed than being in a formal testing environment. The interview day it really helped me to feel at ease as there were current trainees around to chat with which made it feel less formal. The activities and interview questions allow you to make the best of your experience and let the panel get to know you.
- The prospect of finally getting an interview meant I had lots of apprehension about the interview. However, current trainees and members of the Learning Together group were available to talk to prior to the interview which provided reassurance and helped to calm my nerves. The interview itself was well managed, although the stop watch used to keep time was a little off putting. The interview tasks were explained well and there was the opportunity to ask questions for clarity.
- Really welcoming and well organised day. As all the tasks were completed straight after one another it was a speedy process and this meant there was less opportunity to get anxious between tasks so the panel were able to see you relax a little. My impression was that they just wanted to see the "real you". Nothing was overly daunting and there were no surprises.
- Very welcoming, instantly made me feel more at ease prior to the start of the interview. You could tell that everyone wanted you to do the best you could and made sure the process best facilitated that. The actual interview did not feel intimidating or as anxiety provoking as I'd anticipated.
- Very friendly and welcoming. Extremely open beforehand will all the tasks we would be asked to complete (all the information is on course handbook). Panel were supportive and friendly and you felt as though they genuinely wanted you to be able to show your best on the day.
- It was very demanding, quite intense but also very fair. I felt I had the opportunity to show that I had the required skills and competencies to be considered.
- Lancaster outline the exact competencies they are looking for both on their website and also in the letter you receive with your invite to interview. I really valued that they made explicit not requiring clinical examples of you meeting these competencies, rather, just that you as a person have these competencies.
- There were first-year trainee's and service users in the waiting room, welcoming and carrying out admin related tasks. This created a friendly and welcoming environment. I really appreciated that the involvement of service users did not feel tokenistic, something i had come away from other interviews feeling.
- The interview itself felt safe and supportive. The variety of tasks helped me to feel that even if I hadn't done particularly well in one area, I could show those same competencies in a different portion of the interview."
- I found the interview process to be clear and transparent about what to expect before, during and after the interview. The interview panel, other staff, trainees and service user involvement group representatives were all really friendly and I felt that the interview panel were trying to get the best out of me and give me lots opportunities to show my competencies in the interview.
- The interview process was very clear and comfortable. The process was explained to you prior to the

day. The day was welcoming as current trainees and community members were available to chat to, calming any nerves. A stop watch was used to keep to timings and you were told how long was left at certain points.

■ 4th interview

- It was an enjoyable experience. I was made to feel welcome throughout the interview process; first year students acted as hosts and were available to discuss the course or answer any queries. Course admin staff were also on hand to provide information. The interview panels were friendly and encouraging. I felt the positive atmosphere developed allowed me to perform to the best of my ability. I heard back from the course quickly following interview and received a date/time to call to receive comprehensive feedback.
- Really friendly and encouraging. Felt they were trying to get the best out of me and they helped to ease nerves by making me feel settled and welcome
- I was pretty terrified when going for the interview as it's quite thorough. However, on the day everyone made the effort to help me feel welcome and comfortable. This atmosphere helped me settle into the day and relax into the process. I still felt anxious but mostly they made it feel less daunting and more like chance to show off my potential. It was also great to attend an interview that was about me as a person, and how I've learned and grown from life, rather than what I knew about psychology.
- I thought the interview process was understandable anxiety provoking but it felt fair and manageable and as though staff wanted to see you as a whole persona and not a 'perfect' trainee.
- It has changed now and I'm not sure how the current process feels.
- I found the experience intense but accommodating. I felt that I was evaluated fairly on my potential to become a good clinical psychologist. I felt I was asked questions that allowed me to make decisions and reflect on my responses.
- I enjoyed the interview process and thought it provided a fair reflection of my skills and abilities to do the role. I thought there was adequate opportunity to showcase myself through a variety of interviewing methods. Additionally, through a variety of interviewing methods I was able to feel more confident in aspects of the interview (presentation) where I felt less confident in other aspects (interview questions)
- Found the role play and similar exercises nerve wracking, but generally not as stressful as I expected.
- Course content and teaching

## How much teaching is there on different models?



## What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	52%
Mindfulness	79%
Schema Therapy	0%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	3%
Solution Focused Therapy	97%
Neuropsychology	90%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	55%
Other	10%

### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

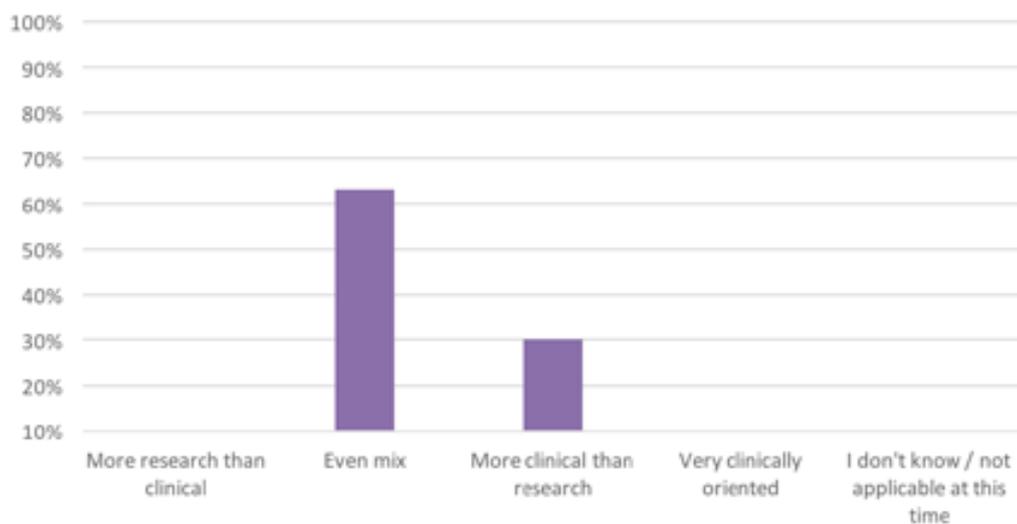
- A wide variety of topics are timetabled throughout the three years. It sometimes feels as though you are learning a little about a lot of different things, but the ethos is that you are developing your own style as a practitioner and it isn't helpful to shoehorn everyone into the same therapeutic modalities. The course has adheres to the CBT+1 guidance from the BPS and so trainees receive core training in CBT plus one other therapeutic modality of your choice (from systemic, CAT or neuropsychology). Also, there are CPD funds available to trainees for external courses and events; trainees are encouraged to use this if they would like to develop specialist skills in any area.
- Reflective practice and communication skills teaching is well established and given the right amount of time. More time on therapeutic models would be good, although we are only half way

through first year and have had a lot of research teaching because we have started lots of our assignments already.

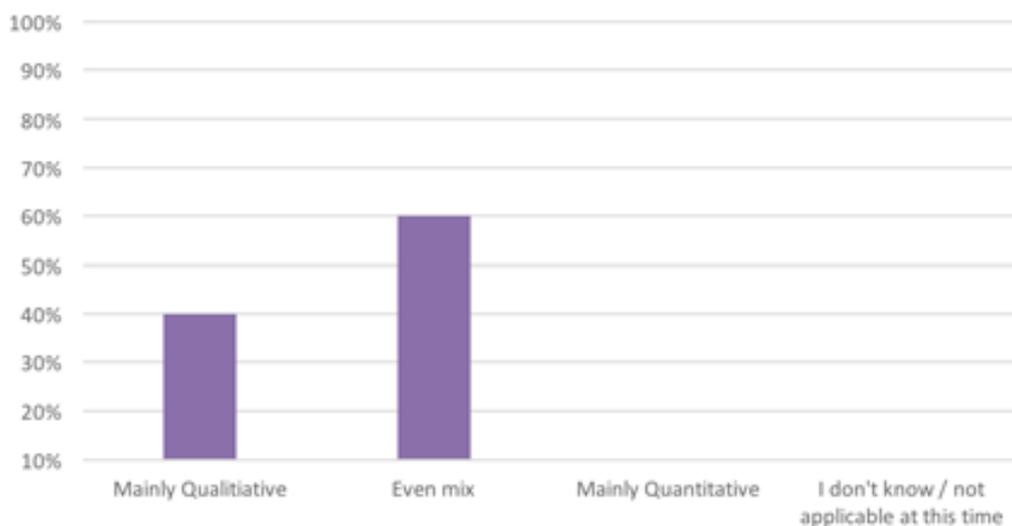
- The course are very responsive to feedback about the content of teaching. There is an emphasis on reflective practice, which suits me. However, it does sometimes feel like a lot of time is spent on learning research skills and thinking about the wider systems, whilst in my opinion more time could be spent learning practical clinical skills or therapeutic models.
- I would like some more model-focussed teaching to feel better equipped whilst on placement
- The teaching feels like we are being exposed to a number of different therapeutic approaches and models which is really good. The downside of this is that we don't have as much depth of knowledge, and can sometimes feel unequipped in terms of clinical skills for placements.
- I have found that the Lancaster course does favour one model of psychological therapy over another, for example there is equal weighting to CBT as there is to other less well known psychological therapies, such as narrative therapy or solution focused therapy. The course encourages trainee's to think about epistemology (their own relationship with knowledge and subsequent understanding of human suffering) and how this influences when, what, why, which and where psychological models are adopted in clinical practice.
- Lancaster tries their best to make sure trainees are competent and confident in all models of therapy. Our teaching isn't modular, they are spread throughout the three years and often line up two very different models of teaching (e.g. CBT on day 1, Systemic on day 2) so that we can make up our own minds and critique each model before aligning ourselves to one. A lot of our teaching is focused on the current political climate, clinical psychology's influence, the ever changing NHS and broadening our skills out as much as possible so that we don't do just therapy. Prior to each new placement we have a block of teaching specifically to develop skills in that particular placement. I have never gone into placement not having a clue what I'm doing. Lancaster also prioritises trainees' personal development and wellbeing. Throughout the three years we have small 'seminar' type groups, where we talk about our attachment styles, our vulnerabilities as trainees, and how we are building resilience in and out of work. Sometimes these are facilitated by a certain model (e.g. psychodynamic, compassion-focused, mindfulness) which is also helpful in building knowledge as well as self-care.
- Being midway through the first year, it has felt we have not had as much teaching on specific models and applying clinical skills as may have been useful. I'm aware, however, that further on in our timetable there are more dedicated teaching sessions coming up on specific therapeutic approaches. There has been a focus on research skills underpinning assignments as well as personal development and reflective practice.
- A variety of areas are covered including psychological approaches and it would perhaps be beneficial to spend longer learning about some of these.
- It can seem a little research and reflective heavy at first but as you progress through the year the focus does shift to more therapeutic approaches and models.
- Year 1 has focused more on CBT, however we are now moving on to having teaching on more psychodynamic approaches and eventually CAT.
- Emphasis on reflective practice and personal development, which is extremely helpful in initiating thinking about the kind of psychologist you hope to be in the future.
- Lancaster has a reputation for being reflective, and whilst this is true, the course also emphasises and values research/ research methods. Speaking as a first-year trainee, a good proportion of our teaching has focused on research methods. I do feel that the course has slightly underwhelmed me in terms of teaching on clinical models and their application, but that must come with the caveat that the second half of our first-year teaching suggests this will be addressed in the coming months.
- There seems to be a general consensus that there could be more in depth teaching on models or mental health presentations. Reflective practice seems to be the biggest priority for Lancaster teaching.

- A good balance so far - the course acts on feedback from previous years
- The course provides teaching in a variety of approaches. This improves your knowledge base regarding different approaches/models, and i feel helps you develop into a more flexible and reflective practitioner.
- There is a good mix of topics included in the teaching timetable, which are relevant to each placement you are on.
- There's a strong reflective element throughout the course, which I welcomed. In fact I wish there was even more-although people differ on this. We had a good mix of models, although there was a lot of CBT in the first two years.
- Due to the course ethos, there is no model specific CBT teaching. However, I enjoy that there is quite a variety of different models covered, as this is more in line with the integrative approach that clinical psychologists should take in approaching cases.

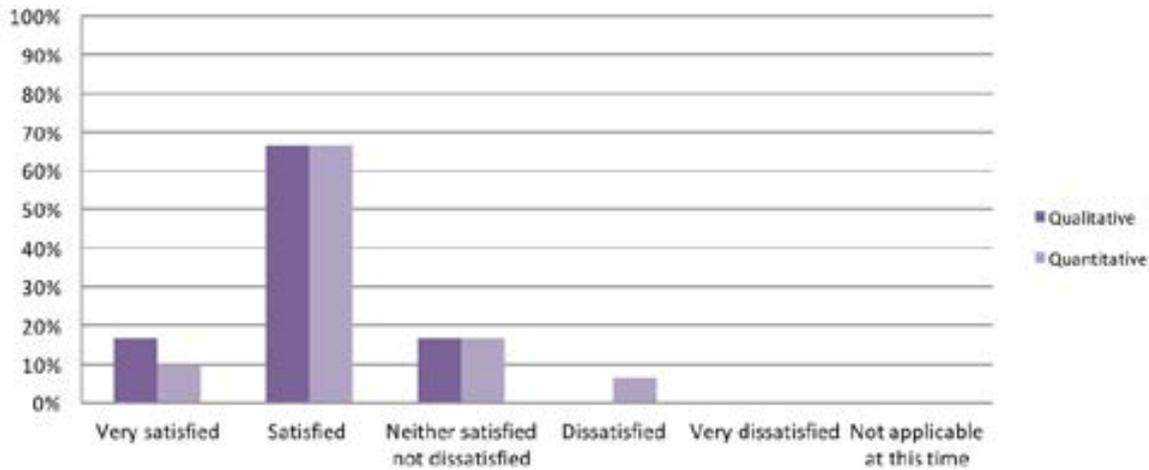
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



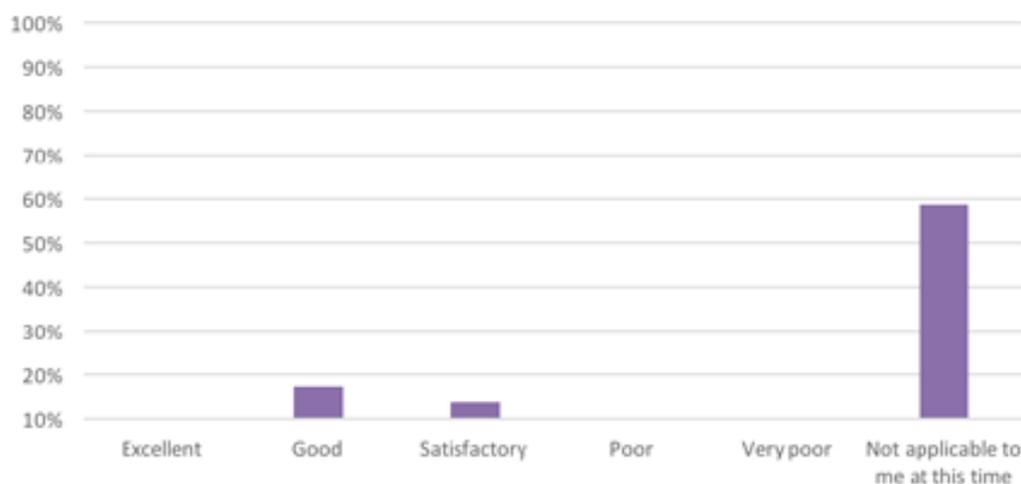
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



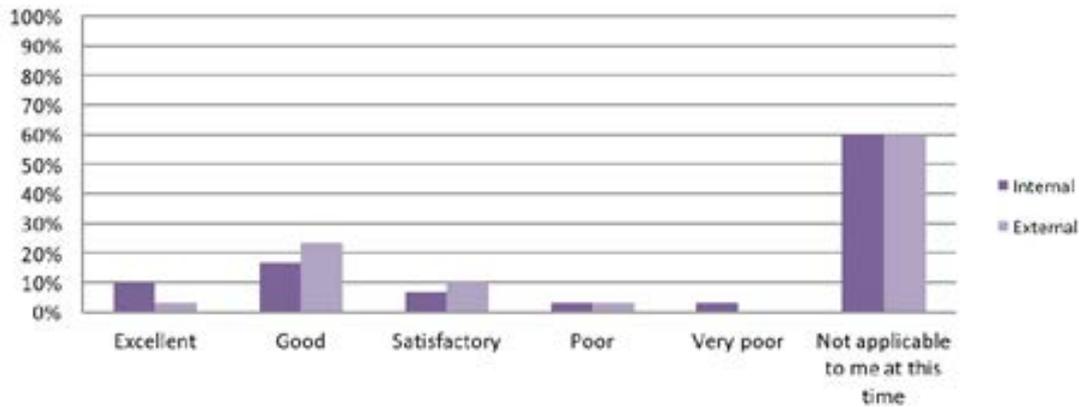
**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- I would like to see the teaching on research skills more focused on the context of clinical practice and NHS constraints.
- Lancaster gives more emphasis to research than i had realised due to there not being any exams.
- Students encouraged to develop research skills and supported in this
- Many of the projects tend to be qualitative by trainees choice, but you are supported to do quantitative if that's what you prefer
- We do a lot of research. However, you get to choose the topic and method, so you've got a lot of flexibility to try and make the most of it. I'm not a fan of research and would happily do none. That said I'm enjoying that I got to do all qualitative research, which is more suited to who I am, and focus on areas that I find interesting. This has made a tough situation easier and I'm enjoying my thesis as a result.
- Teaching for our SLR was poor and we were left quite alone. Other quant has been good. Like anything, it depends on the lecturers!
- These elements of teaching often seem very rushed.

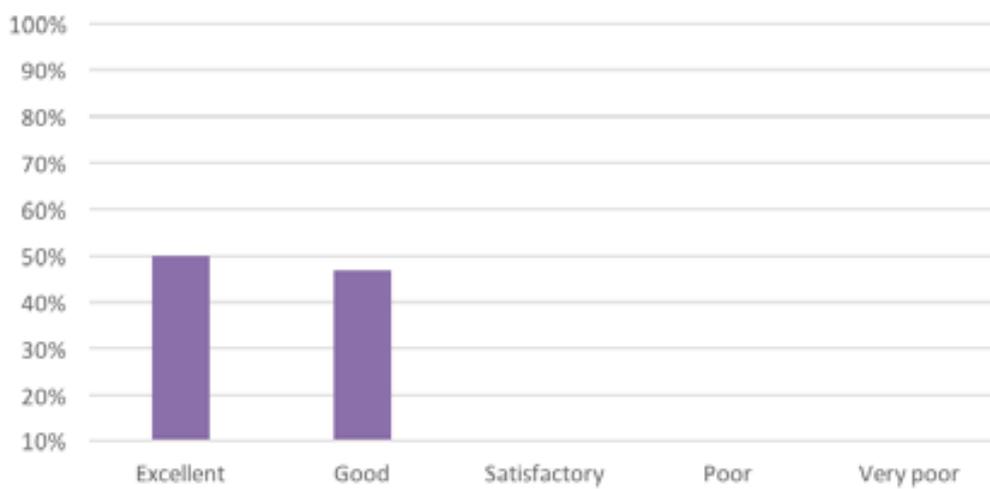
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



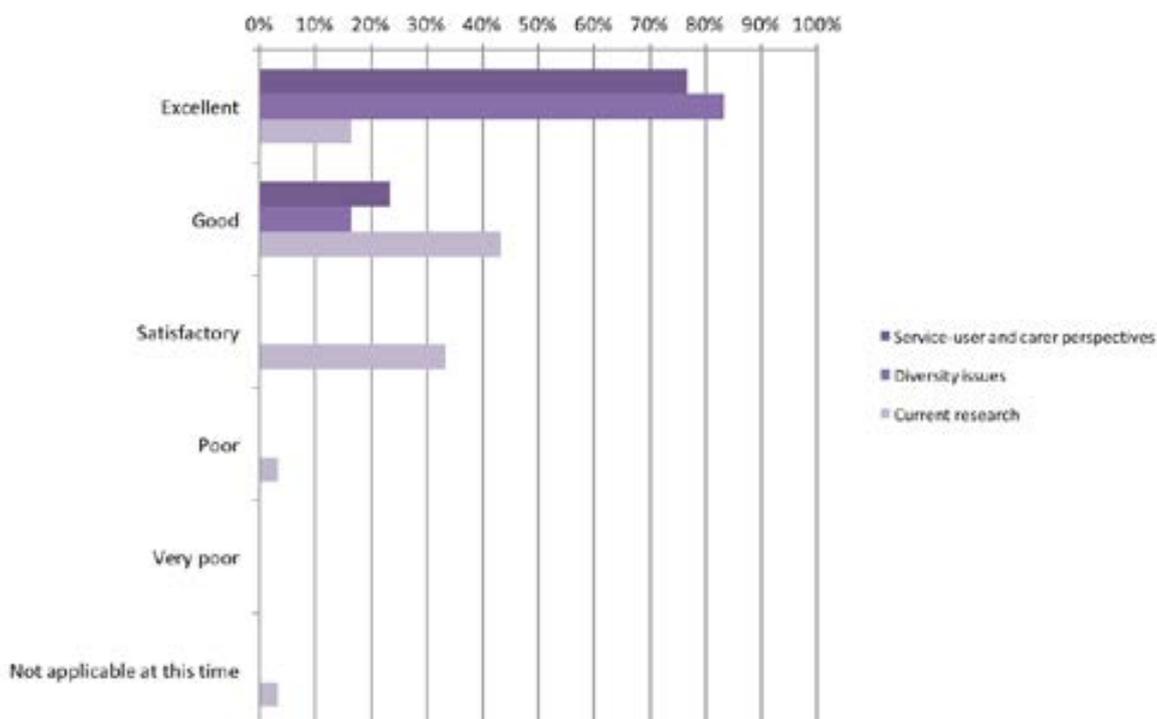
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

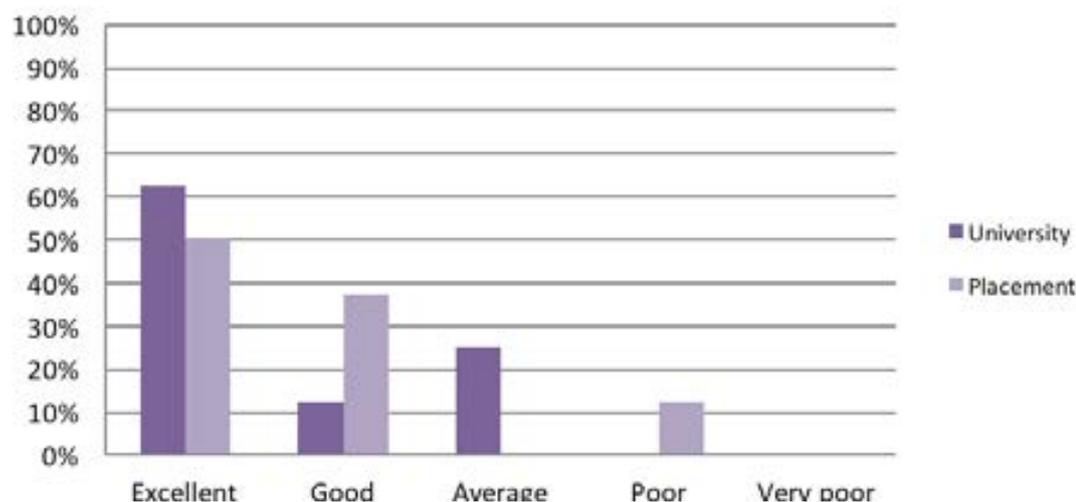
- Some excellent, thought provoking teaching. On the whole teaching is very good, there have just been a few sessions that I felt I haven't taken a lot from them, or the teacher's style didn't suit me.
- The teaching is generally excellent. However, I feel that the organisation of when teaching on various topics is given could be better, to tie in better with ensuring that trainees feel skilled up on placement. However, Lancaster are excellent at seeking feedback and making changes to teaching accordingly.
- Lancaster encourages trainees to reflect and critically analyse issues discussed in teaching. There is always excellent opportunity and encouragement for discussion, and there is a great deal of focus on service user perspectives and diversity issues.
- Teaching is mostly a high standard and has been varied across the 3 years.
- I have found that the teaching (at times) needs to be more didactic and direct. There needs to be a level of semantic knowledge taught and acquired
- We have had teaching from a range of people including clinicians, researcher and the course team. The majority of teaching, especially from external clinicians, has been of a really high standard and has covered a wide array of subjects and perspectives.
- Generally there is plenty of time for discussion about the teaching, and this is encouraged.
- Excellent internal and external speakers from my experience so far. Lancaster are great at receiving feedback and implementing this into future teaching. A nice mix between theory and clinical skills, with lots of practical exercises enabling you to work with the cohort and reflect back to the group. Lancaster does not always explicitly tell trainees how to use certain approaches, models or techniques through teaching which some people may benefit from especially at the beginning of training (depending on level of experience).
- Lancaster does a fantastic job of including service users in a non-tokenistic way. Service users attend and contribute to lectures well beyond what one would typically expect, from the course director down the staff genuinely value the input of service users.
- Being aware of diversity issues is also a strength of Lancaster, I believe evidenced by their forward thinking approach to applications (not needing a 'mid 2:1 degree' from ten years ago or an assistant post to prove you could possibly be a good clinical psychologist!)
- There have been quite a few research and coursework focused sessions in the first part of year one as there are several piece of coursework which are introduced at this time. However this moves more towards clinical based lectures once these are established. The teaching has been really interesting and has introduced me to new ideas and approaches and it has been great learning about these from practitioners in these areas.
- Teaching at Lancaster seems to prioritise reflective practise and expects autonomous learning in regards to psychological models and presentations.
- Teaching on the course is varied. We learn clinical skills, but are also encouraged to consider the wider political and social contexts in which we work, and how our role can hold influence within these. We have considerable opportunity to meet and work with a service user led group, who are also involved in our interview process. The variety of teaching encourages you to always be reflective and continue reading and learning about the role and how it fits into the wider context.
- We've had a lot of great teaching and some pretty poor teaching. Overall though, it's been pretty good. It's hard to attend teaching weekly, for three years.
- I would like more theory specific teaching such as therapeutic approaches for PD, psychosis, trauma, PTSD etc. we had one half teaching day on trauma, nothing on PD, a bit on psychosis. Although this is a downside, I think teaching was planned this way a few years ago and has since changed. Lancaster is really good at listening to feedback from trainees and therefore the timetable changes a lot from year to year. You can't please everyone.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

27% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Balancing/juggling all demands, particularly relating to assignments. The amount of work that needs doing outside of placement can at times feel overwhelming.
- Balancing multiple competing demands- don't think this can be avoided!
- Time management around deadlines - however the course have responded to feedback from previous years and have moved some deadlines around.
- I have found that some deadlines have been very close to each other, so at times there has been a large workload. However, Lancaster have been excellent and very accommodating, and as always, have sought our views on this, and adjusted deadlines accordingly.
- Balancing assignments and placement at particularly busy times on the course can be difficult. Often I have had to use time outside of study days such as evenings and weekends to complete assignments.
- As Lancaster doesn't use exams as a selection method, this can mean that juggling multiple assignments, alongside placement demands and preparing for teaching can feel demanding at times. The course have been really supportive in trying to space out deadlines, but sometimes this is unavoidable. Sticking to agreed draft deadlines and making use of the study days (we get one full day every week, which feels like a luxury compared to some courses!) can help to keep on top of everything.
- Lancaster also really encourages reflection and personal/professional development. Whilst this is done within an incredibly supportive and normalising framework, this can feel intense alongside other pressures, particularly in the first few months where everyone is feeling a bit of imposter syndrome!"

- Yes. Completing placements with a disability.
- Academic work is constant. We have no exams so multiple assignments are often running in parallel. It can be very stressful keeping on top of things. However, all the assignments are extremely applicable to our clinical work, there aren't any "purposeless" work. It is great to be able to go into interviews for band 7 clinical psychologist jobs and be able to tell the panel that I have published during the course, and how our research topics has a direct influence on our clinical work.
- There is a substantial amount of academic work to complete considering it is a clinical training course.
- There has not been one particular demand which has overshadowed the others; instead the biggest challenge has been juggling the number of demands and keeping up with everything for placement, teaching, assignments etc. On an occasion we have had a couple of deadlines quite close together which has added to pressures, however, at other times the pacing is more manageable so it has tended to balance out.
- It can be difficult to manage the different assignments and deadlines. However there are no exams so assignments are used to assess competency.
- As I have been out of education for many years the academic side of the course has been a little demanding but not unmanageable. You get a lot of support from supervisors in the University if needed.
- Lots of deadlines to manage, but nothing more demanding than other courses or previous jobs!
- Work load is heavy right from the beginning (as to be expected). Learning to juggle multiple assignments with placement commitments is a steep learning curve!
- Yes, the amount of work to do on assignments and the juggling of several assignments at once, although they've been the longer assignments which aren't due in yet.
- I have found the course as demanding as I had expected. There have certainly been times when deadlines approach where I have felt stressed, but I think this is acceptable for a doctoral level qualification. I have also seen the course offer extensions to colleagues who need them. There is a feeling among the trainees that the course wants to help you succeed rather than see you fail.
- I think every one finds different aspects of the course and practice demanding but I have found talking to others in the cohort really supportive and helpful. I think it can be quite demanding juggling the different aspects of the course such as placement work, placement coursework, and project and research coursework alongside each other.
- The academic work on the course is demanding. The course do offer plenty of support in regards to this.
- Communication skills is taught through role plays with small groups of our cohort and actors. This is a demanding exercise but very relevant to clinical practise."
- The course is demanding but no more so than expected prior to acceptance
- The academic side of the course can be very demanding. We have a considerable number of large assignments to complete throughout the 3 years (around 12, though i believe this has changed for following years). Juggling placement/academic demands can be very challenging.
- There have been periods of time on the course where balancing placement demands, academic demands and teaching requirements becomes difficult and its hard to maintain a work-life balance
- I have found all of the course demanding. It's much tougher than I expected, and at times I've been quite stressed about training. There have been background personal issues that have been affecting me which made it hard at times. I think the emotional impact of the work has been quite tough-but I've been quite active in seeking support, within and outside of the course. My cohort have become quite open about how tough training is and how we all have had our challenges. Having this honesty and openness has helped me realise I'm not alone, and that yes it is pretty tough!

- Managing commitments of the course alongside personal life. It's a really difficult balance. The workload is quite intense and if personal life gets tough, it can really impact on your ability to keep up.
- A lot of academic coursework with very little study time in comparison. Having to do work in my own time (weekends and annual leave)
- Overlapping work i.e. submitting a 12,000 service related project whilst developing thesis proposal. I have found third year particularly demanding - managing a complex case load in specialist service, applying for jobs and writing thesis with one study day.
- There are certain times of the year when several deadlines appear at once, this often also coincides with placement transitions, and therefore these can be unusually stressful and busy times.

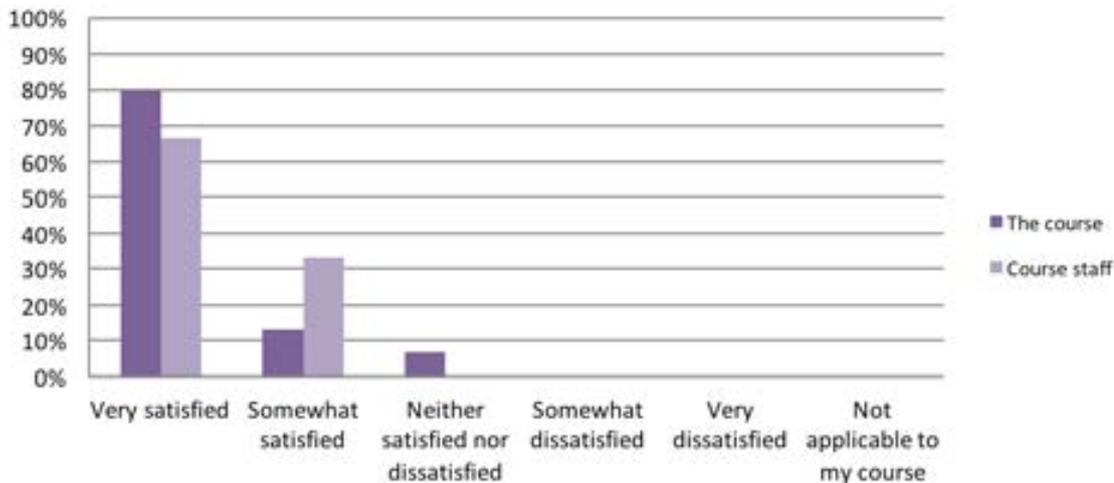
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	53%
"Buddy"	97%
Manager	40%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	70%
Professional Mentor	73%
Personal Tutor	93%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	13%
Other	20%

### Under "Other", responses included:

- Access to funds for personal therapy
- Trainees are funded to receive six sessions of Cognitive Analytic Therapy, which are completely personal and private. We can take up this offer at any point during the course. This is another great way showing how Lancaster looks after their trainees.
- Opportunity to have a CAT reformulation and follow up sessions
- Cohort meetings with tutors once a month
- Course staff in general are supportive and approachable
- personal reformulation sessions

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?



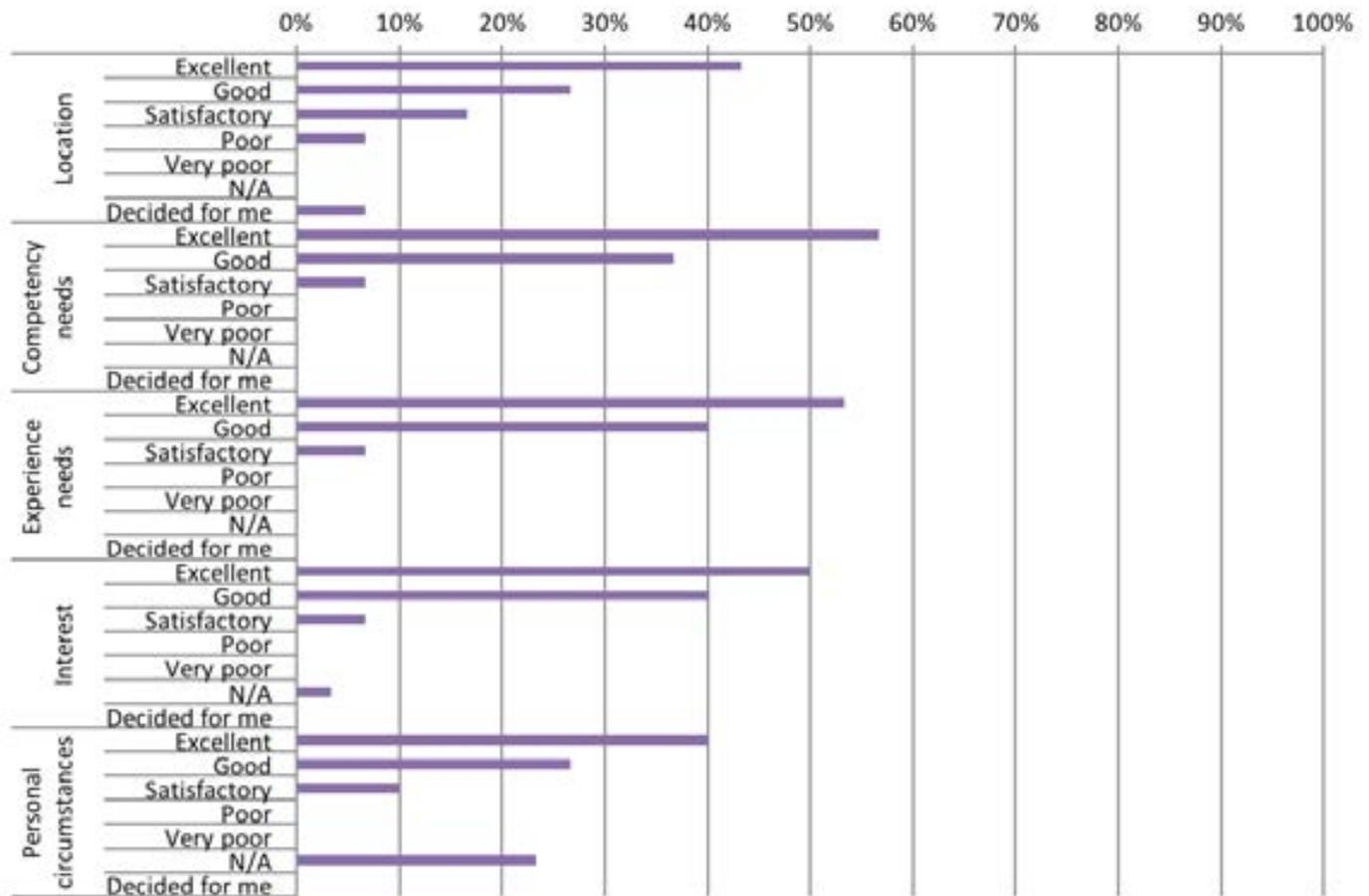
### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

- Having draft reads for assignments gives very helpful feedback, but also reduces the pressure before the actual deadline.
- I cannot emphasise enough what a supportive, accommodating course Lancaster is. I have never been left feeling unsupported or like I have no one to discuss concerns with. There are multiple opportunities to seek support on the course and the staff are extremely approachable.
- I feel the Lancaster course is very supportive, staff are always available to talk through anything you might need and take action on your behalf.
- The support provided on the course has been fantastic. Tutors are extremely approachable and keen to check in and provide support, rather than appearing judgemental. There are a number of support systems in place, such as being paired with a buddy from another year before you start, having the same clinical tutor across your training, and a mentoring scheme with clinical psychologists external to the programme. In addition, the course has been receptive to additional ideas, such as setting up a lunchtime reflective group to consider issues and experiences which have arisen during placement.
- The programme staff at Lancaster University are excellent. The support they provide trainees is above and beyond.
- Our Clinical Director, Anna Daiches, is the most warm and wonderful person. Her door is always open and many people in my cohort has approached her for all sorts of difficulties and sickness. We are very well supported as trainees. There is always someone you can reach out to. At the same time, there isn't a 'dependency'; we are somehow (magically, I'm not quite sure how!) resilient and able to self-care as the years go on. Lancaster definitely tries to foster a secure attachment style with trainees.
- Lancaster are an extremely supportive course in every aspect.
- The level of support offered at Lancaster has been extremely good. From day one it was made clear to us that course staff are available and willing to help with both personal and academic/professional difficulties. The options for support are also widely varied, with access available to peer, buddy, mentor and staff support. There is also opportunity to access personal CAT therapy for a limited number of sessions. The course have also been extremely accommodating and supportive around illness or personal circumstances for people.
- There is plenty of support available and the course staff are very approachable.

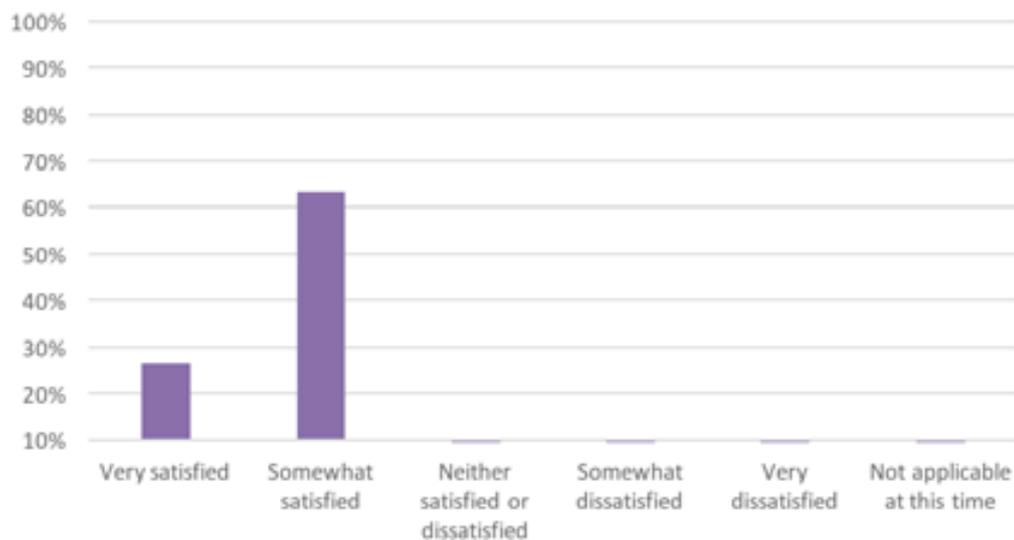
- I have never felt unable to approach any of the course staff. They have an open door policy and if you are unable to speak with your own clinical tutors or supervisors there is always someone available. It is a very supportive course.
- Everyone at Lancaster is approachable and wants you to succeed. Lots of support is in place for every trainee.
- Support at Lancaster is fantastic. They are committed to supporting trainee wellbeing, and personal tutors are involved in every part of the journey with you.
- The course staff and all approachable and supportive. They all try to help in the most appropriate way they can.
- All course staff are friendly and approachable with support when needed - staff and course ethos actively engage in the enhancement and support of trainee well-being, striking a balance between maintaining appropriately high demands but working within limits of capability and promoting the importance of self-care
- There is considerable avenues of support available for those who require and seek it. Each individual has a clinical tutor and a research tutor who are consistent throughout the 3 years of training. We also have a placement supervisor in each placement.
- We are encouraged and supported to identify mentors, and utilise them as external support throughout training. There is also considerable peer support within and between cohorts.
- I've always had access to support from staff and felt very supported overall with any issues, big or small.
- My clinical tutor and I have built a very honest relationship, she's seen me cry a lot. There have been times where I've considered leaving the course, and she was willing to listen to my fears and doubts. Throughout training this support has been fundamental for me. I really value the support she's given me and it's helped grow a lot into the clinical psychologist I'm becoming. The reflective strand has also been a good support.
- I have felt really supported by my clinical tutor and always felt that he had my interests and wellbeing at the fore of any decision making. His input has been invaluable.
- During my training course there have been substantial changes to course staff due to both the research and clinical team leaving for a variety of reasons, or having maternity leave (6 in total since commencing course) which has resulted in difficulties as no replacements have been made and thus the existing team structures for the course have a substantial additional pressure. This in turn impacts the availability and level of support for trainees.
- Staff are easily contactable and give a lot of their time and effort, however sometimes are constrained by the university rules rather than the course policies.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



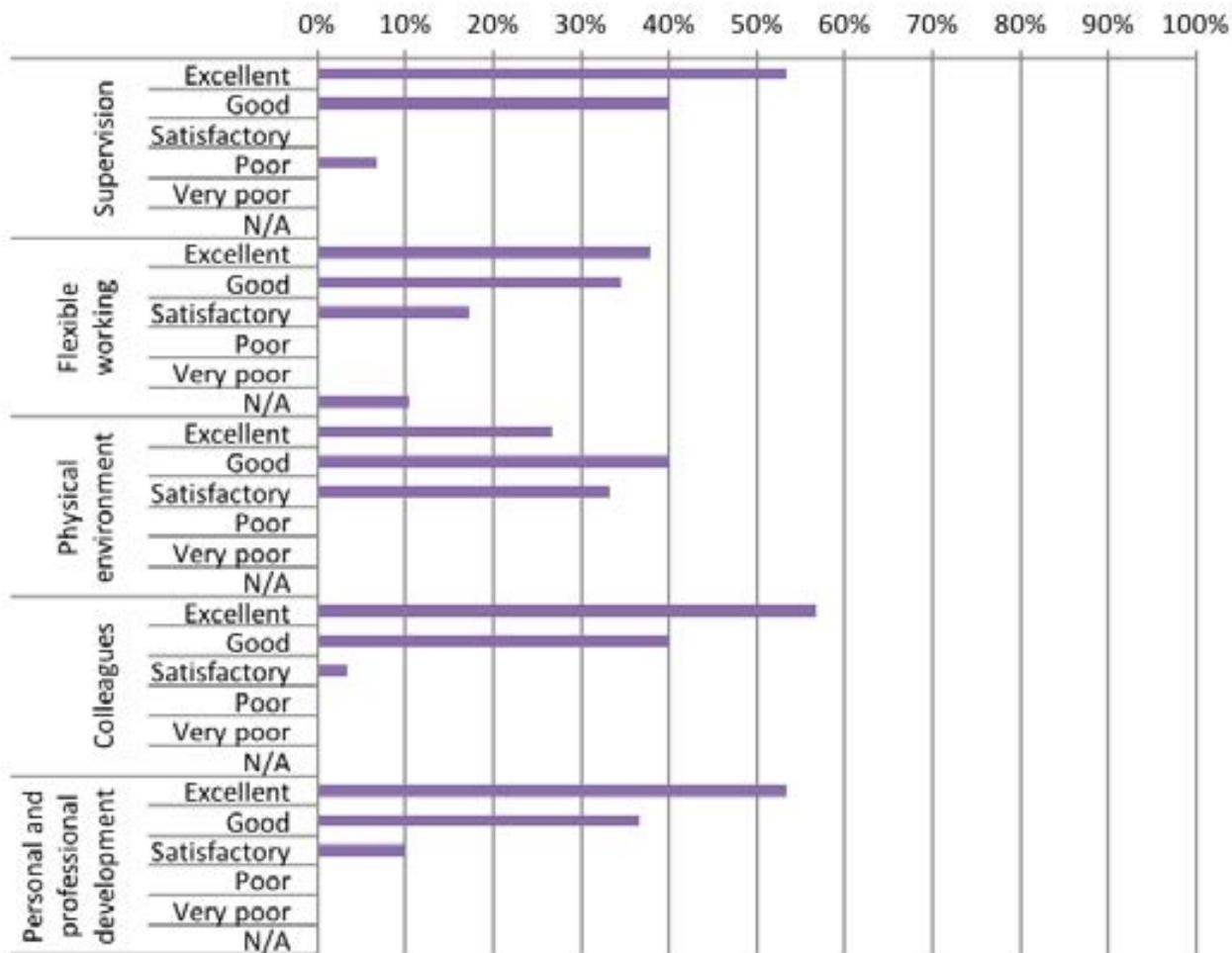
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- The paperwork that had to be filled out at the start of placement was not communicated clearly and meant that some of the information about what had to be done came from hearsay via peers.
- I was surprised that we were given so much preparation around clinical skills for placement, this was great. Formative role plays, although scary, were a great part of preparation for placement.
- I think more of the teaching time could be dedicated to learning and role-playing practical clinical and therapeutic skills to prepare for placement.
- I feel that additional teaching prior to and during placements, in relation to models and clinical practice would have resulted in me feeling better prepared.
- In-depth therapeutic teaching can feel limited at the beginning of the course, which can lead to feeling in-equipped for the first placement. This seems to balance out more when approaching our second placement, and the course also provides regular teaching days in smaller, facilitated groups where we learn direct skills with opportunities to practice these and receive feedback.
- As the child placement is first, the course ensure sufficient teaching (1 month induction block) to prepare trainees.
- Although we have had a lot of really clinically useful teaching, a lot of teaching has not felt wholly relevant to placement activity so has left me at times feeling under-prepared for placements and having to undertake individual reading to feel more equipped clinically. I think this is due to a lot of teaching being geared towards assignment preparation to begin with, however, this could perhaps be better balanced.
- The teaching blocks match up to the placements i.e. child teaching whilst on child placement. For some of the teaching it could have been more useful earlier in the course to support development on placement.
- Teaching blocks before every placement help prepare you. Due to unforeseen switching of teaching topics, sometimes some of the most helpful lectures in terms of practical skills on placement have come further down the line and would have been ideal prior to starting placement.
- We had an intensive one-month induction block of teaching prior to our first placement. I do not feel this was used to its full potential as I and members of my cohort I have spoken to felt that we did not get enough specific teaching of clinical models (e.g. CBT or CAT) meaning it took a little longer to get to grips with placement and the models being used.
- I feel this is an area in which Lancaster could improve. They do try to prepare you however there could be more emphasis and teaching to help improve the preparation for placements.
- We are prepared well for placements. Basic clinical skills are developed in the first month of the course before beginning child (our first) placement. During each placement, we have a teaching block focussed on developing general skills as well as specific skills linked to working with that group.
- The teaching block before each placement prepares you well for placements.
- It's tricky, I think I'd have liked some more preparation. Although really, you just have to be there to learn from the experience.
- I particularly like the teaching blocks prior to starting a new placement.
- Due to CBT being a very dominant model currently in the NHS, I found that we are often at a disadvantage as we are not taught any of the existing specific models of CBT. I understand the ethos behind this and would not wish to use manualised approaches in practice, however, they are helpful when discussing cases with supervisors on placements, for having an understanding about certain well-known models and for the purposes of assignments where we are expected to refer to the models, despite deliberately not having been taught them.

## In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- I couldn't have asked for a better first placement; the course acknowledged that I had previous experience working with children and young people and found a placement that filled the gaps of my previous experience so I still felt that I learnt lots. The team on placement was really welcoming and my supervisor had a working style that complimented my own.
- I have only had one placement so far. My needs for location and development were very well considered and taken into account. My supervisor was fantastic, and supported me to reflect on my clinical practice. I was welcomed into the team, and made to feel like a valuable team member with valuable experience and opinions. There was good communication between placement and the course, which helped with my development needs and evaluation of my current practice.
- Placements have been varied and I have learnt a lot from the experiences, some better than others.
- The placements offered are matched to trainees' developmental needs and their interests. I have always requested my placements in accordance to my interests and what skills I would like to gain next. To date, I have had placements that facilitated my knowledge and competency in a range of models - SFBT, Narrative, CAT, psychodynamic, CFT, ACT, CBT, Systemic. It's great to be able to go through training knowing that you have working knowledge of a range of models - it allows you to really work eclectically and in an integrative way. The freedom to choose the type of placement we would like (e.g. child LD vs adult LD; older adults/physical health/neuro) means that we are able to be develop skills in all sorts of settings, but also means we are able to really niche ourselves with a certain client group.

- My first placement has been an extremely positive experience. The standard of supervision was very high and the service I worked within was extremely welcoming. Over the 6 months I had opportunities to reflect upon my learning needs and carry out a range of clinical activity despite having had limited previous experience in this area. It was a steep learning curve, however, has meant I am now heading on to my second placement feeling more confident and equipped to work as a clinical psychologist.
- Only had two placements to date but both have been incredibly welcoming and everyone is appreciative of trainees and psychology in general is valued. Staff have been really keen to hear the views of trainees and the different experiences/viewpoints we might bring to the placement.
- I couldn't speak highly enough of my first placement (only one to date). But I realise this will be a very subjective thing based on the service and supervisor you are given. This being said no-one in our cohort has reported having a negative experience as far as I am aware.
- I would say that the course put a great deal of effort into making placements as good as possible, both in terms of location (which along with training needs is how placements are allocated) and quality of the placement.
- An excellent experience on my first placement. It met my learning needs and gave plenty of areas to work on for my next placement.
- Only had one placement so far, thus experience is limited
- Placements have been varied and have provided me with experience working with different professionals, in different contexts, and using different models. They have provided good experience working with individuals through the life span, as well as working with individuals with learning disabilities, cognitive impairment etc.
- My placements varied a lot. I've had some good supervisors and some awful supervisors. In reality I learned a lot from both. Learning to be open with supervisors about my concerns and my needs has been a challenge, but it's been a good area of growth. Some of my commutes were about 2.5hrs a day, but that depends on where you live. Trainees' on our course who lived in Liverpool or Manchester had the shortest commutes, something to consider if moving for the course.
- Lancaster tries really hard to get you the 'right' placement.
- Placements can be so hit and miss but you can learn lots from the not so good ones!
- Placements go so fast so I think it is important to manage your expectations of yourself and those around you. A six month placement usually lasts around 5 months (with A/L), 3 days per week probably equates to just over 3 months of full time work! I wish I was aware of this in first year.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	20%
No	63%
Don't know	17%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	41%
No	24%
Don't know	34%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in and around Lancashire, Manchester, Liverpool and Cumbria.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	93%
Don't know	7%

**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

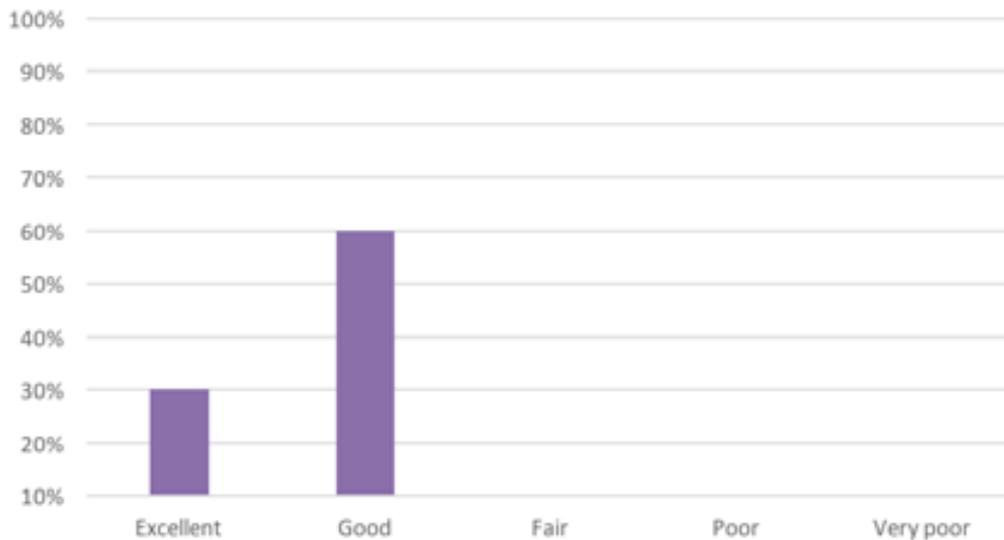
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	17%
Good	30%
Fair	50%
Poor	3%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- Use your study days wisely.
- As the course is assignment heavy it can at times be tempting to work at weekends or during leave, which at the beginning of the course I had told myself I wouldn't do - oops!
- A good work-life balance is encouraged and supported but busier times are inevitable given the nature of the course.
- There have been times when there have been multiple simultaneous deadlines. At this time, my work-life balance has not been as good as it could be. However, at all other times, I have been able to have a good balance. At times where this balance has been less equal, we have been able to discuss our concerns with Lancaster, and they have supported us to make things more manageable.

- There are times when the work life balance is very much taken over by assignments and the need to get them done on time, but there are also less busy times where work life balance is more level.
- The work life balance changes throughout training. The course encourage trainee to have a life outside work, for example raising children.
- Obviously this will be the same for all courses - when work gets tough and deadlines are near, it's pretty much a given that personal life is less of a priority.
- The workload sometimes require working more than 37.5 hours per week.
- It can be difficult at times to get the balance right as demands fluctuate, however, overall (with a bit of organisation) I think having a balance between training and a personal life has been manageable- actually more so than I expected before starting. Of course near deadlines things can be a bit more hectic, however, by using the allotted study time effectively I've largely managed to keep my evenings and weekends work-free.
- This will likely vary depending on how far from home placements are and personal circumstances.
- To date I have had no real issues with having a good work life balance. You are encouraged to take care of yourself and as long as you are well organised and prepared to be flexible with when you complete academic work around deadlines then there is no reason this should effect your personal life.
- Lancaster promote the need for a work life balance. However this can be difficult when multiple deadlines are set in a short space of time. I think any of the doctorate course have the potential to take over, and require boundaries management of your time which is a steep learning curve! The course have alternated deadlines when we have given feedback that the work load is too much.
- The full use of your study day is vital to address your work life balance. The fact that Lancaster trainees get a full day each week is a bonus as I believe that Manchester and Liverpool only get a day a fortnight. I'm not sure I'd keep up with less study time.
- I feel this a subjective thing. Of course, it would be possible to lose the balance but the staff really emphasise not doing so. There is a feeling from the course that trainees are humans with multiple aspects to our roles and the protected study day each week greatly helps with not using personal time for work (although i am sure in second and especially third year there will be times the balance still becomes lost)
- It can be tricky to maintain a work-life balance especially around coursework deadlines but there is a study day each week which, if used well, can help to maintain a work-life balance.
- There are points within the course where it can be difficult to maintain a good work/life balance. I had to move away from home for the course, leaving my partner and family behind which was difficult. The travel between work, university, home and temporary home for the course was at times difficult.
- There are times on the course when it is much harder to maintain a work life balance, but other times it becomes easier.
- This is a personal thing. There were times I really had no work life balance and that felt unavoidable. Other times my own behaviours meant my balance was pretty bad. It's definitely possible to have on okay work life balance for large parts of the course but it's up to you how that looks.
- I find it really difficult trying to balance demands at home with the demands of the course. It is impossible for me to have that balance.
- More so now as I had a baby whilst training
- Highlighted previously, the first two years I found it fairly easy to maintain this balance. My cohort have unanimously agreed that third year does not promote a healthy work life balance, working evenings and weekends are essential to ensure thesis is completed.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- I can't complain, I have plenty of money to live a comfortable life, pay my mortgage etc. I spend quite a lot of money on petrol as Lancaster is 60 miles away from home, and placements have been quite a distance too. As I live so far away this also means I cannot claim mileage to placement which at times feels unfair.
- I feel very fortunate to be being paid to train in an area that I enjoy so much.
- I think it fortunate that trainee clinical psychologists are employed on a band 6 in the NHS when we are postgraduate students.
- The salary we are paid as trainees is, I think, fair given that we are in the privileged position of being paid to learn. There has been some debate and controversy around this year however in relation to tax exemption which has meant some trainees on other courses have effectively been paid more than us for carrying out the same role which does not seem equitable.
- Due to living a long distance away from the University I have had to pay out for accommodation and had large petrol costs. However, generally this can be relieved by car sharing and this is only a problem during teaching blocks.
- The salary we receive is good and I do not struggle financially.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- The Personal Development and Reflection (PDR) teaching strand. I think that this strand is quite unique to Lancaster and my favourite teaching as I think reflective practice is so important. I have learnt lots about myself and my communication through this teaching and this understanding will have a positive impact on the work that I do.
- Peer support.
- The ethos. Inclusivity and diversity are highly valued and the course staff are keen to promote trainee wellbeing. Trainees are encouraged to explore their own values and become the type of clinician they want to be, rather than simply meet a tick-list of standards.
- The staff and cohort are fantastic; extremely knowledgeable, approachable and accommodating and really care about your experience on the course. I love the diversity of my cohort and the commitment that the course has to equality and diversity. I love how accommodating Lancaster are and how they genuinely seek your views in order to improve the course and the experience of current and future trainees.

- The opportunity to be on placement in a variety of areas/client groups and I have particularly enjoyed the variety and the practice based learning I have done on placement.
- Lancaster's supportive and reflective approach. I feel that the course and its staff try hard to create an environment where it's safe and ok to be vulnerable, to reflect on our own values, experience and practice and to be ourselves as trainees.
- Teaching on personal development and reflection. This is most likely to stay with me throughout my career and beyond.
- I love how radical Lancaster can be in letting us be our own psychologists, challenging the status quo and encouraging trainees to be curious and find the 'good reasons' behind people's actions. It's quite a Systemic-orientated course which I think is realistic in terms of our clinical work and our personal lives. No man is an island. Everyone works together and gets on well together. Our cohort is really cohesive, all the trainees are just wonderful. The personal support we get from the course has been amazing, they really do look out for us and try everything they can to make our lives as easy as possible.
- The course has quite a strong social constructionist perspective, which I really appreciate. The course staff are incredibly supportive.
- The course are incredibly flexible, warm and supportive in their treatment of trainees.
- The standard of teaching has been really high and offered a lot of opportunity for reflection and taking new perspectives.
- A variety of theoretical models are covered and there isn't one main approach. This allows individual trainees to develop as clinicians in a way which suits them.
- Teaching and learning from the rest of the cohort. We all have very different backgrounds and experiences which makes teaching and discussions incredibly beneficial and rewarding. Also small communication skills groups where we can practice role-plays are excellent and not as scary as they sound!
- The reflective nature of the course is really enjoyable. It helps me continue to learn about myself as both a psychologist and as a person more generally. The support offered at Lancaster is fantastic, and you feel as though the course staff genuinely care about their trainees.
- The tutors are friendly and supportive and the cohort members are so supportive of each other, varied and friendly too.
- I greatly value the diverse nature of our cohort, in terms of life stages, experience, interests and backgrounds.
- I feel that Lancaster trains you to be the clinical psychologist you want to be rather than moulding you into a predetermined 'ideal clinical psychologist'.
- Listening to practitioners in lectures discussing theories and therapeutic approaches and really bringing it to life with case examples.
- The atmosphere within the cohort is relaxed, friendly, supportive and constructively challenging. This helps with teaching days and academic work.
- The person-centred approach and the psychologically based ethos of every person matters (trainees included); a reflective and reflexive approach to training which aims to maximise individual potential and build on strengths - they genuinely listen
- The relationships developed with my cohort - i have made friends for life, and it is very helpful to have people who understand your journey and the challenges that come with it.
- The opportunities to learn and develop, both as a person and a professional, and the support received in order to do so.
- I enjoy the placements the most because of the variety of experiences that are tailored to your learning needs. I feel I have learnt the most from my placements.
- Lancaster's an open minded course and I have felt encouraged to become my own style of clinical

psychologist. They've helped me develop from quite an anxious trainee to someone who can respectfully hold a psychological presence in an MDT, do pretty decent therapy and be aware of broader issues related to psychology and the well-being of people. My peers have been a really important part of the journey, and sharing this time with them has been a great experience.

- Teaching. I enjoy learning and hearing from other people in the field, especially if they are enthusiastic and passionate about their work.
- Placements are great, if you get a good one. You can learn so much from being in different places, cultures, ways of working etc.
- Research
- Teaching days, peer support, changing placements regularly

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- I feel the Lancaster course is very focused on you as a person as well as a professional and I think I have changed and learned a lot over the last 3 years on the course.
- I would like to stress that the Lancaster course is varied in its teaching of psychological models and therapies. If you are looking for a course to provide didactic and semantic based teaching on how to work with different 'psychological disorders' then I would say that this course is not for you. The course adopts a strong social constructionist stance in its approach to psychological suffering, with a wider focus on encouraging trainee's to challenge the role of a clinical psychologist and the future of the profession.
- Lancaster is a course that focuses on 'you' as a person as well as a clinician. The rate I have developed over the three years on the course equates to my development from undergrad to getting on the course. We are not just scientist-practitioners but are truly reflective scientist-practitioners. The self-awareness you gain on with Lancaster is phenomenal. You really do feel like you 'know' yourself; your values become very explicit in yourself and you get a real understanding of why you want to be a clinical psychologist.
- Lancaster are supportive of people with additional difficulties (e.g. childcare, health problems) and work with trainees to overcome this such as by flexible working hours and scheduling.
- I would highly recommend the Lancaster course, it has been a very good training experience. The course is incredibly supportive and varied.
- Lancaster highly regard feedback from trainees which is a really positive thing on the whole, however, it feels that this may at times mean that things are changed rather often to reflect this but will still never please everyone.
- Practise the online acuity tests on websites that are free. It really helped me to become quicker at calculations and looking for key information in texts.
- Be prepared with your answers on selection day so that you've thought about the competencies required and can give examples.
- I did an awful lot of research in deciding where to apply to. What sold Lancaster for me was the openness and effort the course put into making every aspect of the application process transparent? I felt as though they were the only course who truly were looking for who you are as a person and not needing a 2:1 or assistant post.
- This attitude follows through into the course itself. From day one I have felt valued and that staff care deeply about us as people first and then about helping us develop into the practitioners we want to become. I couldn't recommend the course highly enough.
- Lancaster strikes a great balance between teaching psychological concepts and demonstrating psychological awareness - it practices what it preaches in how it values and supports everyone on an

equal footing regardless of roles etc., whilst also having appropriate expectation of high standard.

- I think the course could do more to provide some form of group supervision/therapy to help trainees with the emotional aspect of the work/training. At times the course felt too intellectually oriented.
- Lancaster's a great course if you want to genuinely reflect on current practice and work in a human-human way. It's a got a very down to earth atmosphere, which can really suit some people. If this sounds like you it's worth practicing that entry test and giving it a shot! Good luck.
- Lancaster is a great course. I think it has a brilliant ethos and culture and this is down to staff there.
- If you have personal life get in the way or have a baby, get married or whatever, they will help to keep you sane throughout all of this. Some other courses maybe don't do this as much and can expect you to just cope and get on with it!

# Courses Survey Results

## Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

## What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Interview, video simulation task, role play, co-construction service user task, brief re-test validation of general mental ability shortlisting test

## For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	1 day
Placement	3 days
Personal Study	1 day
Research	Combined with personal study

## What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# Leeds University

15 responses (31% of 48 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	43%
Year 2	21%
Year 3	36%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	13%
25 – 29 years	60%
30 – 34 years	27%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	50%
Twice	22%
3 times	28%
4 times	0%
5 times	0%
6 times	11%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	13%
MA	0%
MSc	60%
MRes	0%
Diploma	13%
Post Graduate Certificate	7%
Conversion course	0%
None	33%
Other	7%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	7%
2 years	13%
3 years	27%
4 years	7%
5 years	27%
6+ years	20%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	57%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	50%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	36%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	14%
Research Assistant	36%
Voluntary Research Assistant	36%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	71%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	14%
Other	21%

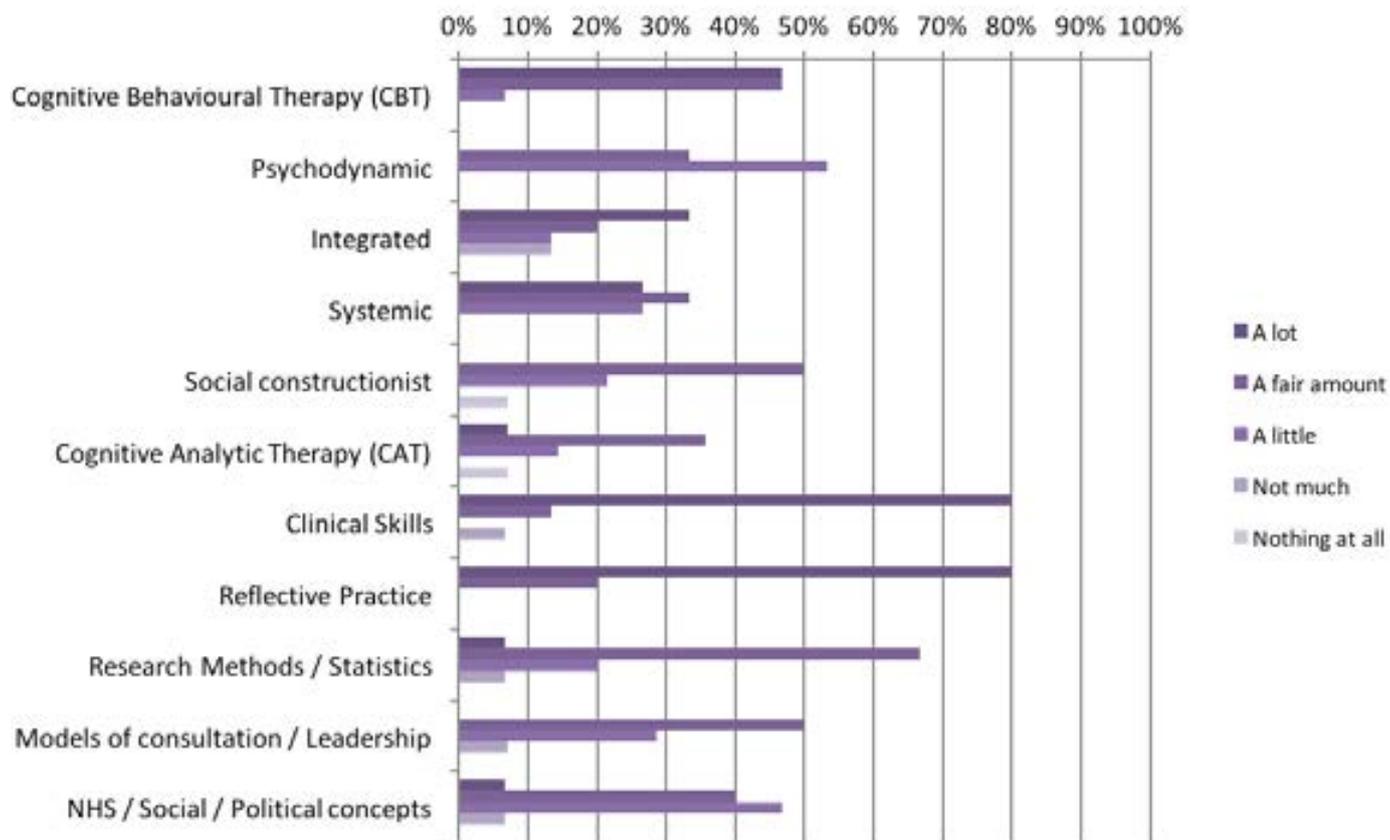
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Much more relaxed than my experiences on other courses, felt that they wanted to get the best from me. I found that being able to talk to current trainees while I was waiting for the various interviews was very reassuring. I felt that the course staff or current trainees were very approachable and down-to-earth.
- It was a very reflective interview that mainly focussed on experiences of clinical work. The presentation task was quite straightforward and the service user panel was great. Not a bad experience at all.
- It was actually really lovely. It was my last interview, and so I was a bit fatigued by the process by that point. But the staff (admin and course staff) and current trainees were so welcoming, friendly and informal and the day was very well organised. I felt that the way in which I was interviewed and assessed corresponded clearly to the competencies expected of a potential trainee Clinical Psychology, and the tone throughout was one of relaxed informality. It was very clear to me that the values were about seeing us at our very best, and as such, supporting candidates to feel as comfortable as possible. The service user input was valued and did not come across as tokenistic, and the trainees being there to welcome and answer questions was really helpful, and they seemed to know and get along with each other well, and we're enthusiastic about the course.
- It was the most relaxed of the interviews I attended. Trainees were around to make you feel welcome and answer any questions. The clinical/academic interview was most daunting but you were given plenty of opportunities to expand on your answers. The service user panel just felt like a nice chat.
- I found it to be a bit too formal, but otherwise fine.
- It was brilliant. They make you feel so comfortable and welcome and they really do just want to get the best of you. From beginning to end it was great.
- A very friendly and welcoming interview that felt like they really wanted to get to know me, and to encourage the best possible answers from me.
- The interview day couldn't have been better, all things considered. It ran smoothly and everyone was very welcoming. There are current trainees around to help you relax and have a tea with. There was a service user panel, a presentation task and then a more formal interview. All the questions felt very fair and they seemed to want to get the best out of you.
- The interview process at Leeds is set up really well. When you first arrive you meet with the current trainees, which really helped settle my nerves. The whole process is explained really well, and there's a chance to ask questions about the course with staff and current trainees. I found both interview panels were encouraging and engaging throughout.
- The interview process was very relaxing and welcoming. The interviewers came across warm and encouraging and were very good at making you feel at ease. By far my favourite interview process, even before I knew the outcome.
- Very well organised and relaxed. They did their best to make us feel relaxed. The process involved two interview panels, the first one involved academic and clinical questions with the main focus being on reflecting on your experiences to date and applying theory. The second one was a service user interview which we prepared a 10 minute presentation on an assigned topic and some brief person centered questions. There was lots of time for talking to members of staff and other trainees during the process tea, coffee and cakes always important.
- The interview process was a positive experience. The staff and current trainees were relaxed and put me at ease.
- It felt as though the interviewers truly want to get the best from you, and really are not interested in tripping you up at all. It seemed like a two-way process; they were interested in getting to know me and also giving me a chance to get to know them and the course.

- I could tell they had thought about the interview process from the perspective of an interviewee as the experience was as good as it could have been. The course ethos came across on the interview day and it made me really want to train at Leeds. Current trainees were around to chat to which helped with nerves.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



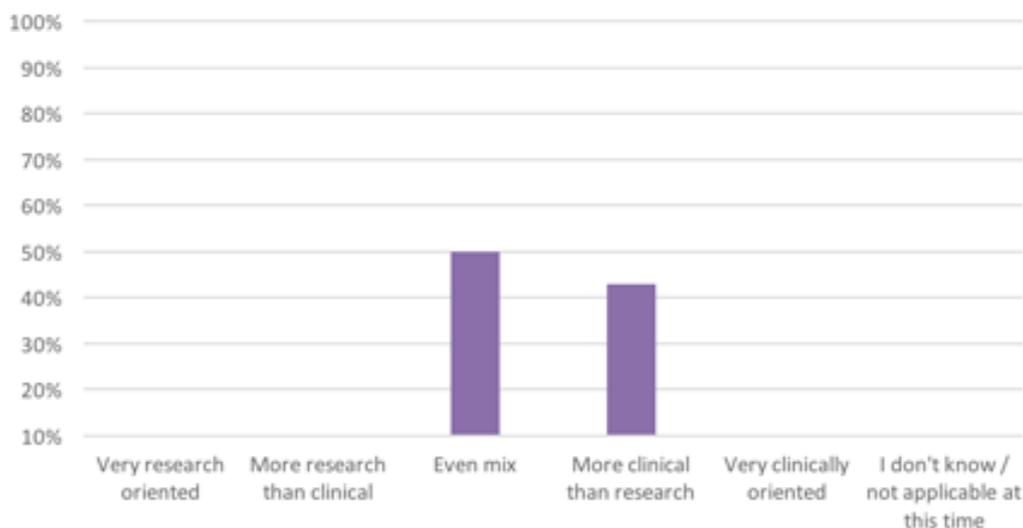
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	100%
Mindfulness	100%
Schema Therapy	13%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	13%
Solution Focused Therapy	20%
Neuropsychology	93%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	87%
Other	7%

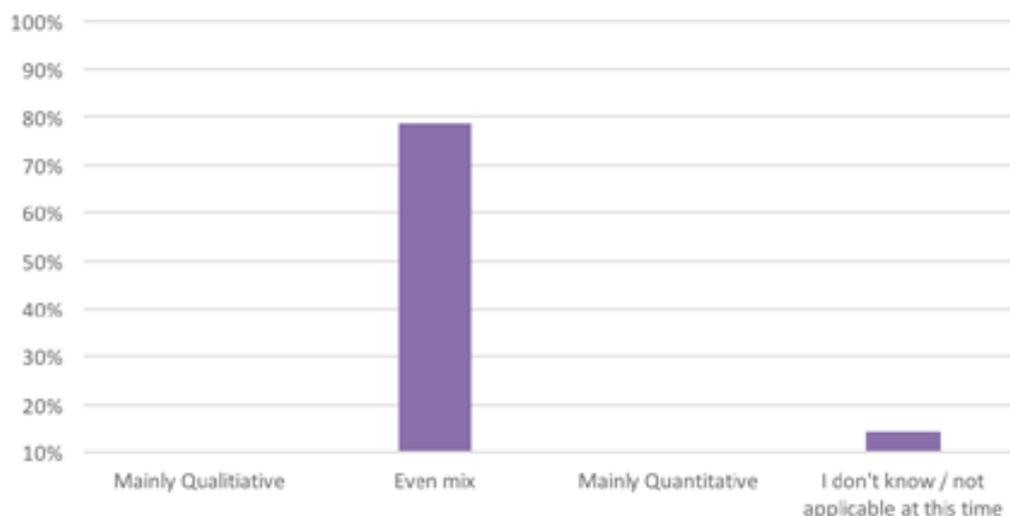
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- The course offers the chance to work into a specific model in the 3rd year. Current options are 3rd wave CBT, CAT and Systemic. You will be expected to work with your chosen model in your final year placement and evidence this in a written document (Therapy Log).
- I would say Leeds is good at covering a broad range in the given time, and is not biased towards one model. They cover enough CBT to ensure BPS requirements but there is a lot else offered in terms of therapy competencies in order that you are able to follow your interests and have a relatively well rounded therapy approach. Placements also reflect this - there are a good range of models supported by local supervisors.
- I chose 'a lot' for systemic as we are given the opportunity to choose a specialist therapy teaching option in 3rd year and I chose systemic. Otherwise this is less.
- It feels fairly well balanced so far.
- Main focus is CBT (with emphasis on trans-diagnostic approaches), third wave approaches (ACT, CFT and mindfulness), Psychodynamic and Systemic but feels like they try to give us a broad range of other bits and pieces along the way e.g. snippets of DBT, schema to whet our appetites to find out more. Neuro is well covered by excellent neuropsychology staff.
- There has been a lot of neuropsychology to date which seems to be covered in a lot of detail. Only being in first year we have not yet (at this point) covered a lot of the teaching so I'm sure there will be a lot more topics covered in the future. Some of the teaching is exceptional and this is very much the case when the course team combine together to teach. With it being only a small cohort it feels very safe to engage in debates etc. I'd say teaching is a real strength of Leeds.
- The focus of the first year is more around CBT.
- I think that the course strikes a good balance of teaching different models, and there is flexibility in where you go on placement such that you can develop greater skills in the models that are of more interest to you.

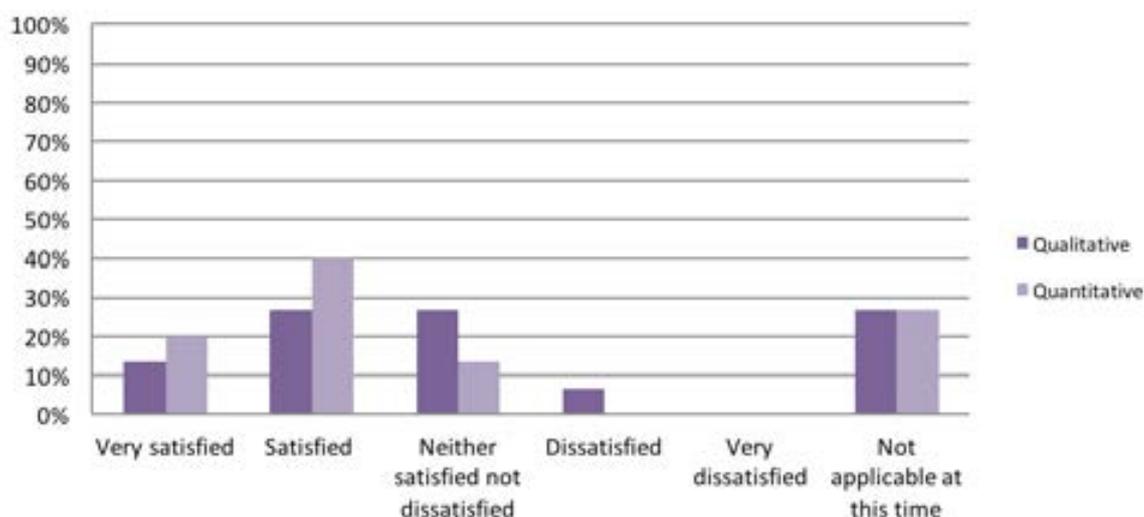
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



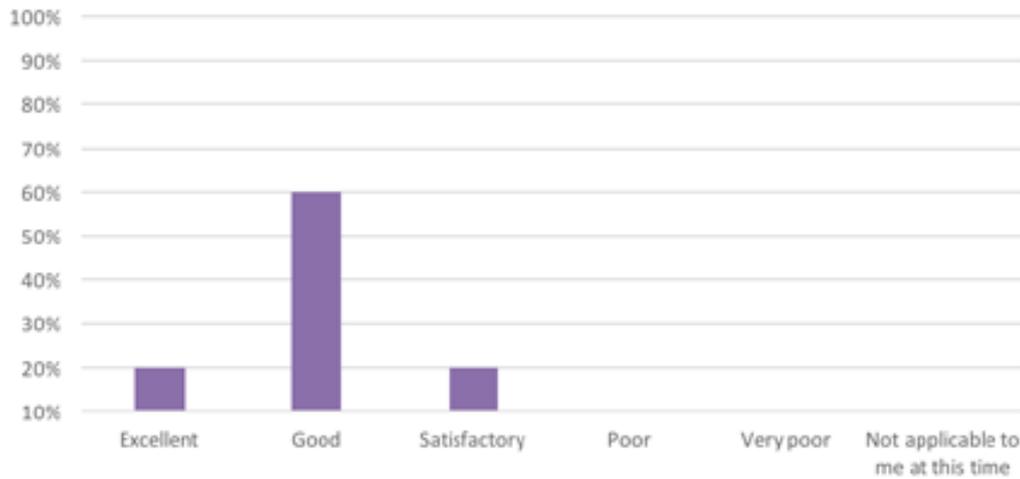
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



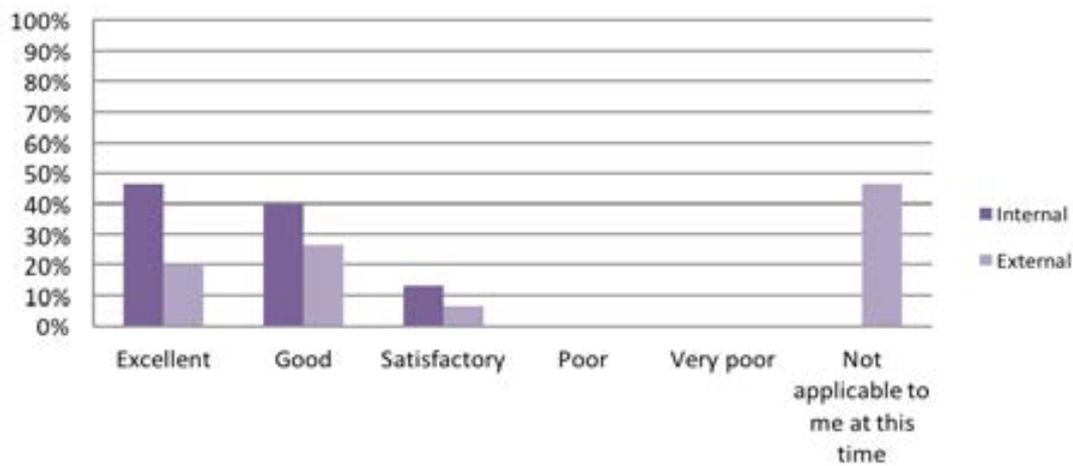
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- It would have been helpful to have a session on literature searching.
- It doesn't feel like the research is overdone but there is always more support available if needed as well. I would say we lean slightly more towards clinical but the research opportunities are good.
- I was impressed with the qualitative teaching we received.
- Not started the majority of our research teaching yet, although what has been covered so far has been helpful.
- Staff teaching research methods are very experienced.

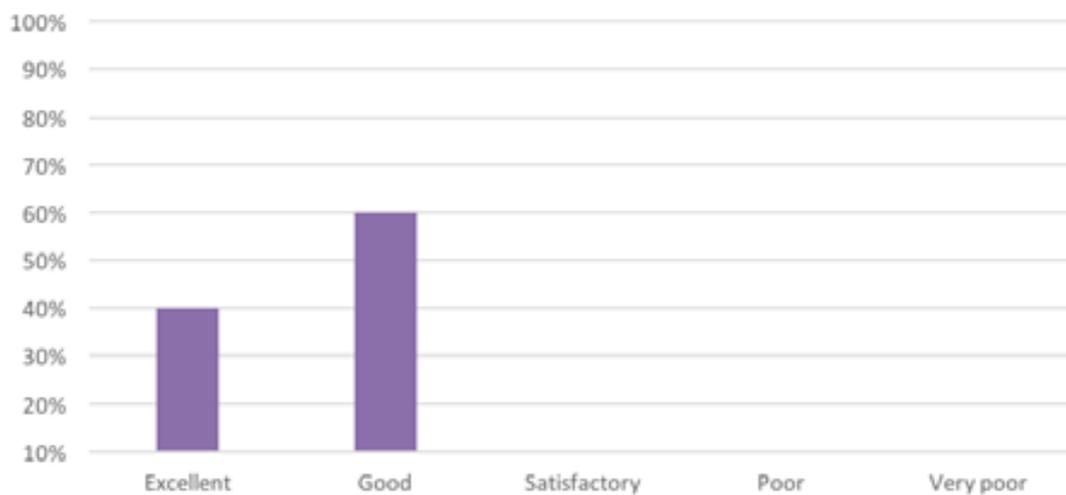
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



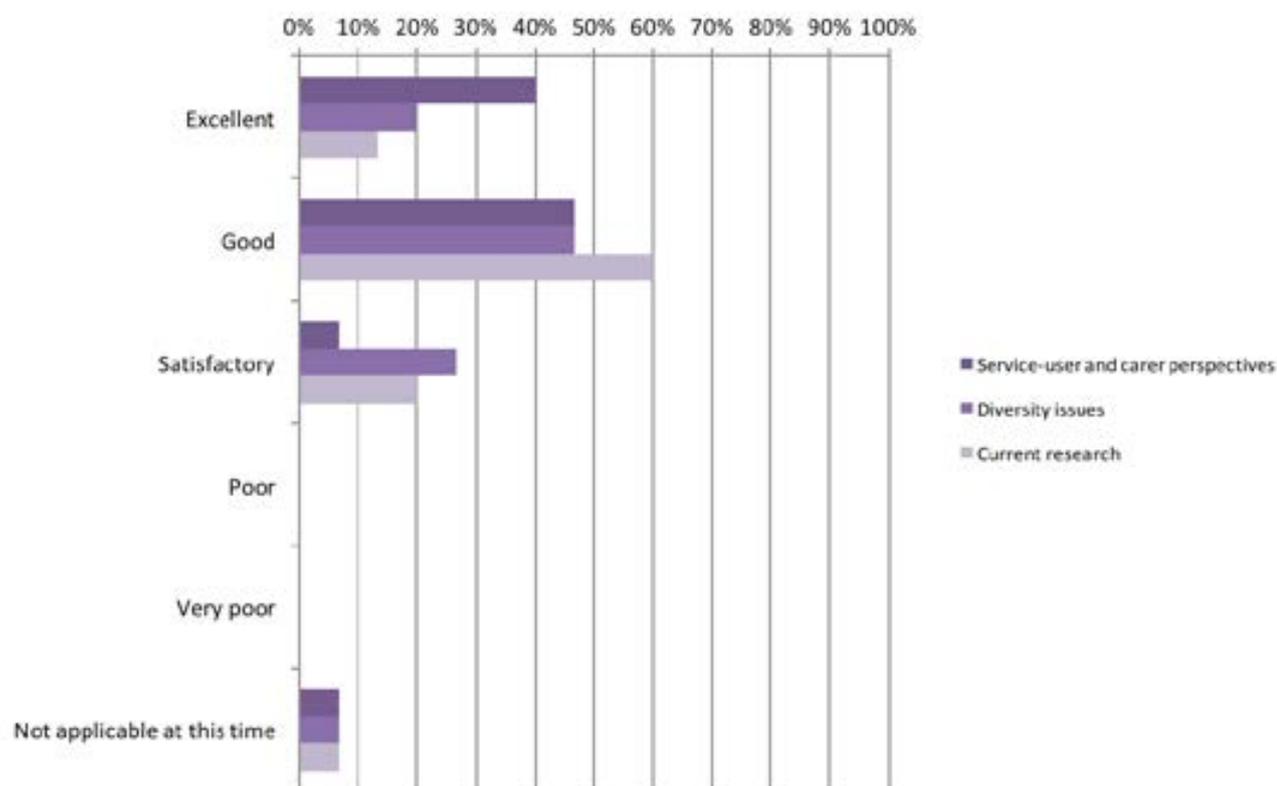
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

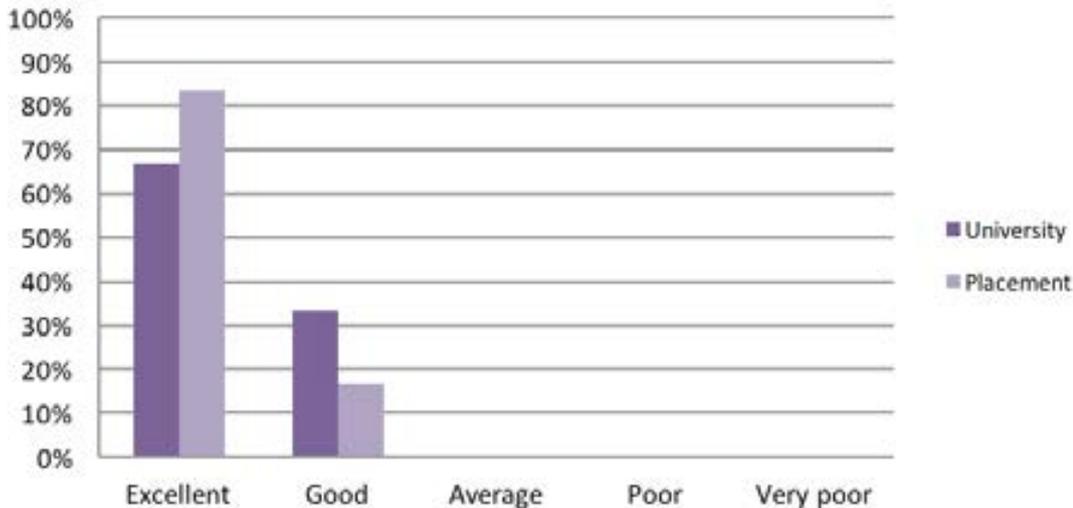
- Teaching is very varied and generally from a range of very experienced local clinicians. It tends to be very interactive and reflective and the course are very responsive to feedback from cohorts.
- Had plenty of service-user and carers invited to give personal perspectives during teaching - had families from CAMHS, services users and parents from eating disorders, people who have experienced psychosis and their families, people who have been inpatients in forensic services. Really valued having them part of our teaching sessions and feels like it is encouraged always.
- The teaching from the course staff is excellent and very reflective. There is also a lot of teaching from local practising psychologists which is more variable but generally very interesting and helpful.
- Still early days but so far it has been really good, some sessions are naturally better than the others.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

40% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Demands have fluctuated throughout the three years, but they have felt manageable.
- Not really, there are peaks around deadlines but I think overall it's pretty manageable. I would really advise anyone to move locally to the course though and not to try and commute from further afield.
- Like other courses, there is often a lot to juggle in terms of academic, clinical and research pressures, but it generally feels manageable and the course are supportive.
- Just the usual - competing academic/clinical/life demands, but are manageable if you are an organised person (I am not).
- The academic assessment process and marking scheme is not wholly transparent, and clear feedback is not always forthcoming. This can be stressful particularly when you put a lot of effort into pieces of work.
- At the beginning it is hard to get used to the numerous demands of meeting new people, studying, preparing for placement etc. Once you get settled things are much easier
- Juggling multiple responsibilities and deadlines has been tiring at times - but there are peaks and troughs.
- Not having a car makes things tricky as many placements are outside of Leeds but it is perfectly doable, the days are just longer. We also don't have that many study days in first year so it can be hard to get a good placement-coursework-life balance around deadline time.

- The level of academic skills expected during training.
- I have to say the lack of study days in first year prior to the first essays made the course more demanding than is needed. The deadlines all come together at the same time as the ‘mid placement reviews’ which adds to the stress demands. I wouldn’t say anything in the course is too demanding it is just a lot of demands all at once and it feels as if this is just part of training. I have been reassured that our study days do increase in the next two years which will help with the above.
- I did at the beginning of the year. There was lots of paperwork, the first essay rolls around quickly and there aren’t many study days at that time. I spent Christmas working on the essay. Not much of a work-life balance in the first 6 months of the course.
- The workload comes in waves, so there are times when you feel you have a lot going on and other times when you feel on top of things.

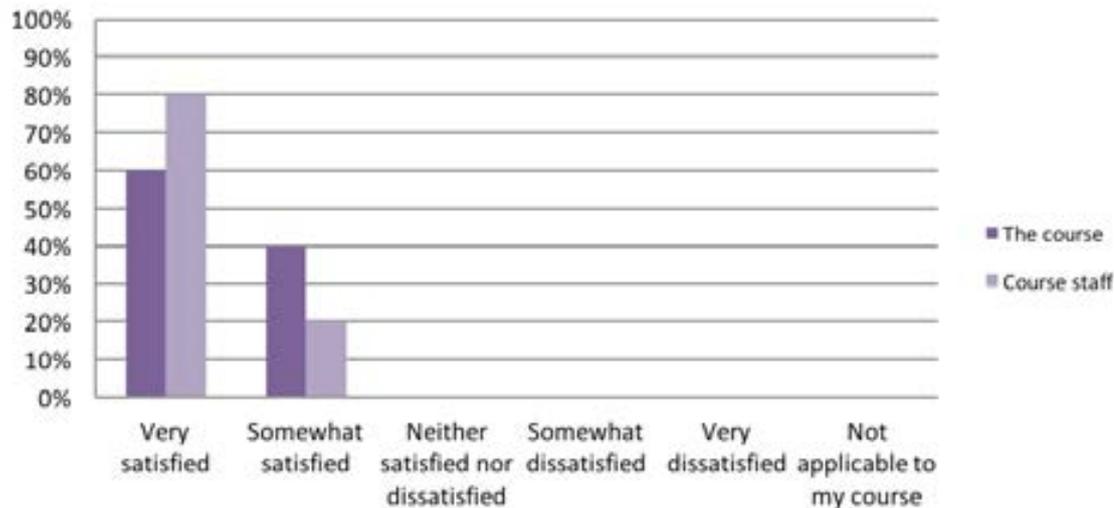
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	47%
“Buddy”	100%
Manager	47%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	13%
Professional Mentor	93%
Personal Tutor	80%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	87%
Independent personal advisor	0%
Other	20%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- We also attend a PPD group for each cohort led by a psychoanalyst.
- Peers on the course
- Academic tutor
- We don’t have assigned tutors but the university have an open door policy which I find great as you can meet with any of them to discuss issues or concerns

### How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

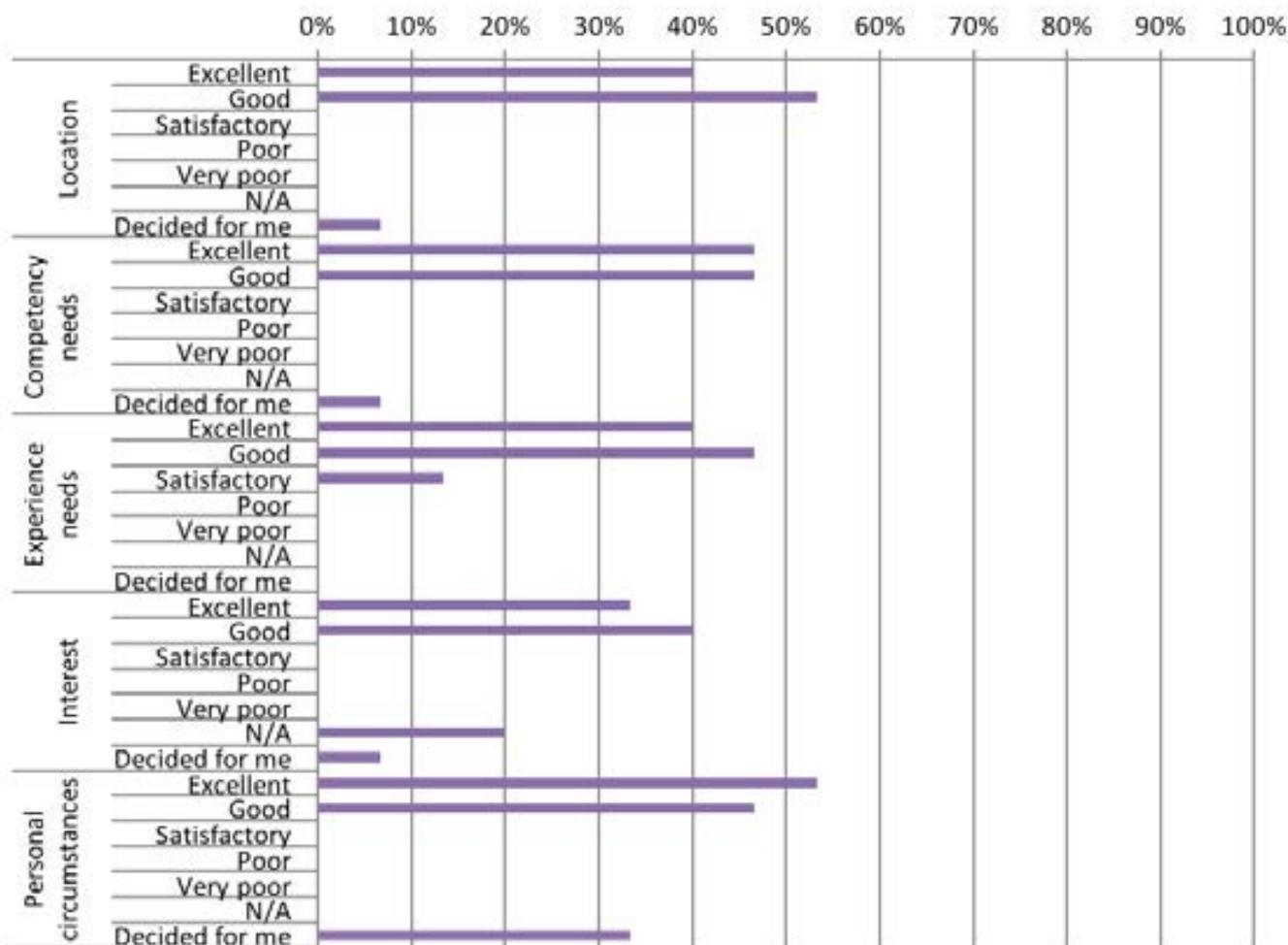


#### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

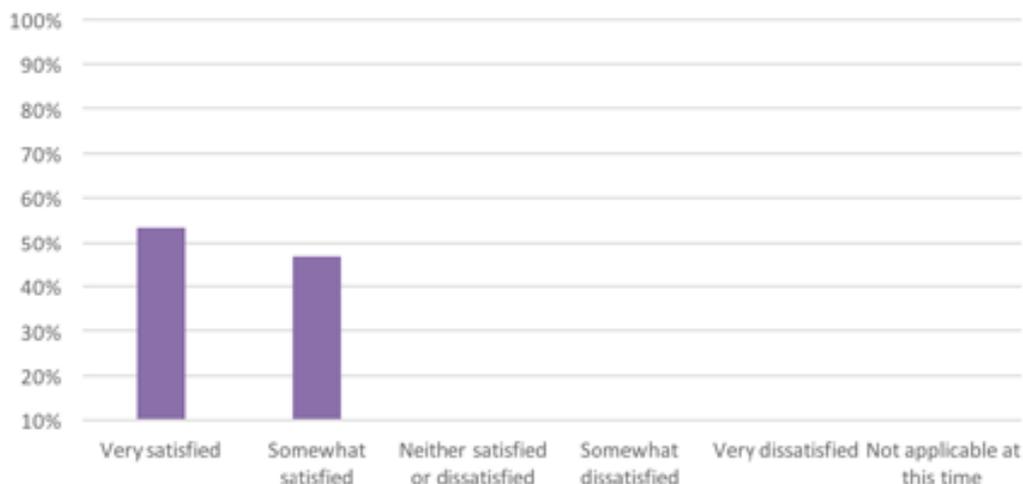
- Support has been available when required. I have no concerns about this.
- I feel my needs have been met, even at times of personal difficulty - where inevitably, life happens during the course.
- I've asked for help from course tutors about managing stress and my own mental health and they have been excellent. They have been supportive, empathic and professional and are happy to meet with you and offer their help and advice.
- Really happy with it so far.
- I have always been very well supported by the course staff at the times I have needed their help or just to tell them something.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



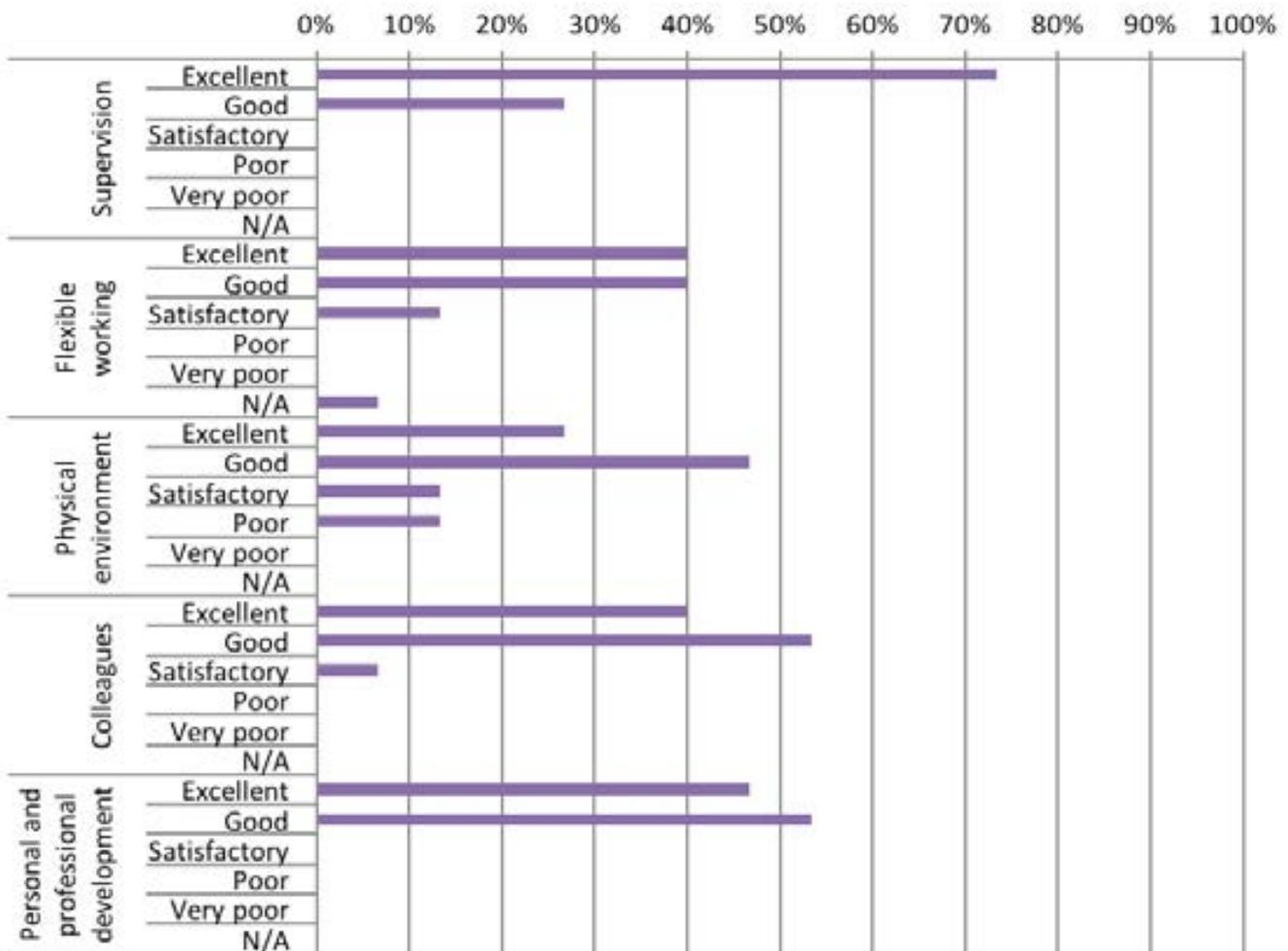
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- I had quite a lot of clinical experience before the course, which definitely helped. Others with less tended to be more anxious.
- Block teaching is tailored towards upcoming placements. In first year, introductory block covers all basic skills for placement and a reflective group to think about worries or concerns. At beginning of second year, 4 week teaching block covers clinical skills in the second year placement options before you start placement.
- It's hard to prepare well for the first placement - 1/2 the cohort do a child placement first and the other 1/2 do adult so it's difficult to cover the basics of both before everyone starts. But we did cover general assessment and therapeutic skills and had some adult and child mental health teaching in the initial teaching block to get us started.
- There is a session on preparing for placement which is really helpful.
- A lot of the teaching was child based initially and as I was going straight into a child placement this was helpful but those going into adult missed out somewhat. This is natural I suppose but an integration of the two may have made it more helpful for the majority.
- I have felt as prepared as possible for each of my placements.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Placements have been really positive generally. They have covered a broad range of client group, presentation and psychological models of therapy.
- My placements have been well suited to my needs and quite unusual in terms of what you'd expect from training placements (Leeds doesn't follow the common adult-child-LD-older adult-final year route and completes competencies in a more flexible way). I've felt well scaffolded in my development there and feel there are good relationships between the course and placements. There is a great choice of final year placements and this feels a relatively autonomous selection process for us.
- My supervisor has been sensitive to the fact that I don't have any prior experience in my placement area and tailored my learning in line with this. You have regular meetings with your placement supervisor from the course and in the service you're working in to make sure everything is running smoothly.
- I've only had one placement so far, but I've really enjoyed it and learnt so much already.
- I have had a fantastic experience in my placement team, work load and superiors have been fab.
- Agile working environments are not ideal to be productive in, especially for trainees who are there for 3 days a week.
- My experience on placements has been excellent. There has been an opportunity for a breadth of placements across specialties that are of interest. In third year you get to choose your placement, which has meant that I have been able to work in a specialist service.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	20%
No	67%
Don't know	13%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	73%
No	13%
Don't know	13%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Leeds, West Yorkshire, Bradford and Lancashire.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

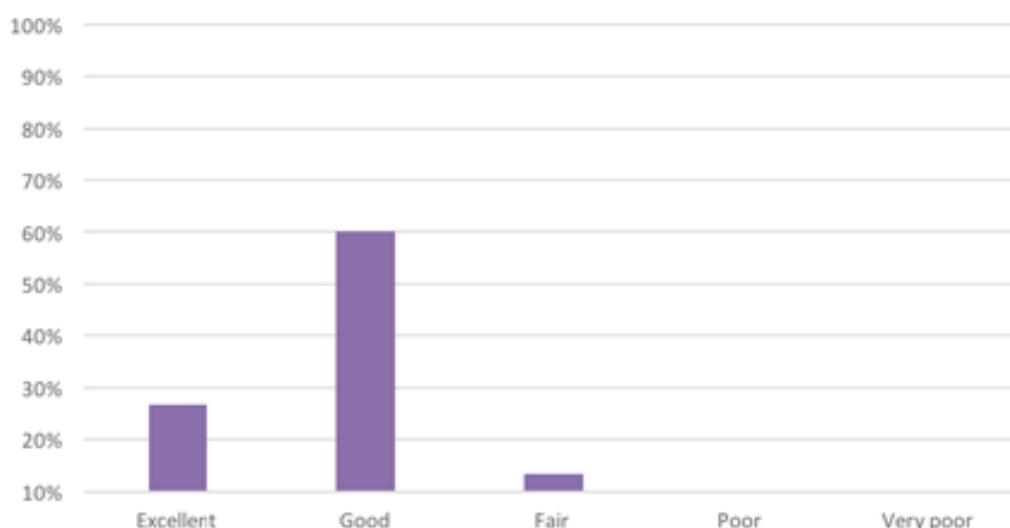
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	73%
Fair	27%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

#### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- The course really encourages and normalises a good work life balance.
- Only that I would recommend that you live close to the course. It's a difficult course to commute to from further afield.
- Sometimes it is more difficult when various demands stack up, but personally I would say that it is manageable and no more the case at Leeds than any other course.
- Be organised and minimise the stress. I am not and have struggled with this, but have come to accept that's just how I am so might as well accept it.
- There are many plates to spin and I've got workaholic habits, so it's important to manage the potentially negative impact of one's perfectionistic tendencies.
- Compared to some other courses we have less study days in the first year and so work life balance is difficult at times. But this will change in second and third year to make it easier.
- Peaks and troughs but certainly take all of my holiday allowance as holiday and not to study. I put in a few extra hours each week here and there to keep everything ticking over but rarely do prolonged study outside of allocated hours unless deadline is imminent.
- It's generally pretty good apart from in the run up deadlines, which is to be expected really. It feels overwhelming at the start, but probably in line with what you'd expect with any of the training courses.
- It takes a while to adjust to the course demands and find a balance at the beginning, but it's about figuring out what works best for you.

- I think work life balance would be better with the addition of more study days in first year.
- Work-life balance in the first 6 months wasn't there, but that's partly due to moving cities and sorting out things associated with living in a new city. Six months into the course there is a bit more of a balance now.
- Work life balance has been good throughout the course - obviously stepping up around deadlines (e.g. before an essay is due), but this is to be expected.
- I am currently working into evenings and weekends to get my thesis in by 10th May. This feels manageable and will ultimately mean that the viva and accreditation process will be stress free.
- I was surprised as I have found it easier to maintain a work life balance than I anticipated. I still do all of the things that I enjoy outside of work and have even taken on some new hobbies by joining societies through the University.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- We don't pay tax.
- Apparently there is due to be a change in our tax code, which has upset a lot of people recently, particularly for those with mortgages.
- The rent and general cost of living in Leeds is very reasonable. Travel to and from placement is reimbursed which also helps.
- Leeds is a great place to live and not that expensive.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- The down-to-earth nature of the course. A lack of superiority on the part of the course and the staff. Feeling able to approach staff about any issues or concerns. Feeling valued as an individual.
- Placements
- The flexibility and reflective elements of Leeds. It is never one size fits all, and I feel I have a lot of input in shaping my experiences and seeking out opportunities to fit my interests and competency needs in order to develop personally and professionally

- Developing different skills and opportunities for growth in areas of personal interest.
- The “third-wave” and health focus gets a lot of attention, which is good to see. Obviously it’s not for everyone, but there are certainly excellent health placements.
- Variety between clinical and academic work
- The teaching staff are fantastic. They are very approachable and they really care about how we are getting on and settling in.
- Friendly team, reflective practice, feels like a commitment to developing you in your own style to be the type of psychologist you want to be - no mould to be squashed in to
- Teaching from course staff is really great. Having a small cohort is a big plus too - it means teaching is often interactive and can involve a lot more group discussion and reflective practice which is when the real learning takes place.
- I’m really enjoying learning again and putting new skills into practice on placement.
- The core staff of the course have a really lovely and transparent way of teaching, which makes me feel less like a student and more like a colleague. I’ve also really enjoyed the service users involvement in our training and I feel the course actively advocates us all to “become our own cakes.
- Teaching and core staff team are all fab and very approachable.
- Clinical placement and the flexibility that comes with it.
- The course staff - I feel as though I have been able to build good relationships with the course staff, they are both friendly and helpful. I think they genuinely care about the trainee experience and really invest in making any changes that would be helpful for trainees.
- The course staff team and their ethos really make the course for me.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- Leeds is a thoughtful and supportive course, helping you to develop into a critical and individual clinical psychologist by valuing uniqueness, and the capacity to reflect on yourself and what you bring to the role.
- A revision of written assessment procedures would potentially be helpful. Try to make them more transparent (e.g. allow us to see previous assignments that were graded so highly, and ensure more consistency with grading - it seems so variable (and low), which can result in feelings of demoralisation). It’s also less clear why the UK courses have such different assessments in terms of frequency and content, with some having far less than others.
- It is a really great course. I am so happy I got a place at Leeds and feel lucky to be part of such a great University.
- I feel the Leeds course is really focused on turning you into the best practitioner you can be. It is very reflective and supportive.
- You should be prepared to travel for placements, and to get the best out of the first year you need to be quite proactive and assertive around finding a thesis supervisor/ topic and requesting the placements you want.
- Leeds is a really reflective course, which is a great fit for me, but may not be for everyone.
- Only improvement I can think of some more study days prior to the first essay hand in and the room we are taught in is not great, this is out of the course teams control to be fair and they do try their best to sort it.
- A few more study days at the beginning of the year especially when people have just moved into the city and need time to wrap their heads around all the changes.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- 2 interviews, one academic interview with members of the course team and local psychologists, and one with a service user and carer panel.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	20%
Placement	60%
Personal Study	20%
Research	Combined with personal study

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	0%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Leicester University

13 responses (36% of 36 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	77%
Year 2	23%
Year 3	0%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	15%
25 – 29 years	54%
30 – 34 years	23%
35 – 39 years	8%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	15%
Twice	54%
3 times	23%
4 times	8%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	8%
MSc	54%
MRes	8%
Diploma	8%
Post Graduate Certificate	8%
Conversion course	23%
None	15%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	8%
2 years	15%
3 years	15%
4 years	38%
5 years	8%
6+ years	15%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	54%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	15%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	31%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	15%
Research Assistant	38%
Voluntary Research Assistant	15%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	54%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	0%
Other	31%

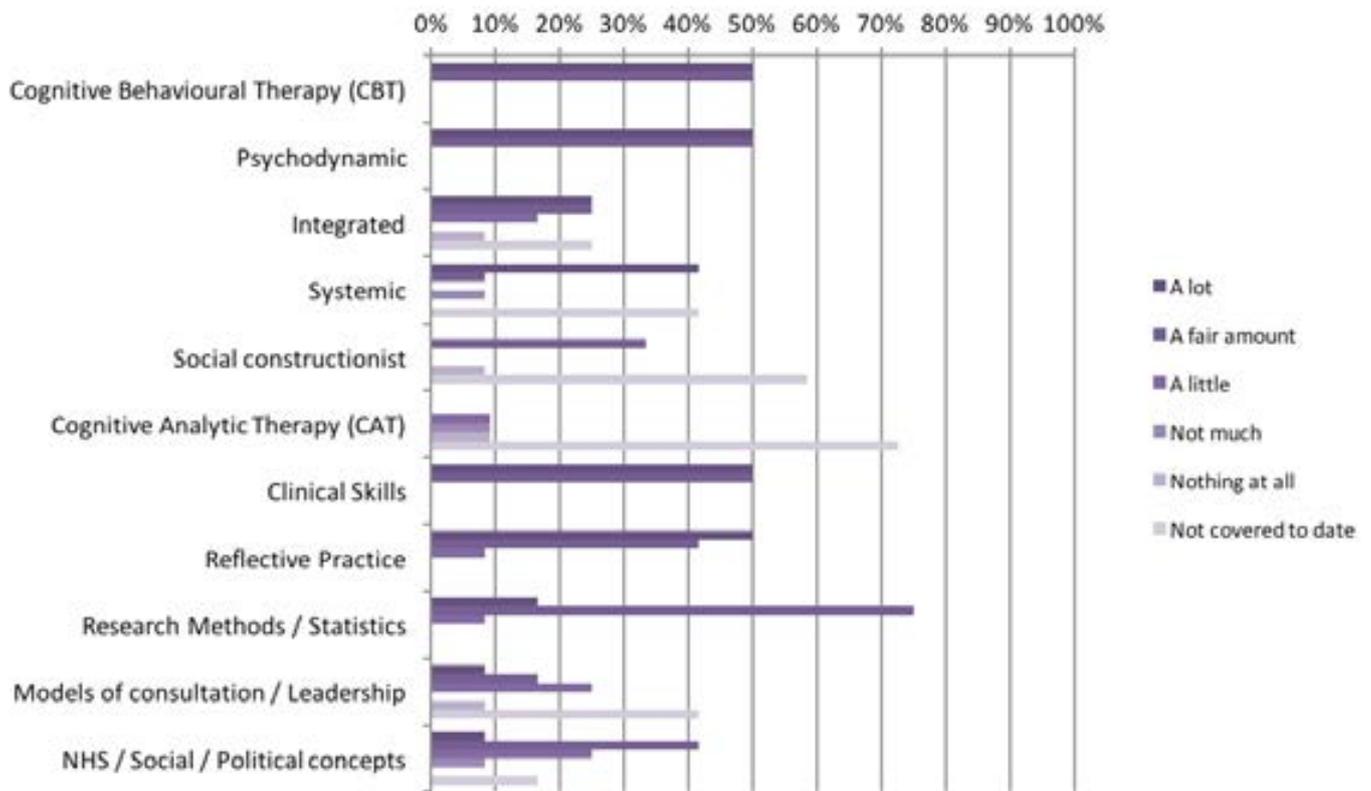
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- It felt as though the course did everything they could to make us feel as relaxed as possible throughout the interview process. Communication from the course, particularly the admin team, was concise and timely and their organisation really helped reduce my nerves. On the day itself the staff definitely gave a good impression that it would be a friendly and supportive university to train with.
- They put me at ease from the beginning. I was running about 20mins late due to an accident on the motorway and luckily they were able to reassure me and managed to fit me in still. Staff were so friendly and helpful throughout, as were the current trainees
- When compared with other interviews on other courses, this felt the least anxiety provoking. As with all interviews it was challenging, but it felt like the interviewers really wanted to get the best out of you and supported you along the process. There were a variety of different tasks and I think this also helped.
- The course appeared really organised and both the admin and teaching staff were really friendly. They let you know as soon as possible the outcome of selection and of the interview itself.
- On the interview day there were a few different tasks, but you were given some information beforehand about what to expect. If there was any reading or reflection time included in these tasks they would leave the room and give you some space. It really felt as if Leicester were trying to get the best out of you, and learn more about you as a person.
- I found that the admin staff and trainees were very welcoming at the beginning of the day and tried to put you at your ease. I found that the interviewers asked lots of follow-up questions about your answers. I felt as though it was very difficult to tell how I had done in the interview as the interviewers did not give any indication of whether my answers were what they expected.
- A transparent process, with the course keeping you well informed along the way. I felt the selection test aspect gave a good opportunity for people with non-traditional backgrounds to get a foot in the door. The interview day itself was relaxed and the selectors genuinely wanted to get to know about you and see the best of you.
- I found it really helpful to apply for a course that used a short-listing selection test. The interview day was great - the staff were so friendly and helpful and there were trainees around to offer advice and support, which made me feel really comfortable and helped with the normal performance anxiety.
- Everybody was extremely warm and welcoming, from those on the interview panel to the current trainees who had given up their time to talk to us about the course. There were a number of different elements to the interview, which I felt gave me the opportunity to demonstrate skills in a variety of domains. I left the interview feeling that I had been given the opportunity to demonstrate who I was as a person and how this translated to the type of clinical psychologist I would hopefully one day become.
- Really relaxed and very well organised. The staff were welcoming and actually took into consideration the fact that I had to travel a really long distance when selecting what day of the week I would interview.
- The interviewers put me at ease.
- Much more relaxed than other interviews. Staff and admin team were all lovely and very supportive
- The interview process was well supported. Due to the set-up of the interview, there was no need to do vast amounts of revision or preparation (although I didn't realise this until after). The interview was based on our experience.
- The interview day was welcoming and supportive. It really felt like they were trying to enable us to do our best.

- The process is made as relaxed as possible. The staff are all very friendly and you get the feeling they genuinely want to hear about you as a person rather than pre-formed answers to questions, which was refreshing. All interviews are nerve wracking but I think they did everything possible to put you at ease

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



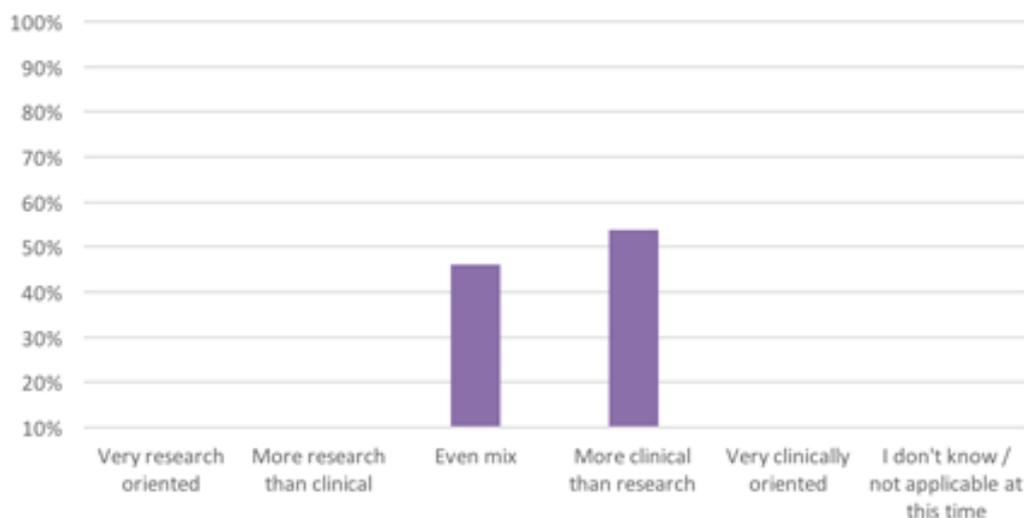
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	23%
Mindfulness	46%
Schema Therapy	8%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	15%
Solution Focused Therapy	15%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	23%
Other	23%

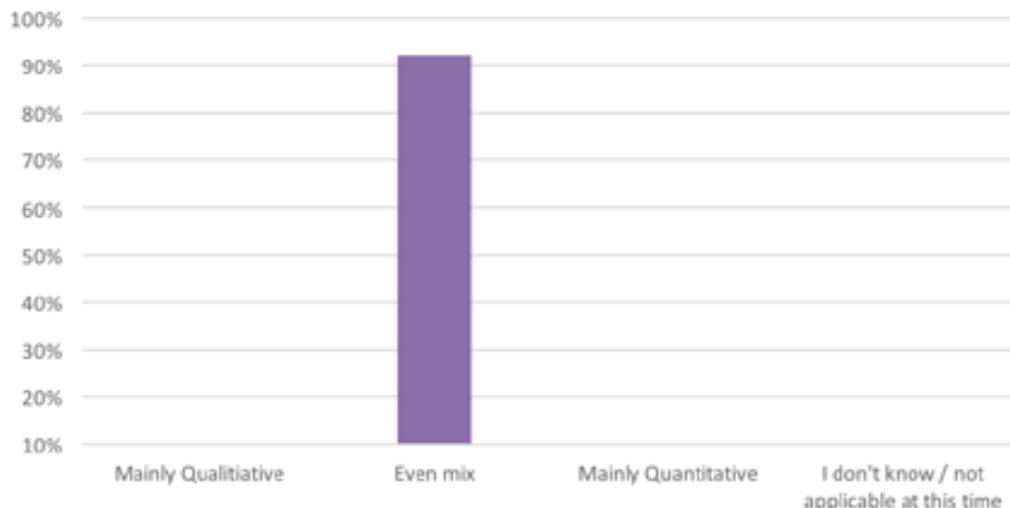
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- In 3rd year we are given the option to ask for extra teaching on anything else we would like to cover, whether a new topic/therapy or more in depth look at something we've previously covered.
- The course have tried to fit in as much as possible that they believe to be important. They are really responsive if you have any suggestions and a rep from each cohort sits on the curriculum committee.
- The teaching in first year mostly centres around cognitive behavioural and psychodynamic models. However, quite a few trainees are doing projects with a focus on compassion focused therapy, so while there is no formal teaching on this there are opportunities for interested trainees to learn about this model. There is quite a big health psychology focus at Leicester with a third of trainees being on health psychology placements. Neuropsychology and research methods are also areas in which there is lots of teaching in the first year.
- The first year focuses on 1:1 interventions and this is backed up with teaching on CBT models and psychodynamic psychotherapy. We also had a good amount of Neuropsychology teaching and options for further learning if of interest. The second year focuses on interventions with more than one, so systemic and community models are taught. Final year appears to have a variety of teaching building on these, as well as preparing for qualifying. But I don't know as I'm not there yet.
- This is only the first year so is quite CBT heavy, but the second year has more of a focus on systemic approaches and then community approaches in the last year. Psychodynamic thinking seems to be present throughout.

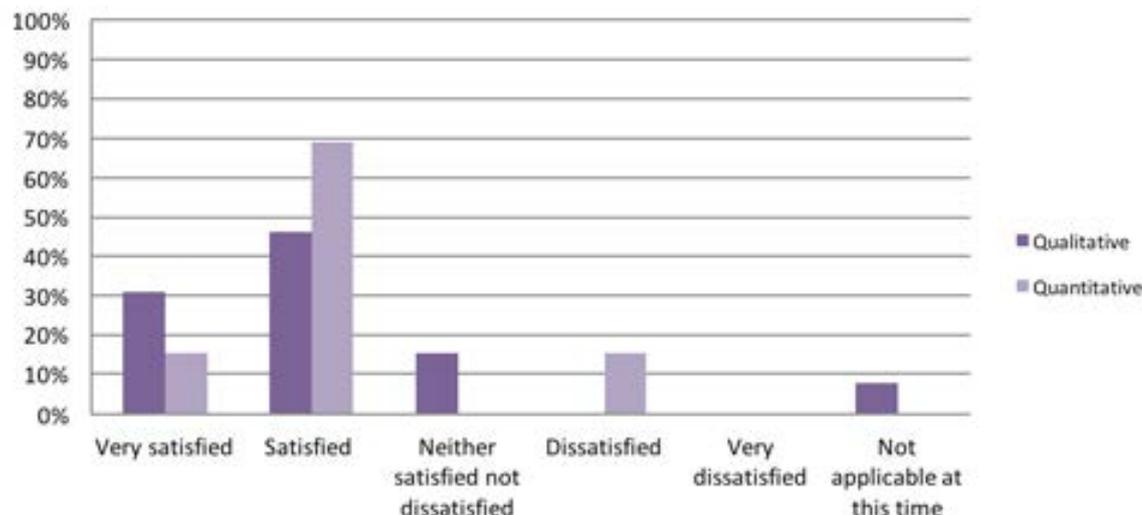
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



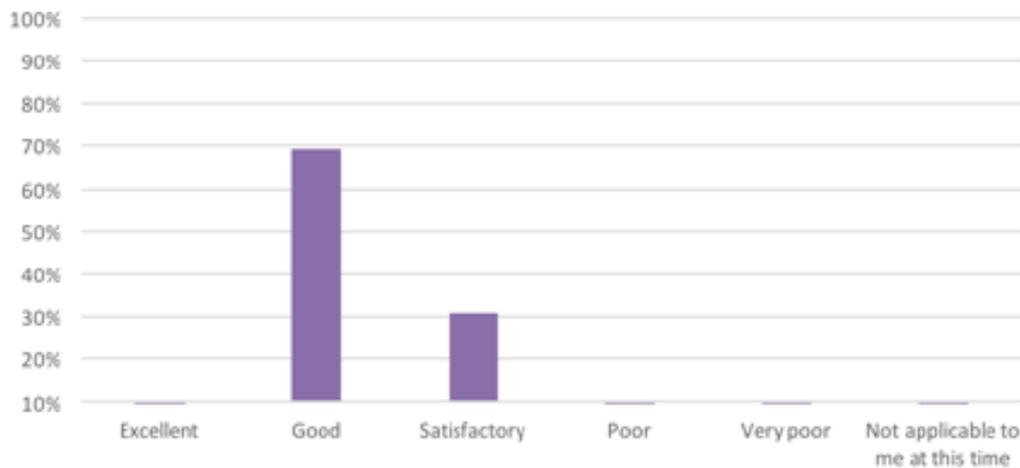
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



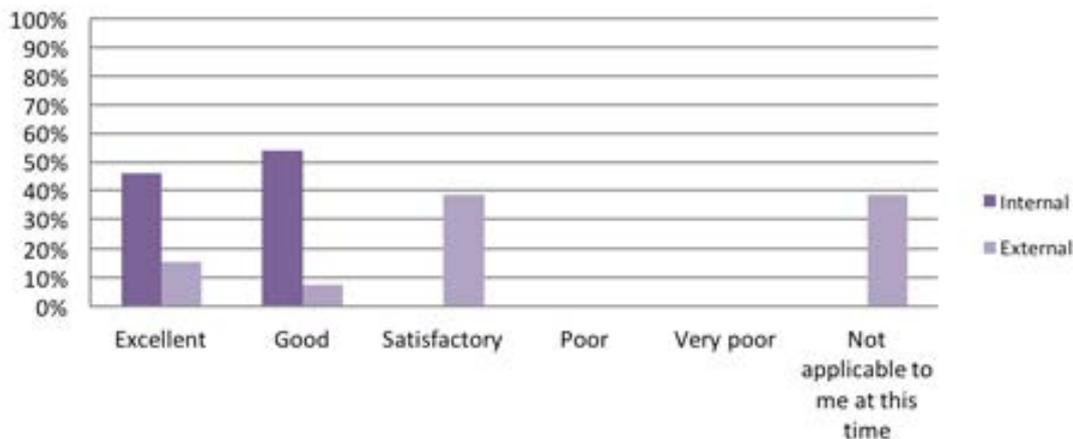
**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- It has been really helpful to start thinking about our research projects early on as it allows us to time to take everything in before we need to start putting plans into place.
- The process of thinking about research (particularly your thesis) starts very early and the coursework is designed to guide you through the different elements. It surprised me that I'd need to start thinking about this in the first term but it definitely has helped get things moving.
- Would have liked some more time to select my research topic but otherwise the course is supportive.
-

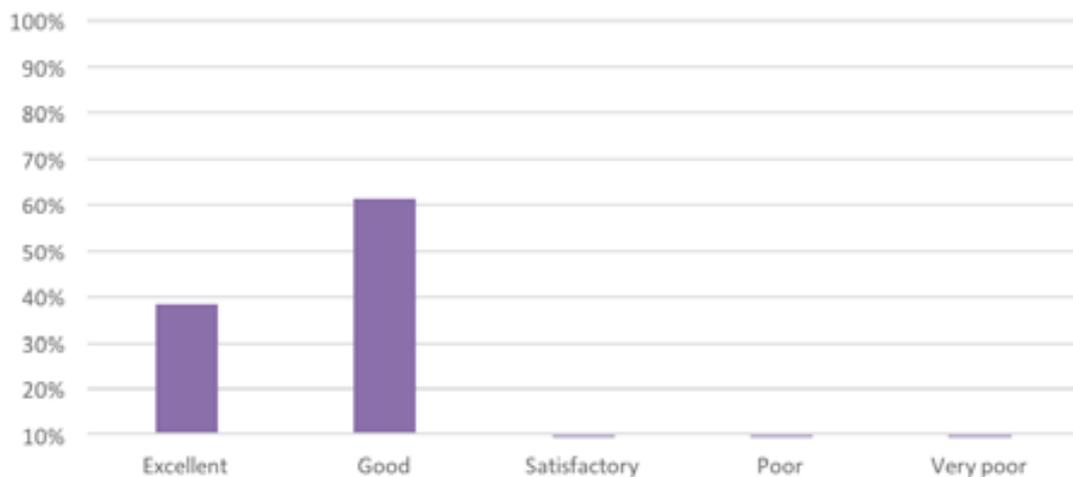
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



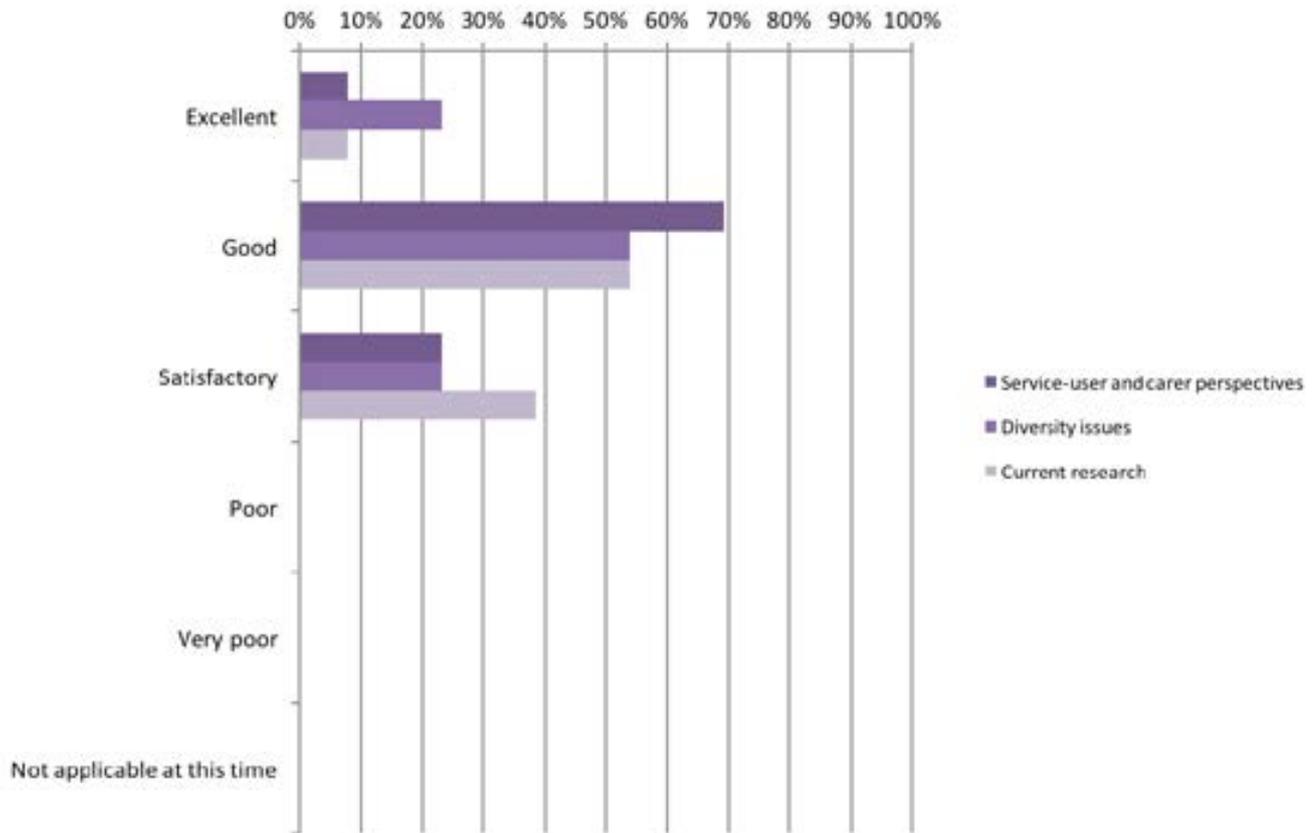
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

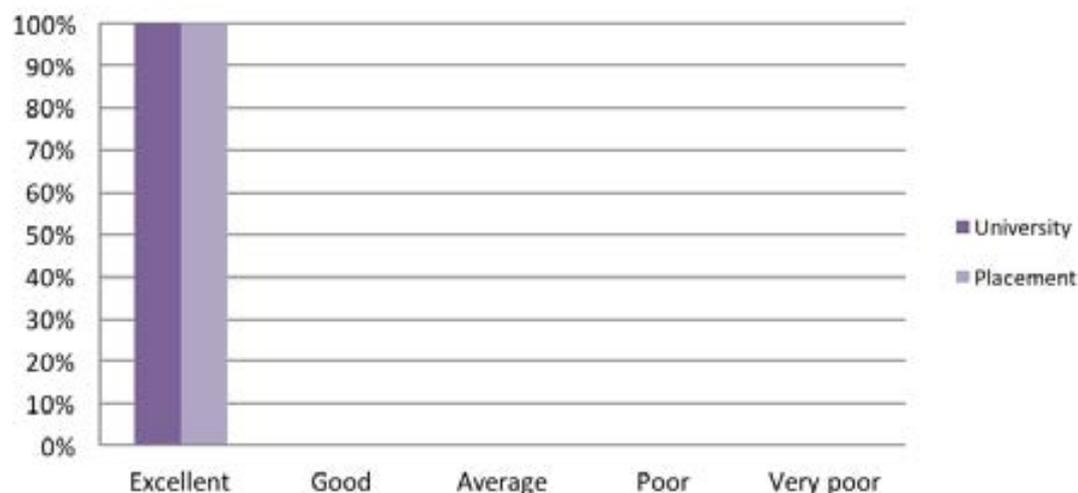
- It's helpful to have external professionals delivering our teaching. This has allowed us to hear about the role of clinical psychologists in a variety of settings as well as receiving the teaching itself. I've found that this has given me ideas about what services I might like to get experience in within or after training.
- Teaching is predominantly carried out by clinicians from the local area or who have links to the course. It is wide ranging and tries to consider what would be relevant. We are able to give feedback on each teaching session and the course is usually very good at taking this into account.
- The teaching is balanced out across the year.
- .

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

7% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Many aspects of the course have been demanding. It's been difficult to adjust to the various roles of a trainee - being a student, a clinician, and a researcher. This has felt particularly difficult because of the time spent commuting to the course and to placement.
- Balancing all the different elements is demanding but I imagine that is the case on all courses and is the nature of the type of training course
- Understandably at different points during the year the academic assignments can feel demanding with a number of deadlines to hold in mind.
- Trying to balance studying with assignments and placement demands can be difficult. There is also a lot of travelling involved for most of the cohort. This isn't unique to Leicester, just part of training.
- Juggling placement and academic demands has been challenging, although the course has been very supportive about this and I imagine this is similar for all doctorate courses.
- Balancing the demands of coursework (particularly in the first term of first year) with teaching and placement has been challenging and I am aware of trainees who have needed to use annual leave to keep on top of the workload. I also commute into Leicester which can be tiring - that being said, both the course and my placement have been incredibly supportive to make sure I can work in a way that manages this.
- I have found that the most demanding part of the course is managing the competing demands and managing your time to meet these demands.
- Having only studied at undergraduate level previously, I found the jump to writing assignments at

a doctoral level a little daunting. Having said this, plenty of support was provided through targeted teaching, out dedicated academic tutor and the detailed coursework handbook.

- Balancing different elements of the course, i.e. placement, research, other course assignments.
- Also, my first placement is quite far, although it is accessible by train.
- Commuting and travel can be tiresome and time consuming (and costly)
- There are few pieces of coursework to get through in the first few months - you can feel a bit like you hit the ground running.
- I personally have found the academic side of the course demanding (assignments), however this may be due to the period since I was last in formal education
- The first year is deadline heavy and so has been quite demanding on time outside of clinical placement.

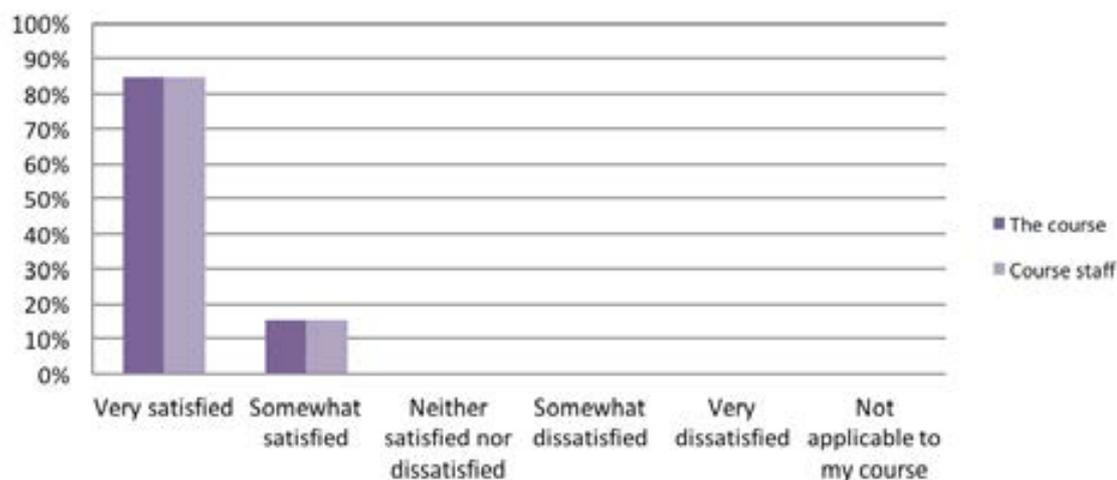
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	92%
“Buddy”	92%
Manager	85%
Placement Supervisor	85%
Librarian	92%
Professional Mentor	23%
Personal Tutor	85%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	92%
Independent personal advisor	31%
Other	31%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- Having a really supportive cohort has probably been the most helpful thing when the course has felt demanding.
- There are also a list independent psychologists who you can contact for one off or ongoing support if needed.
- There is also a 'safety net' supervisor who is a clinical psychologist willing to meet to discuss any clinical matters that arise if you need it. These are outside usual clinical supervision.

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

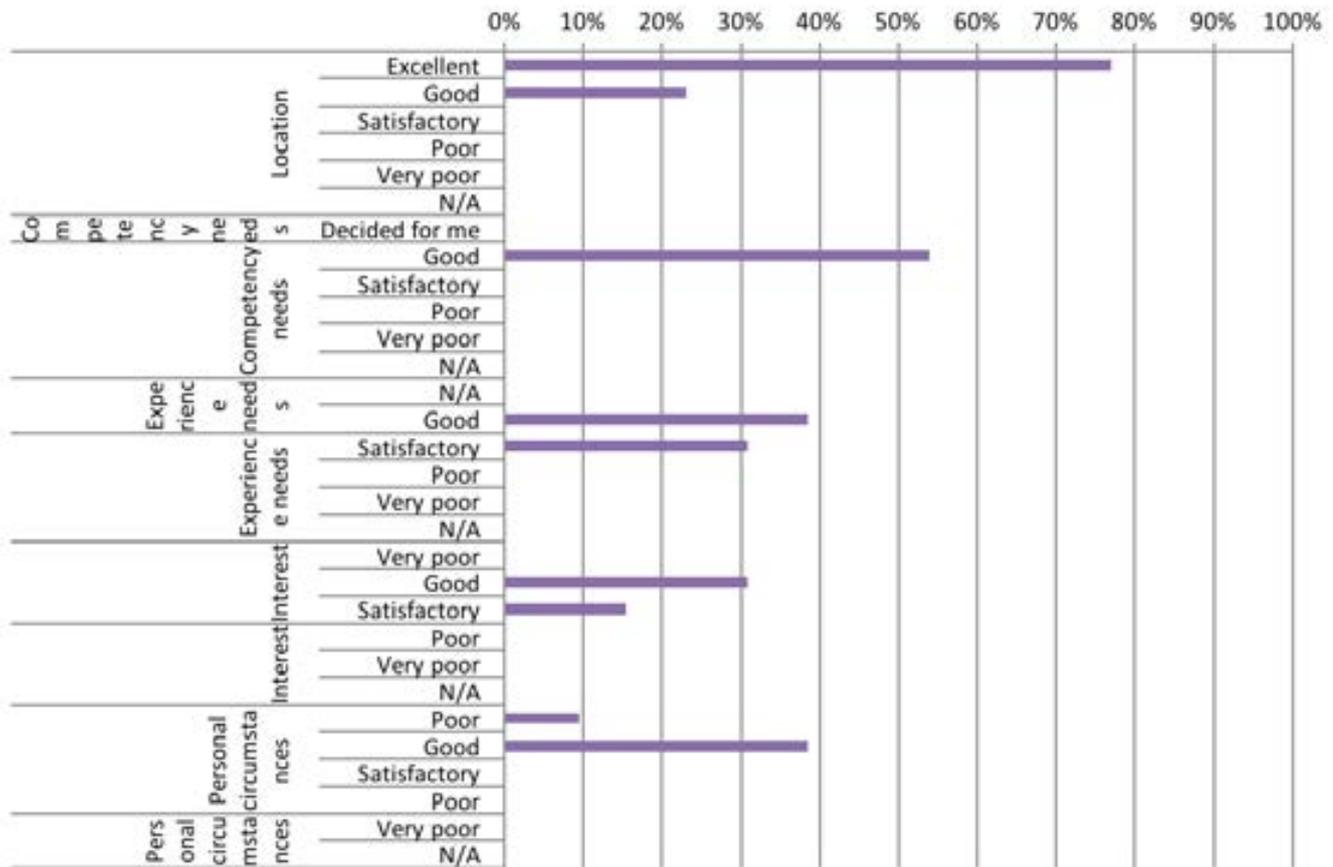


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

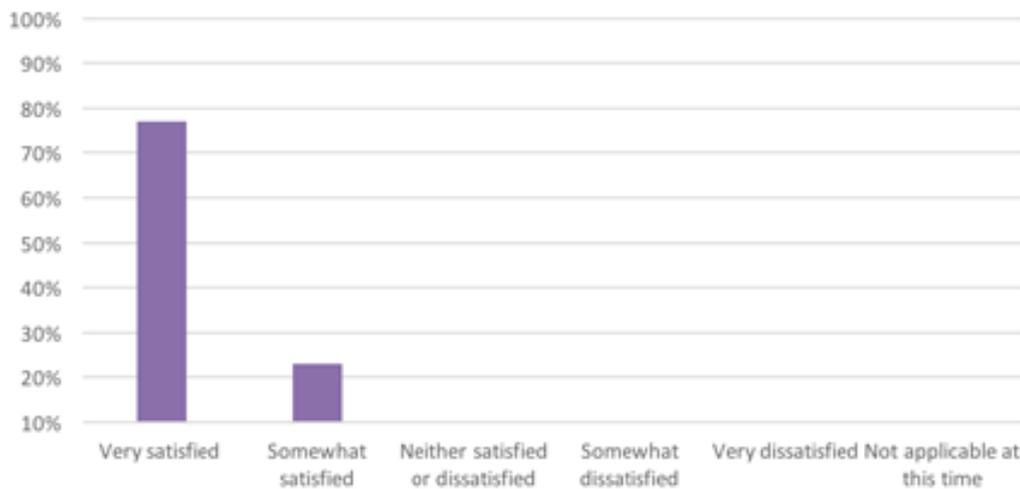
- The staff are very vocal about their understanding of the stress and difficulties trainees might experience and they have made us all aware that we can approach them for support if wish to.
- The support from the course staff and admin team has been really good, from application to actually being on the course. The team are all approachable and friendly, so you can ask them anything. They seem to understand the competing demands, and from the induction block we were encouraged to remember "it's a job" and they promoted self-care and work- life balance (where possible).
- There are many different channels through which you can receive support. I have a long-term health condition that can affect my work but the course have been extremely supportive in adapting my workplace to minimise the impact of this, Everyone from admin to course staff to trainees understand the pressure that training brings and do their best to support you through this process
- Excellent. Admin staff are brilliant for advice and pointing you in the right direction. We have year tutors for clinical placements who are very approachable and willing to get involved if things go wrong.
- I think the quality and breadth of the support given to trainees at Leicester is fantastic. Even at interview I got the impression that Leicester was an extremely supportive and nurturing environment in which to learn; so far I have not been proved wrong! We have dedicated academic and clinical tutors as well as line managers, placement supervisors and safety-net advisors (qualified clinical psychologists who are independent from the course). Our clinical tutors communicate brilliantly with our placement supervisors; bridging the gap between university and placement and making sure everything is running smoothly. In addition, we have a buddy system whereby every first year trainee is paired with a second year trainee prior to starting the course. We all found this scheme very useful prior to and during our first few months of training.
- Staff are approachable and actually advise you to ask them if there is something that you don't know or are not sure about.
- The level of support is very good across the course staff.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



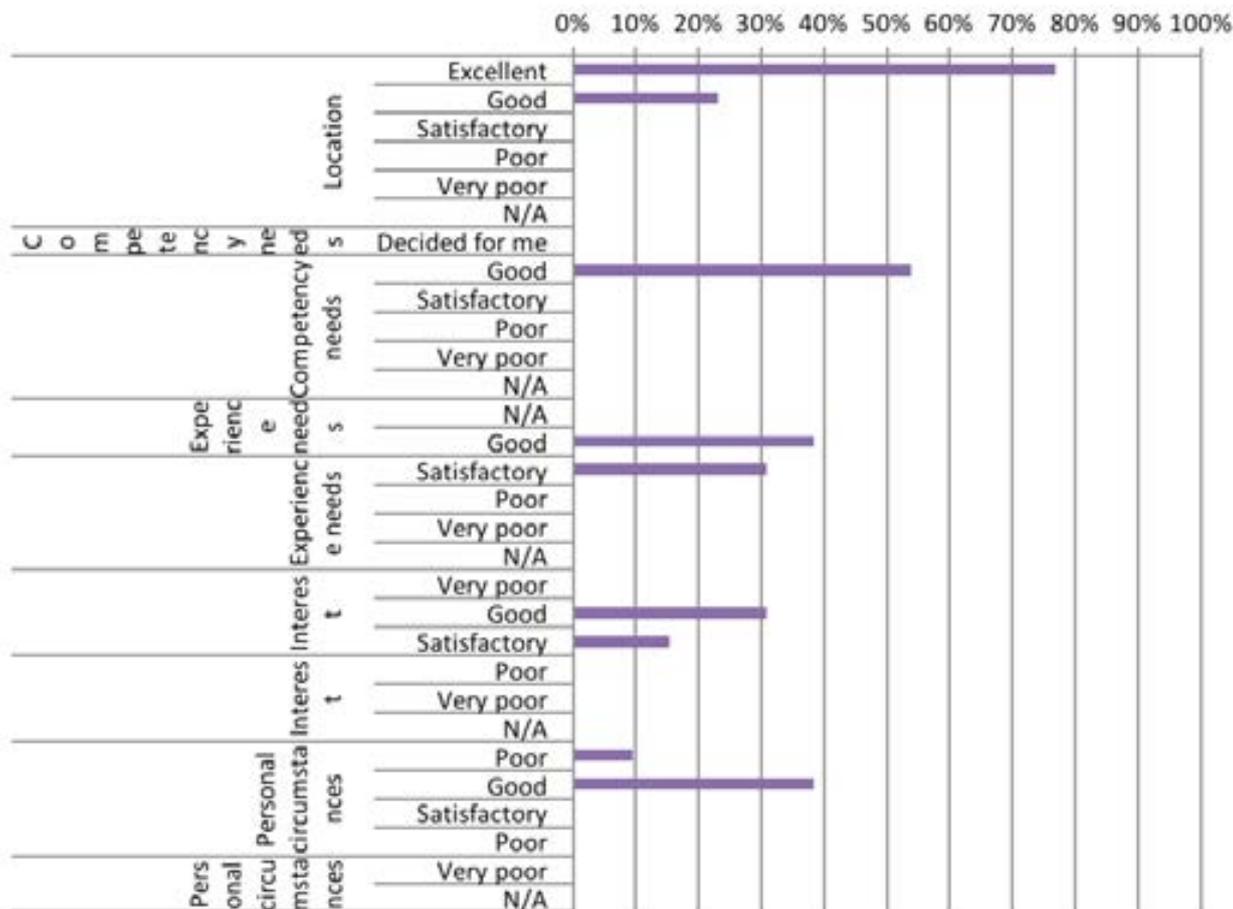
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- I felt that the course prepared us all really well for starting placements, particularly as we had all started with varying amounts of experience.
- The teaching block at the beginning of each year tends to be geared up for preparing you.
- They also ask for a summary of your experiences so that they can match with the expected competencies for each placement. Where you live and personal circumstances were taken into account, but these did not take priority over competencies.
- We did a lot of role play around different clinical skills and some of these included actors which was really helpful.
- In first year placements are decided for you but I understand there are more opportunities for input in later years including specialist placement options.
- In terms of preparation, a large proportion of the initial 6 week teaching block is dedicated to placement preparation which is led by the clinical tutors. This includes an actor's day where we could practice different scenarios in a supportive environment. This was brilliant for practicing introductions in our new role and getting back into the swing of client work after a long period of teaching.
- Once on placement, your clinical tutor meets with you and your supervisor to plan for the placement and then review at the half way point.
- At the beginning of first year there is a module dedicated to preparing you for placement.
- During our teaching block, we had a module called "preparing for placement", which did exactly as it says on the tin! This encompassed all of the practical things we needed to understand in addition to an 'actor's day' during which we worked with actors and our clinical tutors to practice any clinical situations we thought we might encounter on placement.
- You are given information about your first placement in advance so you can plan travel etc.
- There was a whole model which was based on preparation for placements, which was very helpful
- It is difficult to cover all basis for placements and so the general information was very good, but you do have to be checked in at the deep end a little to begin with!

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).

- My first year supervisors have been really welcoming and supportive. I have felt able to build upon my confidence and clinical skills and have felt supported to face new challenges.
- My placement has been flexible in terms of my working hours and also worked really well with balancing service needs alongside my academic requirements.
- I am on a community placement across a whole county which can involve a lot of travelling, but placement have been good at trying to minimise the impact of this as far as possible. The MDT have been very supportive. I have had the opportunity to work with many varied clients on placement.
- There are options for international placements in Cuba, Ethiopia and USA which trainees can organise.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	31%
No	62%
Don't know	8%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	58%
No	25%
Don't know	17%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Birmingham and Coventry.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

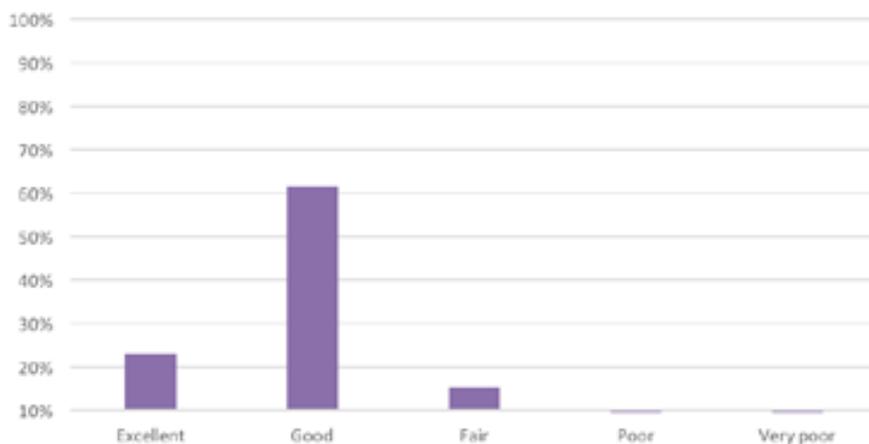
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	67%
Fair	25%
Poor	8%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- I have found that my commitments to the course (particularly commuting, assignments and reading) has meant that I have significantly less time to do hobbies that I used to enjoy.
- I think this is something that is down to you as an individual. The course encourage a good work life balance and it really is about being boundaried with yourself. It can swing in roundabouts, at times when there are many deadlines it can feel a bit less balanced but then during other parts of the year with less deadlines it is much easier.
- Generally it is ok, but this depends on whether an assignment due date is coming up. I have had to use evenings and weekends to study, but try not to make this a regular habit
- The workload ebbs and flows, so at times when working to a deadline it is necessary to work evenings and weekends in addition to 9-5. At other times it is possible to have evenings at weekends off.
- On the whole I have been able to keep a good work life balance (although less so around coursework deadlines). This was made easier when I moved closer to Leicester and reduced my commuting time!
- Generally good, though around coursework deadlines this is hard to maintain.
- As assignment deadlines approach the work life balance declines but generally it is a reasonable balance
- There are times during the first year when a lot of time is needed to be spent outside of work hours on coursework deadlines, but there are also other times which are more relaxed.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- I've found that not having to pay tax has really helped me financially, particularly as commuting can be so expensive.
- Travelling costs are very high and you can claim some expenses but not all.
- As I live close to the university I can claim all of my travel costs back from the university, which is very useful given the amount of travel required as part of my placement
- AT present the earnings are tax free as you are training, and so this makes the post well paid at present.

**What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?**

- Spending time at placement is my favourite part of training.
- Placements
- Some of the staff are particularly supportive.
- I like that Leicester uses an integrative approach, and considers systemic, political and social issues. They like to focus on diversity and equality in every aspect that they can. They have been very supportive and aim to develop you as an individual with your own interests and skills.
- An extremely supportive atmosphere that makes what can be a very difficult course feel manageable. Having one full study day a week is extremely helpful in meeting these competing demands. My placement is extremely rewarding, and the course have placed me in an area of clinical psychology that is my primary interest.
- The people I train with.
- Smaller cohort, which is really supportive. The staff that teach on the course are University staff and local clinicians and you feel that you build good relationships with them during training. The course has a very reflective approach and provides a really good range of teaching.
- I think the depth and breadth of the teaching has probably been my favourite aspect so far.
- I really like the course in general, not a specific aspect. It is challenging but so far I find it rewarding. I would really recommend this course.
- The course is very welcoming and receptive to feedback. You feel very supported throughout the selection process and throughout training.
- My peers in the cohort, we have become good friends and they are a massive support. The team around us are also really supportive, e.g. the admin, clinical supervisors, academic supervisors and University line managers. This has been so comforting, especially in this first year
- Our cohort is really nice and supportive and generally the course staff are also very supportive, particularly the admin team. If there are any difficulties you don't feel alone and you feel like there is the support available to help you through

# Courses Survey Results

## Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

## What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- 2 interviews, one academic interview with members of the course team and local psychologists, and one with a service user and carer panel.

## For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	1 day
Placement	3 days
Personal Study	1 day
Research	30 days

## What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

## Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Liverpool University

11 responses (15% of 72 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	45%
Year 2	27%
Year 3	27%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	82%
30 – 34 years	9%
35 – 39 years	9%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	9%
Twice	36%
3 times	27%
4 times	27%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	9%
MA	0%
MSc	55%
MRes	9%
Diploma	9%
Post Graduate Certificate	18%
Conversion course	0%
None	27%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	0%
3 years	27%
4 years	18%
5 years	18%
6+ years	36%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

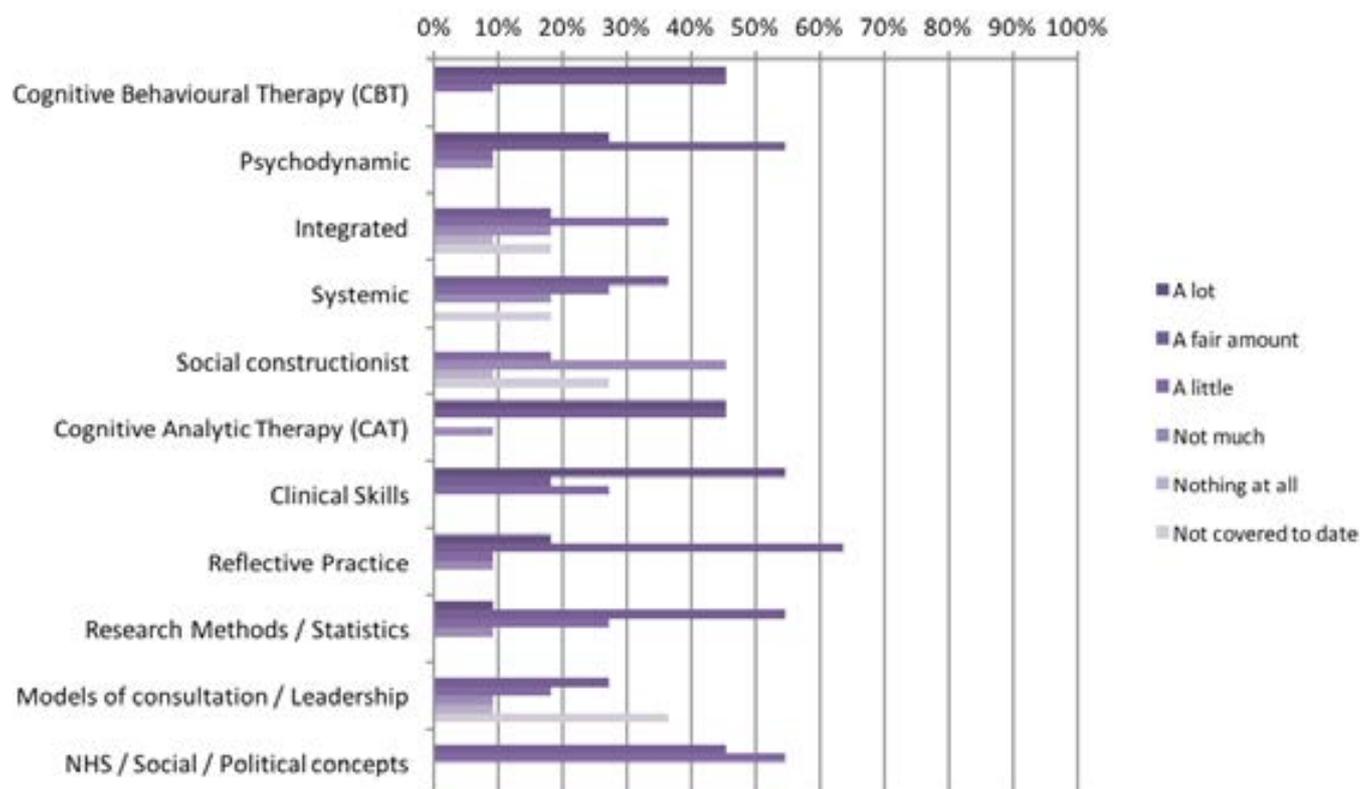
Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	82%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	18%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	27%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	36%
Voluntary Research Assistant	18%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	55%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	9%
Other	36%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- I found the interview process to be quite straightforward, comprising of only two interview panels (one clinical, one research). Each interview panel was welcoming and helped to put me at ease, and comprised a mixture of course staff, experts by experience, and practicing clinical psychologists. I felt that the interviewers were keen to know not only about our knowledge/experiences, but also very much about our personal/professional values.
- Brilliant. It was great having the trainees there during the interview to support us with our anxiety.
- I found the whole process really friendly and relaxing (or as relaxing as you can be on an interview day), especially in comparison to other interviews I had. There were current trainees available for questions and they were really good at putting you at ease. The interview process was laid out clearly. The interviewers were really understanding of nerves and I felt able to take my time and even go back to a previous question if there was time.
- I felt that the interview process was designed to help me feel as relaxed as possible. Both interview panels were friendly and encouraging. I think having a research interview, and a clinical interview is a real strength of this interview process as it enabled me to demonstrate my skills more specifically across these areas.
- The interview felt quite relaxed. Everyone was really friendly and it was obvious they wanted to get the best out of you. The questions didn't expect any 'expert' knowledge and it seemed like they just wanted to get to know me as a person and whether I'd be a good fit with the course ethos.
- The panels went out of their way to put me at ease and the questions seemed to be structured to get the best out of me
- The interview experience was calm, supportive and relaxed. It was lovely having other trainee's on hand during the day to talk to you about 'normal' things to lessen your nerves. There was an abundance of tea, coffee and biscuits too which is always nice. It was good having a service user on each other the panels (There is a research/theory interview and a clinical interview). The initial research task can be quite daunting when you are under time pressures and have 3 other candidates in the room with you all prepping for the task. If you were lucky you had not a lot of waiting time between each interview, however some people had a significant wait (1hour 45 minutes) between interview panels which can be anxiety provoking. You are generally with a group of 4 candidates throughout the interview process which is a good thing as you all get to know each other. It can take up to half a day to get through everything so be prepared to just have easy-going conversations or if not there is plenty of places nearby to escape to if needed. Generally there wasn't anyone prepping in the waiting area prior to interview; it was much more enjoyable chatting with other candidates and trainees.
- It was very relaxed. The interviewers really seemed to want to get the best from you. It was also nice having current trainee's there and although I had nearly 2 hours between the academic/research interview and the clinical interview, time passed very quickly.
- The Liverpool team were extremely welcoming and friendly during the interview process. Trainees from other years were on hand to offer support which was really helpful. Although anxiety provoking I found the interview process to be supportive and that the interview panel wanted you to do well.
- I found that the staff were really personable and friendly at the interviews. I felt that the process and questions favoured those with clinical experience working in psychology services. Something I think should be prioritised given how difficult it is to get and maintain assistant work.
- Course content and teaching

### How much teaching is there on different models?



### What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	100%
Mindfulness	82%
Schema Therapy	91%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	36%
Solution Focused Therapy	100%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	73%
Other	18%

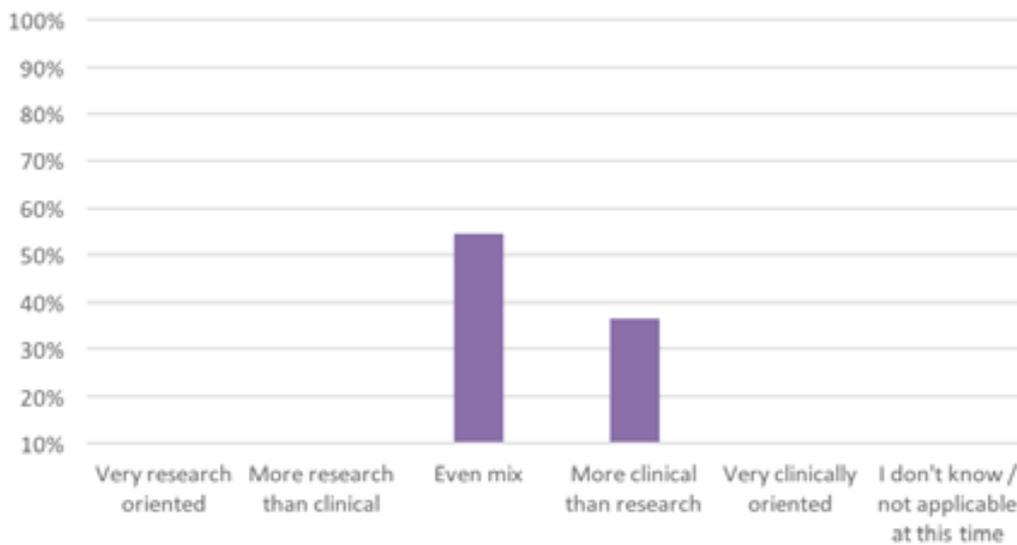
#### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- The Liverpool course provides teaching on a very broad range of approaches. There is approximately equal amounts of teaching on CAT, CBT and psychodynamics models in the first year, which gives a good basis for working using a range of models. The course does not really push any particular model, but emphasises the need to be person centred when considering the best approach to use with a person/system.
- It's just really well balanced. In first year teaching focusses on the three main approaches, CAT, psychodynamic and CBT alongside some shorter sessions on other approaches, third wave, schema etc. and then placement specific teaching on clinical issues pertinent to various client groups. Teaching in second year builds on this knowledge and in third year we get a lot more on 'specialist'

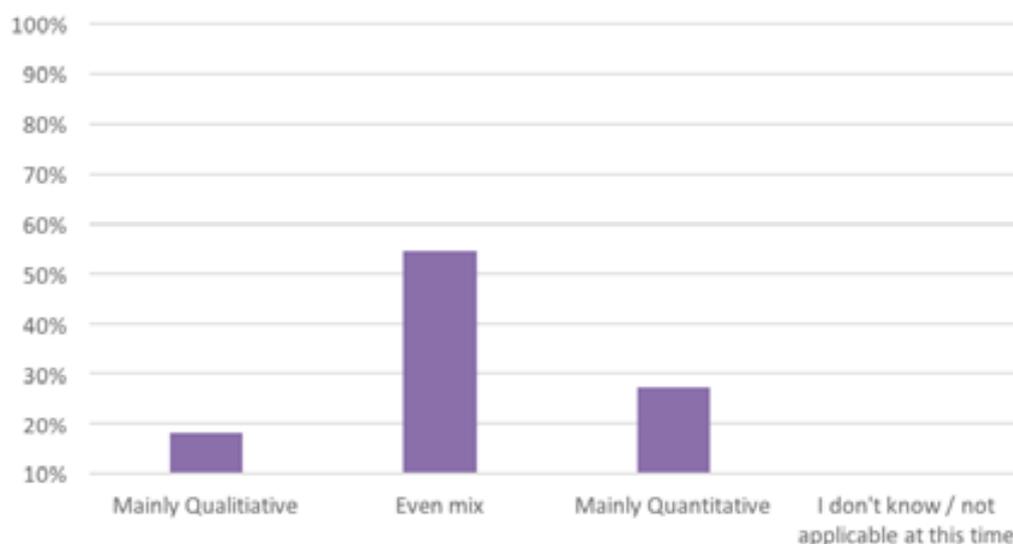
areas like forensic and predominately professional issues - working with diagnosis/in medical systems, working in teams, leadership, using power wisely, commissioning/business plans etc.

- There is a wide variety of areas covered on the course
- It can sometimes feel a little CBT heavy when you first start however for the other models like CAT and Psychodynamic the teaching is usually close together so you can at least change your head space to accommodate a new model. There are some really good external speakers who teach on specific subjects like trauma and schema therapy however there is limited time within the timetable for more specialist teaching on top of the more core areas.
- I personally would like a little more teaching on CAT but it is still early days on the course yet so hopefully this will come later.
- I think the Liverpool course are extremely good and giving us a taste of lots of different approaches and helping use to become our own clinicians.
- Liverpool University try and offer trainees a variety of learning experiences and models. They do have many staff who have worked in the learning disability population and as a result they tend to favour systemic practices. They also have a strong training emphasis on CAT- which is a model most trainees enjoy learning and using on placement.

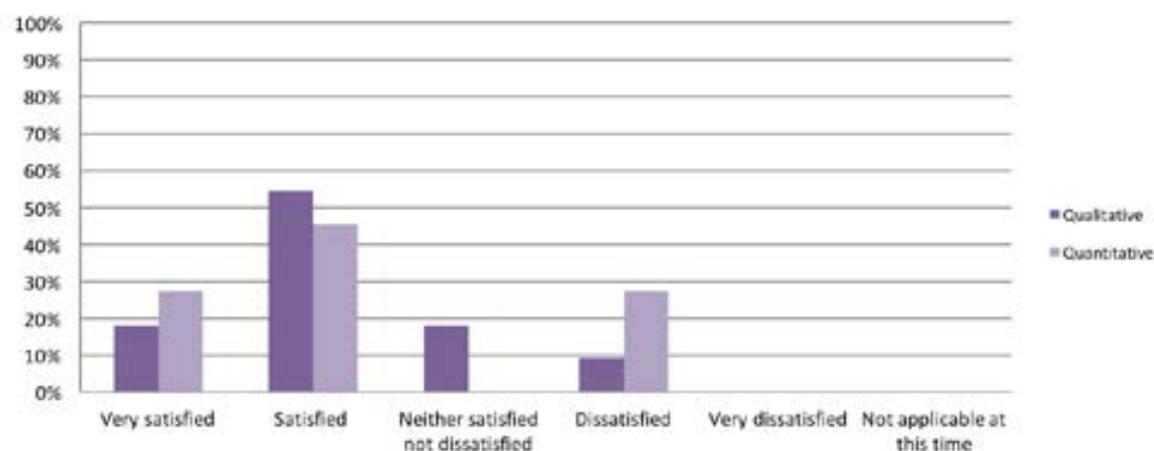
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



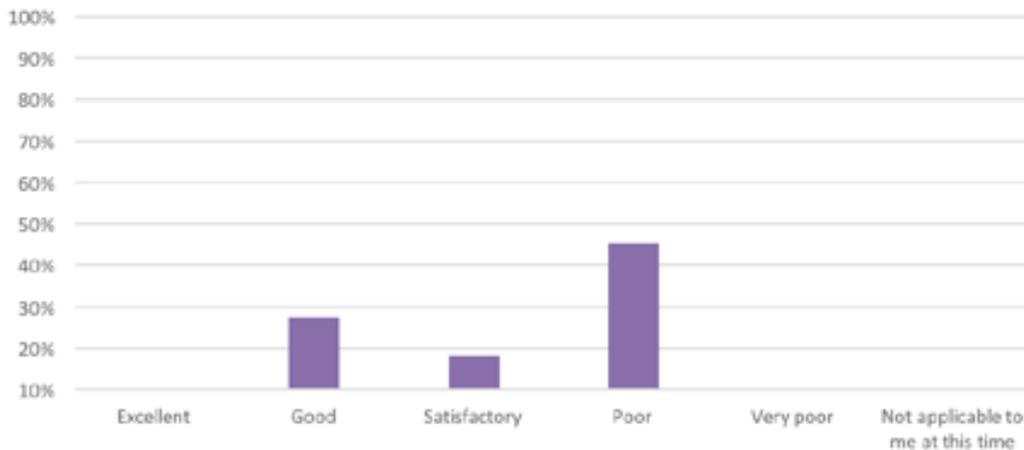
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



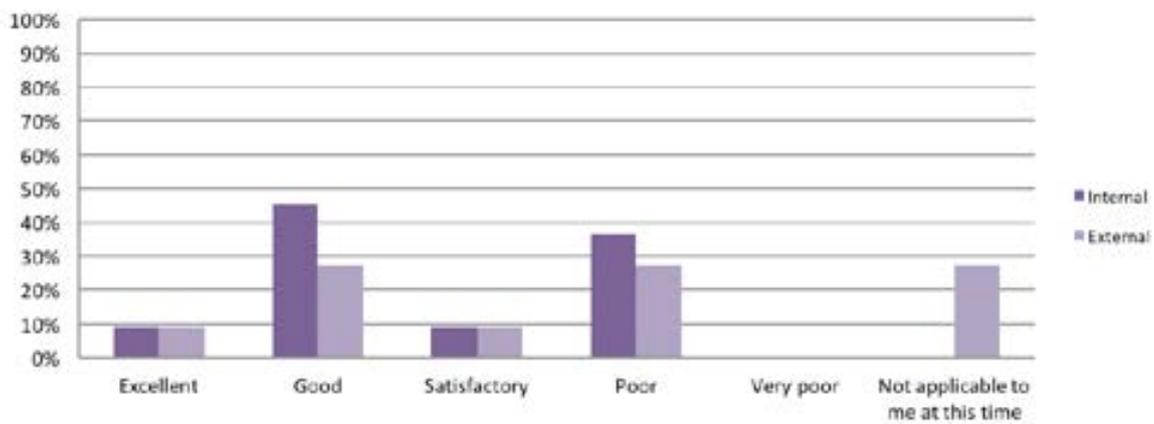
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Some trainees have had difficulty in finding a research supervisor when their topic area of interest was not within the research interests of course staff. I also think there can be a lot of variability in the amount of support that trainees receive, depending upon their research supervisor.
- I did a qualitative project and felt there was little support on offer for the methodology in terms of teaching and supervisors were limited. They have recently expanded the research team to address this.
- If you have an idea or area of interest prior to the course it's useful to hold that in mind. It is quite challenging after only a few months on the course to come up with a thesis topic and then find the relevant people to supervise you. So I would think about your research interests early to avoid unnecessary stresses finding a supervisor. It's also important to be realistic as you may have to do a research project that isn't completely what you want to do but instead is vaguely to do with what you want to do but the idea is shaped and moulded collaboratively with your research supervisor
- Some of the Quantitative teaching has been at a high level which has made it feel quite inaccessible to people who have not done a lot of research.
- You have to work quite autonomously for the research component- and a lot depends on how supportive your thesis supervisor is.

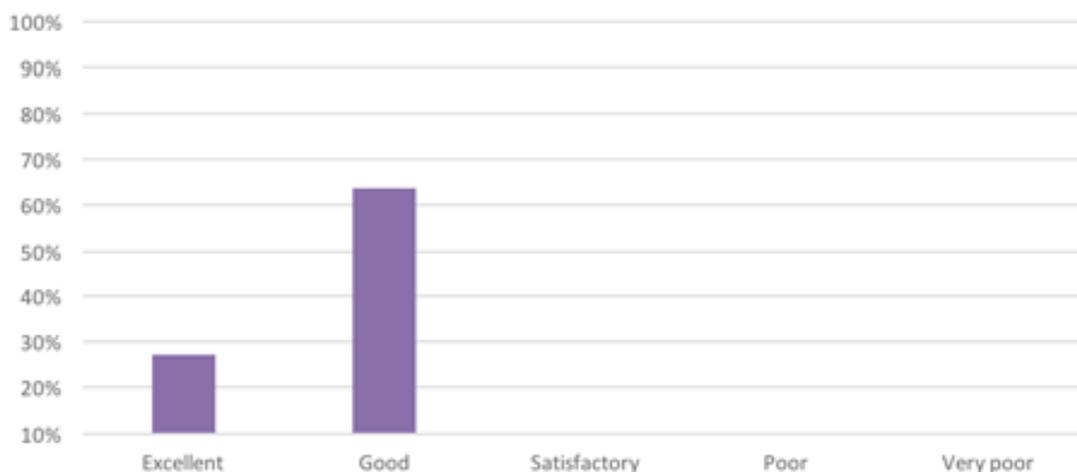
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



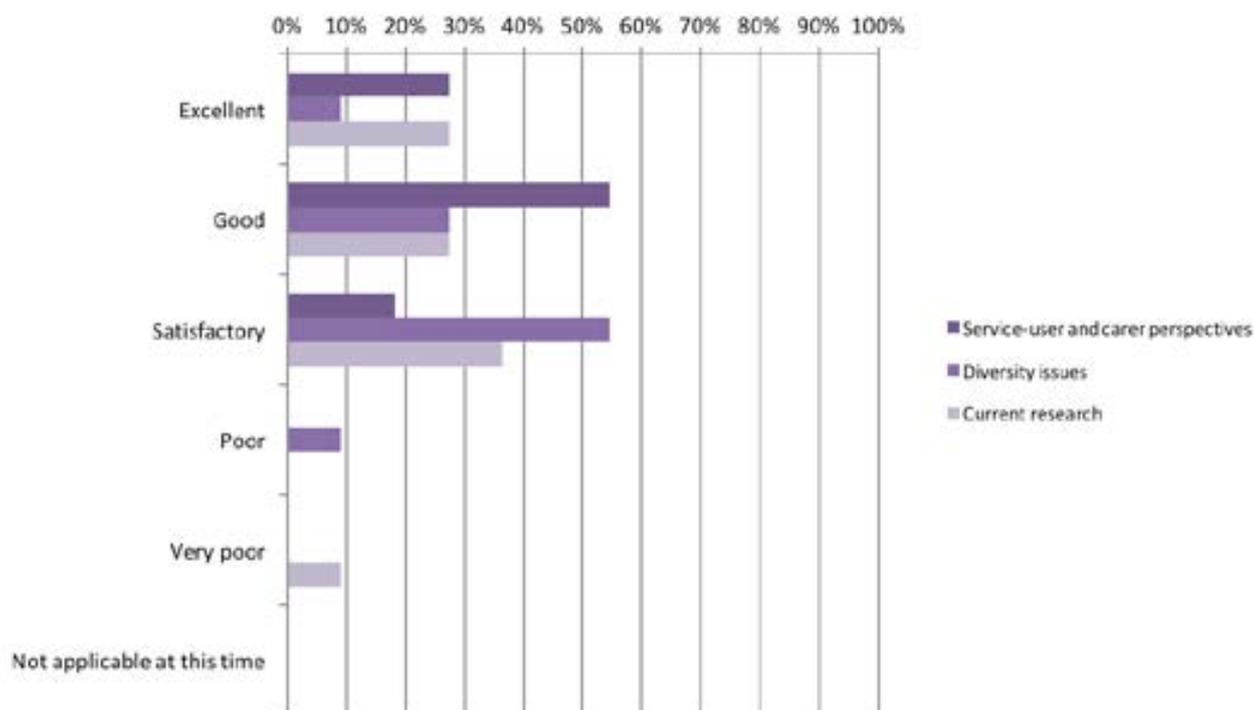
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



### How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



#### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

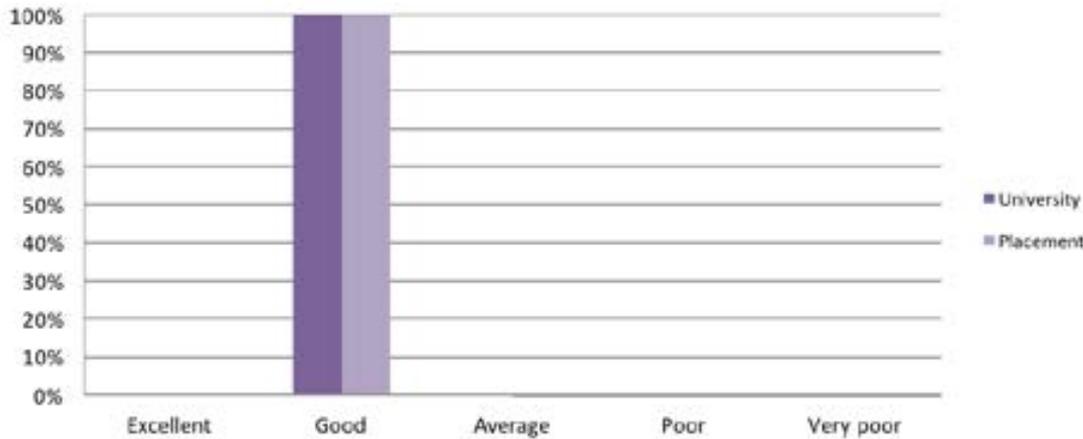
- They are very inclusive at Liverpool, including experts by experience in many aspects of the course and they really support us going through training. However I feel diversity issues are not really explored and there is limited opportunity for trainee reflection on teaching and applicability to clinical issues.
- Lots of input from LEXE group which is really good. They have a strong presence on the course and its nice getting to know them.
- The course team usually provide very interactive teaching which enables a lot of learning. Sometimes when we have other clinical psychologists teaching who don't work for the course, it can feel very PowerPoint heavy with hardly any experiential learning.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

9% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- I think the most demanding aspect of the course is just trying to balance the range of demands that are present at any one time (e.g., progressing research whilst completing ongoing clinical work and essays/case reports). The pressures of the course tend to come in waves, usually around the end of placements or deadlines.
- Timing of coursework deadlines has been difficult to manage in third year. It would be nice to just focus on the thesis, without competing coursework demands.
- The juggling! Research, placement and academic has been tough (plus having a life). You just wish you could concentrate at one at a time.
- Research - I really struggled to recruit and didn't feel there was enough support in the beginning stages. I really wish I'd have had opportunity to meet and discuss with trainees from other years to learn from their experiences and gain peer support, as I did not feel I got this from the team.
- Choosing a research idea and getting a supervisor.
- The time between March and May is a particularly demanding time at the moment with many competing demands i.e. placements ending, report writing, case study submission, and research proposal submission. Finding a research supervisor is not a particularly easy task; you are allowed a supervisor for your research from anywhere in the wider psychology team in the university but without knowing what all their research interests are its difficult to know where to start. The first 5 weeks of teaching can be particularly draining but necessary.
- Having tasks given to us at really short notice in addition to the formal academic assignments. For example, we received a reflective assignment 5 days prior to the hand in date of a formally assessed

5000 word essay. Sometimes we need to do things within a couple of days which becomes challenging when you have annual leave booked. It seems a lot of things are quite last minute which does not help with your work/life balance and self-care.

- I think the supervisors you work with throughout training can impact on how demanding the course is. I have had two excellent placements and one which has been more challenging. I have noticed in the more challenging placement I feel much more on my own in trying to meet all the demands of the course (as the previous 2 supervisors had shown an interest and supported me with my course demands as well as placement ones). That said I have an excellent research supervisor who has made the ethics process and implementation of my research ideas a much smoother process than it could have been. Exam times bring stress but at Liverpool the assignments are fairly well spaced out and you get a research day per week from the summer of first year which really helps balance the demands.

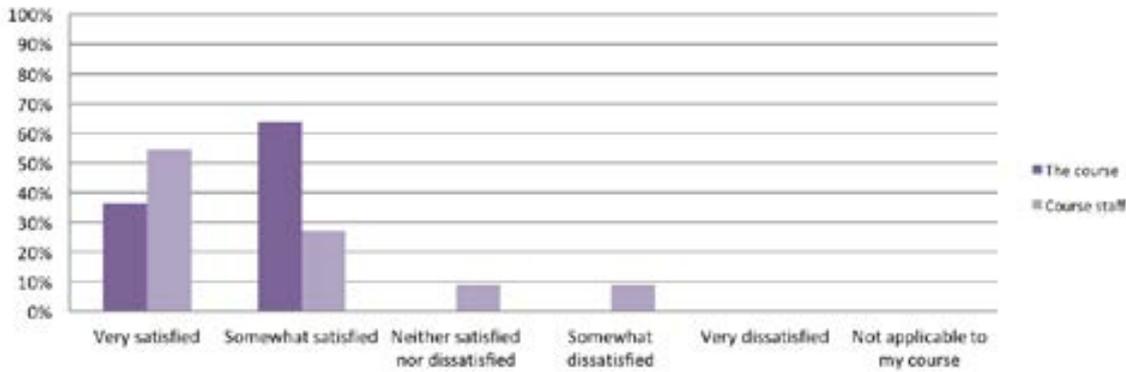
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	64%
“Buddy”	91%
Manager	36%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	73%
Professional Mentor	82%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	9%
Other	0%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- There were lots of support structures in place
- Mentor whom is external to the course is allocated to you for the full three years (You can also pick who you want this to be e.g. a previous supervisor as an Assistant for example)

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

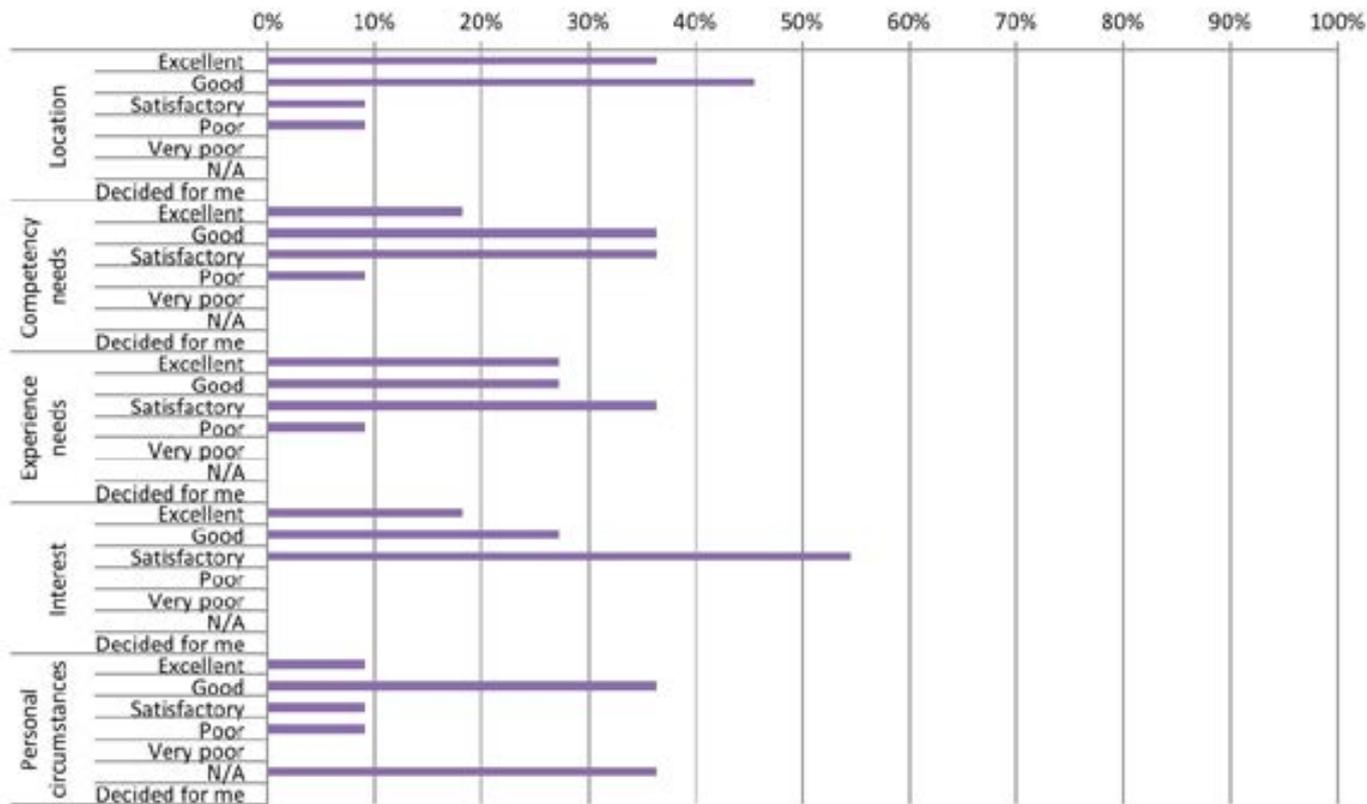


**Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

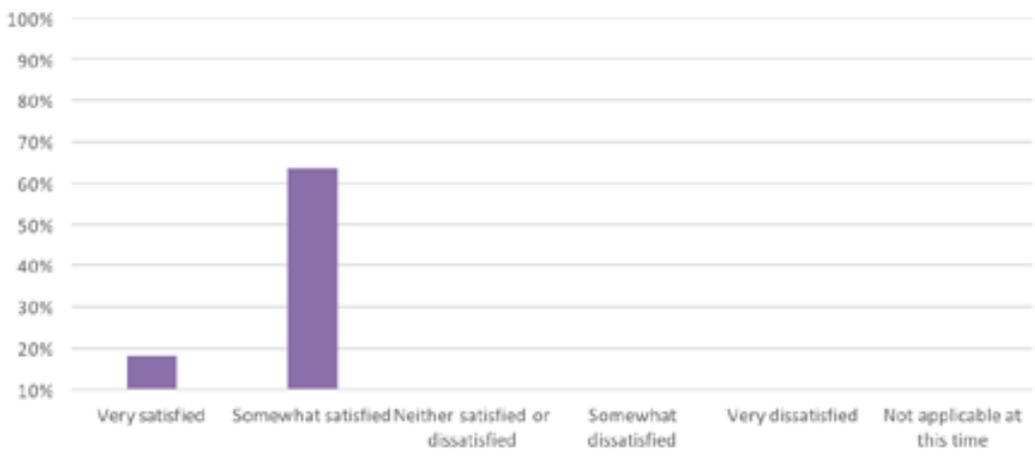
- Generally there is a good level of support from course staff and other support systems. Occasionally, it may be difficult to contact/meet with course tutors in a timely manner.
- There is a great emphasis from course staff about being available for trainees and a policy in responding to emails within a set period of time. Unfortunately, this is not always observed. Understandably, staff are very busy but it is a shame that the support they say is available is inconsistent with experience.
- I think the course can feel very isolating at times, particularly in third year, but I'm lucky to be part of a very cohesive, and supportive cohort.
- When you did approach staff for support, and they felt able to give it, they were amazing and I couldn't speak any more highly of them.
- There is a lot of support from the staff whom are often a sounding board for any challenges you face. Some members of the staff team can be difficult to get hold of and therefore its useful to find out early on who works best with each different type of communication i.e. email, going up to their office. The admin team are incredibly helpful, they know everything.
- The course team are very approachable and always seem willing to help.
- The course will do what they can to support you. My main frustrations have been placement related and I have found that the course are less able here to really change/adapt a placement once you are on it.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



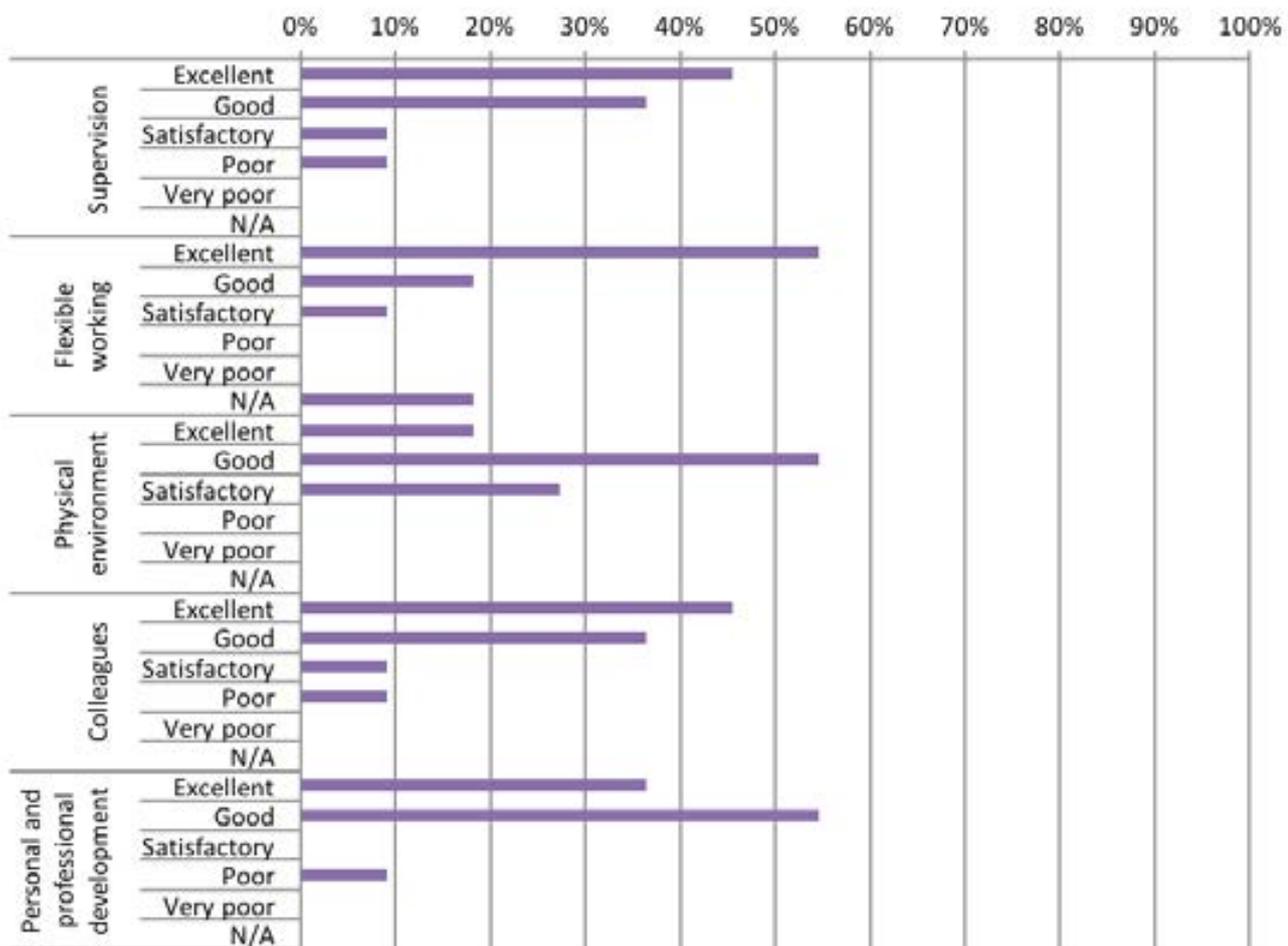
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- Teaching is specific to the placement you are on (or due to go on) at that time. I do feel there is a lot of expectation (from ourselves!) about what is expected of us on our first placement and I think we could have been supported well with this. However, overall teaching is fab and prepares us for placements well.
- Some placements are particularly challenging. Placements are not all “core” and can be in quite specialist areas even on your first placement. Inpatient setting placements in the first year can be quite tough after just 5 weeks of initial teaching.
- I am aware that there are limitations to what the course can offer and feel my comments probably reflect the difficulties all course have finding enough trainee placements.
- I have found in my second year a lot of us had to travel much further for our learning disability placement and again for my child placement I am 30 miles away. I think the course could prepare trainees better for their placement by telling us first where we are going prior to emailing the placement. It often feels like if you do have any issues with where you have been placed it is by that point too late to change anything. In the North West Trainees at Manchester, Liverpool and Lancaster are told that they can have placements across the region (and therefore many don't move and they commute to University). However, in my year it is clearly an advantage to live in Liverpool as those trainees have less travel and more opportunities to request certain placements. Around half my course live in Manchester and we have to do a lot more commuting and can never claim mileage to placement back.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- My placement experiences have been quite variable to date, with one particularly poor experience in relation to supervision. On the whole though, I have enjoyed my placements and feel that I have developed a lot because of my placement experiences.
- I've been so lucky with my placements and all have been great - some much better than others! I was able to choose both of my specialists and got the ones I wanted so it couldn't have worked out better.
- Placements have been varied with trainees across the first year. People have had lots of different experiences on placement some positive and some negative which is the nature of placements really. There have been no opportunities for experiences abroad. There are opportunities to develop your own placements should there be a shortage in that core area and if your competencies can be fulfilled.
- The first placement was not really decided based on learning needs, it was based primarily on location. I would have preferred a placement further away that met my learning needs or at least the option to request this. My second placement is great and learning needs and my requests were very much taken into consideration.
- My first year placements to date have been better than my LD placement. However, I do appreciate that this may reflect the difference in working style and this placement has still offered me many learning opportunities.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	91%
No	9%
Don't know	0%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	45%
No	18%
Don't know	36%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Liverpool and Manchester.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

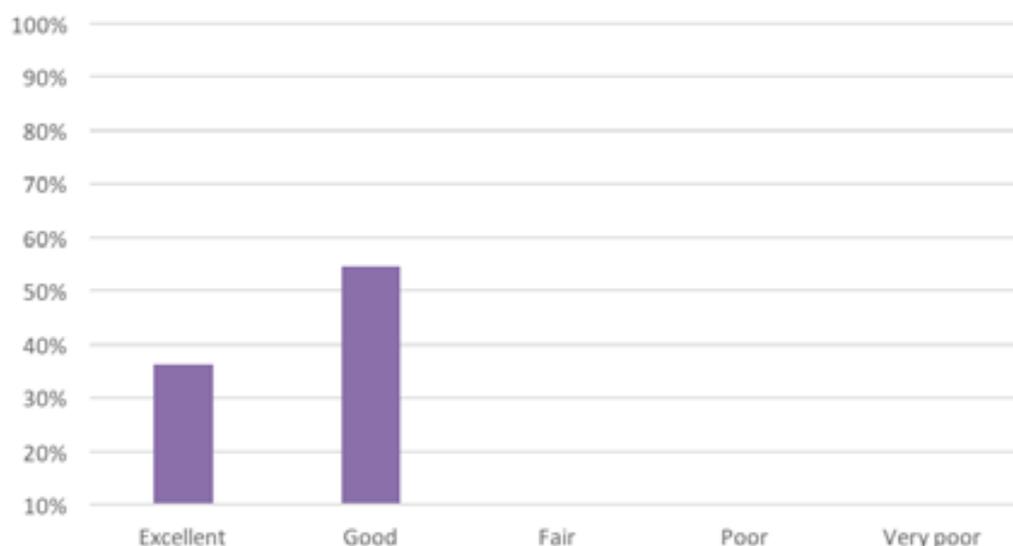
### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	45%
Fair	55%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

#### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- My work life balance is generally fair, though as expected, does become more challenging around deadlines or end of placements, when I may have to work later or a weekends to get tasks completed.
- There are a lot of smaller deadlines that are thrown in last minute as part of the teaching. These can often skew work-life balance as they are not detailed in the handbook and can be unexpected.
- You expect it to be hard and life busy. I had a lot of trouble with recruitment for thesis and it absorbed many evenings, weekends and annual leave to catch up so that I didn't defer. I'm not going to lie, the second half of 2nd and all of 3rd year were hard. The course help where they can and they let me have extensions to allow me to submit thesis on time.
- Work-life balance can be challenging. Prior to Christmas workload seems manageable however from February onwards there are significant competing demands which you are always trying to juggle. The course tries to prepare you as much as possible but In my opinion it's impossible to get everything done without doing work outside of placement/university. One tip is to use your annual leave wisely and plan your holidays strategically (and in advance) at the beginning of each placement to allow yourself a break. Annual leave cannot be taken on teaching days but you can have a certain amount of placement time on annual leave.
- Sometimes we are given things to do with only a few days' notice which when you have annual leave makes work life balance impossible. Things are also given to us very late on (e.g. marking schemes for academic assignments) which makes trying to get ahead to protect your work life balance impossible.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- I feel like we are paid well considering where we live. It's a massive step up from an assistant wage and I really noticed this.
- Liverpool is a very affordable area

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- The mixture of being able to do a job I enjoy, continuing to learn about things I'm interested in, and being part of a fantastic and supportive cohort.
- The possibility of doing research.
- Being surrounded by a great and supportive cohort who you can go through the ups and downs of the doctorate with. At the end of it, the cohort is the main support we have. I think having teaching days each week is great for keeping that connection with peers and with the university.
- The variety and quality of placements.
- My cohort and the teaching.
- The support of my fellow trainees
- The different models we are taught. The interesting external speakers we have come in to teach. Your fellow Trainees are a great source of support, including those in 2nd and 3rd year. Lots of service user involvement. Lots of emphasis on peoples human rights
- The range of teaching is great. It feels as though we will learn so much throughout the three years.
- I think the course team are approachable and friendly. The teaching generally has been really good and it has been great to have had training in so many different areas and models at such an early stage of training. There is a Human Rights focus which is really valuable and the teaching on this was so helpful.
- My favourite aspect of the course is the My continued learning opportunities whether on placement or at University. I really enjoy that Liverpool does have some experience led teaching and does support Trainees to ask for teaching/learning ideas. I have also found in my placements I have been well supported to meet whatever competencies I have hoped for during that placement.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- It's such a good course, really well balanced and the ethos is a perfect fit for me. I'm so glad I trained at Liverpool.
- Although there are some niggles, I'm sure every course will have these. It's a nice balance of teaching of therapies which allows you to get a wide range of knowledge whilst focusing on the therapies of most interest to you. The teaching staff are great and are very experienced clinical psychologists.
- Have some flexible ideas about research questions early on and think about what psychologists in the department can support you (i.e. finding out their research interests). Be an open book and allow yourself to try as many things as possible – Liverpool are excellent at supporting this- they don't want you to be the expert they want you to be open minded. Use the study days and research time well they definitely give you enough time at the end of the first year and start of second but many trainees hadn't got their ideas together yet, use this time well and it will help you as demands increase.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Two interviews. One involves a presentation which candidates prepare under exam conditions on the day of their interview).

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Teaching	12	6	6
Placement	2.5	2.5	2.5
Personal Study	24	24	26
Research	16	54	58

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Manchester University

25 responses (35% of 72 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	24%
Year 2	38%
Year 3	38%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	5%
25 – 29 years	62%
30 – 34 years	33%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	50%
Twice	22%
3 times	28%
4 times	0%
5 times	0%
6 times	11%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	19%
MA	5%
MSc	52%
MRes	14%
Diploma	5%
Post Graduate Certificate	29%
Conversion course	5%
None	14%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	10%
2 years	19%
3 years	19%
4 years	10%
5 years	14%
6+ years	29%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	62%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	24%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	19%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	10%
Research Assistant	52%
Voluntary Research Assistant	38%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	76%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	14%
Other	14%

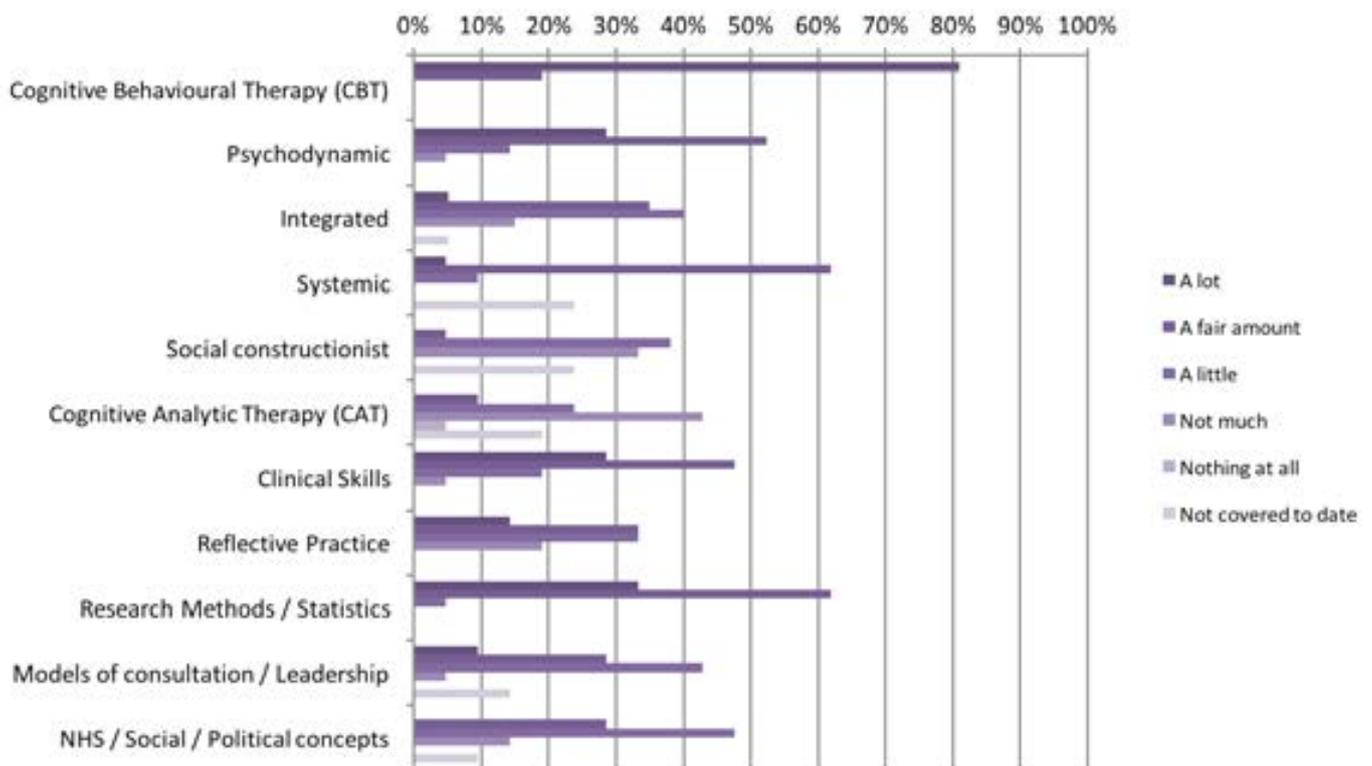
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- The interview process at Manchester was probably one of the most positive interactions I've had with the course. Compared to the following three years the interview panel were supportive. It is a 20 minute interview consisting of a clinical, a research, a professional issues question and a question from a service user.
- I was particularly nervous and anxious for the interview. Despite this I felt I managed the day keeping my emotions in check. I felt that the panel were challenging and hard to read, but fair and encouraging at times. I came away feeling positive (although not confident of it being enough).
- Straight forward and quick four 'set' questions in the fact you know they would ask you a research question, a formulation and intervention question, an ethics question and then a service user one. Current trainees were present to help alleviate anxieties and to ask any questions. Interview panel were all nice and encouraging.
- Brief and as pleasant as it could be. Everyone was welcoming. Questions were focused on vignettes rather than previous experiences and personal coping/preferences/responses to emotional work.
- Very supportive and calm. I felt that I was encouraged and felt well supported.
- Quick panel interview with current trainees there to answer questions. Found it the best interview experience, although the panel members were not very warm.
- I really like the fact that Manchester only do one 45 minute interview. I was asked a range of questions and felt it was sufficient time to demonstrate my own knowledge and experience. The panel were really supportive and tried to get the best out of me.
- Absolutely fine. 30 min interview, little preparation needed. Felt like the panel were trying to get the best from me.
- Interview is predictable and therefore easy to prepare for.
- The interview process is quite brief. There are lovely trainees on hand to allay fears but it was still quite anxiety provoking and involved thinking on your feet. I think the main thing is not to panic, try and talk them through your thought process, rather than giving the 'correct' answer.
- I knew what to expect as I'd interviewed the previous year, I thought that it was brief but covered multiple areas of competence for a trainee clinical psychologist - clinical knowledge, research methodology, ethical/professional issues.
- Really quick and short. Felt quite intense, certainly some questions that I did not know the answer to. The support of current trainees before and after the interview was really helpful to calm nerves and normalise the experience.
- Very positive. I felt the panel wanted to get the best out of me and were welcoming. I was glad it was fairly quick. It was nice that current trainees met you before hand too.
- The interview processes was good. The supporting trainees (current first years) were very friendly and helpful. The interview was predictably anxiety-provoking but didn't last long. All-in-all, about as painless as it could be.
- It only took 30 or so minutes. There's no hanging about asking you why you want to do clinical psychology etc. they cut right to the chase. I got two vignettes to read over beforehand and then was questioned on them during the interview and then asked to come up with a research methodology to test a specific research question. It is really intense but personally I preferred the fact that it was so short. They have a trainee who does a debrief with you after - which I felt was really helpful too.
- It worked well for me. It was a short (half hour) interview which I preferred in comparison to a full day interview for another course. I think it was more about how you come across as a person rather than knowing everything. They obviously know you have a lot of experience to offer you an interview so it makes sense to keep it short in my opinion.

- The interview lasted 30-45 minutes and focused on clinical reasoning, research design, ethical issues and service user perspectives. I found the interview to be a safe and supportive environment where interviewers gave maximal opportunity for you to demonstrate your knowledge.
- The interview process was short but good. Straight forward questions. Although the brevity was fine I can imagine others might find this perhaps not enough time to settle and present themselves in a way they would be happy with.
- The interview process was relatively painless in my experience. The panel were warm. I felt that I was introduced to each member of the panel. I was prompted with my questions but this felt like it was to get the best out of me rather than to 'put me on the spot'. It was around 30 minutes and I felt able to give good answers and contain myself appropriately. There were trainees from the first year to meet and greet and this put me at ease.
- One 30-minute interview which I preferred to a whole day of tasks etc. Although the panel pushed you to get the most out of you, it didn't feel too critical or unsupportive.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



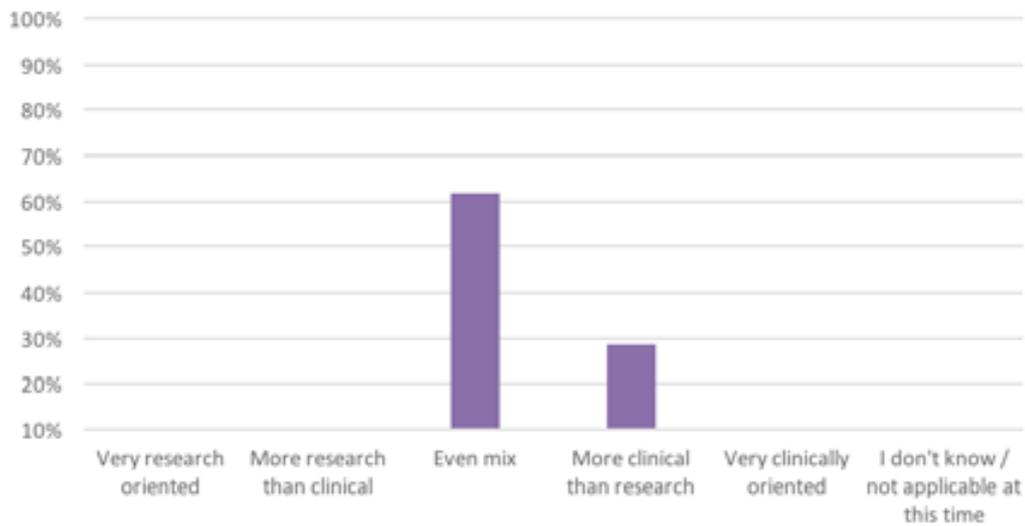
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	80%
Mindfulness	75%
Schema Therapy	75%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	80%
Solution Focused Therapy	80%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	50%
Other	15%

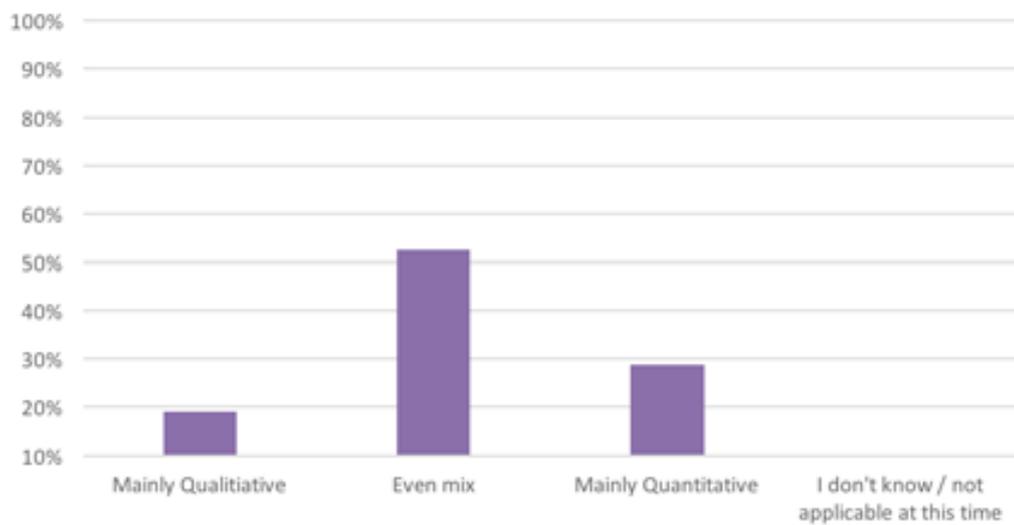
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- Too much CBT. Too model specific.
- In terms of topics covered by the course I am finding this difficult to answer as I am only in 1st year. I am sure we will have teaching on many of the topics above, but I haven't had teaching on them so far.
- Relational models or community psychology approaches are lacking. I feel I would have benefitted from more skills based teaching.
- Manchester provide a really clear structure around the competencies we need to develop. We are expected to reach level 3 in CBT and one other therapy (from the choice of PIT, systemic and Neuro). So far we have been provided with really thorough teaching on CBT and PIT. The teaching is knowledge based and practical allowing us to develop the skills and confidence required.
- I would wish for more practical teaching and skills-based teaching focusing on clinical decision making.
- Despite being seen as a very CBT heavy course, Manchester actually covers a relatively diverse range of models.
- The main models selected by Manchester are CBT, Psychodynamic Interpersonal Therapy (PIT) and systemic (for child working). The other approaches have a day or half a day of teaching devoted to them.
- The course was quite CBT heavy to start, now seems to be more varied but with just a taster of lots of different things. Could do with more reflective practice type teaching.
- Some therapy models only got a half-a-day formal teaching, e.g. mindfulness. However, other teaching (e.g. teaching for specific clinical presentations) was often model-focussed. This supplemented the formal teaching.
- There is more of a focus on CBT in comparison to other models. Teaching on other models tends to be one day/half a day and that's it. We are fortunate to have the psychodynamic interpersonal therapy teaching but I personally would like more of this. There is not a lot of teaching re reflective practice, self-care etc.
- I would appreciate more time on relational approaches.
- The course is predominantly CBT focused, but does have a module of psychodynamic interpersonal therapy in Year 1 and will have days on other modalities.

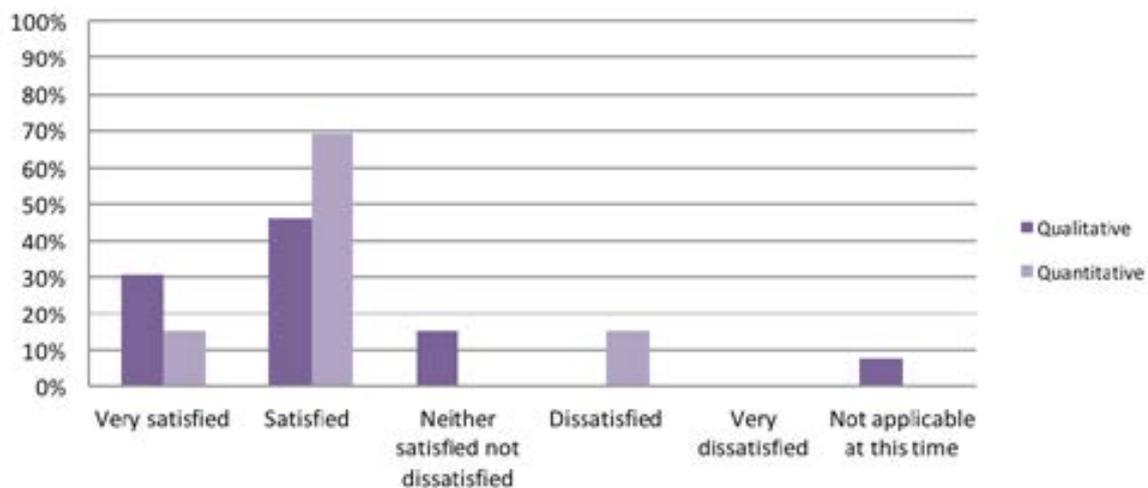
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



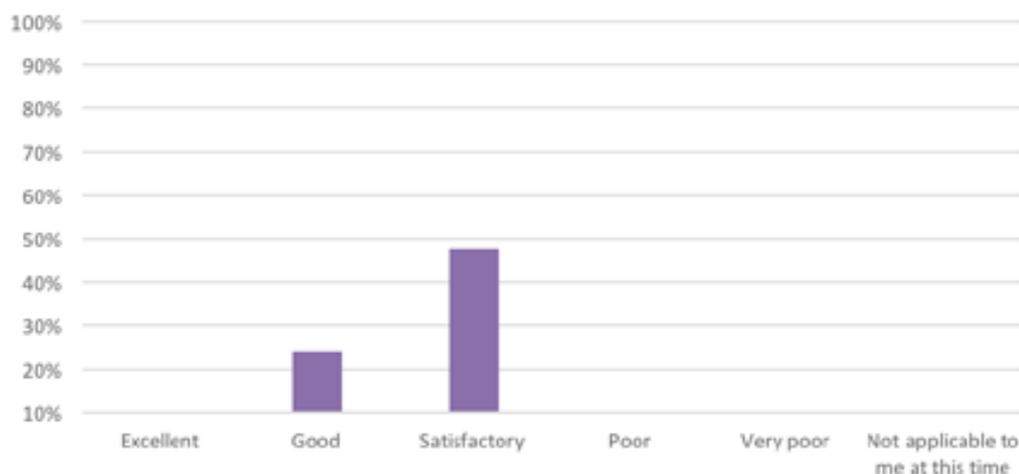
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



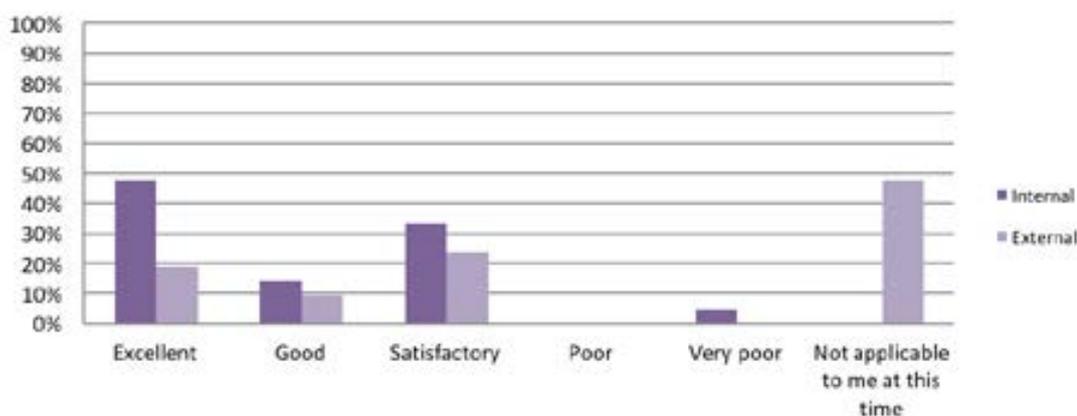
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Very limited choice of research projects
- The course has a random allocation for projects, most of the projects are qualitative in psychosis.
- I wonder if it is in any way beneficial to force people to do research methods training that they will not end up using for their theses.
- The year I am in, the options for thesis projects were broadly qualitative, but there was not in depth teaching on qualitative methods to reflect this.
- Much research-related learning happened in research supervision.
- Our thesis options our presented to us and we choose what we would like to do (there is less room to create your own). This can be difficult if nobody is researching the area you are interested in (e.g. in our year there were no neuro, eating disorder or learning disability topics).

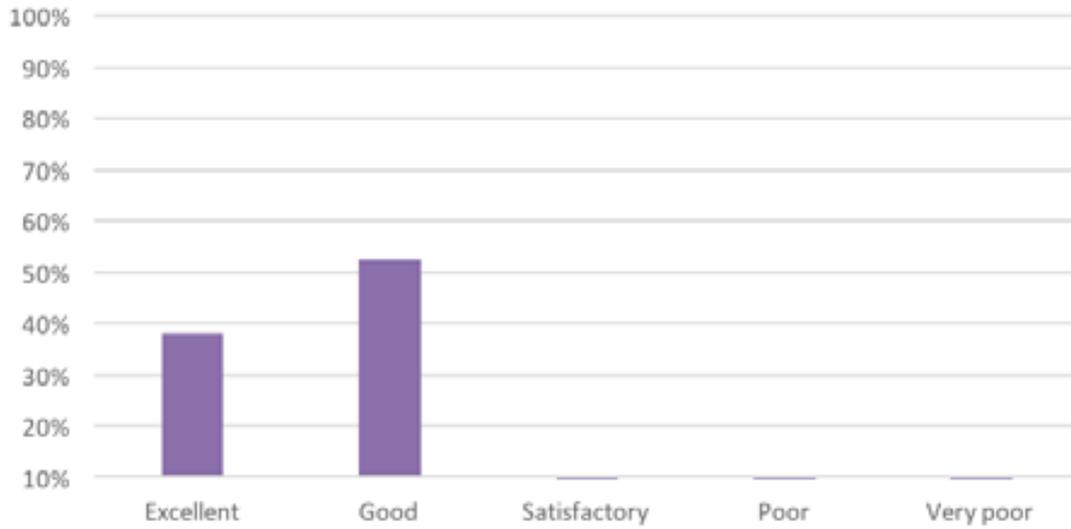
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



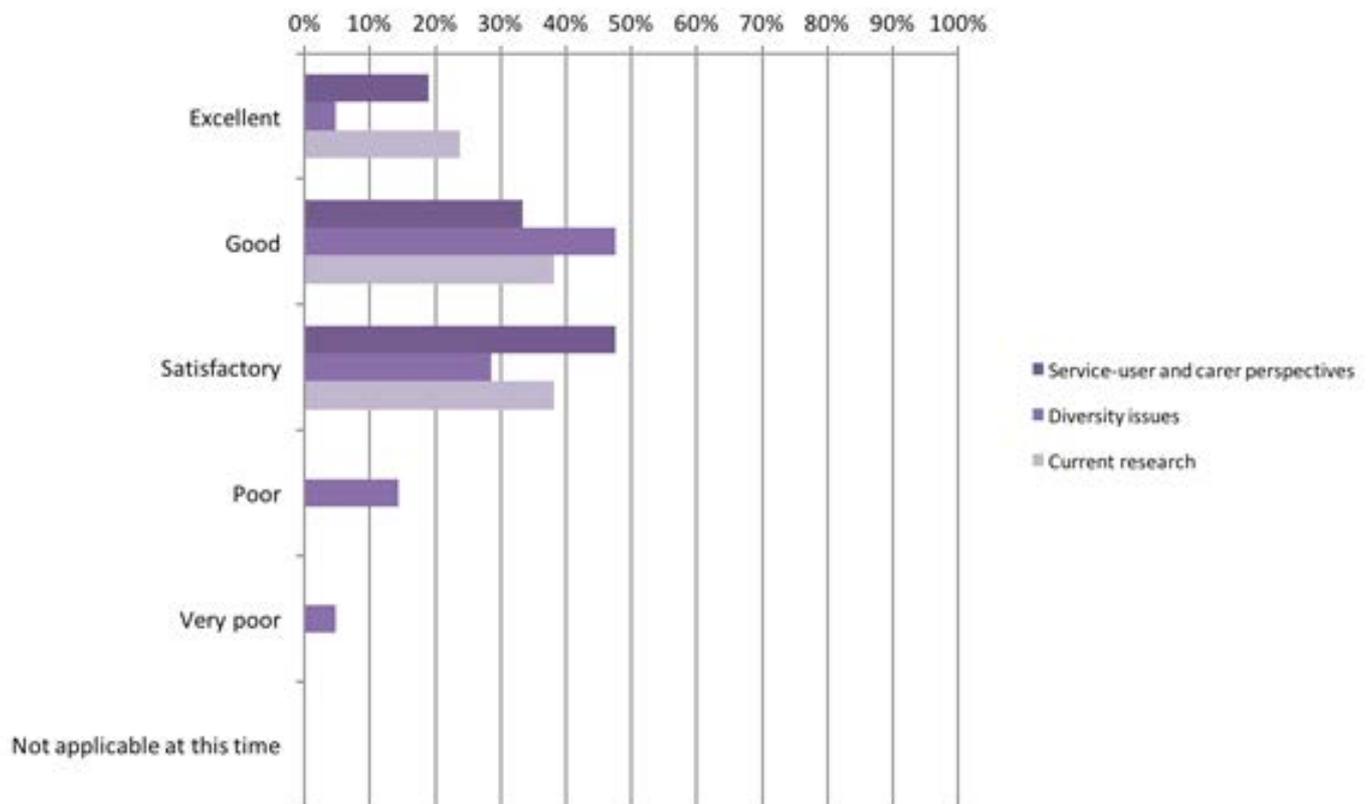
### What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

- Very little teaching that deviates away from a standard lecture approach
- Manchester have established excellent links with previous service users and they are actively involved in our teaching. The University are very thoughtful in their approach and encourage us to work in collaboration with the community liaison group.
- The teaching is fantastic, lots of diverse ideas and excellent speakers. Personally I would like to see a more critical psychology and political framework introduced from the start.
- The above subjects are covered, however it is not clear how they are relevant to the modules they are placed within.
- I feel more diversity perspectives could be interwoven throughout the whole course.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

**Do you have any disabilities?**

0% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

**Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?**

- Research. Lack of support from the research team.
- To date the workload has been manageable, however this seems to have very much peaked and is becoming more intensive currently.
- The course tend to provide feedback that feels more critical than constructive. This is something that we have raised as an entire year group. It has felt that the threat of being removed from the course has been very prominent even for those who have not failed placements or academic work. When people have failed it has seemed that instead of feeling like the course have put in measures to support areas that they may be finding demanding they have been reminded of the exiting policy. Again this is something that has been raised to the course by the entire year group. Due to lack of availability of placements I have been sent to work places that have been previously complained about without warning or additional support.
- Specialist placement alongside final months of thesis work.
- I found the course more demanding towards the end of our first placement as we had a number of deadlines within a short space of time. We were provided with plenty of support and forewarning to prepare.
- Exam time.
- Juggling the various parts of the course.
- Exam times are stressful as is coming up to deadlines.
- The main issue with the course is juggling all the different elements - it isn't that one thing is particularly difficult or burdensome, it's just that it is very challenging managing the competing

demands. There are periods where the course is very manageable, and others where it can feel quite overwhelming.

- In second year the workload of placement, case reports, lectures and research can feel overwhelming at times, and it can be difficult to manage a work life balance
- Finding a work-life balance with time in between for resting has felt very difficult. The course talk a lot about encouraging self-care, but the reality is there is very little time for it.
- Balancing different demands - year 2 is hard with multiple exams in particular
- Balancing the various placement and academic demands in second and third year is challenging.
- Juggling everything at this point of the course (Apr, Year Two) we have case reports to do and 4 exams to study for and could potentially be having to do research such as ethics panel interviews, coming up with an idea for a systematic review and a service audit as well. Then you also have the emotional demands placed on you by client work on placement and the attempt to keep up with friends and family etc. There's no particular aspect that is massively demanding - rather the sheer amount of things you need to consider at all times.
- I think the emotional demands are less talked about than the academic. We are obviously prepared to be faced with emotionally demanding work in this role but I underestimated how much I would learn about myself/others and how overwhelming this can feel at times. I view this as a positive thing and it is definitely manageable but I think this should be talked about more.
- I personally have found the academic demands manageable so far and I feel I have maintained a better work-life balance than I thought I would. I appreciate this may change in the final year.
- The course does not offer allot of protected time for study and research in the first two years.
- In the second year the course has become more demanding. There are more 'plates spinning' including the research, placement and academic side (exams and case reports).

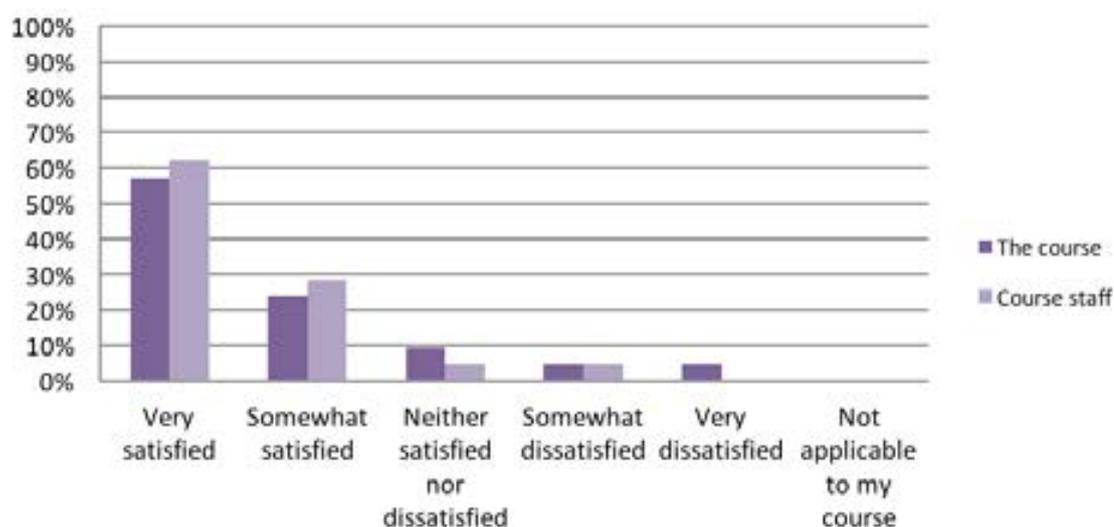
**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	100%
“Buddy”	90%
Manager	29%
Placement Supervisor	90%
Librarian	24%
Professional Mentor	10%
Personal Tutor	95%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	95%
Independent personal advisor	14%
Other	14%

## Under “Other”, responses included:

- Trainee Advocate
- Although there are clinical tutors the narrative is that they are there for times when a problem exists rather than being someone who may develop a relationship with you throughout training. I have requested meetings with my tutor which he was receptive to but acknowledged that contact is usually problem focused.
- Peers
- Clinical tutor
- Academic and Clinical Tutors

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

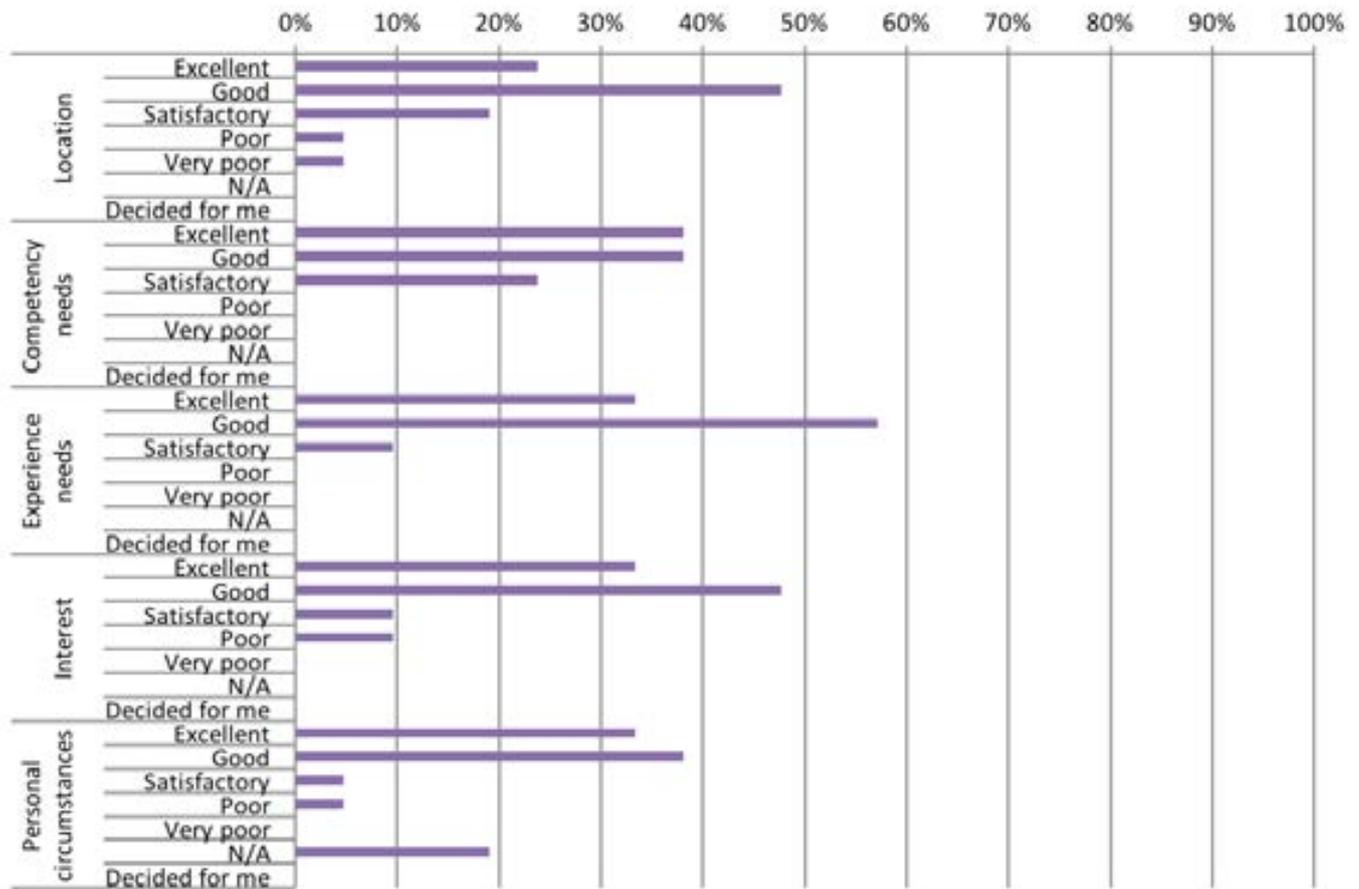


## Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

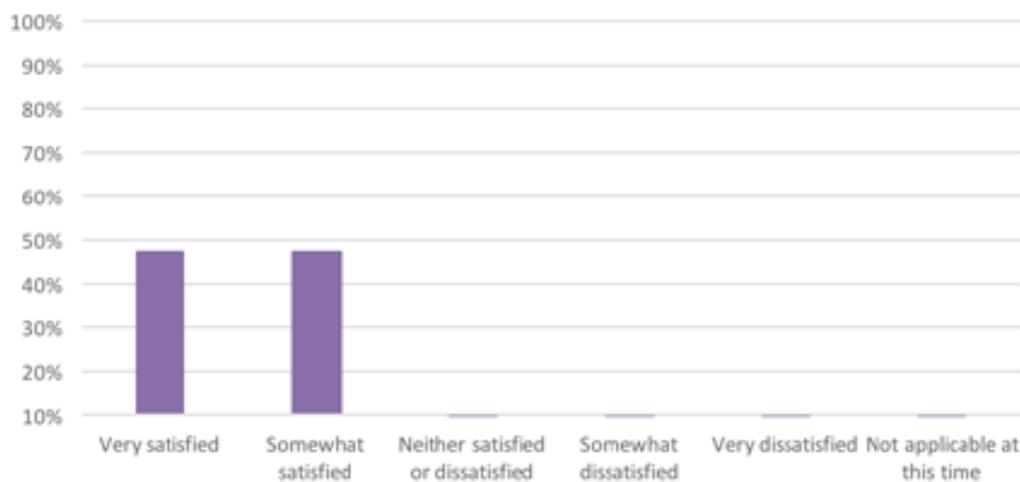
- There is a real divide between the clinical staff and the research staff. The clinical staff are incredibly supportive. The research staff are too research focused to be as empathetic and as supportive as would be helpful.
- The staff are incredibly supportive and the course feels very safe and scaffolded. I would feel very comfortable approaching many staff members if I was struggling.
- It has always been excellent. I have never had any fears in seeking support as I have always been responded to very well. I know that others feel unable to ask for help as they worry about what their tutors will think and they really shouldn't.
- The support is excellent across the University. On the few occasions I have requested additional support the team have been responsive and helpful in their approach.
- I personally have had a really positive experience of the support I have received. I feel my clinical tutor has always been a good listening ear, and the reflective practice groups have been really helpful.
- Contact with the course team depends on their working days and method of contact, i.e. they might not be in University or have access to their emails when you really need an urgent response but they will respond to you when they are able.
- Support is available if you request it. Other than that there are standard processes (e.g. placement visits). However, these felt more like assessment than support visits.
- The clinical tutors are really supportive and anytime I have needed support there has always been someone there. They really are fab.
- The clinical tutors are excellent. They are very supportive and approachable.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



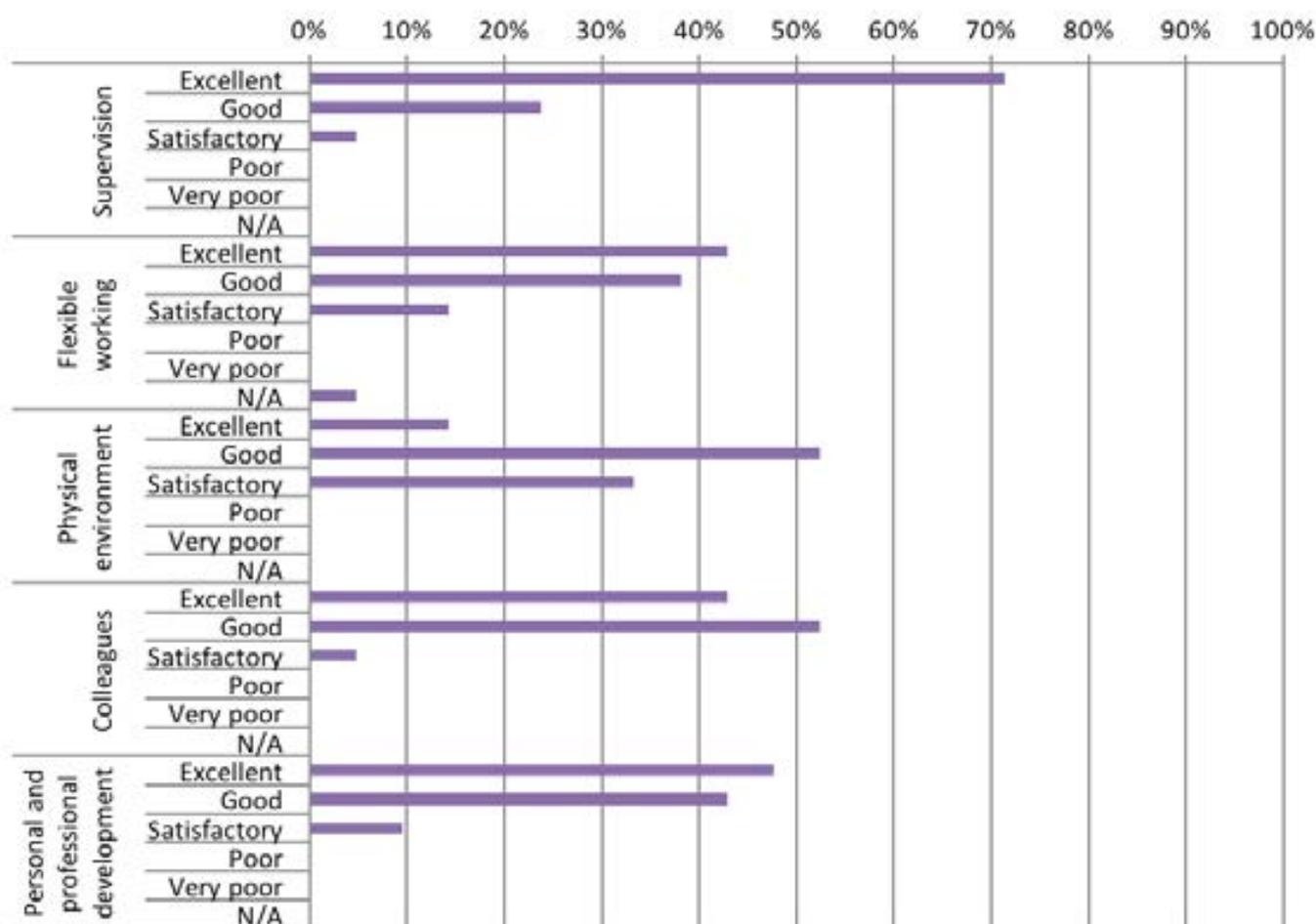
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- I think as teaching continues alongside placement, I find that some of the teaching would have been very useful earlier on. Although I understand that this is part of the learning process.
- Whilst it is difficult to provide teaching on all areas required (e.g. for more specialist/complex adult placements) I feel the University really consider our needs and provide us with a broad skills base that is sufficient for the first placement.
- There is a teaching block before each placement which covers the main areas required e.g. specific models, formulation and assessment, etc.
- It is not always possible to find time to contact placements and meet supervisors prior to starting them because of the timetabling of the course.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Very varied across the 6 placements I have had so difficult to score and make comments on
- It varies within the year. I've had an excellent placement.
- Although my first placement was more specialised than I was expecting, I have really valued the experience. I had a fantastic supervisor who was really encouraging and considerate of my needs.
- Really happy with the quality of the year 3 placement experiences. All placements were very interesting - as someone who knew nothing about working in LD services this was something I really enjoyed.
- I have had good experiences on my placements to date. I have had 2 of the 3 specific placement requests met. I know others who have not but they have been able to address this with their clinical tutors.
- My placement experiences were positive. I had good supervisors.
- Each placement is so different but I have always found I have learnt a lot even if I wouldn't necessarily work there again.
- I have valued the opportunity to work with different client groups as I have found interests that I didn't know I had before and may go on to work with a client group that I didn't expect to. I have also appreciated that the course have placed me in very different settings each time (e.g. ward, community etc.)
- Unfortunately I haven't had the best locations even though I live in Manchester but I know other people have had a great experience of commutes (even some who live outside of Manchester).

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	81%
No	14%
Don't know	5%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	62%
No	19%
Don't know	19%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Manchester and Liverpool.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	5%
No	90%
Don't know	5%

### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

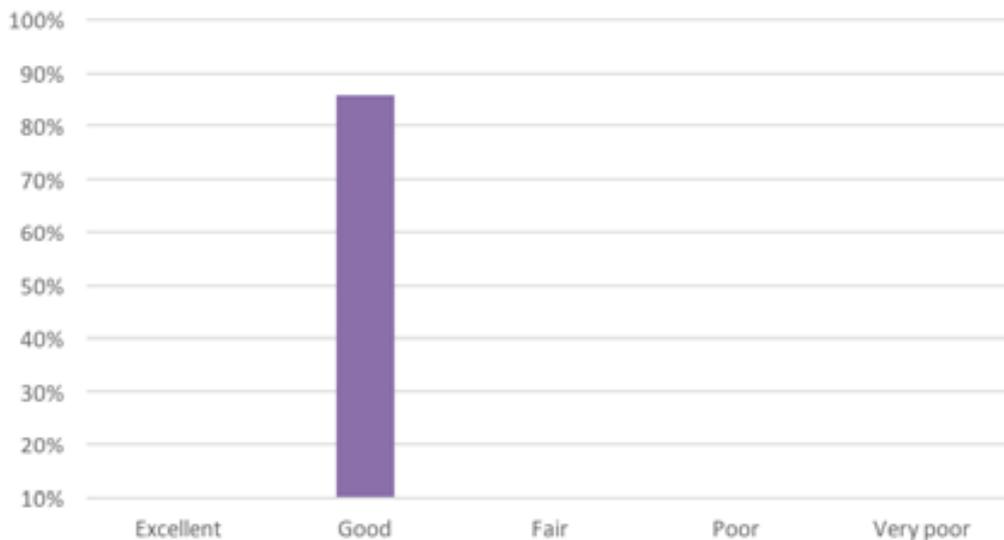
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	48%
Fair	43%
Poor	10%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- I have managed not to work many weekends over the 3 years, but a lot of people do. It depends a lot on how effectively you use your study time as well as things more due to chance like how well research recruitment goes.
- I think it has been excellent up until the second term of 1st year. I feel that this is shifting at the moment.
- This has varied throughout the duration of the course. It feels like there is an expectation to work evenings and weekends and this is often modelled by staff, for example emailing outside of work hours.
- At times it is excellent but then at others not so good. This mainly surrounds deadlines and current demands of specialist placement and thesis hand in looming.
- Everything is due in March of first year which is stressful but overall it is manageable.
- For the most part I feel I have managed a good work life balance. The course allows you a few months to settle in Manchester and University life. Now that exam and case reports are looming I have given up more of my time on the weekends but I feel this will balance back out.
- It is an ongoing issue, particularly in 2nd and 3rd year as I'm sure it will remain as a full-time working person.
- Varies due to time of year and course commitments - balance of times with less work and times with more
- It can be very challenging to strike the right balance, particularly with deadlines and if you have children. It does contribute to things feeling overwhelming at times.

- This varies with the demands of work at any time. When there is pressure to complete work then this can mean staying late in University or on placement, or working at home in the evenings or weekends. Study time is arranged as an additional hour after lectures (which is not always utilised) and every other Friday, however this can be impinged upon if lectures are cancelled and need to be rearranged. With forward planning and organisation, the balance can be generally maintained.
- Difficult to find the time.
- In second and third year the course is very demanding. Not necessarily more-so than a full-time Masters course, however. But it last longer.
- I think some people are better at managing this than others and I think it varies at different times of the course, depending on the demands that are placed upon you at that time.
- I have made a conscious effort to maintain a good work life balance and have valued this over getting top marks (I am happy if I pass). I think if you use your study time well in 1st and 2nd year then you don't have to use much of your personal time - I have only worked evenings/weekend around deadlines/exams.
- In the first year the work life balance was better. In the second year it has become more difficult.
- Occasionally have to work in the evenings coming up to deadlines etc. but generally I don't do much work currently outside of 9-5.

**How do you rate your financial quality of life?**



**Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?**

- The widening access scheme has improved this, although the uncertainty of whether this scheme will run for trainees is yet to be resolved.
- The Widening Access Scheme has been helpful in managing financial worries.
- Being salaried is excellent. We also enjoyed many of the perks of being a full-time student.

## What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Placements
- The other trainees are incredible supportive, I feel our cohort is very close and I value each trainee. I also value how supportive the course is. The leaders truly listen and value the trainee voice.
- Very supportive teaching team
- The cohort. The clinical work. You are very supported as a trainee.
- The cohort absolutely make the course a fantastic experience. We all get on, are very supportive of each other and have become good friends. Having moved to Manchester for the course this felt particularly important to me.
- Very supportive course and clinical team at Manchester
- Love the diverse range of ideas and models we have been exposed to throughout the course. Very interesting mix of placements and research activities, and the service related project allowing for some service development work in the final year. Overall it's been a life changing experience and very worthwhile.
- Applying theory on placements, learning about the role of a psychologist in practice
- Placements and supportive cohort.
- The content of the work and teaching has never failed to keep me highly motivated.
- Clinical work.
- Meeting likeminded people - I have met friends for life. I have really enjoyed the clinical work. I also find reflective practice really helpful.
- Well-structured and staff work hard to try and satisfy trainee needs.
- The cohort and course team e.g. clinical tutors. I really like the teaching and the placements have all been excellent.
- Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?
- The reputation isn't accurate. Manchester is a very accessible approachable course
- There is little focus on reflecting on personal responses, for example personal therapy is not funded. The lectures often focus on theoretical rather than emotional responses to work. In my opinion the course would benefit from a structure that supports trainees throughout the training rather than being problem focused. I would benefit from feedback of what has gone well in an academic piece of work as opposed to just its downfalls, this during my training due to trainee feedback has been incorporated into marking sheets but I wonder if the change in culture might take time.
- The thesis project allocation is random and limited to mainly qualitative predefined projects, largely on psychosis. The research focus of the Manchester course is a myth. It is becoming more in line with more psychodynamic courses. Trainees are not encouraged to seek their own projects and do not have to find field supervisors which would appeal to the less research focused trainees. The support the course offers overall is excellent, the clinical tutors and admin support staff go above and beyond. You are very protected as a trainee on the course.
- Contribute to lectures.
- Question the status quo within the course and if you wish to see changes, use the avenues that are there to make them.
- The course team are generally receptive to feedback though it can take time to action changes.
- I think it's a great course in a very vibrant city, with lots of interesting opportunities.
- I personally felt that the course's response to failed work was punitive rather than supportive. In many cases the possibility of exclusion was made explicit after a single fail (irrespective of performance in other areas). This unfortunately impacted on my experience of the course in general.

- I would say if you are thinking about coming to Manchester - it is a good university, high quality teaching and a great area to live if you are moving. Manchester have exams but they are mainly focused on what you would do clinically so I wouldn't let that put you off unless you really hate exams!
- I feel the course could encourage more reflective practice in its teaching.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Interviews last 30-40 minutes and consist of a series of in vivo assessments of clinical, research and professional knowledge and skills.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	1.5 day a week
Placement	3 days a week
Personal Study	0.5 day a week
Research	Combined with personal study

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	0%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Newcastle University

8 responses (19% of 42 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	63%
Year 2	25%
Year 3	13%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	63%
30 – 34 years	38%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	38%
Twice	25%
3 times	25%
4 times	13%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	13%
MA	0%
MSc	88%
MRes	0%
Diploma	13%
Post Graduate Certificate	13%
Conversion course	25%
None	0%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	13%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	0%
3 years	38%
4 years	0%
5 years	13%
6+ years	38%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

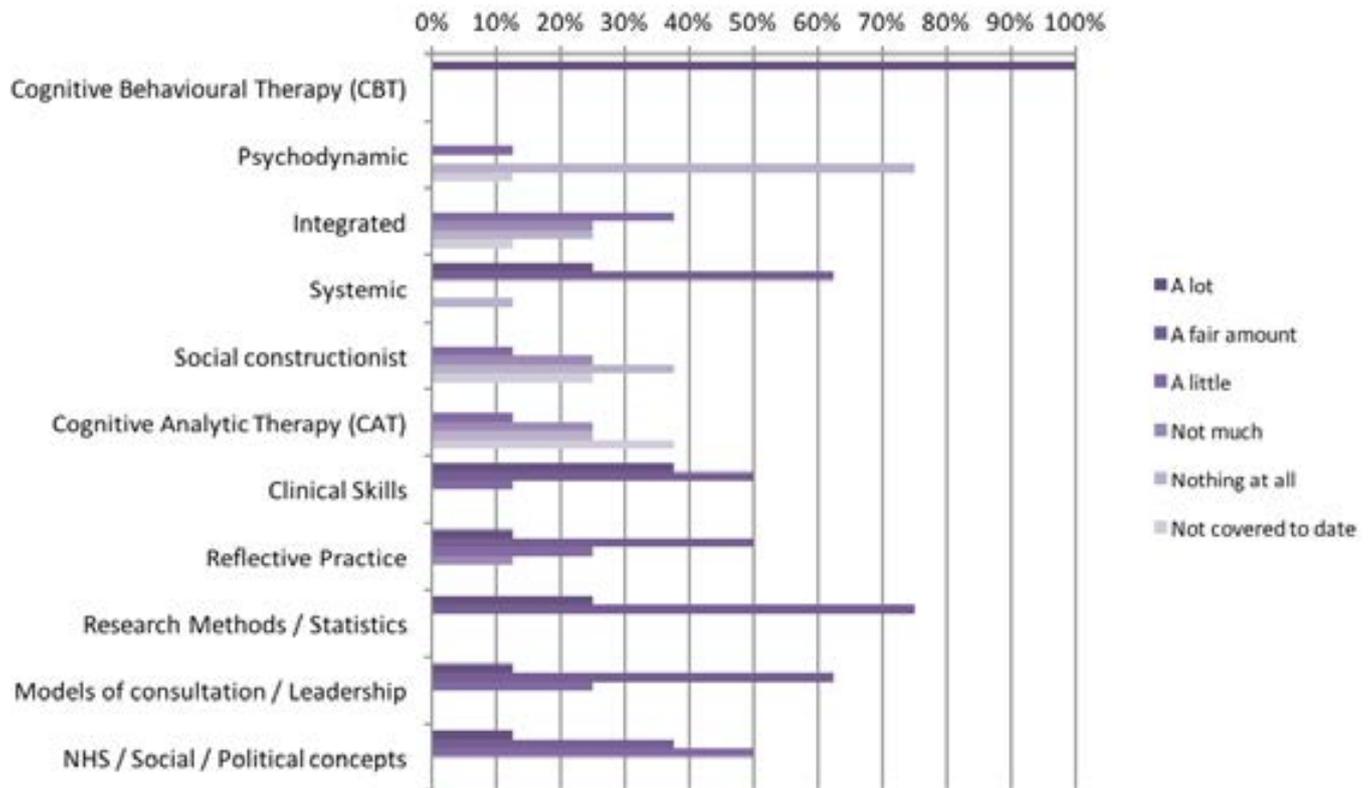
Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	38%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	25%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	13%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	13%
Voluntary Research Assistant	25%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	25%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	13%
Other	50%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Really informal in the waiting area - lots of trainees there to answer your questions and we were provided with a light lunch. There was a research exam, followed by an interview.
- Felt pretty relaxed
- The interviews were really well organised and people were welcoming and friendly.
- On the whole it was a very positive experience. The team were welcoming and organised. Before my interview I got to meet and chat to current trainees which was helpful. The process on the day felt relatively straightforward and consisted of a brief exam of my knowledge of research design/ methods, then a single interview (approximately 45 mins) which covered my research and clinical experience and professional values. I enjoyed the interview as I got to speak with members of the university, the employing trust and with a service user. I felt the questions i was asked were well thought out and considered. Nothing felt designed to trick me rather to get the best out of me.
- I thought that the interview process at Newcastle was quite relaxed. Although initially there had been some confusion over actual interview times (e.g. all morning candidates arrived at the university at the same time before doing the research task part of the interview, and then the individual interview panels started after this). This meant that I had gone to the interview thinking my interview time was earlier than it actually would be which meant waiting around longer with increased anxiety. On the positive side, the university gave us the opportunity to meet current trainees from the third year, and also had a buffet which was a nice touch. Also, I am aware that the course listened to feedback about the interview day structure last year, and have made this more explicit to candidates being interviewed this year (e.g. research task followed by individual interviews).
- As for the actual interview, this was not as daunting as other courses that I have heard about. As mentioned above, we first had to do a 30 minute research task, which was then followed by an interview panel asking clinical and research-based questions. This was the first year that the Newcastle course had changed their interview process, with the aim of being more objective and providing a fair interview process. Having not known this at the time, I thought that my interview panel had not gone well as none of the interviewers asked many follow up questions. However, this was because questions were standardised for the reasons aforementioned, and so there was not much scope to go into detail about more specific aspects of my experience.
- Overall, I would say that my interview experience at Newcastle was a reasonably pleasant one, and I was helped to feel welcome and relaxed by the current trainees.
- The interview itself was a positive experience. It was very nerve wracking but the panel on both interviews were very encouraging and supportive, which made the process of interviews easier. I was on the reserve list so had no straight out interview but I was given two weeks' notice and had already been preparing in case. At Newcastle they gave me a number of where i was in the queue, which actually helped because I then felt I had a chance of being interviewed.
- I interviewed in the previous format where there was a clinical, academic and research task interview. I found everyone friendly and welcoming and felt that the process went smoothly.
- Current trainees greeted us and stayed with us in a communal room throughout the process. Very friendly atmosphere. Interviews were pleasant and the interviewers tried to get the best out of candidates.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



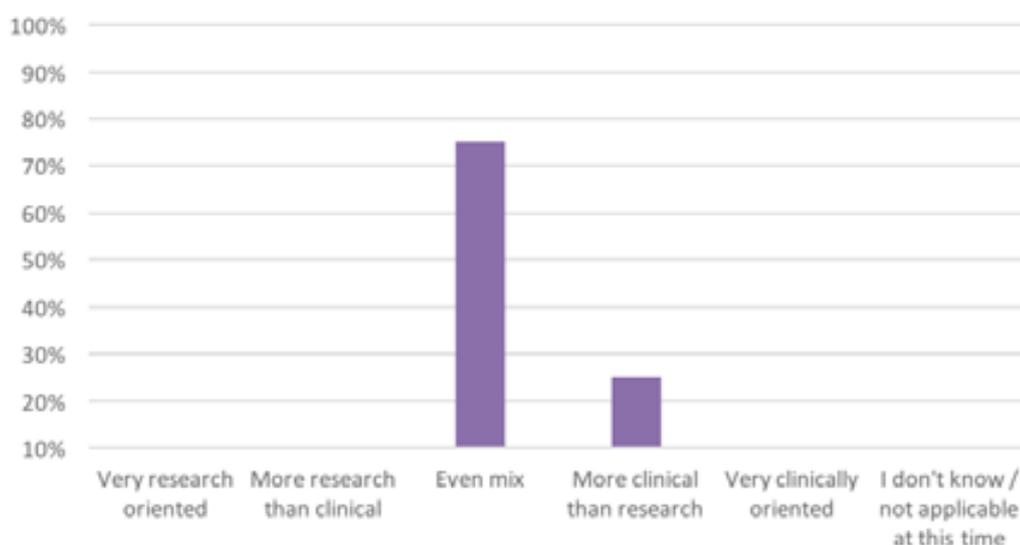
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	29%
Mindfulness	43%
Schema Therapy	0%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	29%
Solution Focused Therapy	14%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	14%
Other	0%

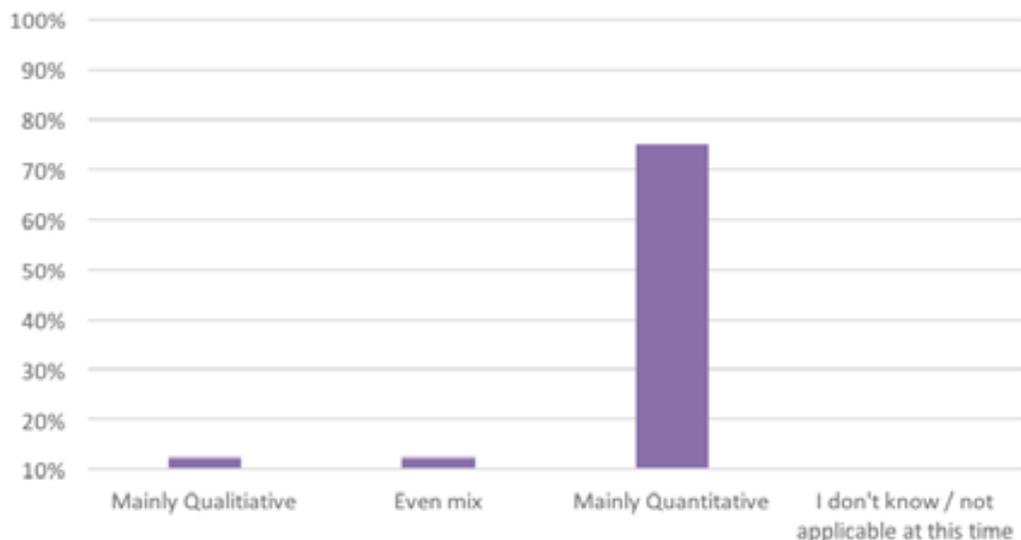
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- I think the course would benefit from more psychodynamic teaching.
- The primary model taught has been CBT. The course in general is very CBT informed thus far- I feel this is appropriate but would also like more opportunity to receive perhaps single day introductory workshops on other evidence based models.
- The Newcastle course has recently changed to focus more on providing two evidence-based therapeutic models in line with the recommendations made from the BPS. As such, at Newcastle the focus is now on gaining a good grounding in CBT (first year) and Systemic Therapy (second year). Unfortunately, this has meant that some other therapeutic models have been dropped from the curriculum, or with very little teaching provided on other models (e.g. psychodynamic psychotherapy, CAT).
- I would have liked to see some psychodynamic teaching but the course have completely cut this out. It would also be nice to have some good teaching on CAT, ACT, DBT and CFT, which may come in our third year.
- 1st year is completely CBT, 2nd year focuses on systemic so none yet. We had 3 days on neuropsychology at the start of the year.

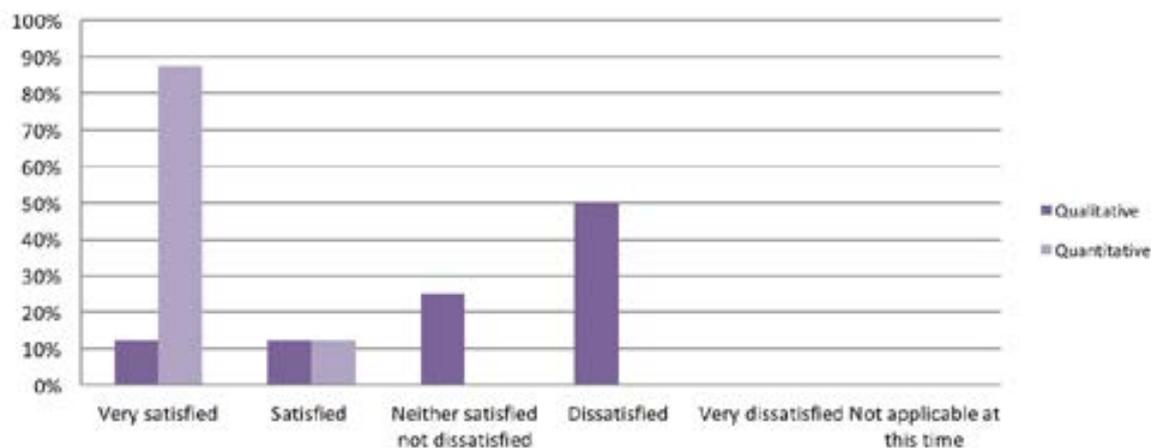
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



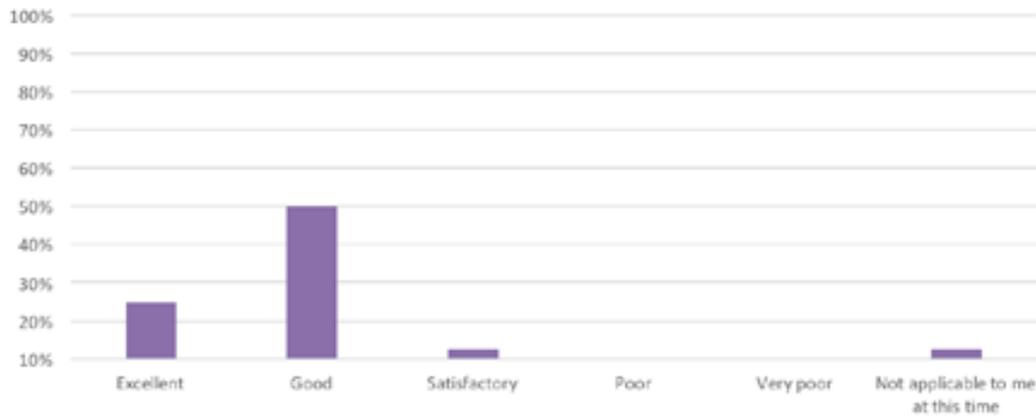
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- All trainees were offered a choice of possible projects from a compendium of projects. Having this opportunity to become involved in programmatic research which is already established and ongoing in the department is a big plus for me as it took the hassle out of finding a suitable and importantly a viable project. Though i can see some people may be off put by this if they come onto the course with very specific ideas for research projects.
- There is a severe gap in terms of qualitative teaching on the course.
- Very quantitatively orientated.

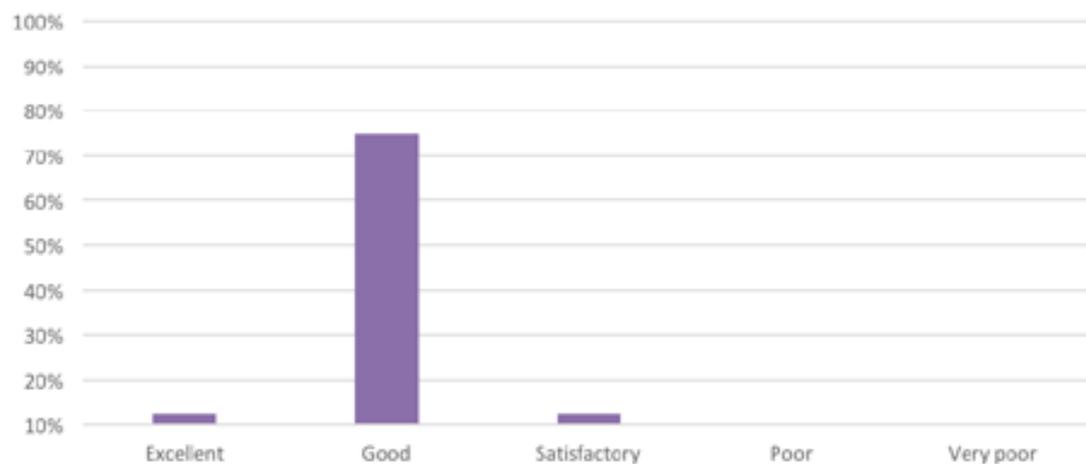
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



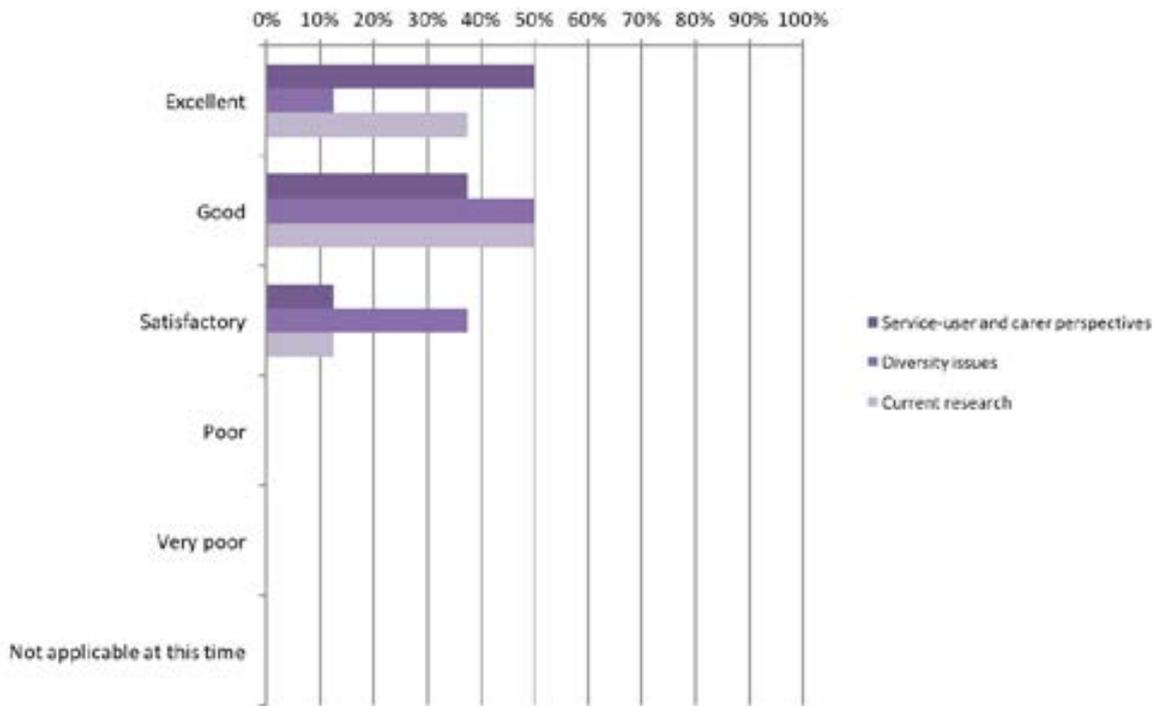
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

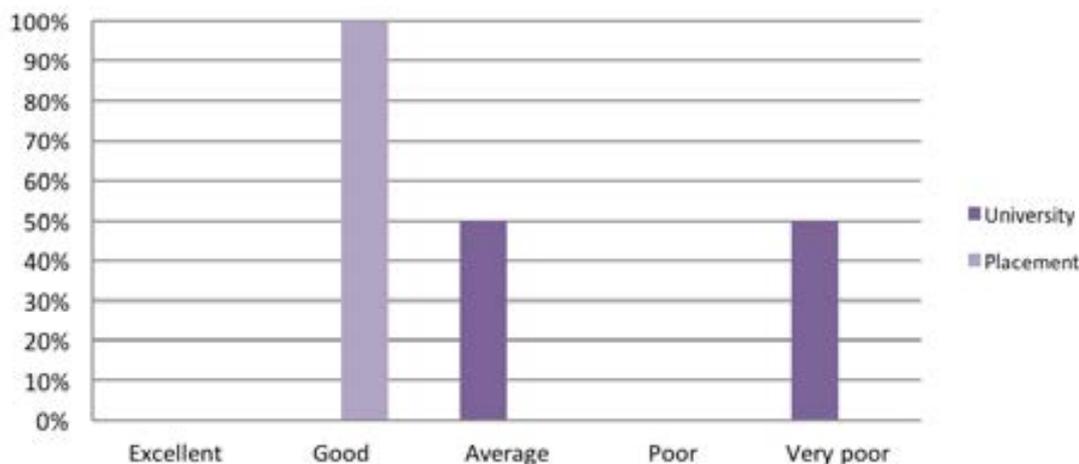
- Thus far nearly all of the teaching we have experienced has seemed very relevant to both academic and importantly (for me) the clinical work required as a trainee. The vast majority has been of a high standard and up to date.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

**Do you have any disabilities?**

25% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

**Please describe how well your needs are met**



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

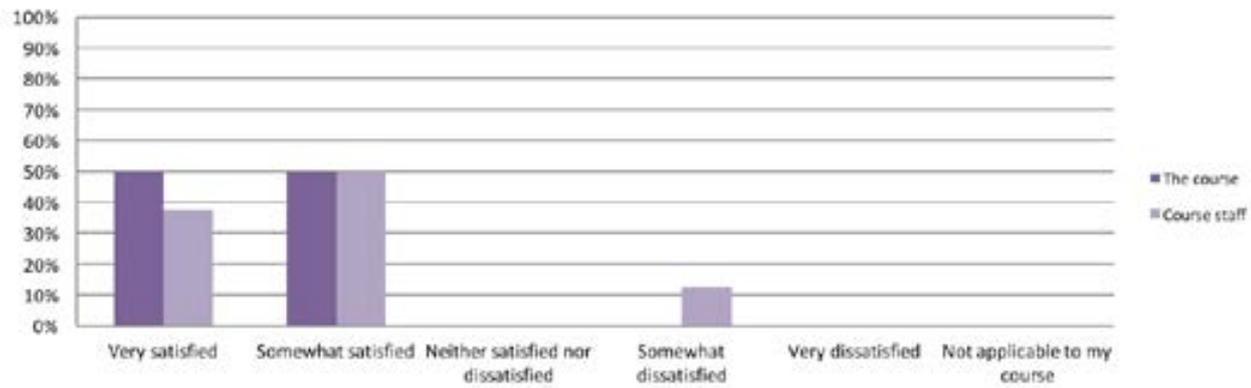
## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Lot of juggling in second year but that's been changed now
- For me, the clinical work has been more demanding because of my lack of experience in this area. My placement supervisor has been brilliant and incredibly supportive.
- I feel it has been very manageable thus far.
- As I am still only 6 months into the course, it has not been too demanding at this stage. However, I have noticed that the workload has slowly started to increase. As such, it is important to keep track of dates/deadlines for this reason. However, at this stage it seems manageable, though I am assured that second year is particularly demanding in terms of managing research, clinical, and academic workloads.
- Balancing research and academic responsibilities has been challenging in the third year.
- Juggling placement and academic pressures.
- Notes are generally put up online following lectures. Cohort interacts with guest lecturers individually to facilitate extra breaks and extra materials if needed.
- Lectures are not recorded for later viewing.
- The strict/inflexible holiday situation has been very difficult for most of the cohort to adapt to.

### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

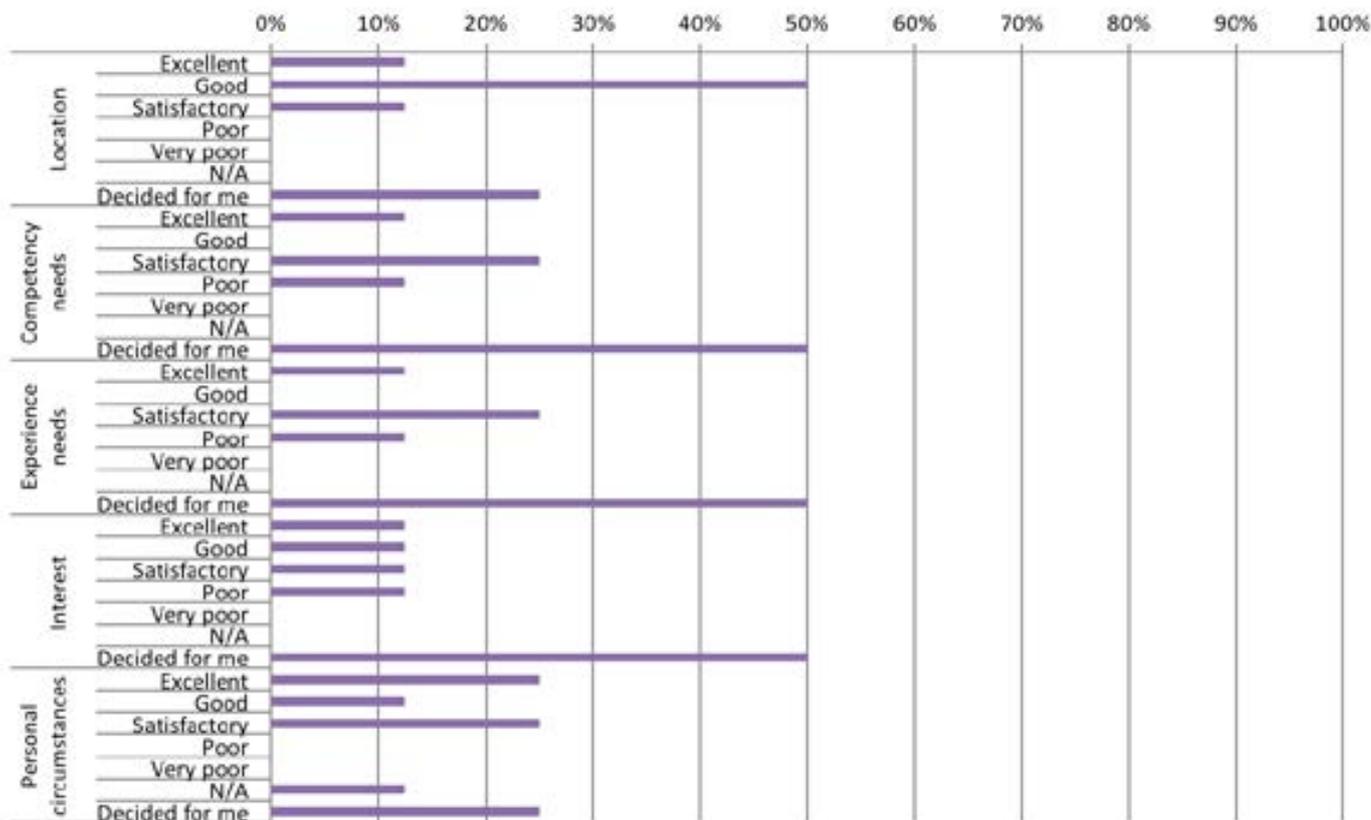
Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	0%
"Buddy"	100%
Manager	88%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	63%
Professional Mentor	63%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	13%
Other	0%

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?****Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

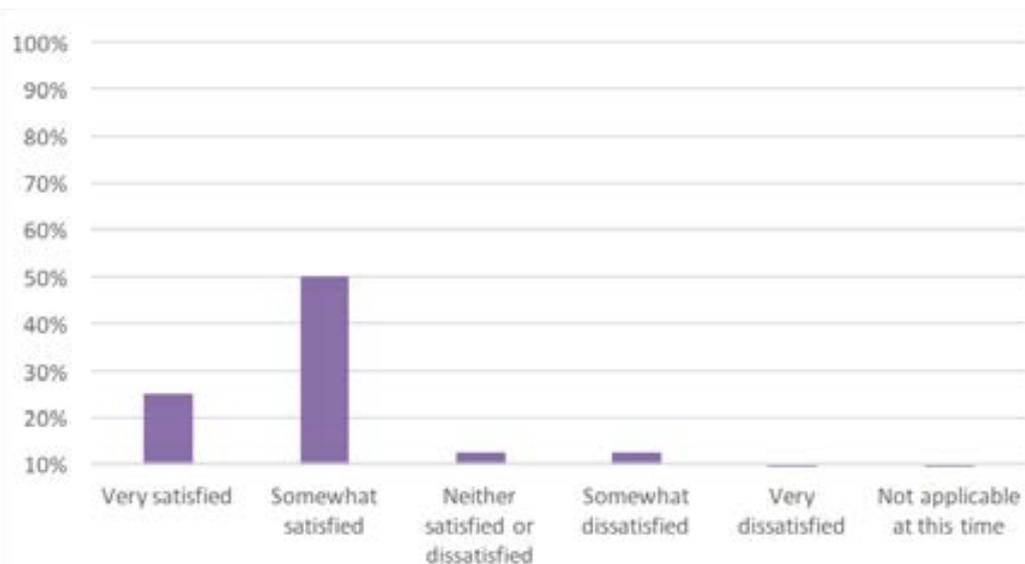
- My placement supervisor has been fantastic
- Support in placement and teaching has always been available and useful.
- Access to support staff has been very good although I haven't needed it that much, but when I have it hasn't been problematic at all.
- I have been happy with this.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



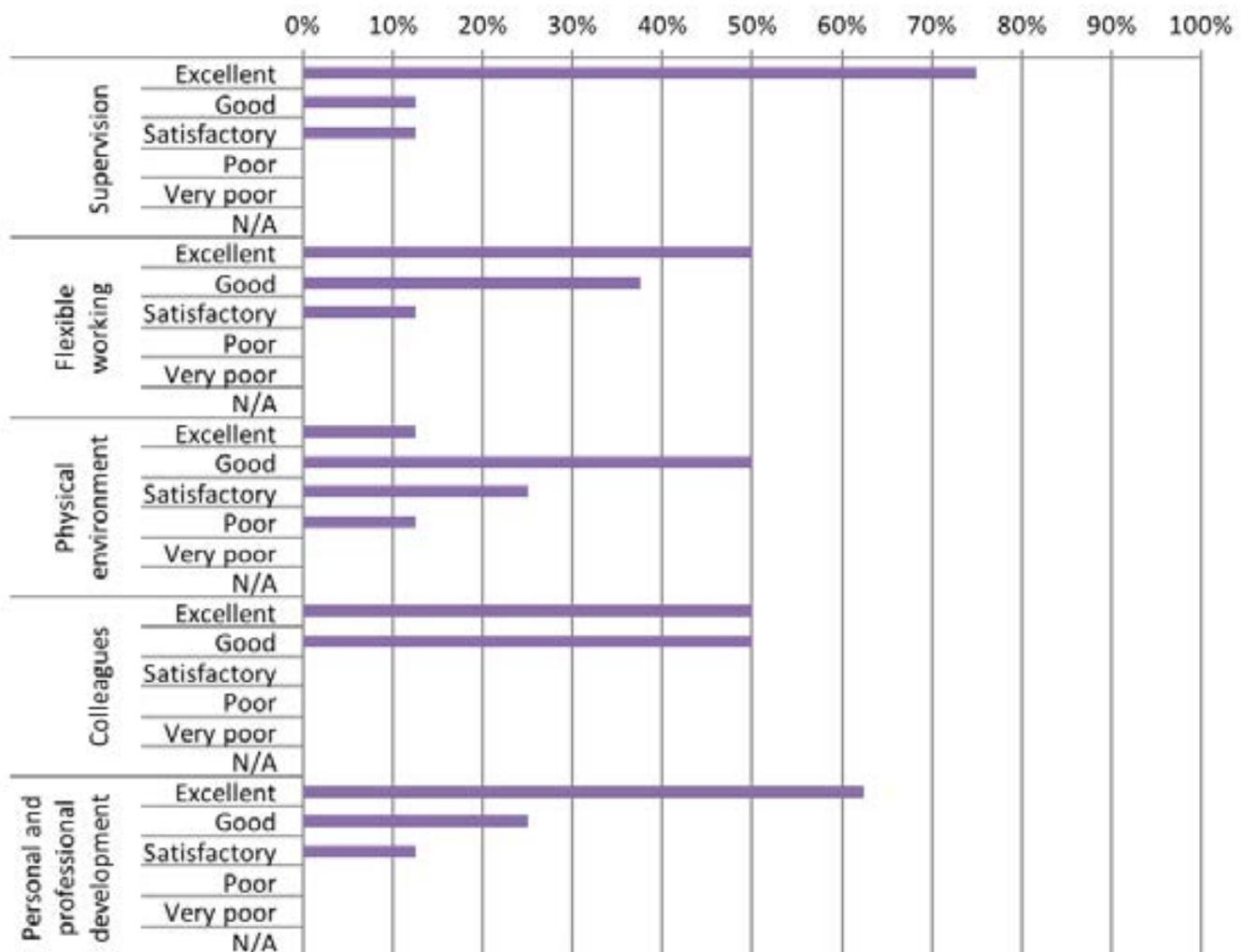
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- Only have input into third year placement
- The placements are matched to the teaching, and effort is taken to ensure that we have suitable cases on placement to match teaching. For instance, the whole cohort have their first placement in adult services which coincides with teaching in adult mental health. As the primary model taught on the course is CBT, placement supervisors are encouraged by the course to ensure that suitable cases are made available to trainees to apply CBT skills.
- Given that the first year is focused heavily on CBT, at the start of the course we had an 8 week block of solid CBT teaching to prepare us for our first placements in adult mental health services. However, my cohort have been placed in a wide range of different adult services e.g. CMHT, primary care Psychology, tertiary level services, health Psychology, which has meant we have all had different placement experiences to an extent. Some of these placements have been more amenable to us practising our CBT skills than others.
- 2 days per week in the 1st year is not enough time to see enough clients or work in a team.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- I have been fortunate to have a really good supervisor on my first placement. It has also been beneficial that my supervisor is CBT trained as well as being a Clinical Psychologist, which means I have been able to focus on meeting the CBT competencies required by the university course.
- It has also been good to get an experience of working within a community treatment team, secondary care being an area that I have not worked in previously. This has meant I have gained experience in seeing the work of other mental health care professionals e.g. psychiatry, mental health nursing, support work etc.
- All my placements have been excellent with some of the best supervisors you could ever hope for.
- Placement has been fantastic. I just wish I could have spent more time here than 2 days per week for 6 months!

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	50%
No	50%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	63%
No	38%
Don't know	0%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Newcastle

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	25%
No	50%
Don't know	25%

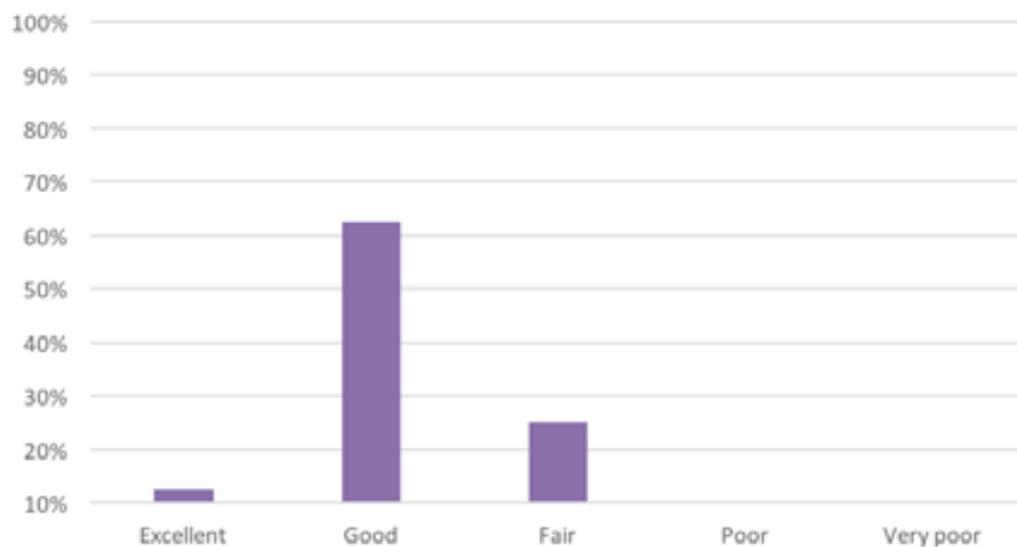
### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	13%
Good	50%
Fair	25%
Poor	13%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- Annual leave policy was amended this year, to meet BPS guidelines. Cannot take leave during teaching, which restricts full week leave periods to Easter / summer and Christmas holidays.
- Friday study days consistent across course but no extra time between placements, for thesis write up etc.
- Quite manageable at present and encouraged by the course. There have been issues over the lack of flexibility over holidays which has been difficult. The course introduced a new rule for our incoming cohort (and future cohorts) that no time off is allowed to be taken from teaching. As there is teaching every week this means the opportunities to take a full weeks holiday are very limited (to Xmas, and summer). This can be frustrating and has been a source of ire for several trainees.
- I think as I am only 6 months in to the course, my work life balance is fine at present. However, there are some periods where you may be required to work evenings or on weekend days in the first year, though I think this depends on how well you manage your time. On the Newcastle course it is good as we get a study day (usually a Friday), every week over the duration of the 3 year course. So if you use this study day for its intended purpose, you can strike a good work-life balance (at least when deadlines are not looming).
- I am driven to ensure I have a work life balance so I strive for this, but I have found the course allows for this by spreading most deadlines etc. out and giving lots of notice for assignments and placement allocation.
- The volume of assessments (academic and clinical) can feel overwhelming at times.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- North east is generally quite cheap for living costs
- Newcastle is quite an affordable city rent wise. I could however, imagine that things might be tighter financially if i was on a placement that required more travel. Thankfully for trainees on longer distance placements accommodation is arranged and paid for in advance by the university.
- I think that the band 6 wage for a trainee is a really good salary, especially when you compare it to the fact that other healthcare professionals are not this lucky. Also, the cost of living in Newcastle is also reasonable which means that you can have a decent quality of life in the area based on the trainee salary.
- I am in an unusual situation because I stay away during the week to do the course and travel home at weekends so my outgoings are more because I pay a mortgage and rent a flat but I have managed to cope.
- Cost of living is reasonable.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- We are lucky to have staff members who are very experienced in their field to provide teaching and supervision.
- Location
- My placement (adult mental health) is great and I'm growing in confidence as a clinician by the day.
- Being with a cohort every week for teaching has been a great experience.
- I would say my favourite aspect of the course to date has been getting to know the other trainees. I have been fortunate to be on placement with one of my fellow trainees, which I think has made my first placement all the more enjoyable and less anxiety provoking.
- Placements
- Clinical placements
- Working on placement.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- It's now very CBT and systemic heavy, only introductory sessions on other models
- I think that potential applicants should be aware that the course is very strict in terms of when we can take annual leave. That is, we are required to attend all teaching days and cannot take any leave unless there are good extenuating circumstances. Also, we are required to attend a given number of days on each of our placements, which means that we can be somewhat restricted on when we can take annual leave (e.g. restricted to when there is no university teaching, bank holidays). I know that this has been a particular issue for some of the people in my cohort, and so if this is a massive factor for you, it may be worth thinking about.
- Holidays have been a major bone of contention this year. If you require any flexibility regarding missing class (other than sickness), taking certain times off for partner/children (times outside Christmas, Easter or august), I would look elsewhere.

## Courses Survey Results

**Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?**

- Role-play, research task, interviews

**For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.**

Teaching	15 hours
Placement	15 hours
Personal Study	7.5 hours
Research	Not stated

**What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)**

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Oxford University

46 responses (100% of 46 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	37%
Year 2	33%
Year 3	30%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	11%
25 – 29 years	78%
30 – 34 years	7%
35 – 39 years	4%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	24%
Twice	43%
3 times	28%
4 times	2%
5 times	2%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	2%
MA	0%
MSc	51%
MRes	2%
Diploma	2%
Post Graduate Certificate	20%
Conversion course	11%
None	24%
Other	2%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	2%
2 years	15%
3 years	26%
4 years	37%
5 years	9%
6+ years	11%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	80%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	28%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	41%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	9%
Research Assistant	39%
Voluntary Research Assistant	30%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	50%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	15%
Other	13%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

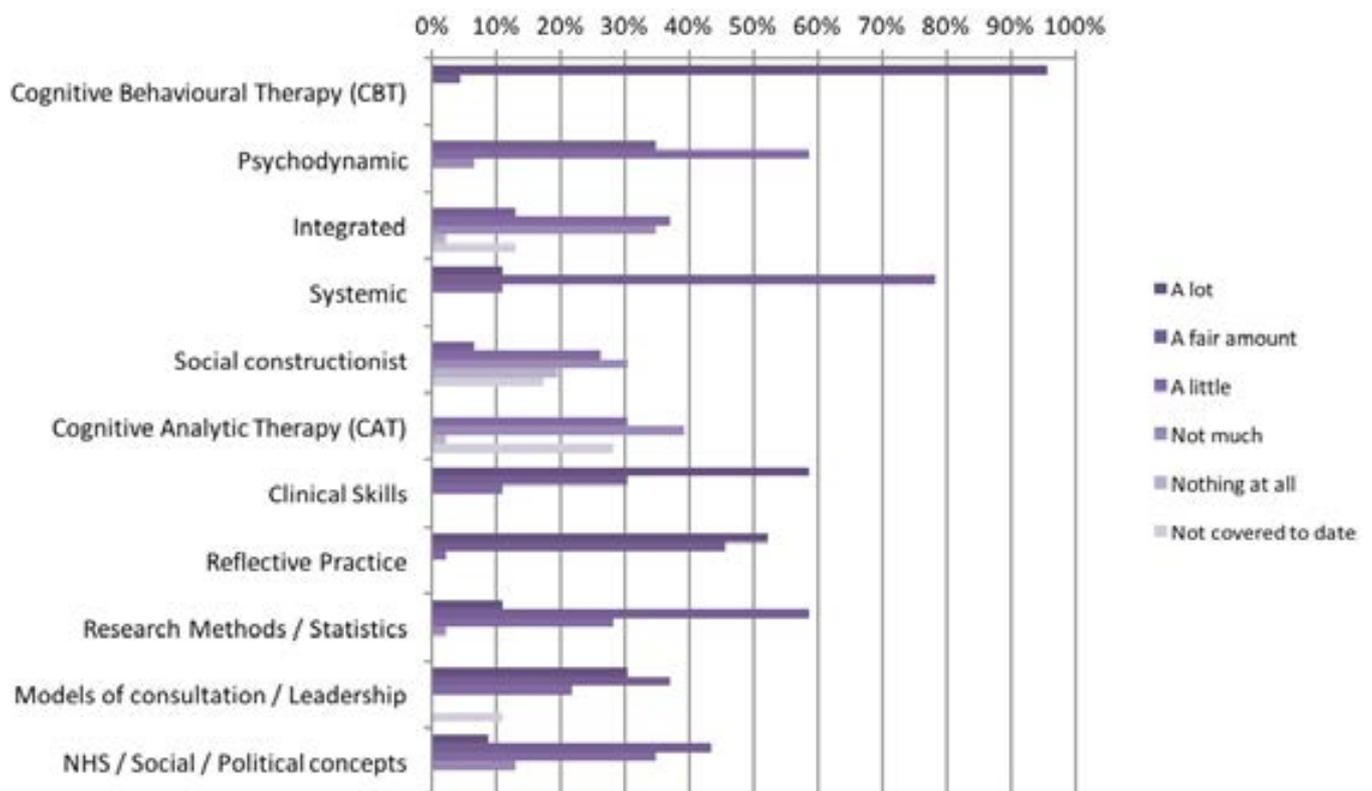
- It was very supportive.
- I found the interview process a pleasant experience. We had a group task, followed by an individual vignette and joint research/clinical interview. It was generally a warm atmosphere and I didn't feel like anyone was trying to 'catch you out'. There were trainees available to talk to in-between the group task and interviews, which really helped to calm the nerves. We were also provided with a free lunch.
- Very friendly, everyone was very helpful and it felt as relaxed as an interview can be.
- The interview process was friendly and supportive. Current trainees welcomed us and guided us through the process, chatting with us throughout the day. The interviewers seemed to want to hear my best answers, and gently prompted me a little at one point.
- The staff and trainees were very welcoming at the interview. I remember there being a group task shortly followed by an individual interview where I had some time to read a research and clinical vignette and prepare some ideas/answers. They did put me on the spot in the interview though asking about my academic achievements at undergrad and why I failed one of my modules in my first year.
- It was as calming and friendly as possible for such a nerve-wracking situation.
- A much more relaxing experience than other courses. The group task seemed terrifying but was actually quite enjoyable
- I found the course staff and trainees incredibly supportive which helped with the nerves.
- Very friendly. There is a group task followed by a reflective exercise and then one interview that combines research and academic competencies. I think it's good that they are combined, however it was very short.
- I really enjoyed the interview day and my experience made me sure that I wanted to go on to study at Oxford. Each applicant was assigned a current trainee as a buddy for the day which was really helpful they made me feel at ease and were happy to answer any questions. The interview and group task panel were friendly and seemed like they were really trying to get the best from us which really helped with my nerves. Overall the course made what could be a really daunting experience much easier!
- I found the interview process as pain free as possible. I was nervous but the staff were all friendly both during the day generally and in the interview itself. There were current trainees present who were just there to support us. We were provided with food and drinks and it was a welcoming atmosphere. I didn't find either part of the group task too difficult and no one tried to catch you out with questions
- The atmosphere was very warm and supportive and definitely had an influence on my decision to choose Oxford. From the moment I arrived to the time I left on the interview day, I felt like the course was trying to put me at ease and get the best out of me. I was surprised that the interview questions asked were largely the same as you'd expect at any job interview. They weren't nearly as psychology specific as I had anticipated and prepared for.
- Really friendly and positive. One interview only (and a group exercise, which was producing a poster as a team). They tried to tailor the clinical vignette to the area you've been working in.
- I personally didn't enjoy the interview as I didn't feel like there was a huge chance to 'shine' with the questions asked, but I recognise that this may simply reflect my worries on the day about how it went. I also found the group task very uncomfortable and it felt quite forced. However, it was extremely well organised, the trainees were very supportive, and in general I'm not sure what could be done to make it any better as it is what it is.

- I found it the most enjoyable out of the 3 interviews that I went to. This was the only course which matched you up with a 'buddy' for the day who made sure that you got to the various tasks on time. The course provided sandwiches and snacks and there was a very relaxed vibe around the building. It really felt like a community at Oxford.
- I found the process really supportive, having trainees available to chat to beforehand really helped to relax you and everything seemed well-organised.
- I found the interview process quite difficult, and did not enjoy the group task at all.
- The course was really welcoming and there were several trainees from all the years who were friendly and happy to answer any questions about the course. Even though the process was anxiety-provoking (as you would expect), the course did their best at putting our nerves at ease and even provided juice, crisps and a sandwich lunch.
- The interview went very quickly. I enjoyed the group task as it relaxed you into the process. It felt quite artificial, although it was also fun. The interview went quickly, and it was clear that they were trying to get the best from you. Having current trainees around was really helpful.
- Having friendly and supportive trainees on hand throughout the selection day created a welcoming atmosphere and helped to ease my anxiety. The group task and individual interview questions felt challenging, but fair and it did not feel like they were trying to catch me out.
- The interview process at Oxford is as nice of an experience as an interview can be. They are very supportive and want to get the best out of you, and know more about you as a person as well as your career in psychology.
- Interview process was really nicely set up. There was time for tea and snacks with current trainees to ease our nerves, and they were also there to help us get to the various parts of the interview on time. They were also available to answer any questions we had. It was well structured and ran smoothly.
- I found it strangely okay although I didn't have any other interviews to compare it to. The group task was the most anxiety-provoking for me but the interview was quite containing and there weren't any trick questions. It was really useful to have current trainees to talk to and relax with before/after the interview. I remember coming away and thinking that everyone was really friendly and that it wasn't at all like the stereotypical Oxford that a lot of people (including myself) thought it might be.
- It was a really friendly environment, the process of the day was very clear, current trainees were on hand to answer questions and reduce anxiety, it felt like the course staff in the interview wanted to get the best from you, not catch you out.
- I found the interview much less stressful than I had expected. In fact, I found it less stressful than any of my interviews for Assistant Psychologist posts. The staff and current trainees were so friendly and welcoming, and it felt like a really well organised day.
- Very laid back and welcoming. We were paired with current Trainees who were able to answer our questions and made sure we found our way to and from our interview. The interview process included a brief group task and one interview lasting approximately 30 mins. There were also cakes.
- Very friendly and encouraging.
- I felt like interviewers were trying to put me at ease and get the best out of me. There were also lots of current trainees around on the day who helped me relax and answered my questions, which I found very helpful.
- I had a very positive experience of the interview. I thought that the communication prior to interview was clear and extremely warm and encouraging. I also found the interview day itself as comfortable as it could be. All the staff were extremely friendly and the trainees really helped to make the experience manageable. There was a good opportunity to talk to the current trainees and that definitely swayed my decision to choose Oxford. I felt that the interview itself was fair and I didn't feel like they were trying to catch me out at all but just wanted to get the best out of me. I also thought it was well organised and the communication after interview was just as impressive. I went to two other interviews, and I found Oxford by far the most welcoming and comfortable.
- Really good, questions were fair and relevant and felt the interviewers were supportive and helpful.

- Time was given to prepare.
- I remember the trainees who were there on the day being really supportive and friendly. Any questions I had were answered. The panel really wanted to get the best out of me. Having the group task first helped to ease my nerves for my interview.
- Friendly and really felt like the panel were getting to know me. It was helpful to have the trainees there which made me feel more comfortable and relaxed. I liked the balance of the group task having a break and then doing the interview.
- It was the most relaxed atmosphere and enjoyable interview process in comparison to other courses. I feel as though they wanted to get the best from me.
- I had a very positive experience interviewing at the Oxford course. It was really friendly and I felt that there was an emphasis on getting to know us as people not just as potential psychologists. On the day, they had allocated a current trainee to each interviewee and this made it all feel much less intimidating! Oxford had not been my first choice before interviewing, but on the day everyone seemed very welcoming and friendly which changed my mind.
- The process was surprisingly supportive and even enjoyable. Starting with a group task felt like an easier way to get going than other courses which start with individual interviews. Then having a vignette to read and prepare independently to answer interview questions about was a good way to warm up for meeting with the panel. During the individual interview itself, it was evident that the panel genuinely wanted to get the best out of me by helping me to feel comfortable, taking the pressure off timings, and giving me the time and headspace to consider what I wanted to say before launching into saying it. As it is only a half day and involves just one individual interview, I found it in some ways more intense than other courses interviewed at which have multiple individual interviews over the course of a full day, but ultimately I think this format must have worked well for me! Plus compacting it into a half day made it feel like less of an endurance test than courses which used a full day for their selection.
- Interview was really nice, or as nice as it can be. Simple format, the group task is a bit of an ice breaker, then got the impression the interviewers actually wanted to get the best of you rather than put you on the spot.
- It was a very well organised and pleasant experience. The course arranged 'buddies' for each of us, who were current trainees from the course. It was helpful to know that this person would ensure we got to the right places at the right times, and I was grateful for the opportunity to speak with them about their experiences of the course. The interviews (group and individual) were not as scary as I thought they'd be, and genuinely felt that they were trying to get the best out of me. The staff were warm and encouraging and this helped to put me at ease.
- Everyone was very friendly and went out of their way to make us feel as relaxed as possible. The information sent in advance was helpful, in terms of knowing what to expect on the day.
- Positive. Encouraging and friendly.
- Very friendly. Trainees and staff did everything they could to relax me and make me feel welcome. Nicest interview I went to.
- It was a very positive one. The environment felt very relaxed with trainees to talk to and take us to our individual interviews. The actual interview felt quite quick and the interviewers were friendly, supportive, and gave extra time at the end for me to have another go at the questions I didn't do so well on! I liked the different formats - having the group task first was good to get to know others, and I liked that the vignettes structured the individual interviews so nothing felt too unexpected.
- I found the whole interview experience at Oxford a positive one. They had clearly thought about ways that they could make candidates comfortable and at ease, and there was a welcoming, inviting atmosphere in which I felt they wanted to get the best out of me, rather than intimidating or pressuring me. However I have no comparison to other interviews as this was my only one. I found the interview itself very warm, fair and not too long which was helpful. It was also well organised and the day ran smoothly.
- The Oxford course has a really friendly selection process. It was lovely to speak with current trainees and the group task actually made me feel at ease! Interviewers were all really friendly too.

- The process was well thought out and catered for with trainee support.
- Excellent - oxford really tried to get the best out of you and the setup of the day really put you at ease. There were supportive trainees on hand to help out and the whole day was very well organised and gave a good flavour of what it would be like to train here.
- I liked the interview process as there was an emphasis on understanding me as a person. I don't think the ability to remember lots of facts is a good indicator of your potential to be a psychologist and therefore I do not think courses which use extra examinations and long academic interviews in their interview process are tapping into the right things! Therefore, right from the start, Oxford had an ethos which fit my views of what makes a good psychologist.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	48%
Mindfulness	91%
Schema Therapy	59%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	33%
Solution Focused Therapy	11%
Neuropsychology	80%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	78%
Other	15%

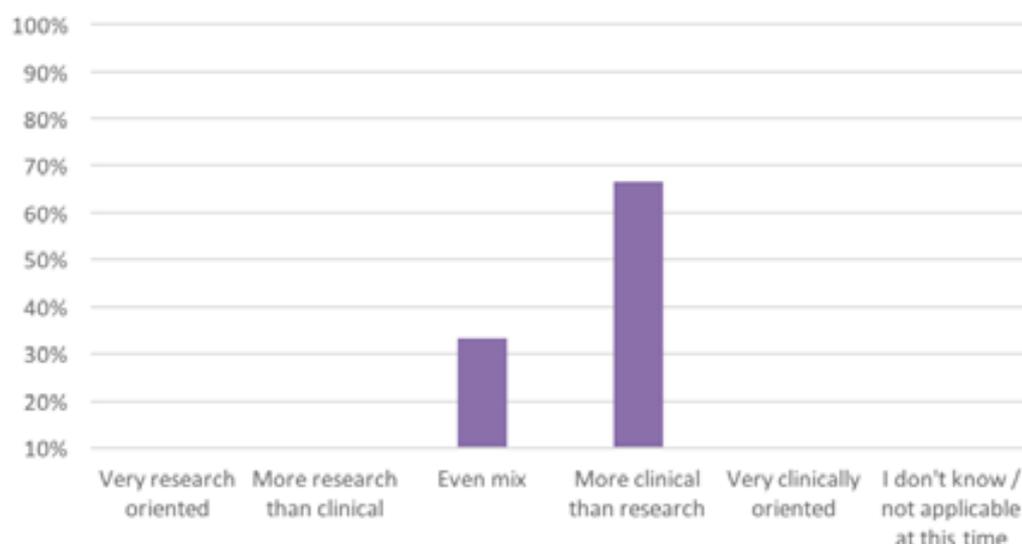
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- There is a lot of time spent discussing therapeutic approaches but far less spent on learning the skills.
- There is a heavy focus on CBT teaching. However, more recently we have started the psychodynamic module, which has been really valuable and we have been taught by some fantastic lecturers.
- Years 1 and 2 felt more CBT-heavy, year 1 included a systemic module, and most other models have been covered in just one or two sessions. Year 3 has been more integrated. A specialist teaching week in year 3 allows us to choose something to have more in-depth teaching on. The last few years have chosen emotion focused therapy.
- There is a strong CBT emphasis but this is partly balanced by a fair amount of systemic teaching and a bit of psychodynamic and a little of the other models listed.
- A lot of CBT covered in the first year in comparison to other approaches. More systemic and alternative ways of working have been covered in the second year linked to clinical work with older adults and people with intellectual disabilities.
- CBT is covered significantly more than the others. However, in second and third year we have started to have much more varied teaching which has been excellent.
- The course is quite heavily weighted towards CBT approaches as Oxford is a centre of excellence in this area. This has been helpful for my first placements as they are also CBT oriented. We have an awareness of other approaches but I wouldn't feel as confident using these in my practise. That being said I'm only in my first year so have lots of teaching to come!
- The priority has definitely been CBT so far (but as expected in first year). We have had some systemic and psychodynamic teaching which have been interesting. I have found the weighting fine, but as we go on I hope to be taught more of other approaches
- At the moment, six months into first year, it feels very CBT-heavy. We have also had modules on systemic and psychodynamic so far. Having read feedback from the 2nd and 3rd year trainees, it sounds like the focus shifts across the three years. Nevertheless, I would describe this as a course quite committed to CBT -- and perhaps even a limited scope within that. For example, we have had no teaching on the history of CBT, how CBT and REBT differ, etc. At times you can be left with the impression that nothing came before Beckian CBT and nothing terribly significant has come after.
- Some models are covered by half a day training only. However, there is a budget in third year for the cohort to arrange a week of training based on their own interest. This year, we are getting a week of Emotion Focused Therapy training.
- The first year is mostly CBT, but reflects the ethos of the course and is certainly what I expected. I think the balance might shift as the course progresses, but as I'm only in first year I'm not certain about this.
- In the first year there has been a big focus on CBT and laying the groundwork for core clinical skills. However, there are also blocks of systemic teaching and psychodynamic teaching which have been very well received and enjoyed by trainees.
- The content is quite geared towards CBT, especially in your first term but there is plenty of teaching on other models as the year progresses.
- I think one the strengths of the Oxford course, is that it gives you a good grounding in CBT, but also introduces you to a range of other models (e.g. lifespan, psychodynamic and systemic). Personally, I find that this is a really good approach and mix.
- In the first year, the main focus lies on increasing our skills and knowledge in CBT. However, we also have some lectures on systemic and psychodynamic approaches, which have been very good. This may become more balanced over the years, but I do not know that yet.
- The course is very focused on CBT, however it does provide a good overview of other therapies and models which has been great.

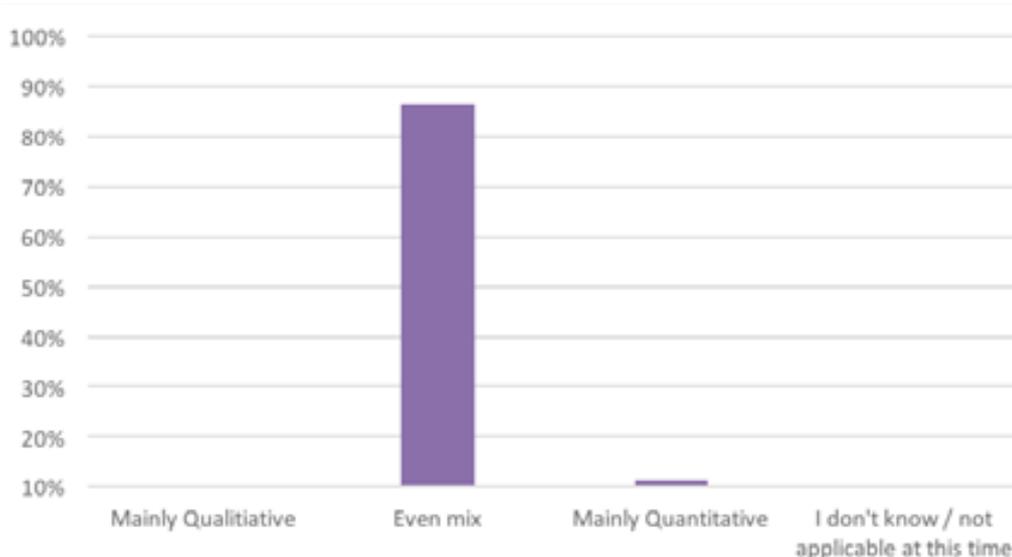
- The first year feels very CBT heavy with psychodynamic and systemic approaches coming out more in the second year. This reflects the models we would consider on placements during these years. Generally teaching maps really well onto placements.
- It's very CBT heavy, especially in first year, and it can be a relief to have teaching on something other than that. There can be a lot of repetition too, which can be quite frustrating, but generally the lecturers are quite receptive if you let them know that you've covered something before. Systemic features quite heavily, and we have a series of psychodynamic lectures, but all other models e.g. ACT or schema, only have one or two sessions devoted to them, which is a shame.
- It is CBT heavy which is what I expected. It has been really interesting being taught more about psychodynamic and systemic approaches and we hope this continues to develop our skills outside of CBT.
- The first year has been relatively CBT focused, however this feels appropriate as our placements services are predominantly using CBT (so I might have felt a little out of my depth had we not had this focus). However, I have been pleasantly surprised at the amount of systemic and psychodynamic teaching, which has been covered more than I expected. Overall it feels like a good balance.
- There is a big focus on CBT particularly in the first year. A lot of other types of therapy are covered but in less detail.
- So far, my experience has been that CBT is definitely the dominant model, and then systemic. However, this is 1st year, and I am hoping other models will be taught in greater detail as the course goes on. Although limited so far, the teaching we have had on psychodynamic has been excellent.
- Nothing on social constructionist perspective at all except a half day on narrative therapy. Very little on community psychology and nothing on political and social psychology. Too much CBT - to the reduction of all other perspectives. Good amount of systemic teaching but mostly just introductions to all other models.
- The additional topics checked above were covered on a much smaller scale i.e. half day main focus is CBT and systemic. It would be helpful to have larger chunks of the other topics such as CFT and ACT. The third year opportunity to choose a topic for a week's teaching block is great.
- First year is very focused on general clinical skills, CBT and a little systemic. Second year starts to go into considering wider issues such as leadership which seems to match well with the competencies expected on placement.
- It is very CBT heavy which can be a little frustrating as we train to work in a profession that values integration. Having said that, the CBT teaching is brilliant and has been given to us by leaders in the field which has been great. In the first year, there has been a surprising amount of psychodynamic teaching which I have enjoyed. I think that further through the course we might begin to have more teaching on integrating techniques, but as a first year there seems to be an emphasis on learning techniques independently and in depth first.
- I'm now in third year and have completed the taught parts of the course so feel I have more of an overview of the balance of teaching in different areas. The first year felt a bit too CBT heavy, even though a fair bit of time is also given to systemic approaches, psychodynamic, and briefly (one-off sessions) to CAT, mindfulness and schema therapy. But now I think the early focus on CBT is developmentally appropriate to give you a solid grounding in a form of therapy that you can use in your core placements, and because CBT is so dominantly used in services offering psychological therapy currently (especially in the NHS) it makes sense to be really skilled up in it early on. Teaching in second year and particularly third year progress into areas of more clinical complexity, which brings with it more subtlety and integration of approaches offered by the teaching. Under the directorship of David Murphy, the Oxford course has recently developed a specialty for comprehensive teaching in leadership, with lots of renowned speakers being brought in from other sectors which I think is a real asset to our course that I'm not sure is currently available from (m) any other courses. This does move the focus somewhat from clinical competencies to leadership skills, but as this seems to be the direction that the profession is traveling in at the moment it is likely to be good for career development.

- Pretty much get a little bit of everything and there are enough supervisors around that you can follow a particular placement to learn a particular therapy style if you like.
- The leadership module is supported by the Said Business School at the university so we get some very good speakers.
- Have a third year teaching block where you get a budget and can choose anything you like as a cohort. We just had a block on emotion focused couples therapy with a team from Canada. It was great.
- Please note that I am in first year, so this may still be covered, however I'd like to have teaching on social constructionist and integrative approaches.
- In 1st year I felt like it was CBT heavy. But now in 2nd year I can see this was necessary for placements and we have not had a great deal of CBT teaching since.
- I think it was reflective of what was expected of and available to us in our clinical settings as trainees. Particularly the first year can feel very CBT-heavy, but second and third year much less so. We are privileged to have a budget for a week of specialist teaching chosen by us for our final year, which is a great opportunity to get teaching of topics you may feel you have missed out on.
- Personally I would like to see more psychodynamic teaching, but the teaching we have had so far on this approach has been excellent. I find the course a little too CBT heavy and would like to see a shift towards more systemic and psychodynamic approaches as these are equally important and should not be seen as "extras" as we are being trained to be integrative and draw on different theories, not become CBT therapists.
- Generally the course seems to cover most areas well. Only one hour was dedicated to teaching on sleep and sleep disorders, which is inadequate considering the trans diagnostic relevance of sleep and the prevalence of sleep problems in the general population. This seems to be similarly lacking on other courses.
- I personally wish we had more focus on relational therapies and psychodynamic teaching
- The course provides a good grounding in CBT and systemic therapy. There is an excellent opportunity in third year to use a healthy budget to organise your own teaching for a week. This has given our year group an opportunity to explore another model (EFT). I think the course would benefit from adapting to the changes in services as ACT and Mindfulness are increasingly being used by psychologists on our placements.

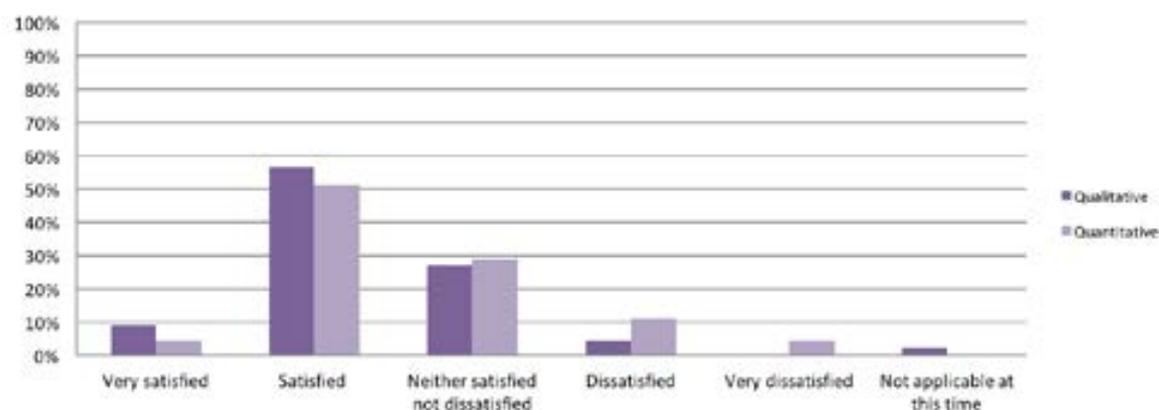
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?

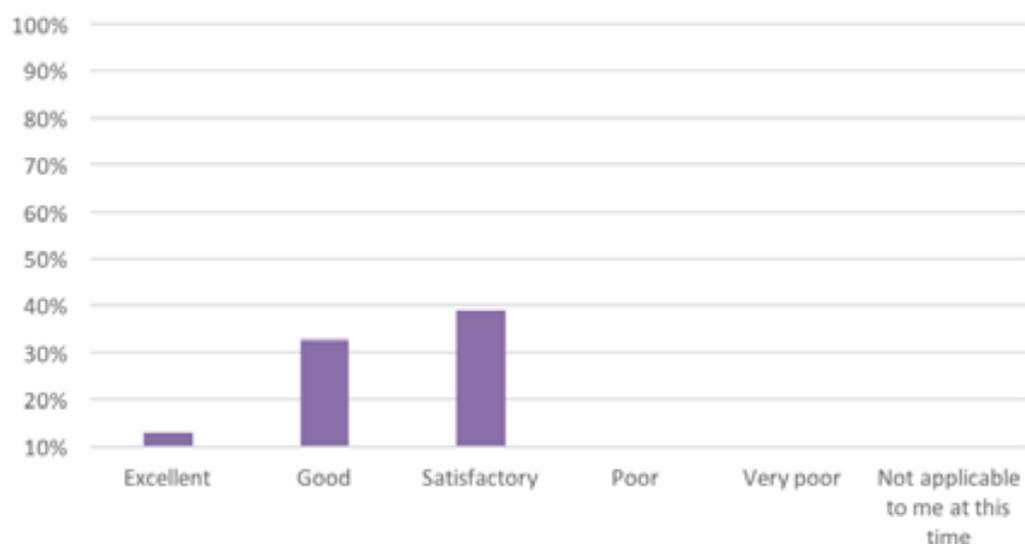


### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

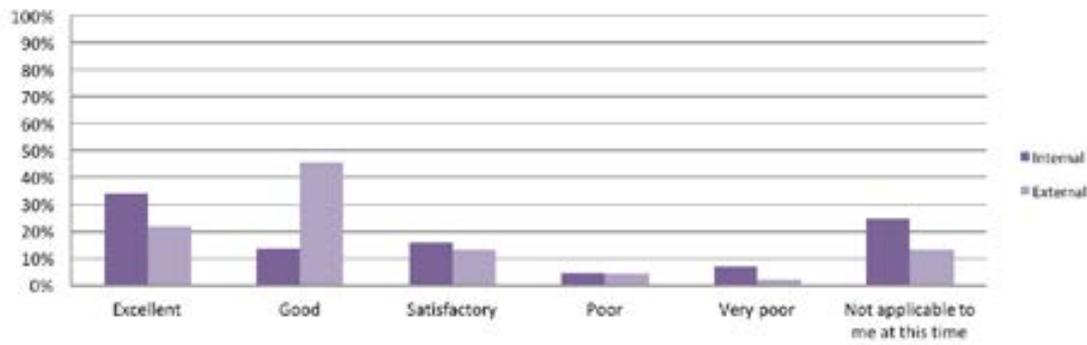
- The way the research teaching is structured has recently undergone a review with the aim of improving the quality and timing of various sessions to suit the trainees better, particularly in relation to our dissertation process.
- Pitching Stats right for DClInPsy is tough given the mixed level at intake but I feel the teaching is a little basic.
- I know other courses have a lot more statistics teaching compared to Oxford. It's my opinion that we should be good enough at statistics from our undergrad teaching and should only need a gentle refresher. I am not sure if the research element of the course is actually on board with the 'good enough' ethos promoted by other elements of the course.
- Not a huge amount of research teaching, but I think the idea is to gain knowledge through your own service-related project (and later, your dissertation)
- Being in first year, we have only just begun focusing on research areas. However, I have appreciated lecturers taking the time to acknowledge that everyone is starting at different levels and they have spent the time going over some core skills from undergrad.

- We all have dedicated research tutors who are really supportive and helpful. However, the statistics teaching from lecturers outside of the course team has not always been to the best standard.
- We are currently covering some basic quantitative stats, but this may become more advanced over the years. We have also had an introduction to different qualitative methods.
- The course are very supportive of your research interests and ensuring that you pick a feasible project.
- There felt like equal opportunity to explore qualitative and quantitative options for our dissertation, and the course encouraged us to think about our own theoretical and epistemological leanings when deciding which type of research we were interested in. There felt like equal support for exploring both options, in terms of course staff's own interests and expertise.
- We have missed some of the qualitative teaching which is why I have marked it slightly lower but this is due to be rescheduled.
- Not enough teaching or support in this area
- There seems to be a lot of support available through the course, for people who feel a little less confident with research. As trainees, there seems to be an equal mix in our year of people who feel more and less confident with it. We have had more qualitative teaching than I expected which I've really enjoyed.
- I think the qualitative teaching and staff expertise of qualitative is a real strength of the course's research profile.
- The Quantitative teaching is a little under review at the moment and has been improving over the last year. There is some great teaching and more than enough for dissertations etc.
- Although there is good research support, quantitative methods and inferential statistics could do with more structure and time dedicated to them.
- I think the research teaching is the poorest element of the course. I would recommend considering Oxford if you are already confident in research methods because the teaching on stats and research methods is insufficient in my opinion.

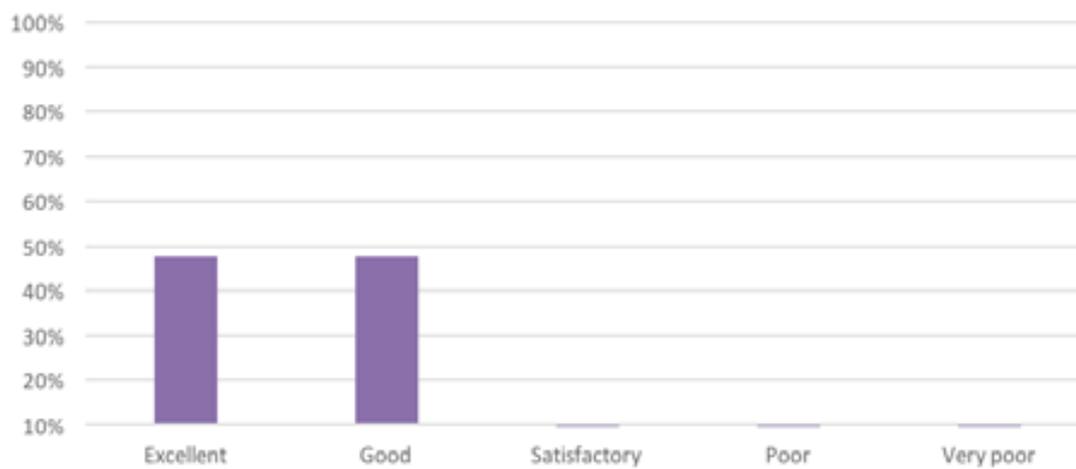
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



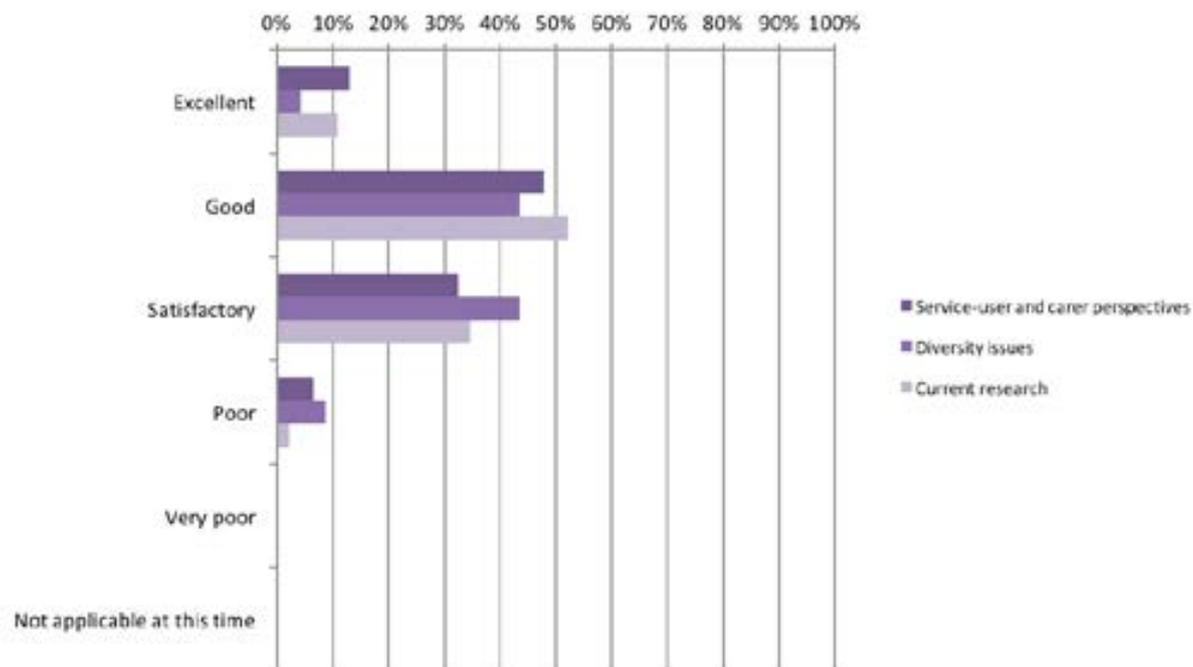
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

- We have had some fantastic teaching on some areas including psychodynamic approaches, OCD, working with interpreters and compassion. However, there have also been times when we have been disappointed with the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, on the whole, the teaching is of a good standard.
- The teaching in year 3 has been really varied and interesting.
- The teaching is overall excellent with some bad experiences which seems par for the course. Feedback does seem to be taken on board
- It's really helpful to learn from a wide range of practitioners and get to know psychologists working in the local area. It's also great to be taught by people who have developed some of the models we use. As the cohort is small there's always opportunities for discussion and interactive learning.
- Teaching is generally excellent, and we complete feedback on every lecture so if we aren't satisfied we can make this known
- The majority of the lectures are delivered by practicing clinicians from the surrounding area and are generally of a very high quality. Some of the lectures have been outstanding. On the other hand, this format means there is less coordination between the lecturers and we end up covering some material many times over at the expense of other topics we hear little about. Many of these visiting practicing clinicians (and some of the course staff) were themselves trained on the Oxford course. Sometimes I wonder if that creates a sort of echo chamber, which makes it harder for new ideas to get a foothold on the course.
- The course started off with a good amount of service user perspective, but this seems to have tapered off. Hopefully there will be more in the next two years.
- I appreciate having lots of lecturers who also work locally in various services. This allows for some discussion over current clinical issues facing services.
- There is some (inevitable) variability in the teaching. Some of the content is excellent and delivered by experts in the field, but other subjects have felt a little glossed over. The course do take feedback on lecturers seriously however, and will act on it.
- Some of the teaching we have had has been excellent, and the lecturers have taught us using different methods (such as videos and role plays).
- Service users attend training fairly often and this is really valued. In most of our teaching a service user perspective is present. The course is also interested in regular feedback from trainees and quite responsive to this in terms of using it to guide and inform changes to teaching for the following years.
- We have had service-users and carers come in for certain teaching, but I think we all feel like we would benefit from more service-user/carer perspectives.
- Service-user perspectives formed a part of our induction block of teaching but have not been very present since. This is definitely something that we hope to feedback to the course so that it improves.
- On the whole, I have found the teaching to be excellent. I have found it varied, and I have been inspired by the many passionate and experienced lecturers we have had teach us. There have been some less positive experiences, but the course have responded well to our feedback to adapt this for future years.
- Very little on cultural perspectives or community ideas but more involvement from service users and it feels as though this is growing.
- Get some cutting edge research stuff from the local research teams, which is really amazing but there is a nice mix with the basic kind of stuff you need to be a jobbing psychologist as well.
- A wide range of models and topics are covered and our teaching sessions have utilised a range of teaching methods.

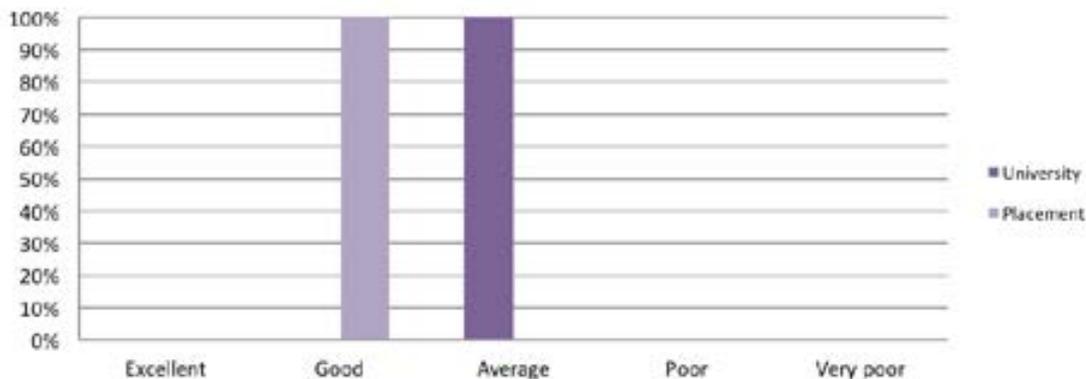
- Teaching quality varies hugely with local clinicians providing much of the course teaching material.
- Most of our lectures are delivered by clinical psychologists working in the NHS. This is of great benefit because they have current experience of implementing the content they are teaching in NHS environments. However this does mean they are not trained lecturers and teaching can be variable in quality.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

2% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- It is hard to balance several roles but none of them are overly demanding.
- Not having a study day in the first year is very demanding. There is also a culture which encourages 'front loading' the work which makes the first couple of terms very stressful.
- I find the balance of doing clinical, academic and research work at the same time challenging at times. As I don't live near Oxford and at least 30-40 mins from placements I find often find all the commuting hard, but then it's been my choice not to move house. I've struggled with the "good enough" philosophy at Oxford at times as sometimes there are mixed messages from different staff. Training is both challenging and stimulating at the same time and a bit of a love/hate relationship.
- There are times when you are juggling multiple priorities e.g. the course, thesis, placement, assignments but there are multiple sources of support within the course structure.
- Not having a study day is a nightmare. I work a lot of evenings and weekends.

- Balancing the research, academic and clinical demands
- Getting used to submitting lengthy assignments whilst working can be tricky at first. I also found choosing dissertation topics quite difficult as we were expected to do this quite independently.
- The workload (obviously). We have no allocated regular study days and instead 10 to spread across the first year. This has meant a fair amount of working in the evenings and weekends which is difficult to integrate into my life. I hope that as we move through the course, although workload will increase we will also have more dedicated study time so it should feel more manageable.
- Some people experience the Oxford course as being very supportive of its trainees. Others experience this dynamic less helpfully and regret the unnecessary parent-child atmosphere that seems to dominate. Personally, I have benefited from the small size of the course and the opportunity to know and be known by the course staff. I do feel, however, that it goes too far at times and I have found that emotionally taxing and tiring.
- The increase in clinical responsibility at the same time as getting back into doing academic work and lectures was more difficult than I expected. However, this is probably more from me being complacent when starting the course, and I think it gets easier to balance as time goes on. I doubt this is anything unique to Oxford and expect that all courses have multiple demands.
- Adjusting to the juggling act that you need to do in order to balance placement, academic work, and research work has been a struggle. The course have strict rules on taking annual leave next to study days, which means that it can be tough balancing everything alongside having a life outside of the course. However, this was what I expected from training and was under no illusions that I would have mountains of free time.
- Balancing clinical and academic demands is a challenge and this inevitably impacts on your amount of free time, particularly around assessment deadlines.
- I found the work-life balance quite difficult in the first term of first year. We don't have many study days and it was difficult to manage all the demands at times.
- Juggling the clinical, research and academic demands - there are only so many hours in the day (even on weekends) and we get very limited study days during the first 8 months of training. This will be better over the summer, when we have one study day a week.
- In the first year you don't get many study days, so it is difficult to balance life with the academic assignments. However, the course allow you to pick your hand in dates, so this helps.
- I am currently in first year and have found it challenging having few allocated study days so far, but I know the number of allocated study days will increase as the course progresses.
- I have had an excellent work-life balance and feel that the demands of the course are manageable. This is something I have particularly valued at Oxford.
- Generally managing the demands as you start to think about dissertations gets tough, but this would be the same with any course. Where aspects have been demanding the course have plenty of support systems that you can utilise to help you manage these. The course also spoke to us about certain times of the year feeling more demanding than others.
- Balancing academic demands with clinical demands with family affairs with a social life with time for yourself is really hard.
- Just juggling all the demands, as expected!
- In the first year we are encouraged to front load some coursework work to help free up time when we begin our dissertation. This makes sense but also means that the first two terms can feel a bit demanding. However, it eases after this.
- It's all pretty demanding but I do feel well supported and I find that if you work consistently, plan and try to be good enough you can still have the majority of evenings and weekends free.
- The process of beginning work on the dissertation feels demanding
- I would say that the course is very demanding - but I imagine it is at all course centres. I found it to be

a big jump from being an assistant, but I have felt well supported by my supervisor on placement and the course staff. I found that we didn't have many study days in the first part of first year (I had 7 from October - April), and it was therefore challenging to complete the assignments on top of all the clinical work, meaning that I had to use quite a few evenings/weekends/annual leave. I think some courses have more study days, but we will start to get more in the 2nd part of the first year.

- The dissertation proposal process is ridiculous, my current proposal is far longer than my final dissertation write up will be. There is no need to hold up the process through an overly involved proposal. Not a great deal of support around research within the course.
- Balancing multiple demands of academic, research and clinical work but I think this is to be expected and has not been unmanageable. Sometimes course deadlines fall around holiday periods (e.g. Christmas) which can make it challenging to maintain work life balance without significant organisation skills.
- This is probably true for most courses but it is quite tricky to get the balance of clinical, research and academic work having come from a full-time job where the focus was only on one of these. We only have written assignments (rather than exams) so it is a little relentless with deadlines throughout the year but I think it will pay off in the summer when we don't have any exams!
- Juggling and switching between the multiple demands of working at my clinical placement, working on my thesis, completing academic essays/reports, and attending teaching is by far the biggest challenge. For the most part it is manageable if you plan and structure your time, but there are points where the different types of work can build up at the same time and get on top of you. In my final year I've found it mostly manageable in terms of time (albeit working on quite a few evenings and weekends), but there are sometimes too many pieces of work running alongside one another so that it's hard to really get your head into any of them making it more demanding to complete than it otherwise would be.
- The work load is stressful but I think it is pretty much everywhere. We don't have any exams, which helps me, and the relatively small cohort means we are quite a supportive and cohesive bunch.
- I have found it difficult to balance the demands of clinical, research and academic components of the course particularly given we have very few study days. This has meant I have had to spend many weekends/ evenings working on coursework.
- Meeting the different demands of the course, (placement, course deadlines and teaching) can be difficult, but I would imagine that is the case on any course.
- Dissertation proposal approval process (internal).
- Different parts are demanding at different times. For example, having multiple deadlines can be demanding.
- Now in final year, there have definitely been peaks and troughs. The process of everyone being at the same stage with deadlines was comforting in first year regardless of whether we were busy or not. Moving through second and third year people have been at very different stages with dissertations which can impact how demanding it feels when you become overstretched. One particularly demanding aspect for me was having a placement that required a lot of travel which definitely took its toll over the 6 months.
- We have not had many study days in first year which has made the academic workload feel demanding as it has spilled into my own time a lot, and this takes a toll on my work-life balance and wellbeing.
- Just all of the deadlines although this is the same for every course. But it is actually really manageable if you use your study days wisely
- Managing competing demands - especially with regards to assignments, deadlines, end of placement paperwork, committees, research proposals etc. This seems to fluctuate throughout and depends on how best you work and manage stress as a person.
- I think I have found the research element of the course demanding, which I am sure is the same for most courses. At Oxford there can be a great pressure to do things quickly such as find supervisors for your dissertation, draft a research proposal, which can be unhelpful in the long-term.

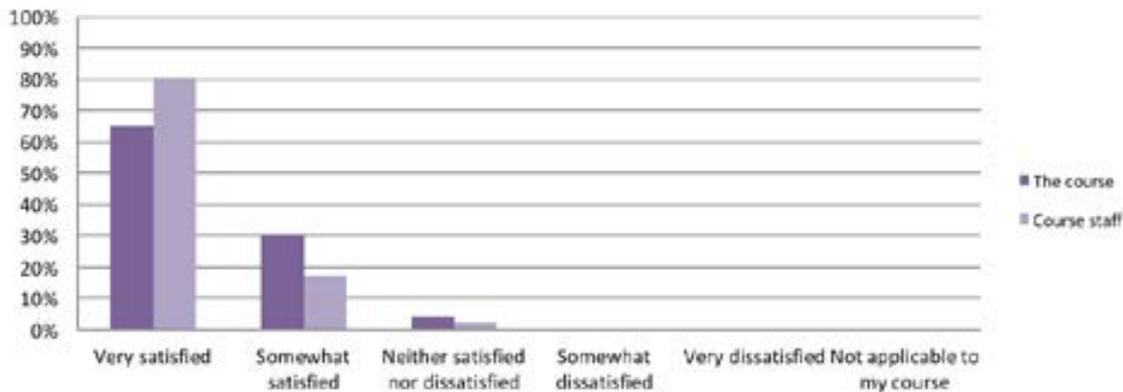
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	100%
“Buddy”	98%
Manager	74%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	72%
Professional Mentor	35%
Personal Tutor	96%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	30%
Other	15%

#### Under “Other”, responses included:

- All course staff, including course director are very approachable.
- Option for reduced fee therapy (although have to self-fund). Also, my cohort is the biggest support.
- Oxford has a great support system in place. There are academic, research, clinical and individual tutors for each trainee, as well as a buddy from the previous year and the option of having a personal tutor outside of the course. Moreover, course staff are very approachable and always happy to help.
- The independent advisor is optional, but very accessible. You also have your own individual tutor, clinical placement tutor and year group tutor. The course are clear though that anyone can be approached for support.
- We have a research tutor who is responsible for overseeing our service-related project and thesis deadlines. We have an individual tutor who we can go to with any difficulties and who we have review meetings with. We have access to names and numbers of therapists/counsellors although we have to fund this ourselves. We can also choose to have a personal tutor who is external to the course and who we can talk to about wider issues, i.e. the type of psychologist we want to be, future jobs, the NHS, or any difficulties about the course that we feel unable to bring up with the course.
- Other members of your cohort.
- Given the size of the years at Oxford (around 15-17 people per year), I often use peer support when I’m feeling in need. Having smaller cohort’s means that you quickly recognise everyone in all 3 years, which facilitates seeking help from trainees who’ve recently gone through similar things.
- Options for personal therapy (not funded by course).
- Cheap access to personal therapy, we have reflective groups within the same year and across all three years. The course also put on a 12 week MBCT course for trainees once a year.
- Clinical tutor

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?



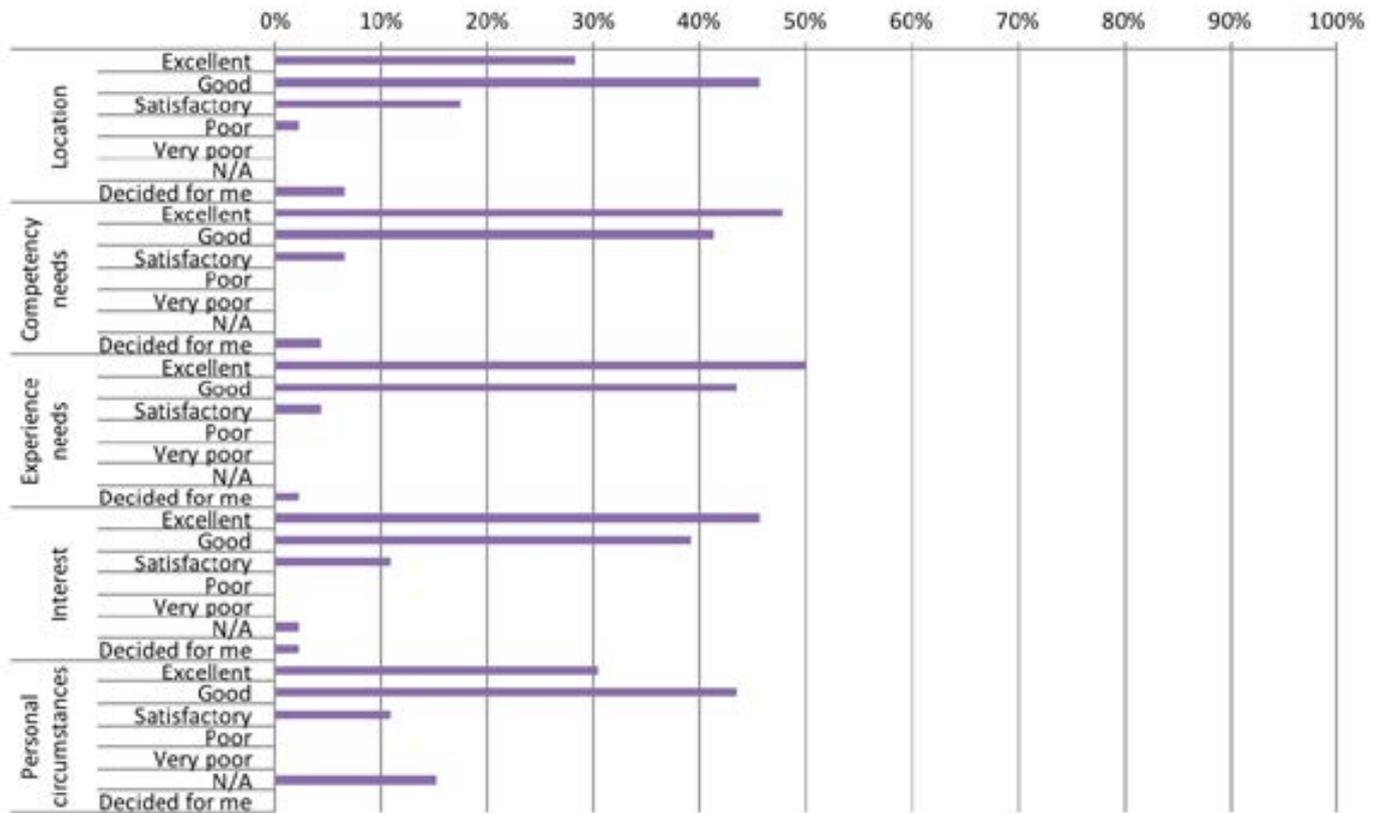
### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

- The staff here are very supportive and approachable.
- The course have been supportive when I have approached them and encourage us to consider our wellbeing generally.
- It varies depending on who you go to
- Staff are always happy to discuss any problems and are available to give helpful feedback on assignments/research. The course team are very friendly and approachable and the administration staff are wonderful!
- There are always course staff there for support, although for some areas such as workload I would anticipate being met with a shrug and 'you are doing a doctorate it is to be expected' which puts me off raising this.
- Some of the staff have been very helpful and supportive when I have asked for their assistance.
- Easy to access, good.
- I wouldn't naturally seek help when struggling. However, when I have found things difficult this has been picked up by staff without me having to say, and I found the staff very supportive (and they continue to be).
- Course staff are all very approachable and there are lots of avenues to access support if you need it.
- I have been confused about the course ethos towards support; we have received very mixed messages. Some members of staff take a more supportive and compassionate approach than others.
- Whenever I had a question, staff were always happy to help and quick to respond to e-mails or to agree to meeting in person.
- I have found the course to be very supportive. We have a personal, placement and research tutor, all of whom I have found approachable and available. I also appreciate that we have a meeting with our placement supervisors half way through our placements as well as at the beginning and end.
- A very supportive and caring course overall.
- Sometimes it feels like there are so many support systems in place that you don't know what to do with them all! But they are all helpful in their own way, the amount of support you access from each tutor will vary at different times in the course. From personal experience, the course have been very supportive and understanding with personal difficulties.
- I have found having a personal tutor (i.e. a psychologist external to the course) particularly useful. Course tutors make it very clear that they have an open door policy and I've often been able to speak to someone on the same day.

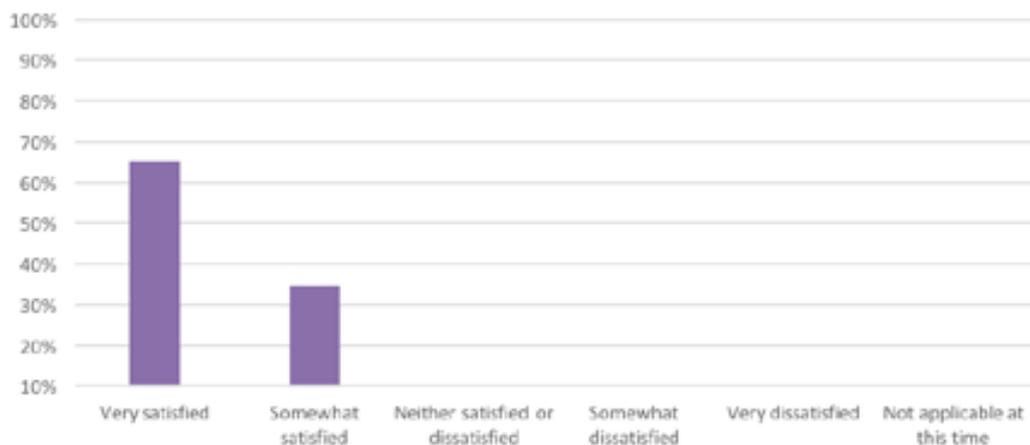
- The course staff are very available, so if you needed someone to turn to there would be someone there and it is very clear that you can turn to who you are most comfortable with.
- In general, I feel much supported. We have scheduled meeting with tutors (clinical, research and personal) which is a good opportunity to keep them in the loop about how we are getting on. The staff are always very present around the building and approachable if you want an extra meeting/informal chat.
- There are lots of support systems that we're encouraged to use as suits us best
- I have felt extremely supported (both by staff and fellow trainees) which has been vital. I have always felt that there is an avenue for support when needed.
- The course are supportive when you have difficulties but not always as understanding as they could be. All members of staff are kind and helpful.
- The course staff are very supportive across the research and clinical teams
- I have found the individual tutor system very helpful, but I like that we are encouraged to approach any member of the course for support and this can be for clinical, research, academic or general wellbeing issues.
- Everyone is really approachable, and supportive when difficulties arise both on and off the course.
- I think the pastoral support on the course is excellent. Despite probably hearing the same problems all of the time, the staff team are always kind and helpful. There are lots of avenues to seek support. I have been less pleased with the support I have received for my research project because the approach to providing support can be authoritarian and punitive, rather than a collaborative effort to help you pass.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



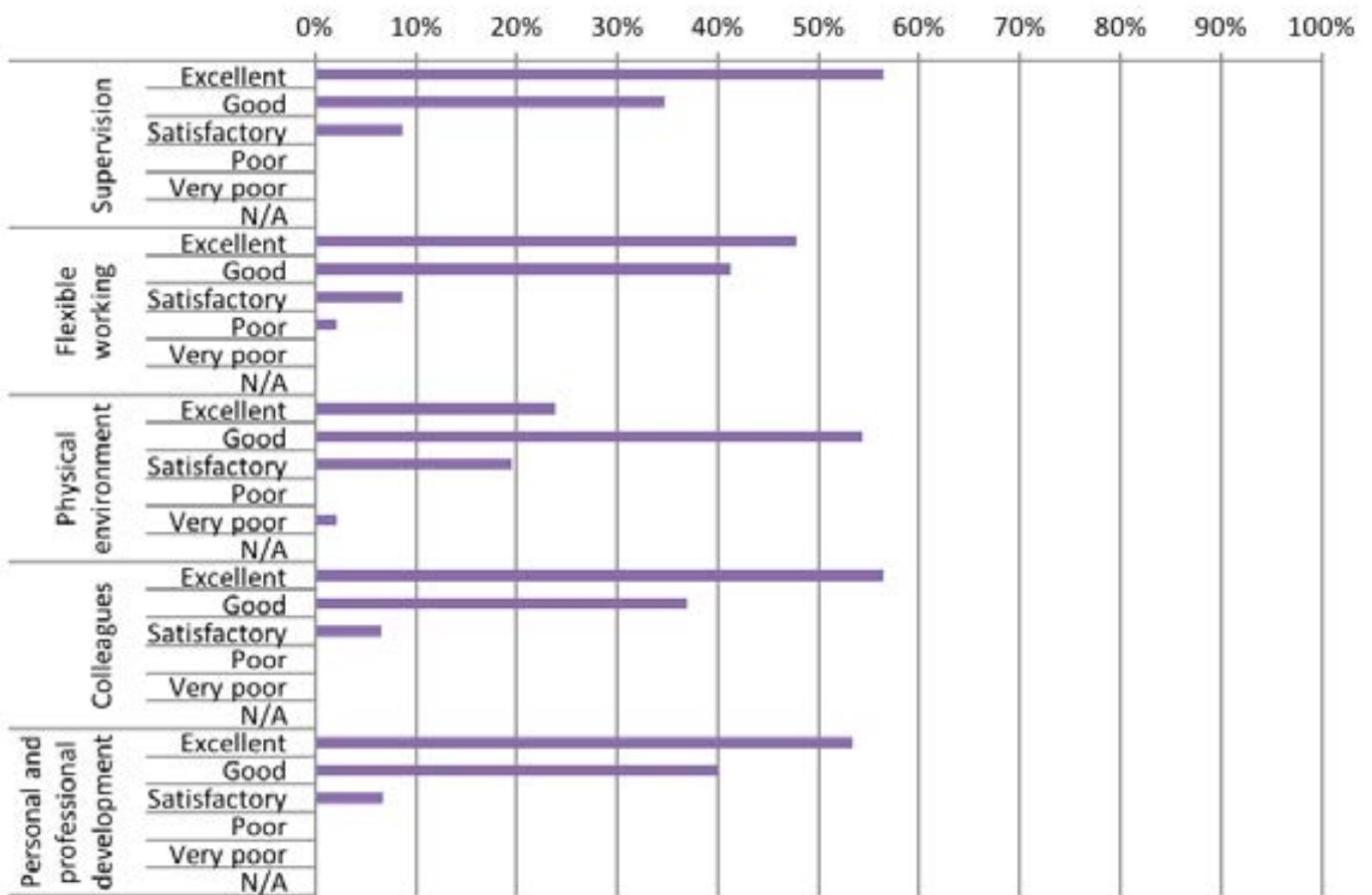
### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- We had a month of block teaching before placement which was very helpful in preparing us.
- We are encouraged to have a pre-placement visit, which is allowed as part of our current placement time, and the supervisors are well supported to know what these visits should entail.
- It's really helpful to have a pre placement visit and the course seem to take into account learning/ location needs when selecting placements. I felt a little unprepared for my first placement as I didn't have as much clinical experience as others before the course. The four week teaching block at the beginning of the course is fantastic but I feel if CBT skills were prioritised more in this period it would help with confidence.
- I think it prepares you as best as it can, first placement is always going to feel a bit new and unprepared for because they have a very limited amount of time to prep you. It took a while for teaching to catch up with reality of work on placement, if you had little clinical experience this could be difficult but I managed ok
- The course has made a real effort to consider my location needs and my interests and I've been very grateful for this.
- Pre-placement visits are encouraged, and the course puts you in email contact with your supervisor so that you already have a way of getting in touch. There is a goal-planning meeting very early on in placement which helps shape the placement. Induction covers placement-relevant stuff too.
- I felt like we got a fair bit of preparation for the first placement, but we haven't yet had anything for our second one- this may still be to come though. I'm assuming as we move through the course we'll need less and less preparation as the process becomes more familiar.
- I appreciate the teaching they delivered early on in training concerning how to get the most from placements and planning well for placement visits by course staff.
- First placements are allocated based on the course's perception of your training needs with some consideration for location. For second placement I had a meeting with my tutor who asked if I had any requirements she would like me to consider which felt very helpful. Unfortunately there may have to be a fair bit of travel, which we were warned about.
- We could not choose our first placements as these were decided for us based on previous experience, location and other people's needs. However, we got much more of a say in our second placement, which was excellent. I expect that we will also be asked about our needs and wishes for future placements and I believe that these will be accommodated where possible. However, given the wide area of placement locations this may still involve a considerable commute. My clinical tutor is very approachable and has taken my preferences seriously.
- There is an option for pre-placement meetings with your next placement supervisors. At each of the placement reviews there is a chance to think about your interests and learning needs for your next placement and to discuss preferences. I was not expecting the course to be so attentive to my own interests when identifying placements and this was really valued.
- They send out details of your next placement including email address(es) of your new supervisor(s) to arrange a pre-placement meeting. This gives you a chance to meet your new supervisor, talk about your previous experiences, any hopes or fears, etc.
- We have a four week teaching block in the first term, and are encouraged to visit our placements before starting in order to prepare for them.
- The teaching doesn't always match the level of complexity you meet on placement.
- I feel that this is well thought out and I felt well prepared.
- Sometimes doesn't seem to be a logic to how placements are allocated but for the most part it appears fair and they try and support your learning needs.
- Very dependent on your placement supervisor
- It is quite helpful that half of the year does an adult placement for the first 6 months, whilst

the other half does a child placement as it means that by the time the second placement comes around, and we swap over, our expectations have been managed slightly.

- Placements feel very well supported and there is always an opportunity to ask for particular things from placements which they try to accommodate where they can.
- We have an induction block in the first year, which I think prepares you well for placement. We also have a two week teaching block at the beginning of second year, prior to placement.
- We are told about placements so that there is enough time to visit them before starting
- We had a helpful preparation lecture in the induction block and the opportunity to discuss hopes and fears and ask questions, and good access to clinic tutor throughout.
- Teaching content mirrors placements and therefore always feels relevant to your work on placement.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Unfortunately my first placement has been difficult because the service has been undergoing a restructure and there has been lots of change (e.g. building walls in each office to separate them into two). There has been a lack of clinical and desk space which had made it a stressful experience.
- I've really enjoyed my placement and had very varied clinical cases. Unfortunately my supervisor was part time and didn't do much individual work so there wasn't much opportunity for observation.
- I have enjoyed my placement overall and have received support from the course as needed. Our clinical tutor visits us on placement 3 times which is helpful. Working in services which are poorly resourced can mean hot desking and not having as much contact time with a supervisor as would be ideal. This is out of the hands of the course though
- As a first year trainee, I have only had one placement so far. It has been a very positive experience and I will be sad to say goodbye and move on to a new placement in a month. The quality of supervision has been good and the work atmosphere at my service has been supportive. I have learned loads. Talking to others on my year, it does seem like placement experiences vary considerably, which I think is understandable given their diversity. Most people in my year seem to have had a largely positive experience.
- The course are very interested in how everything is going on placement, so I always feel supported. Overall, very positive experiences of placement.
- We didn't get much say in our first placement, which was frustrating. In general, the placement part of the course feels quite separate from the teaching and it can feel difficult to get help from the course with problems on placement because of this (although this may just be due to me finding it hard to ask for help).
- Overall, on my first placement I've gained lots of experience and enjoyed my client work. I'm looking forward to my second placement, and the course appear to have taken on board my preferences (in relation to interests, location, etc.).
- I am only just finishing up my first placement but it has been excellent and one which I have thoroughly learnt a lot from.
- I have only had one placement so far but it has been wonderful and I will be very sad to leave it. I learned so much.
- Supervision has been varied across placements, although has always felt safe. The course do check in on all of these areas at placement reviews to ensure your needs are being adequately met. I know that placement experiences have been quite varied across my cohort.
- I've had multiple split placements so far (i.e. clinical caseload split between two bases), some of which have been more successful than others. I've had an equal mix of placements close to home and some further away (around an hour or so). I do feel that my placements have been chosen based on my needs, which is reassuring.
- I have really enjoyed my first placement - it has been an excellent experience.
- I have enjoyed my placement so far, and am pleased with the selection of my next placement! We have briefly been told that there is an opportunity do a placement in Florida at the end of third year. This is for a short period of time, and on the condition that you finish your dissertation 6 weeks early.
- I had a negative experience on one of my placements, with regards to my supervisor, but felt well supported by the course.
- I have only just completed my first placement but this was a hugely positive experience. My supervisor was very supportive and also challenged me which greatly facilitated my development.
- All my placements and supervisors have been excellent across different client groups, location and trusts.

- Different people on the same placement can have very different experiences. You can often shape a placement to meet your specific needs.
- I think the placements around the Oxford course are one of the real strengths there is a great mix of very skilled supervisors working in very diverse service.
- You also have a yearlong elective placement in the final year, and I am really appreciating getting properly settled into a team and building some of the more professional and leadership skills.
- I have enjoyed all of my placements, my placement supervisors have been very supportive and helped me to gain a range of experience whilst being aware of the other demands of the course.
- Really varied, interesting experience tailored to my needs. I felt like my development has been prioritised and I have been well supported in my learning.
- Placements are varied and as such the quality of supervision etc. will also vary. In general they are good and well provided for.
- I've happened to have two amazing placements and one negative experience so far. The Oxford course have been really responsive to this and supported me through this.
- The course work hard to make sure placements are of good quality. If you have any difficulties on placement your clinical tutor will meet with you and develop a strategy for sorting it out!

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	87%
No	2%
Don't know	11%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	35%
No	59%
Don't know	7%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Oxford, Reading and Buckinghamshire.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	4%
No	96%
Don't know	0%

### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	9%
Good	44%
Fair	36%
Poor	9%
Very poor	2%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

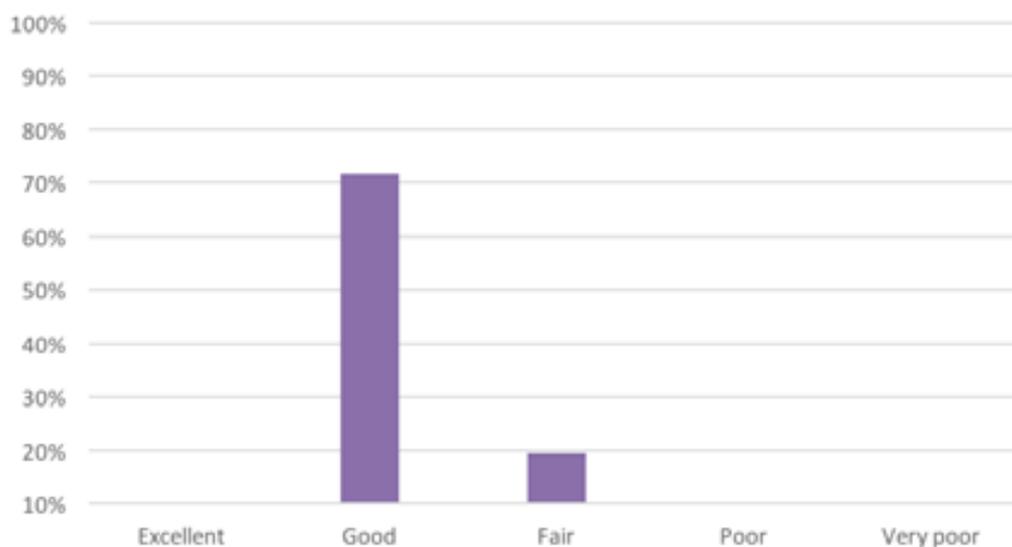
- You have to be very organised on this course due to the lack of study time. You do get 10 days of study a year, which you book out from placement. My work life balance is generally OK, but I feel this is due to planning things far in advance.
- I have had to give some things up naturally. I don't see my friends as often as I used to and as often as I would like to. I have given up playing sport as often as I used to. I'm hoping after training I will get some of my life back.
- My work life balance is good but it requires maintaining strict boundaries. It is possible though.
- This is quite poor. A lot of my life has been on hold in 1st year which feels unfair. The message is 'that's what happens on a post doc course'. Fortunately it is at least very interesting stuff
- Heavier weighting of assignments in some terms than others when there is a lot of academic work to do the balance is trickier but in general I feel there's a good balance. I manage to have most weekends and evenings free to do fun things.
- It is difficult to manage at times, in ebbs and flows but there is definitely an expectation that we work in our own time. Maybe we should expect that in our role, but it is definitely a factor.
- I have found time management very challenging so far on the course and I am an organized person and quite good at time management! The challenge is due to the course not always being clear about what we can expect of them, what they expect of us and how long we can anticipate certain assignments taking us. Our service-related project proposal, for example, required many rounds of feedback and corrections. That is fine, but I hadn't anticipated this so hadn't built it into my term work plan. I doubt the course would agree with this assessment and that difference of perspective between the course and trainees is, for me, the greatest challenging to maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

- Particularly good after first year, when you get a day a week as personal study. Generous number of study days available to take during placement too.
- The workload seems to come in bursts and so you may have a month with not much going on, and then suddenly lots to be doing in your spare time. However, this can probably be handled by pacing yourself rather than leaving things until the last minute.
- One big downside that I have found is the unexpected lack of study days/time during first year so far. Although we get some towards the end of the year, this is after our assignments have all been completed. As you don't have any study time during the first and second time, you do have to use a lot of your own time and annual leave studying. I'm hopeful that this will change as the course progresses as I know we will start getting more study time soon.
- The workload goes through peaks and troughs. I was recommended by a previous trainee to enjoy the troughs and the 'down time' then do what you need to in order to make it through the peak.
- The work-life balance can change quite rapidly, assessment deadlines are generally well-spaced but because you only have a limited number of study days in first year it is hard to avoid having to work in your own time.
- It was hard during the first term of first year, but hopefully will get better now.
- The balance definitely tips towards work, but that is to be expected. Weekends will most likely be taken up by work close to deadlines but are freer at other times. People balance this differently.
- I have enjoyed maintaining a good work-life balance, and this is something actively encouraged by the Oxford course
- Work life balance goes in peaks and troughs. Sometimes it feels like there is loads of work to do and at other times it feels as though there is a bit of a break. There is some flexibility in managing when this happens yourself (e.g. which placement you pick to do an essay). It is expected that the balance will tip more towards work as training goes on, but again, the course are available for support with this. Sometimes there feels like a lot of encouragement from the course to have a "life" but this feels as though it contradicts with their expectations of trainees and deadlines etc.
- It's really difficult to maintain this. Ultimately there are times when work takes over, and sometimes (rarely, but there are infrequent periods) there are times when social life takes the forefront. The course does preach a lot about maintaining a health work-life balance, but I don't feel much supported by the course to maintain this.
- It is as I expected it to be, that there are pressure points with more work that needs completing and submitting but there are lulls in the intensity of the work too.
- Always difficult to achieve when there are lots of different demands to juggle. The course try to encourage a good-enough ethos which helps.
- I found the first 6 months difficult in terms of work life balance due to the limited study days. However, we are encouraged to "front load" and so we have completed quite a few assignments in the first part of the year and will have more study days later. I am therefore feeling that this is now starting to improve.
- Difficult to balance at times in the course with the additional pressure of the dissertation but study days in second and third year aid this process.
- Work life balance can be maintained, although you have to be organised and willing to accept that you won't be able to do as much around deadlines.
- In the first year you have fewer study days so I find I do work on week nights or weekends. I think this is particularly bad for the first 6 months as in the 'summer holidays' one day a week is a study day which will hopefully help with the work-life balance!
- There is obviously a lot of work but I don't think you'd expect anything else. I can't say it ever feels unmanageable though.
- We have had very few study days in our timetable so far (October 2016 - April 2017). We have 5 study days we can use during placement days (over a period of 6 months), however multiple pieces

of work to do. This has meant I have spent most weekends and some of my annual leave working on coursework.

- I think it is expected that you will be busy for 3 years during the doctorate! But a work-life balance is possible if you are organised.
- Having a study day per week makes this much more manageable however this does not tend to happen for most of first year
- It has been tricky around deadline times as it has felt like there are not enough study days to complete academic work so it spills into my own time. Generally with placement and teaching however there is an adequate work life balance.
- I think it has all been fine. First year there are no study days for the first half of the year but I still managed to do my work. Even in third year on the lead up to the dissertation hand in it has not been too bad. I still do all of the things I like to do outside of the course.
- This fluctuates and depends very much on what kind of worker you are, how organised you are and how things pan out!

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Oxford is very expensive and you don't get paid any more than you would in other areas.
- I am very grateful to be paid a decent salary as a trainee. I also live outside of Oxford which makes my financial quality of life good.
- Oxford(shire) is an expensive place to live which is hard if you move from a cheaper area. I have done a lot of cycling which keeps transport/car upkeep costs down.
- Well with the widening access to training scheme and trainees currently being paid to do the clinical training, I don't think I can complain. I have a mortgage, a car and can go on holiday each year so it's enough money to live off.
- Oxford is almost as expensive as London but with no additional funds so bear this in mind.
- We only get paid 'training' not 'business' miles which means per mile we may get only half of what trainees on other courses get. Seems a small detail but can really add up. We haven't had much support from the course in terms of the WAT scheme which would have helped
- Oxford should have an Oxford Living Allowance, just as London does, to reflect the higher cost of living here.
- Oxford is an expensive area to live. If you're moving here from somewhere other than London, it might be worth researching rent prices etc. ahead of time.
- Oxford is quite an expensive city, particularly in terms of rent etc. but with the salary it is more than manageable
- The salary is good. Even though there are considerable travel costs involved (mileage is covered depending on where you live but you still need to pay for a car, car insurance etc.), it is possible to live comfortably. There is currently a lot of confusion regarding the Widening Access Scheme for Trainee Clinical Psychologists (which affects how much tax you pay), so that may affect just how comfortably you could live. That would be the case wherever you train though.
- Oxford is an expensive place to live, especially without London wages. However, if you spend time looking at accommodation you can usually find something reasonable. I haven't been able to save as I had wished, however Oxford is so beautiful that it almost makes it worth it.
- Oxford is a very expensive place to live. I believe it recently overtook or drew level with London in terms of rent costs etc., yet we don't receive the extra salary for working in a higher cost area as I believe London courses do. However, I still feel that I'm generally able to spend as I would like on everyday costs as well as holidays etc., but I haven't been able to save as much as I would have liked to.
- It's not bad in the grand scheme of things certainly better than an assistant, housing in Oxford and reading is pricey compared to lots of places so you have to pay a premium to live in one of the cities.
- The salary is good but Oxford is very expensive so I spend a lot of my money on rent and bills so I am not able to save money for the time being.
- Rent in Oxford is expensive but there are plenty of student activities to engage in and NHS / student discount helps. Plus expenses are paid if you live close to your base.

## What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Placements
- I enjoy the luxury of having one base for teaching and having all trainees/staff in one place. The staff are supportive and there is always someone available to help you in times of need!
- The cohort size is really nice, we all get on really well and spend time together outside of teaching. Everyone is very supportive and although at times the workload feels heavy we always get the message that it is do-able and we'll be fine!
- Systemic and Psychodynamic teaching, professional reflection.
- I think the cohort size. At the moment its 17 and we've got a great group, you get chance to get to know everyone and it feels very supportive. We try and do lots of shared lunches, celebrations, and social gatherings.
- The cohort size. Being 15 of us means we can be very interactive within teaching. They are also a great source of support.
- Working with clients.
- The teaching and placements.
- This would have to be the friendly staff team and small cohort - I feel really supported and am really enjoying the course!
- I really enjoy the teaching, the fact that the building starts to feel homely - we can go in on evenings and weekends and work socially if we want, that staff are friendly and approachable and ask how we are.
- The sixteen other trainees in my year, without a doubt. After that, it is the experience every so often of having a thought-provoking or touching lecture with a lecturer who is fully present, understands their material deeply and has a passion for sharing it with others in a reflective, supportive style.
- My cohort. The size of cohort is small enough to feel bonded as a group, but not too small. Similarly, the staff team and their openness to interacting and getting to know everyone.
- I've really enjoyed the teaching around ethical issues and diversity and I feel like the course gives us a lot of space to discuss these issues. I also think the course is very supportive in general- even in the midst of such a difficult time for them they have still been warm and welcoming to us (the first years).
- My cohort.They are truly a supportive, encouraging, and wise bunch! I didn't think too much about the size of the cohort when I was applying, but having a small cohort (17) has been wonderful.
- Teaching is increasingly structured to encourage you to think about how to develop your professional identity and this feels very helpful. The nature of the course means that you will become very close with your cohort and they become a really great support network.
- I really like the link with Oxford University. I enjoy the teaching; the course is quite reflective. I also love my cohort and the size of the course.
- How welcoming it is! I have felt like part of a team from day 1! All staff and trainees from all years are so approachable and always happy to help - I really feel like part of a community. Moreover, my placement has been wonderful and the level of teaching has generally been excellent. I would highly recommend this course!
- The support from my cohort. I really enjoy lecture days and the emphasis on learning.
- My favourite aspect is the support received from both the course and my cohort. I have very much enjoyed my experience of training so far. It has also provided great placement opportunities and has widened my interests.
- Having a small cohort group is really great we all get along well, and get more from teaching as our lecturers can use exercises with us rather than just being taught from a PowerPoint.

- The general friendliness of everyone on the course (trainees and staff) is also a lovely environment to come into.
- Teaching days with the rest of my cohort are what I most look forward to. Especially seeing as we don't get to see each other a lot.
- Being with a great cohort and getting such an interesting and challenging learning experience through training both on placement and through teaching.
- It is hard to say, I enjoy a lot of aspects. I would probably say that some of the teaching sessions have been particularly memorable for me, in that they have reminded me about why I have pursued Psychology for so long, and how privileged we are to hear our client's stories.
- The quality of teaching is always great. Small and supportive cohort. Good quality and range of placements. Supportive and receptive team.
- Having the opportunity to learn and choice to work in areas I am particularly interested in.
- Teaching. Most of the speakers are external and we have had some very good and inspiring teaching.
- I love the teaching - I think it's of a really high quality and I have learnt a lot. I also find the staff team passionate and very welcoming and approachable.
- The staff are lovely, the placements are fantastic and some specific teaching is very high quality.
- Having a cohort of 15 means we have all become really good friends and such a valuable support for each other. The course staff are lovely too.
- Clinical placements have been very enjoyable and the teaching generally (the third year chosen topic, leadership, clinical seminars have been particular highlights).
- Good sized cohort and opportunity to use your cohort for support on teaching days. Being given time to study for academic/research aspect of course.
- I love the size of the course - you quickly get to know all the other trainees across years and all the tutors. As a course, they make such an effort to get to know us as quickly as possible which makes settling in a little easier. It is also lovely to train in Oxford - it's a beautiful place to live. Having not gone to Oxbridge myself, I've enjoyed getting a peek into what life is like as a student in Oxford, particularly through our association with Harris Manchester College.
- Being paid to learn, and having the opportunity to shape your training as it develops is a real privilege.
- Being properly embedded in the NHS rather than at the university campus, it stops it feeling like going back to University. We have a nice feel to the course centre most of the time, and it's such a small team every gets on pretty well and it's no cliquey.
- I have enjoyed the teaching, clinical work and opportunity to reflect on this with others on my course. It has been great to have a group of people going through the same process as me, learning together and I have found my cohort to be a valuable support network.
- I think having a range of teaching, so that I feel I am continually learning. Also being part of a great year group and having a supportive course team.
- My cohort and the great placements I have had.
- The teaching and collegiate atmosphere
- My cohort. My cohort is wonderful and we are such a strong source of support for each other. I learn a lot from my cohort academically and clinically, but we also get on so well socially and this has been really important to me.
- The other trainees! Also the amazing teaching we have from experts in the field. All of the course staff are really friendly and approachable. It is nice being in our own building for teaching as it feels very supportive and we all get to know each other.
- Dissertation Research

- The people - staff and peers. The quality of the surrounding services, teaching and training opportunities.
- Learning from experts in their field (Oxford has access to some incredible speakers for lectures). I also have to say getting to know my cohort has been a real bonus. The small cohort size means you develop close friendships with everyone in your group. The course also has one building where all training takes place, this means there is a homely atmosphere and you do not have to spend time travelling between lecture theatres.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- This is an excellent course. The teaching requires improvement however, particularly as a lot of knowledge is assumed but not given space e.g. core therapeutic skills and how to actually do therapy. Placements and research labs in the area are superb.
- The course would benefit from giving trainees one study day per week, like many other courses. I also feel it is unfair that outside of term time we have to attend placement for four days per week, instead of three like many other courses.
- This is a smaller issue however the course does everything by paper and post (e.g. annual leave, informing you of placements, assessment results, submissions which have to be printed and bound etc.). This is time consuming and can be frustrating when we have the means to do these things electronically.
- This is a good, supportive environment in which to train as a clinical psychologist.
- I think the main thing is, if I was applying for training again would I apply to Oxford and choose to train at Oxford I have to say yes to both.
- In terms of disability support, I think it is poor that the course does not offer paid leave for time off related to disability (e.g. appointments). This has been seen as a reasonable adjustment in all of my previous roles.
- I haven't regretted applying/accepting my place here for one minute. It can be challenging at times, and there are sacrifices but it is such a fantastic opportunity to receive this training and support and I feel very lucky!"
- The Oxford course, and psychology in general, badly needs greater diversity. Not only in terms of demographics (but that too!), but in terms of unusual life experiences and life perspectives. If you are from a minority group or have life experience of a challenging or marginalised identity or background, please apply! We need you on the course and in psychological discussions and in the NHS. As a minority, I haven't always found the course easy, though I don't think that is unique to the Oxford course but I am still glad that I applied and I am very hopeful to see more under-represented groups amongst future cohorts at Oxford.
- Please don't let the 'Oxford' label put you off applying - everyone here is really friendly and supportive.
- Although it's not perfect, Oxford is a wonderful course and they try their best to listen to our needs and respond to our feedback. I think the size of the cohort creates a supportive atmosphere. In terms of what could be improve, I think more input on our first placement and better quality statistics teaching (it is taught at a very basic level, which is disappointing).
- The course has a very didactic approach, and we are often not treated as adults. However, there are also great things about the course; the fact that we get to study in Oxford Libraries and go to formal dinners, the teaching and the size of the cohort.
- If you would like to apply for a course with generally excellent teaching in CBT as well as some (more limited but great) teaching in psychodynamic approaches and systemic models, this is the course for you!

- Unlike a lot of the other courses, we don't have a study day in our first year. Instead, in each year, we have 10 days that we can take as study days off placements (we're advised to split these days equally between the placements). Personally, I found the lack of a study day in my first year very challenging, and am really appreciating having a weekly study day in our second year. On the other side, I really love the fact that we are a small cohort and a relatively small course as a whole. My fears about not fitting in with the 'Oxford way' of life/being were also unfounded - the other trainees are just like me and the majority of the staff are grounded and approachable.
- It is a great course, with lots of support and great opportunities.
- The course can sometimes feel overprotective/over-directive but I think this comes from a place of wanting us to do well and support us.
- It's really clear to me that the course cares a lot about its trainees.
- Overall, I would definitely recommend Oxford. I feel very positively towards the course, despite finding it challenging at times. This is because I feel well supported and feel that the staff care about my development and well-being. I would also say that I have found my cohort to be really social and we get on very well. I have made some really good friends - which definitely helps the whole process.
- Not enough variable teaching over focus on CBT.
- I've heard that some other courses have a dedicated 'research block' of up to 3 months in the final year for trainees to work on their thesis, without being tied into a placement at the same time. Whilst we get 20 study days to take out of placement throughout the final year (and 10 each for 1st and 2nd year) at dates of our choosing, it still requires more of the juggling and switching of multiple demands that I find to be the biggest challenge and stress of training. I think a research block in the final block would help trainees to work on their thesis with greater ease and probably also to a better standard due to the extra ability to focus that it would grant.
- Oxford is a great course, very friendly and supportive.
- At the moment we are trying to improve the inter-year relationships/support/etc., because teaching days mean that we rarely see each other and most feel this would be beneficial as we are three fairly small groups across the three years.
- It is a real bonus to be affiliated with Harris Manchester College, however I have sometimes felt unclear as to the relationship between the college and us.
- Oxford is a great place to live and there are some brilliant placement and research opportunities.
- Apply! It is an amazing course. I wish I could do it all again, well maybe not all of the work! But I have made some amazing friends and feel very lucky to have trained at Oxford.
- Communication on the course could be better. They are still yet to enter the 21st century.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Interview and Group Exercise

For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Teaching	14	7	7
Placement	22.5		
Personal Study	10	7.5	20
Research	Combined with personal study		

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# Plymouth University

21 responses (54% of 39 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	48%
Year 2	14%
Year 3	33%
Other	5%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	62%
30 – 34 years	19%
35 – 39 years	5%
40 – 44 years	5%
45 – 49 years	10%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	29%
Twice	52%
3 times	5%
4 times	10%
5 times	5%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	6%
MA	0%
MSc	44%
MRes	0%
Diploma	13%
Post Graduate Certificate	25%
Conversion course	6%
None	38%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	14%
2 years	10%
3 years	24%
4 years	10%
5 years	14%
6+ years	29%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	57%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	33%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	38%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	10%
Research Assistant	38%
Voluntary Research Assistant	5%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	52%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	19%
Other	38%

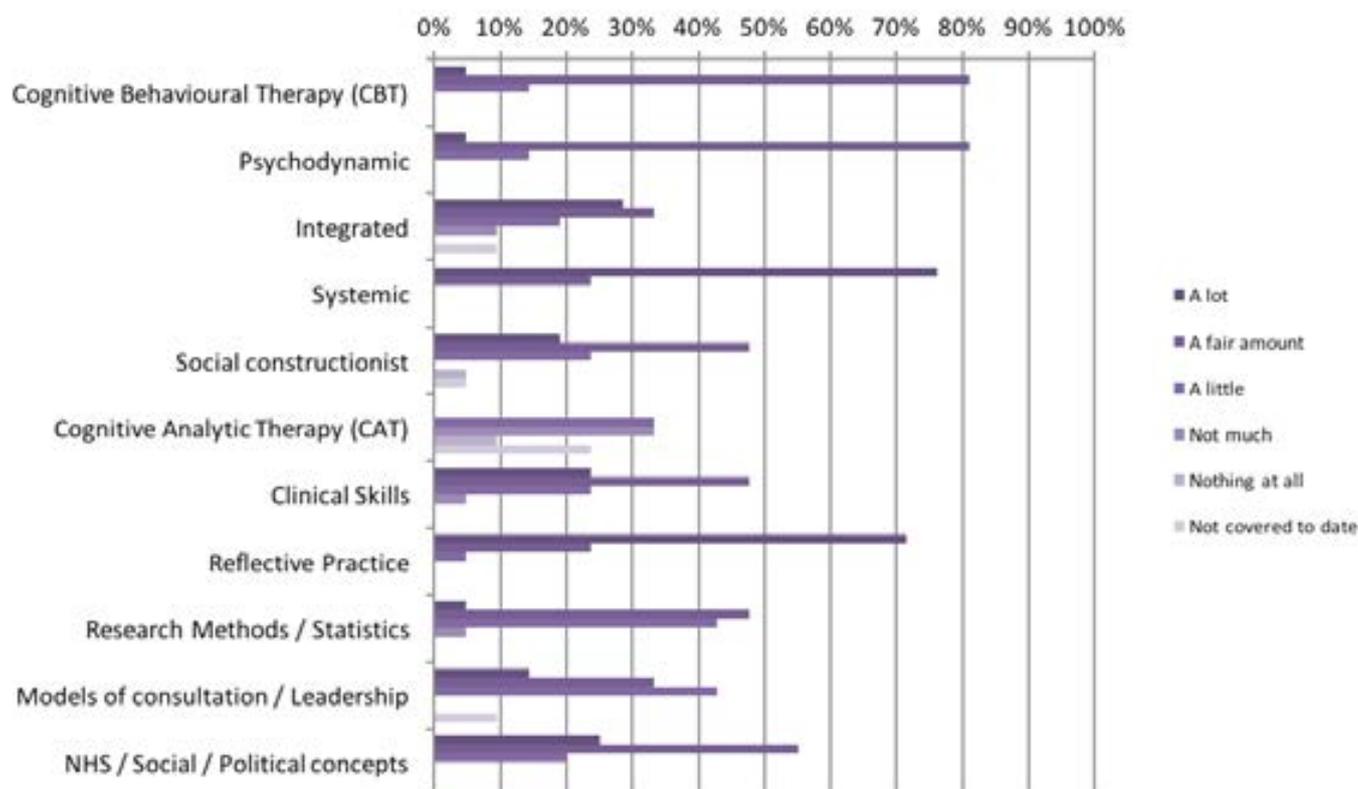
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- It was about three years ago now! But I felt welcomed by staff and trainees during the interview day. I felt excited by the broad range of interests encouraged by the staff team and felt as if the interviewers were trying to get the best out of me.
- Very warm and welcoming. The questions were difficult, in line with other interviews I've attended, but the atmosphere was relaxed and I felt a sense that everyone wanted you to do well.
- Very thoughtful and well planned. The interviewers were lovely and it genuinely seemed like they wanted the best out of us. We were given two vignettes the day before to prepare to answer questions on so there was lots of time to really think about ideas and this made the interview less anxiety provoking.
- My main impression of the interview day was that they went out of their way to make people feel as comfortable as possible. The course team laid on limitless tea, coffee and biscuits for us, as well as lunch. There were loads of current trainees there, who were really nice to talk to and even in the interview itself people were asking whether there was anything they could do to help me relax.
- Very pleasant, course made an effort to get people relaxed. Questions on the day seemed very reasonable and like they wanted to get to know you and see you do your best rather than catch you out.
- Very relaxed and friendly.
- I found the experience to be a pleasant one. The course team were welcoming and the panel really seemed to want to get the best out of me rather than trip me up. The day is split into two interviews and although some had a long wait in between my wait was not too bad. I was also given the opportunity during this time to talk with current trainees who were available. I found this really calmed my nerves. Also during the lunch time the course team presented about the course ethos and structure which not only served to distract me but was very informative.
- Of all the interviews I went to, Plymouth was my favourite. There was a surprisingly relaxed atmosphere with lots of support from current trainees. Interview panels involved members of the Service Receivers and Carers' Consultative Group which was reassuring as one of the reasons I was applying to Plymouth was their focus on Service User involvement. Everyone on the panels were warm and supportive, trying to get the best out of me. I entered the interview process not sure about which of the universities I preferred, I left it thinking that Plymouth would be an amazing place to study.
- I found it helpful that there were only 2 interviews and you were given a vignette and article to read before each one to discuss in the interview. This meant I had an idea of what they might want to focus on in the interview and I found this really helpful.
- The course made a real effort to make us feel welcome, the day was super relaxed! It was helpful having trainees present as they were a real source of support. The interviews themselves obviously the most stressful part of the day. But unlike other interviews I've had it was clear that the interview panel wanted us to do our best.
- Very good - the interviewers made me feel at ease; no trick questions; and when I appeared stuck because of nerves rather than knowledge/ experience they helped me. I asked for questions to be re-framed and that was also no problem. I think this was the first time ever that I felt I was able to show the 'real me' at an interview and it was a mutual getting to know each other.
- I loved the vibe that the already trainees were sending out. They clearly had good things to say about the course too.
- I thoroughly enjoyed the interview day. It felt relaxed and well-structured, the current trainees were enthusiastic and welcoming, and the interviews themselves seemed designed to get the best out of us.

- Plymouth were very welcoming on the interview day and the process was very clear. Though the interviews were very nerve wracking, the atmosphere in the holding room was nice and the current trainees were very friendly and supportive.
- I had the interview before the recent introduction of the testing process in Plymouth so I am thankful for that. The day was interesting and really useful to have current trainees available to ask questions and get a feel for the local area. I had one interview panel in the morning and the other late in the afternoon, I think I would have preferred to have them closer together but the interviews themselves were fair and asked relevant questions.
- I found that the whole course team made a real effort to make all candidates feel relaxed and welcomed. It was good to meet with current trainees and hear their perspectives on training and their own experiences on being interviewed. Of course, interviews for training are scary but I do feel the course team and the interviewers put in a lot of effort to help candidates feel relaxed so that they could show their true potential.
- Very positive. The course team were very welcoming and created a calm and relaxed environment. It was great to meet trainees during the day. I was not anxious and felt as though the interview process was not just about the course selecting me, but also about me deciding whether the course was right for me.
- There was a lot of information given prior to the interview including scenarios which I found helpful. On the day, all staff were welcoming and there was a good structure including a lunchtime presentation. There was no buddy system with current trainees. Instead we mingled with some very friendly, relaxed and enthusiastic 1st, 2nd and 3rd year trainees. Both interview panels comprised three members including service user representatives and questions were shared equally, enabling interaction with all. The numeracy and comprehension tests were also completed in a relaxed way, despite IT problems. Overall, I enjoyed the experience.
- The program team, interview panels and trainees made it as welcoming and un-intimidating as possible. I felt the structure of the process enabled me to present myself well. More than anything else, I ended the day exhausted but feeling so grateful for the chance to have stimulating conversations with people who were interested in the same things as me.
- The interview process was well organised and I feel that this helped to put candidates at ease on the day. All the staff and administrators were welcoming and down to earth, and this has been my experience on the course too. The questions in the interview itself were thought provoking and interesting to answer, and it felt like they wanted the best out of candidates.
- It was helpful having trainees around on the interview day it was an opportunity to ask questions about the course and their experience of training, and gave an impression of the culture that the course nurtures.
- The interviewers were friendly and didn't seem as though they were attempting to 'trip' you up. Follow-up questions seemed organic and I seemed to get the sense that interviewers were genuinely interested in what I had to say rather than listening for keywords or a specific answer.
- The current trainees who attended the interview helped to create a relaxed atmosphere which was conducive to feeling at ease.
- Course content and teaching

## How much teaching is there on different models?



## What other topics are covered by your course?

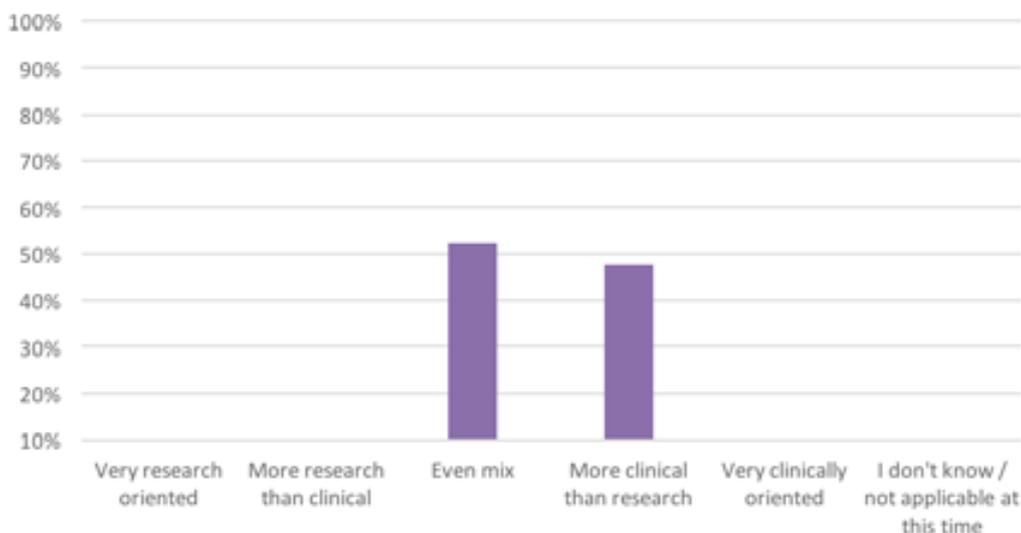
Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	25%
Mindfulness	55%
Schema Therapy	0%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	0%
Solution Focused Therapy	50%
Neuropsychology	85%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	50%
Other	20%

### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

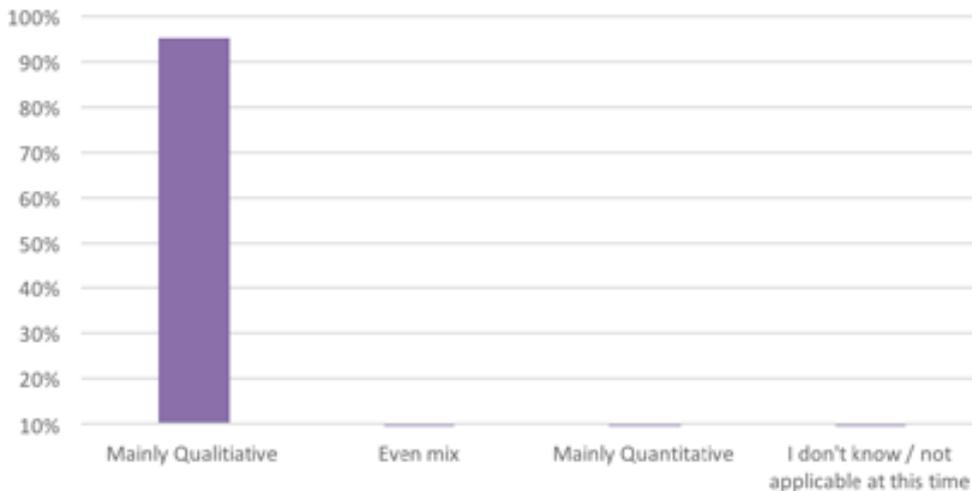
- The CBT teaching on our course meets the minimum standard requirements for accreditation, but is by no means rigorous. The focus of the course is to be integrative in its thinking, which suits me well. Fortunately for my cohort, all of us had CBT experience before the course. Additionally, as adult learners, there are plenty of CBT resources and sources of further teaching recommended if any individual identifies that they need to strengthen their knowledge in that area.
- Lots of focus on systemic approach with CBT as the other model of focus. Good amount of psychodynamic teaching too and a recent focus on leadership and policy given the current climate of the NHS and the changing nature of psychology.

- I think the courses core focus is systemic/attachment with a humanistic psychology bent. There is a fair amount of CBT teaching but it is mainly to achieve competence in this rather than the focus of the course. Much of the teaching is about developing the clinician as an agent of change capable of utilising and integrating many ways of working.
- For me the balance has been good. I chose this course for their emphasis on systemic theory but i feel i have received a lot of teaching on the other models
- The major focus of Plymouth is in Systemic Family Therapy. In the first year, trainees complete a foundation course in Systemic Family Therapy alongside clinicians external to the course. Attachment theory also is a key topic within the first year. There is less psychodynamic teaching than there used to be, but it remains well-taught.
- The course promotes systemic and psychodynamic ways of working primarily, there is less of a focus on CBT
- I think the course makes no qualms about not being CBT heavy, but that personally suits me. From my experience with many other professions being trained as CBT therapists, as trainees we need to bring an alternative model.
- The teaching overall has influenced how I view the world and psychology within it. In teaching I have enjoyed being able to think and reflect on aspects that are far wider than just the psychology within the individual. Social inequalities and the communities have been a big part of the discussions.
- Systemic is taught well but CBT teaching is more limited in comparison to other courses (from what I've heard). We learn lots of other models which is great though.
- I feel that the CBT teaching could be much improved.
- It's too early to tell. The bulk of teaching is at the start of the academic year, with placements starting in December. Other teaching days throughout the year feel more meaningful in application to placement however may not be relevant at that time due to the complexity of timetabling and different needs across the cohort and the placement settings.
- There seems to be a relatively equal focus on different approach which is useful because it doesn't feel skewed. The roughly equal attribution of time to different models helps me to stay open-minded about working practice and take flexible approaches to formulating with the service receivers' interests truly in mind.

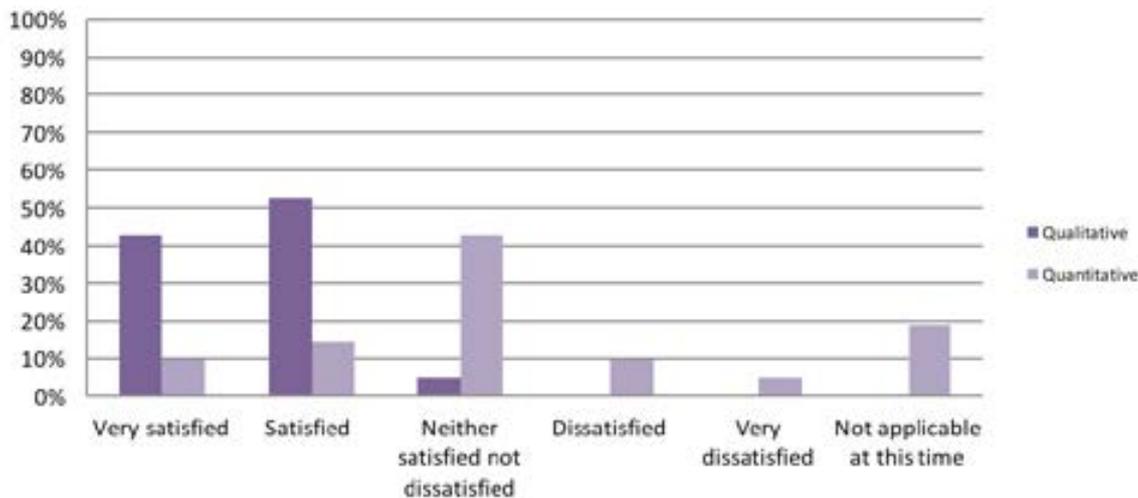
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?

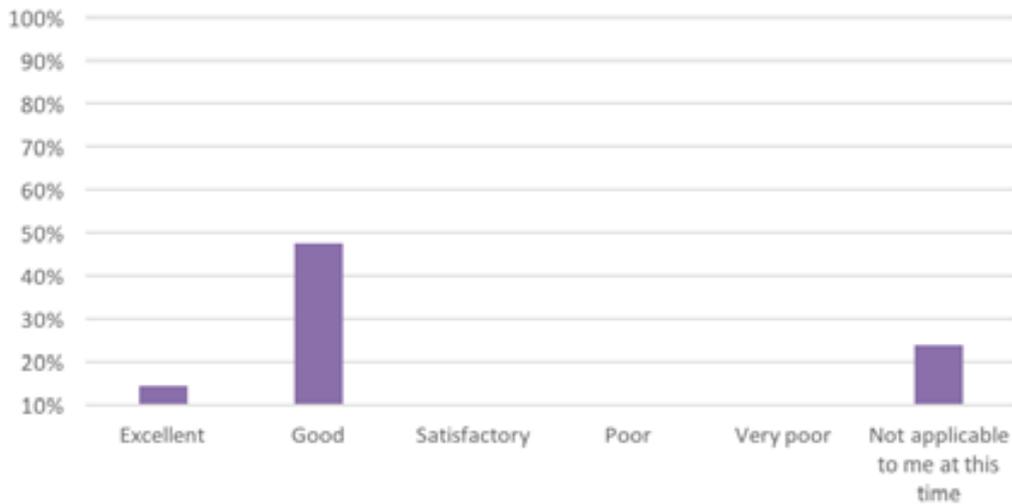


### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

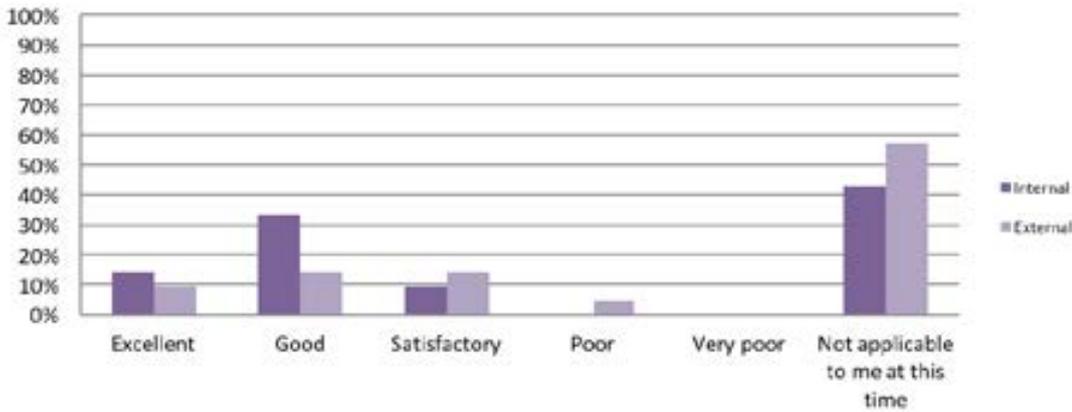
- Although the course states that they support quantitative research, it was difficult to find a supervisor who was used to working in that way in my area of interest. Positively, there was lots of flexibility with regards to choosing a topic of interest.
- Massive focus on qualitative research.
- I prefer qualitative so I am happy with the bias, but if you are really keen on quantitative then this is probably not the course for you.
- Focus is mainly qualitative/ practice based evidence approach and emphasis on breaking down division between researcher and clinician.
- Trainees are paired up in year one to conduct a service evaluation together. I would have liked more quantitative teaching, but maybe this is because that's what feels comfortable to me.
- The course team have more of an interest in qualitative approaches rather than quantitative however there is good teaching on both ways of working
- The course team are very passionate about research, particularly qualitative research. The teaching can be at times can be challenging, due to the new concepts, but worth the struggle.

- It is a great idea that submission of the substantive research assignment requires evidence of submission for publication
- Although staff and trainees tend to have a more qualitative orientation, quantitative research is not derided or discouraged and relevant support and guidance is provided to trainees who choose to do quantitative projects.

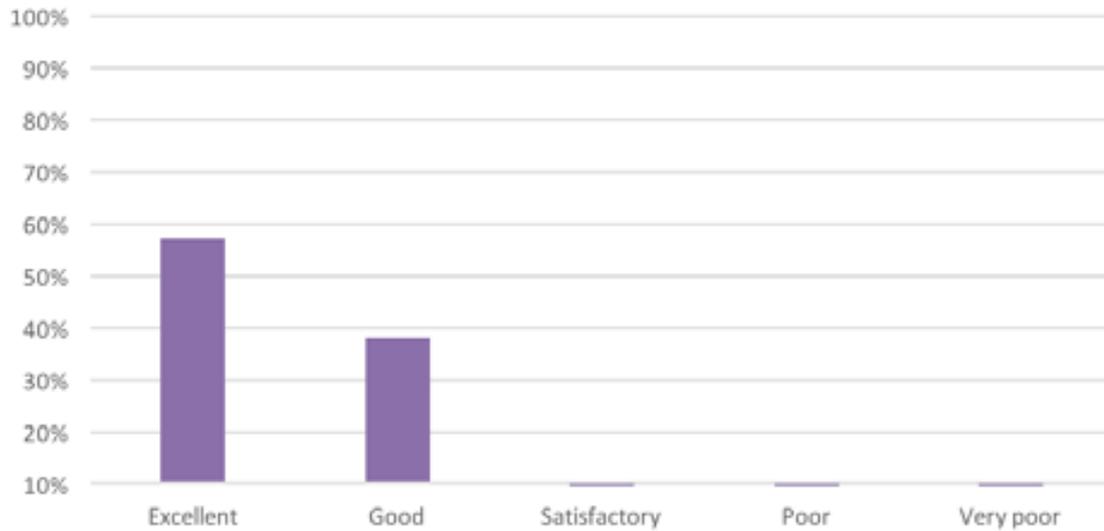
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



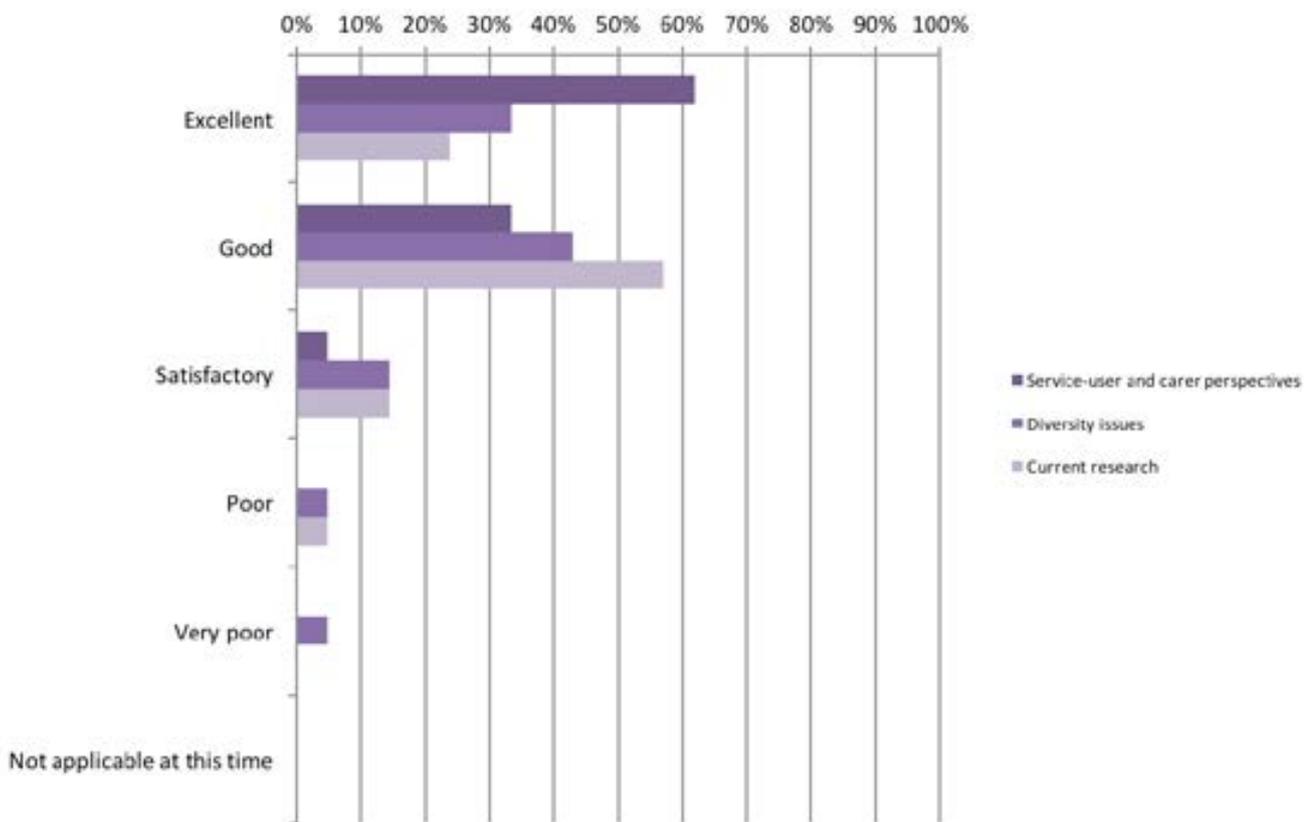
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

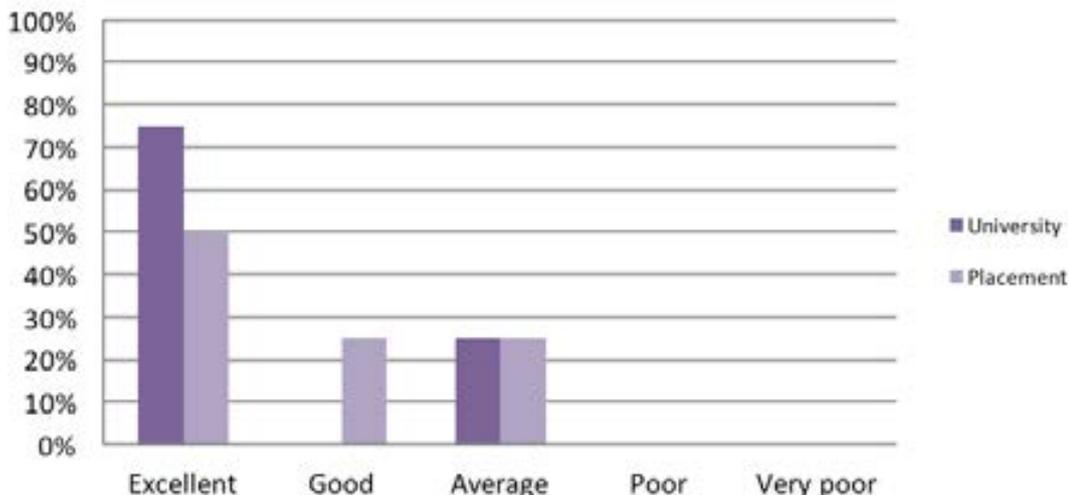
- The course strongly encourages the application of social inequalities and community psychology ideas in consideration of distress. The only teaching which I have found less-than-brilliant is the internal CBT teaching.
- The course has a good mix of internal staff and external guest speakers. The course team are lovely and knowledgeable and the guest speakers are amazing, we have had some really top people come in to teach us.
- The faculty are good at presenting themselves as human beings and thinking and caring about their trainees. Most of them seem to practice what they preach.
- I really enjoy the teaching on the course, it is very varied with a range of external speakers from local services.
- I think the course does an amazing job of ensuring that service-receiver and carer perspectives are heard throughout the course. However, they fail to address diversity issues, considering the lack of diversity among trainees (nationally), along with being based in the South-West. The course does not quite give you insight into the experiences of intersectionality you need post qualification in relation to social class, sexuality, gender or ethnicity.
- Teaching is good overall and having external speakers in is really valuable. The lectures can occasionally be repetitive.
- There is some very impressive and authoritative expertise on the course, added to by visiting clinicians who are often inspiring in their passion for their work.
- The standard of visiting lecturers is generally very high. The small cohort allows for very involved learning in interaction with the programme team/external speakers. The team are responsive to our requests in terms of content and style of teaching, they have been able to involve us in determining the topics of some of the teaching sessions and encourage us to join them in providing teaching sessions.
- The teaching feels like a genuinely collaborative experience where trainees are encouraged to take a curious and critical positions.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

**Do you have any disabilities?**

19% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

**Please describe how well your needs are met at:**



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- It's been a very emotionally challenging experience, but also rewarding and I'm glad I am training at Plymouth. Intensity of teaching blocks and what some of the experiential teaching has brought up for me in terms of my own lived experience of mental health have been challenging, but I have learnt and grown through both. High workload has left me feeling very tired at times.
- In terms of deadlines, although the course is demanding, I have found a very good balance of study days. It has been very rare that I have needed to work outside of those days. Emotionally and psychologically the course is intense. The course ethos is heavily weighted towards self-reflection and wider thinking, which can be emotionally draining, but is incredibly positive and is the wonderful ethos that drew me to Plymouth in the first place.
- Still getting used to it all I think. The first 6 months were difficult as there is so much to take in and first placement it definitely felt like I was still finding my feet.
- The juggling is the hardest thing. I have kids and training is not really designed for people with children. The course has been supportive, but trying to keep everything going at the same time is definitely challenging.
- Can be isolating being down in the southwest if you aren't from here.
- For me managing the work load alongside trying to maintain some quality of life
- Plymouth has been very supportive around my mental health needs. The importance of reflective and reflexive practice is a key theme of the course. Likewise, supervisors have been helpful in further allowing me to explore this. Because of this, I have been able to cope with the increased pressure of moving to the other side of the country, travelling long distances for work and manage the workload.
- Research applications for ethics/ recruitment/ literature reviews/ analysis/ write up.
- I haven't found the course particularly demanding.
- Training in itself is a very demanding process. It is difficult to pin-point any particular aspects that are more demanding than others and I am sure this would be different for each individual depending on what they feel are their strengths and areas of interest. I find that training is manageable when your personal life is stable. As soon as I experience any personal difficulties it then often comes to light how demanding training is and how hard it can be to keep work in work hours and it not start consuming your evenings and weekend.
- Yes. It is very hard to juggle the academic and clinical demands alongside family life. I found year 2 particularly difficult, due to a number of coursework deadlines whilst on a challenging placement.
- All of it. But not more than I expected. All individual assignments and competencies feel within my grasp, it's the juggling of these which is most challenging.
- The first year was a real challenge in terms of relentless monthly deadlines for assignments. I am a parent and have found it difficult to keep on top of the demands of training, which is fairly incompatible with the demands of family life with 3 children. That said, I have not had an extension for any of my assignments. I know of other parents who have made arrangements with the program team to accommodate family needs, but if you follow the conventional training route of 3 years full time, as I did, you need to be ready to perform in the same way as anyone who is less encumbered.

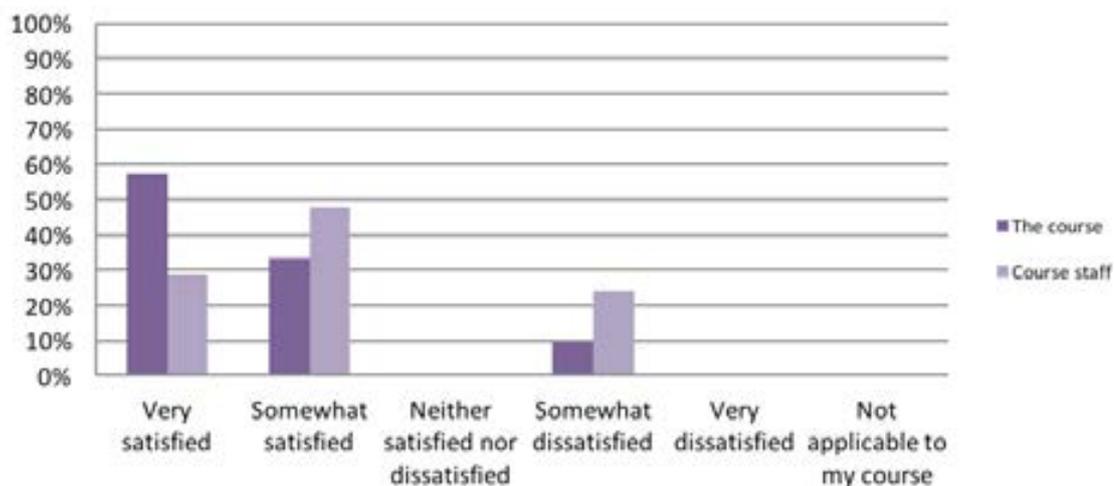
**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	95%
“Buddy”	70%
Manager	20%
Placement Supervisor	95%
Librarian	40%
Professional Mentor	55%
Personal Tutor	80%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	85%
Independent personal advisor	5%
Other	20%

**Under “Other”, responses included:**

- Locally organised trainee support networks
- Clinical Tutor (for placement related queries and career development- really valued support!). I would also say peer support.
- A very friendly and supportive cohort.

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

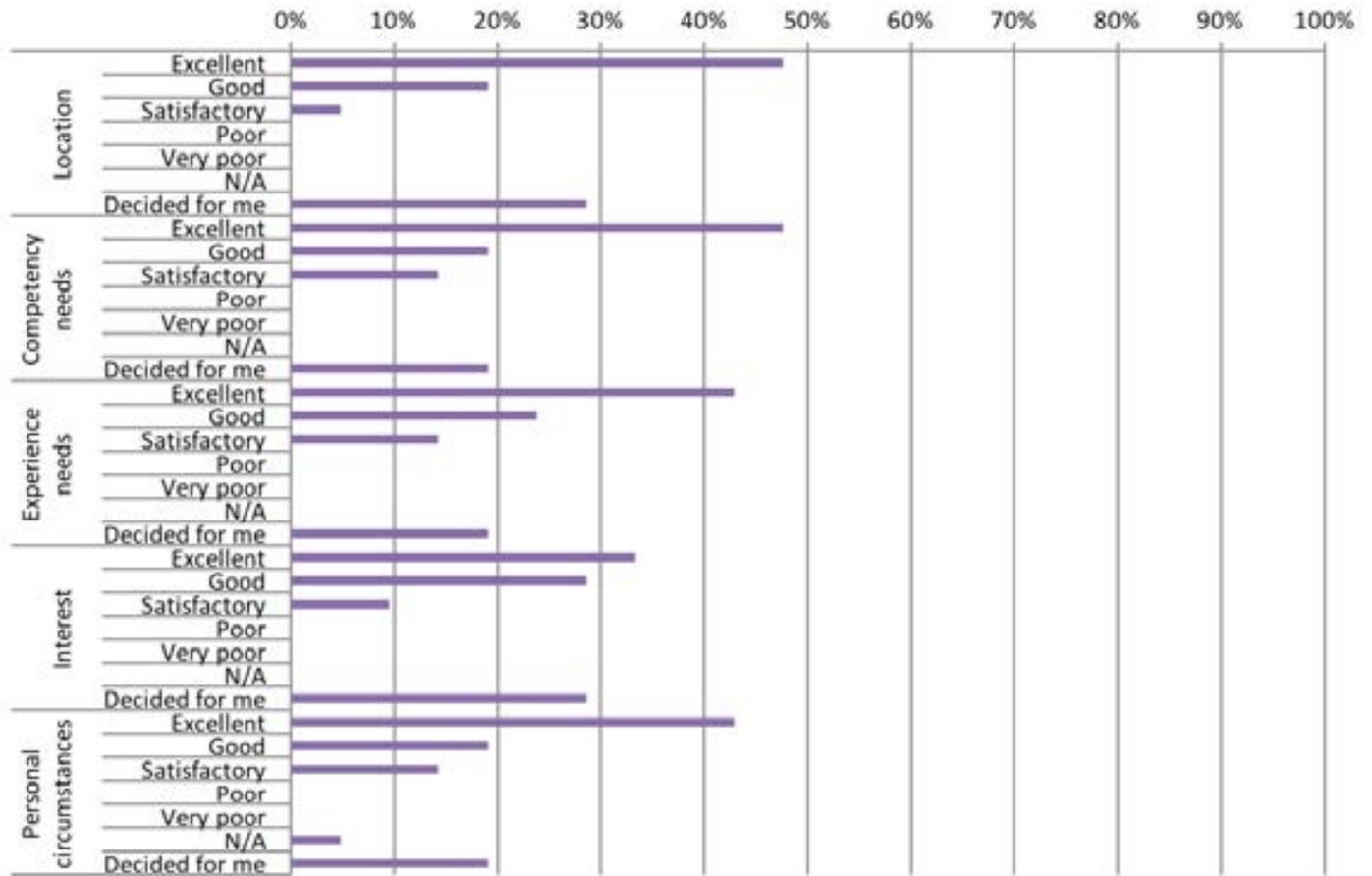


**Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?**

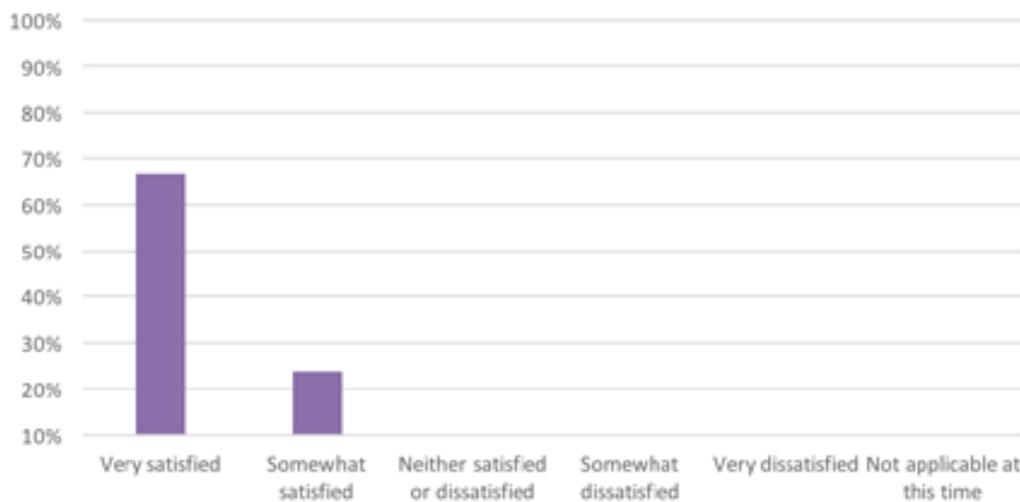
- I have found the course team to be valued, supportive and compassionate. I just wish there was more of them to go around.
- The course has been fantastic in relation to my personal mental health diagnosis and ongoing treatment. I have been able to share my experiences openly when I feel safe to do so, in order to use lived experience and service user reflections in to teaching. I feel that the course has really embodied the value it purports to hold about breaking down the 'us' and 'them' barriers between therapists and service users.
- Staff are very understanding but can be very busy so not always available to provide the support
- We have been hit by staff illness this year as a key member of staff has been off on long term sick. The other staff have worked really hard to cover, but it might have been better if the university had paid for a full replacement.
- I think the staff put in fantastic effort, they have been undermined recently by cuts to funding.
- The support systems are very much in place, however it can feel like you are very far away if you're in Cornwall or Exeter. Geographical distance has been the biggest hurdle for me.
- The staff are incredibly dedicated to the course and trainees and I have always received very individualised support.
- The course staff are very busy so it can take time to get hold of them, but when you do the quality of the support is good.
- When I access support from my course team I do feel very well supported and satisfied with the support I receive. However, due to funding cuts, Plymouth has lost members of staff and we have also experienced a lot of staff sickness recently and this had impacted upon how easy it is to access that support as reflected in my answer above.
- When there are pressures on the staff team resources, we are kept informed which is helpful in understanding how to best use the support available.
- Staff are very dedicated to ensuring that trainees benefit from and thrive through training but in reality the support provided and the availability and responsiveness of staff has been severely compromised by recent changes in staffing levels. The team are now so over-stretched that any illness or absence has a significant impact on provision of support through training.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



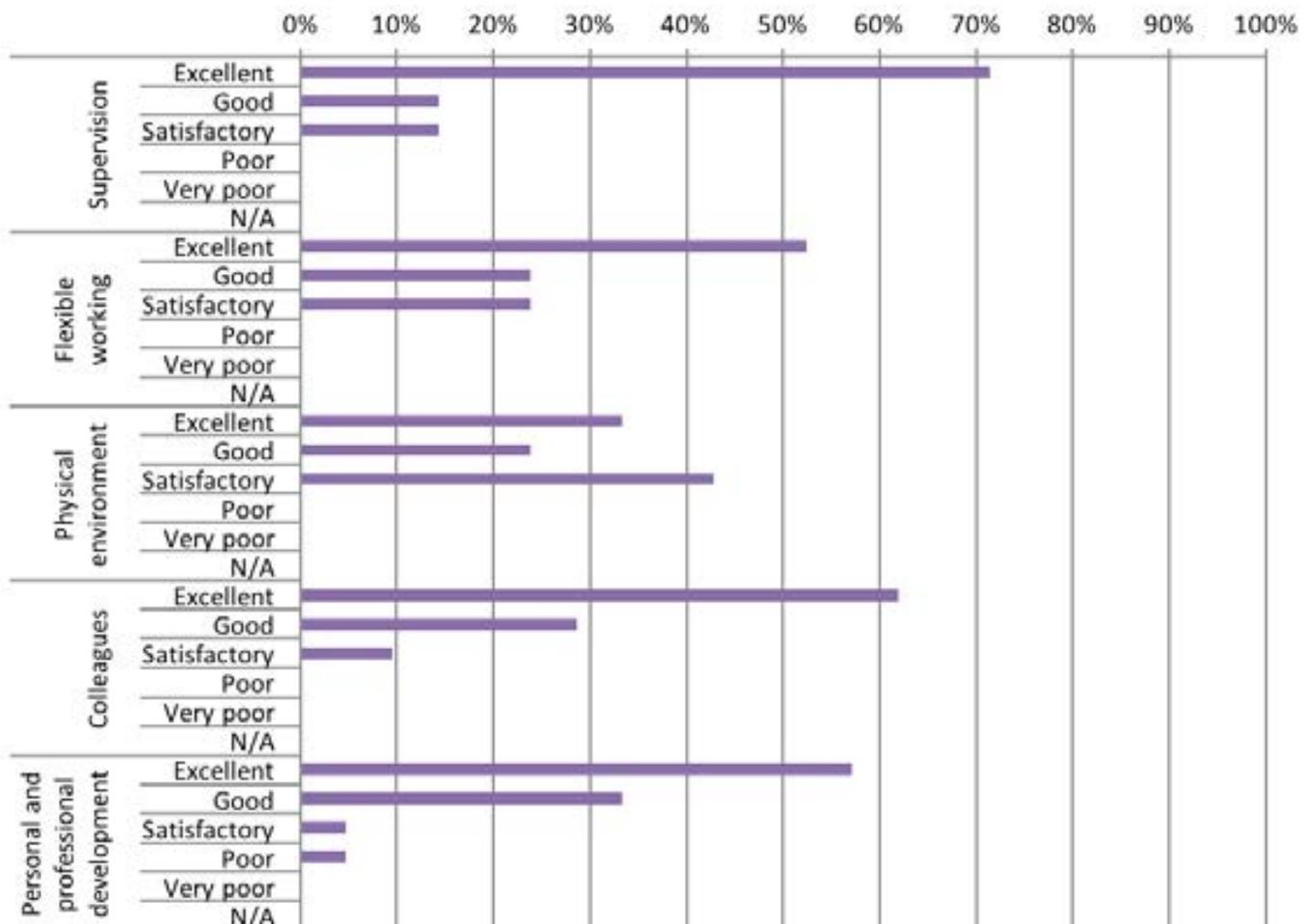
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- I think the course puts a lot of emphasis on learning on the job and don't expect trainees to be completely 'prepared' for placements.
- We didn't find out where our placements were going to be till we had already started on the course. This meant that I found somewhere to live that was really far away from where I work each day. I would have preferred to have known in advance. Teaching wise, we are very well prepared for placement as we have a 10-week teaching block at the beginning of year 1 and year 2.
- Really excellent clinical tutor.
- First year starts with an in depth 10 week teaching block, where the areas covered prepare you for placement.
- Allocated time is provided to encourage reflection on anxieties prior to commencing placements and reflection on experiences in placement at regular intervals throughout, which creates a sense of containment.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- My placement so far has been excellent (just about the start the next one) and they have supported me through a few challenges.
- My supervisors have been fantastically supportive, trying to ensure that I am getting the best learning opportunity whilst not been overwhelmed by work. I find my placements both really interesting and tailored towards my individual learning needs.
- I have really enjoyed my placement this year, I am working in paediatrics and in a family therapy service. Both my supervisors are really helpful, knowledgeable and passionate about their work.
- I don't believe that the NHS environments are particularly therapeutic, but I have met passionate and dedicated NHS professionals at every placement. I am now finishing training and I think it is a privilege to have worked in such a wide range of NHS settings and learnt from very experienced and passionate people.
- I believe the course could do more to mediate or address issues of disagreement, conflict or breakdowns in relationships between trainees and placement supervisors.
- Plymouth runs an optional community psychology placement. This has been a real interest of mine and it is nice to see that placement time can be used towards exploring different initiatives. I also decided as an addition to complete my intermediate family therapy training this year and the course team were very supportive in my finding a specialist systemic placement with a family therapy clinic.
- Whilst not ideal for my experience, this was unavoidable given the location. Flexibility has been shown by all, which has allowed me to get the most from the experience.
- The teaching team has good links with supervisors and I feel this is a virtue of the course. As a result of these links, my placement supervisor really understands the course requirements (e.g., what coursework is expected and when) and this supports a connection with the academic demands of the course when I am out on placement.
- I have been provided with the opportunity to access various CPD events and allowed to adopt a flexible approach to working. This flexible approach has allowed me to think about how I'd most like to meet competencies.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	81%
No	14%
Don't know	5%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	33%
No	62%
Don't know	5%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Exeter, South Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	5%
No	90%
Don't know	5%

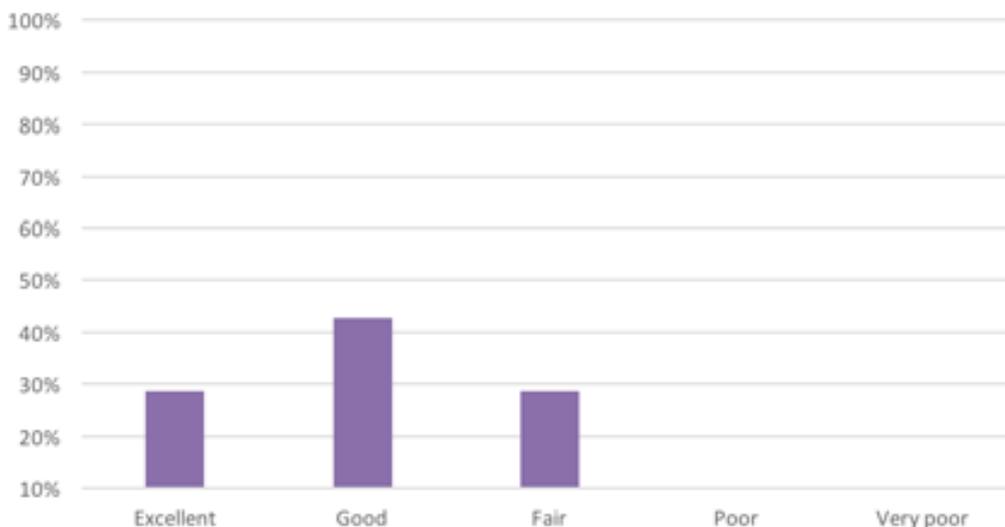
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	5%
Good	43%
Fair	48%
Poor	5%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- I have struggled with this at times because of my tendency to take on too much work!
- I think it could be better if I used the study days more effectively and was better at focussing on work. I tend to be a last minute deadline person which means I often find myself working at weekends before a deadline but others are much better organised and have weekends free!
- This is a particular challenge for me due to having kids. The demands of the course eat into family time. I think if I did not have kids it would be a reasonable balance.
- It can always be better. It helps if you haven't left your life behind to be here.
- It is hard to maintain but it is absolutely vital that you try and do this. It is also encouraged by the course team. It is manageable if you are organised.
- I'd have a better work life balance if I didn't spend 3 hours a day commuting. That said, the South West is a beautiful place to live and I do sometimes get to go exploring. The workload is manageable (most of the time). We get study days and distance learning days which help us get university work done and explore the wider issues involved in our current modules.
- There is a lot of work involved in the course but I still manage to go to the gym and do recreational activities
- It is really hard to balance life and the course but the staff team and my supervisors have always been helpful in creating as much space as possible to re-charge.
- I think it is possible to have a good work life balance on the course. At times you have to work at weekends and at other times not. It depends how you balance your workload out yourself.
- In my 1st and 2nd year it was more manageable to obtain an equal work-life balance. However, in my final year this is very difficult due to coursework demands.
- It can feel like it's taking over too much of personal life. When visiting lecturers reminisce about time they had spare as trainees, and I see how hard my supervisor works, I'm reminded that this the job.
- It is hard for me to judge because I am over-stretched as a mother so I find the training very intrusive in my family time. Nevertheless I was expecting this and chose to do it anyway.
- If you use your time wisely, work doesn't need to spill into evenings and weekends.
- There are peaks and troughs but that might be more due to my working style than anything else. The demands of the course mean that if you plan your time well, you are definitely able to maintain a positive work life balance.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- The salary we are provided is a very good amount of pay, especially in the context of the cost of living in the south west. Expenses are provided and I have had no difficulties in claiming this.
- This is not great for me, but due to personal circumstances as I took a big pay cut to start training.
- Doesn't help that NHS pay increases have been held below inflation for 7 years.
- The South West is comparatively cheap to live and has many budget supermarkets. Days at the beach are also free and plentiful.
- I think we are fortunate to be paid well on training.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- One is hard- my inspiring cohort.
- I love the reflective and critical approach the course takes to theory and learning. They thoroughly encourage an integrative style. I have been able to openly integrate my own lived experience of mental health in to learning without judgement. The core course staff are supportive and knowledgeable.
- I think the teaching has been excellent.
- The reflexive nature of the course and the focus on the wider political arena, getting us to think about social inequalities and community psychology.
- Genuine interest in reflection and developing as a person.
- The relationships with the course team and other members of my cohort, and mostly excellent supervisors.
- I have loved meeting a wide range of new people, from my cohort, to the course team, to other professionals that assist in the teaching and the professionals i have met on placement. I have had the opportunity to talk to and get to know some very knowledgeable and influential people.
- If this course was a stick of rock, it would have "Systemic" and "Reflective" written through the middle.
- The placements. I really enjoy my current placements as well as my previous ones which have been in a learning disability service and a CMHT.
- My favourite aspects of the course is learning in a group of really special people, people who are deeply invested in bringing about positive change to our world. In the cohorts, it is possible to create a strong and loving connection with people during training and I believe that is down to how the course team recruit trainees but also by the way teaching is facilitated. I feel fully respected and accepted for the person that I am.
- Breadth of teaching, and how demanding it is, you are pushed to learn all the time
- Working in different contexts and being a learner in the work environment.
- Being on placement as I love my clinical work and the all the different interactions I have with people and the good quality teaching we receive that always welcomes and encourages healthy debate. I will truly miss that space when I qualify.
- My cohort. I couldn't wish for a more supportive and inspiring bunch of colleagues.
- When the three modules: clinical/academic/research synthesise (either deliberately or by chance) through the application to a piece of work, it feels really exciting and like you really are learning - bridging the gap between trainee and qualified.
- We have a fabulously supportive cohort and we enjoy training together which enhances our learning.
- Teaching is reflective, thought provoking and discursive, and the lecturers (both within the

university and external speakers) are prominent figures in their areas. The cohort is diverse, friendly and supportive, and the course nurtures a non-competitive and supportive environment.

- The welcoming and caring atmosphere throughout the entire course the trainees and staff on the whole are reflective, supportive, and the overall atmosphere is extremely positive.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- Plymouth is very big on reflective practice and is a very politically liberal course. Which was perfect for me but I don't think it would suit everyone.
- Plymouth offers the foundation level in family therapy which I really enjoyed and there is scope for attending CPD events which is great.
- I am grateful for the experience at Plymouth University.
- Living in the South West is a beautiful part of the country. If you enjoy being outdoors and by the sea it is perfect and if you live in Plymouth or Exeter you are also part of a vibrant city life. This really helps in maintaining that good work life balance.
- The Plymouth course team have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share with you and you really get to know the course team well.
- The course involves a substantial degree of reflexivity, which can be difficult for some people - but the staff support this as an area of development where necessary. There is quite a diverse range of research interests among the staff team, although because the course is quite small in comparison to other courses, you might be well served to identify research interests of the teaching staff to check whether or not your interests are anywhere near. The area of the world is lovely; if you are moving from far away, you might want to research the area in detail before moving.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Two interviews assessing clinical, academic and reflective strengths

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.

Teaching	Blocks in year one and two and intermittent throughout
Placement	Not stated
Personal Study	Not stated
Research	Not stated

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Queens University

4 responses (12% of 33 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	67%
Year 2	0%
Year 3	33%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	50%
25 – 29 years	25%
30 – 34 years	0%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	25%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	75%
Twice	25%
3 times	0%
4 times	0%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	100%
MRes	0%
Diploma	50%
Post Graduate Certificate	25%
Conversion course	0%
None	0%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	25%
3 years	0%
4 years	0%
5 years	25%
6+ years	50%
I don't know	0%

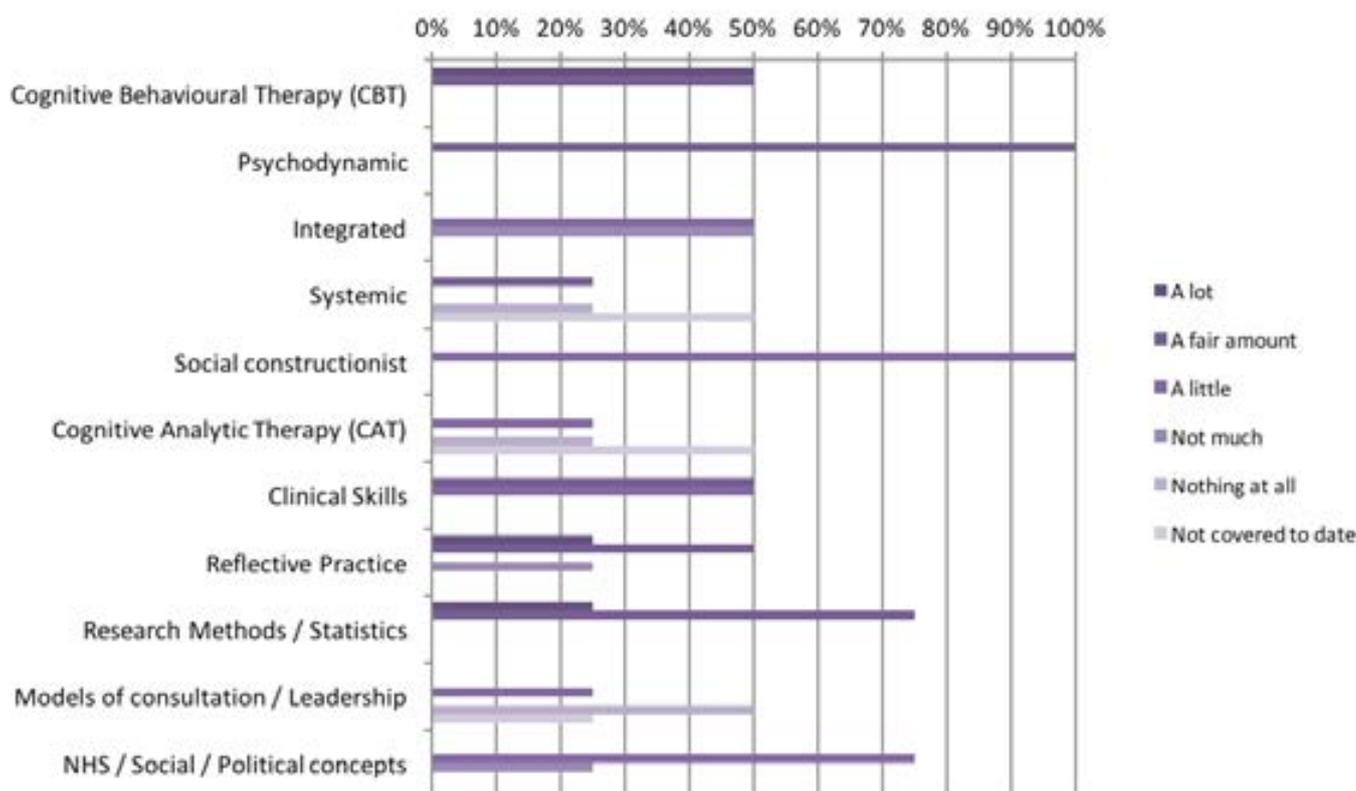
**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	75%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	0%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	0%
Voluntary Research Assistant	25%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	50%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	25%
Other	50%

## The selection process

- What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?
- The interview lasted a day, with three parts; personal, clinical and group. I felt staff were encouraging and the questions were pitched at a good level. Although I was nervous I also enjoyed the day.
- This was an intense day of interviews, however I felt that I was supported and given opportunities to show different strengths and skillsets.
- It was a demanding process but it did offer me the opportunity to demonstrate my skills, knowledge and experience.
- Interview process was a 9am-5pm day of interviewing consisting of a group interview, research and clinical interview and personal interview. The day was long and tiring but current trainees provided support throughout the day. I found the group interview task to be daunting and difficult which made me feel uneasy for the remainder of the day. I enjoyed the research interview and clinical interview as this was a lot more clear cut and easier to prepare for. The personal interview was enjoyable and I don't believe this portion of the interview could be studied for as it was an interpretation of your reflective skills.
- Course content and teaching

### How much teaching is there on different models?



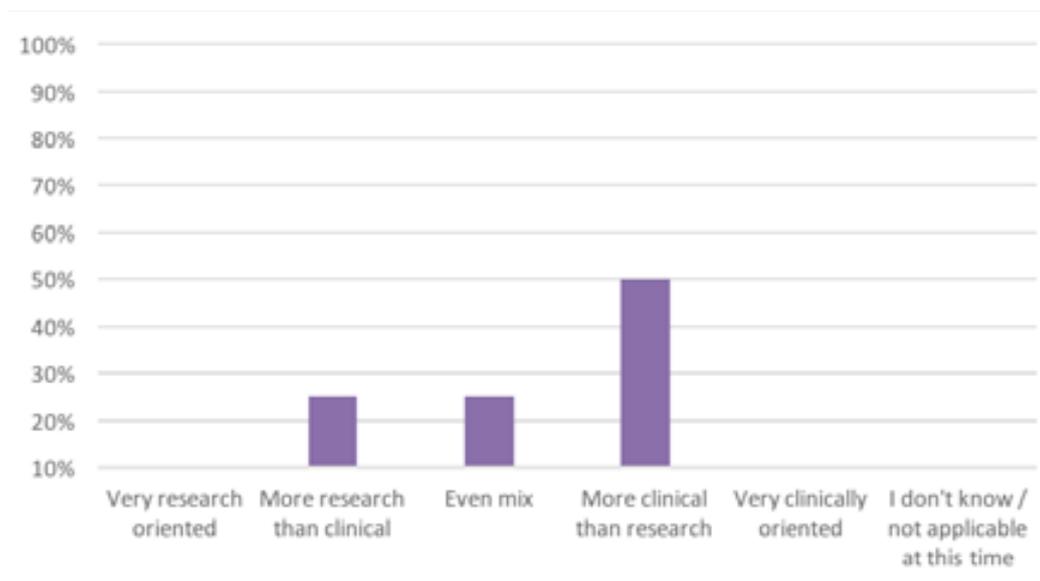
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	75%
Mindfulness	100%
Schema Therapy	25%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	25%
Solution Focused Therapy	25%
Neuropsychology	75%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	0%
Other	0%

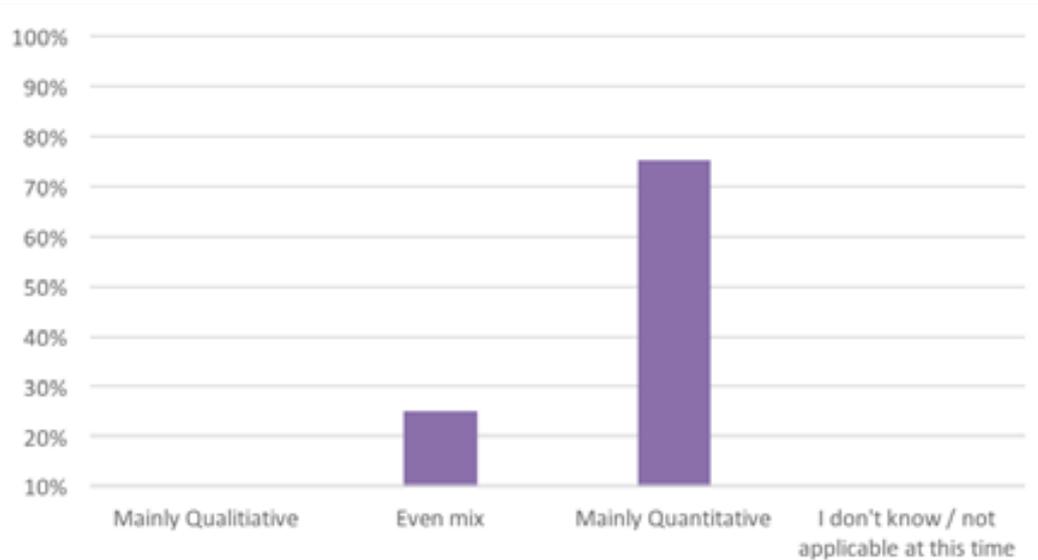
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- I feel that a lot of topics are covered but not in a lot of depth.

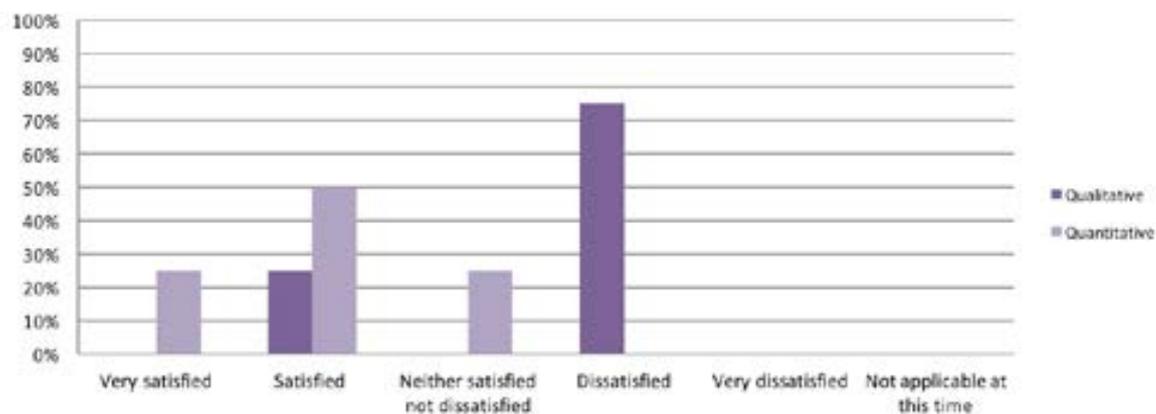
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



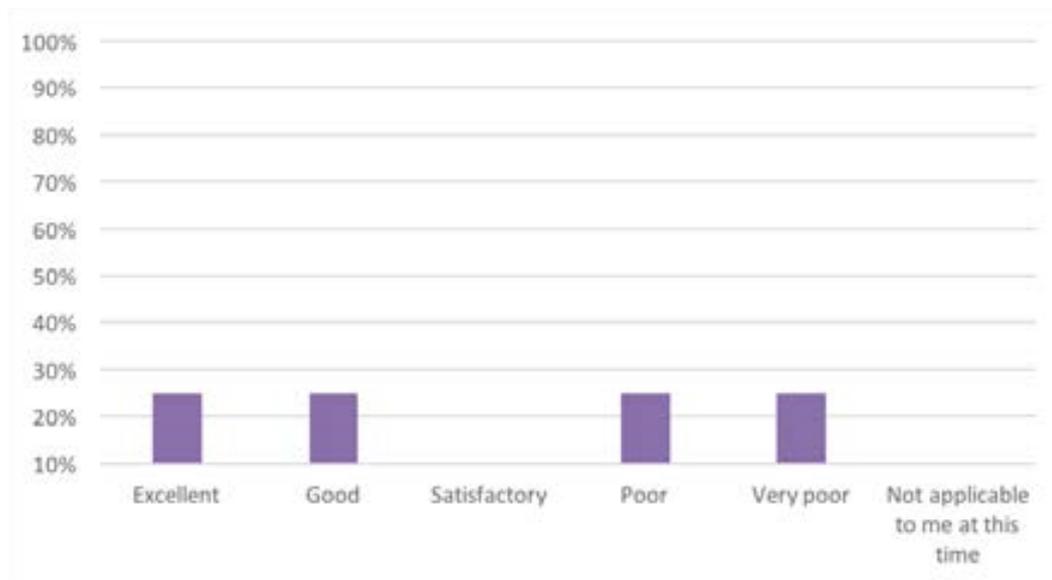
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



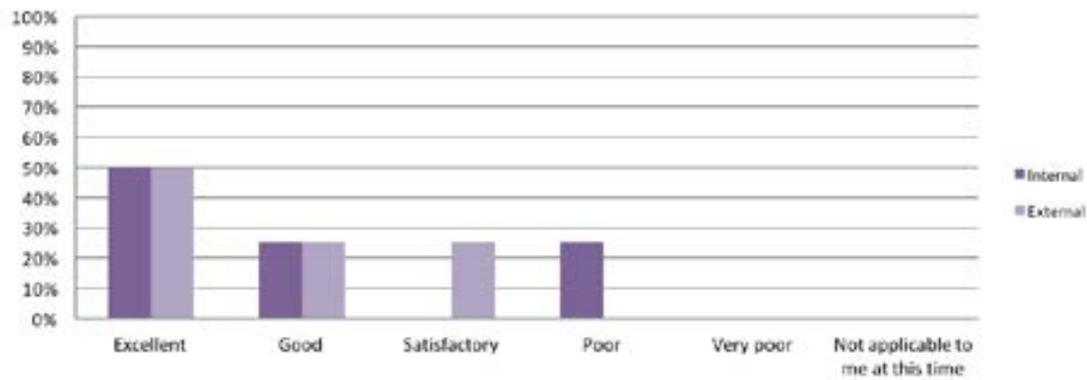
**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- Need more clear-cut criteria on the deadlines and different documents to prepare for large-scale research project. Better explanations of ethics/research panel preparation required.

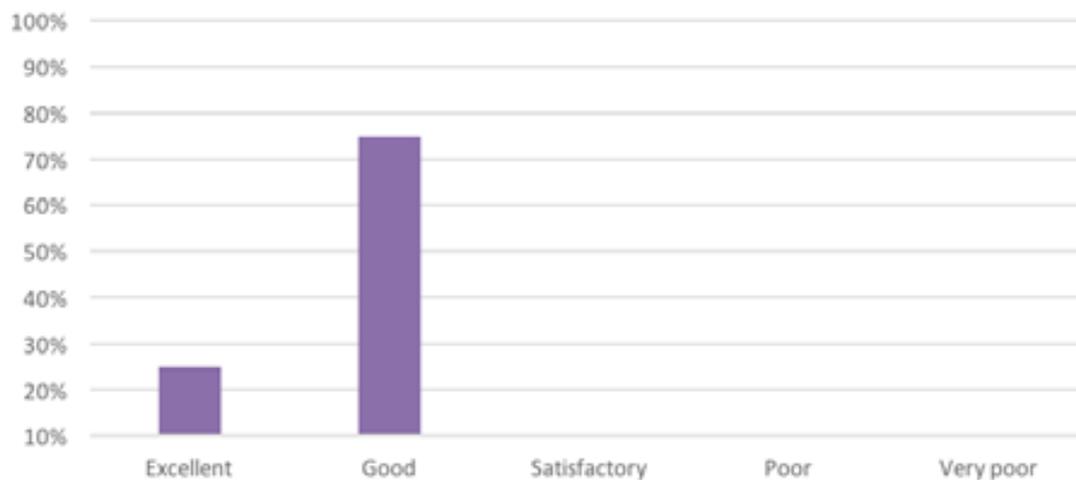
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



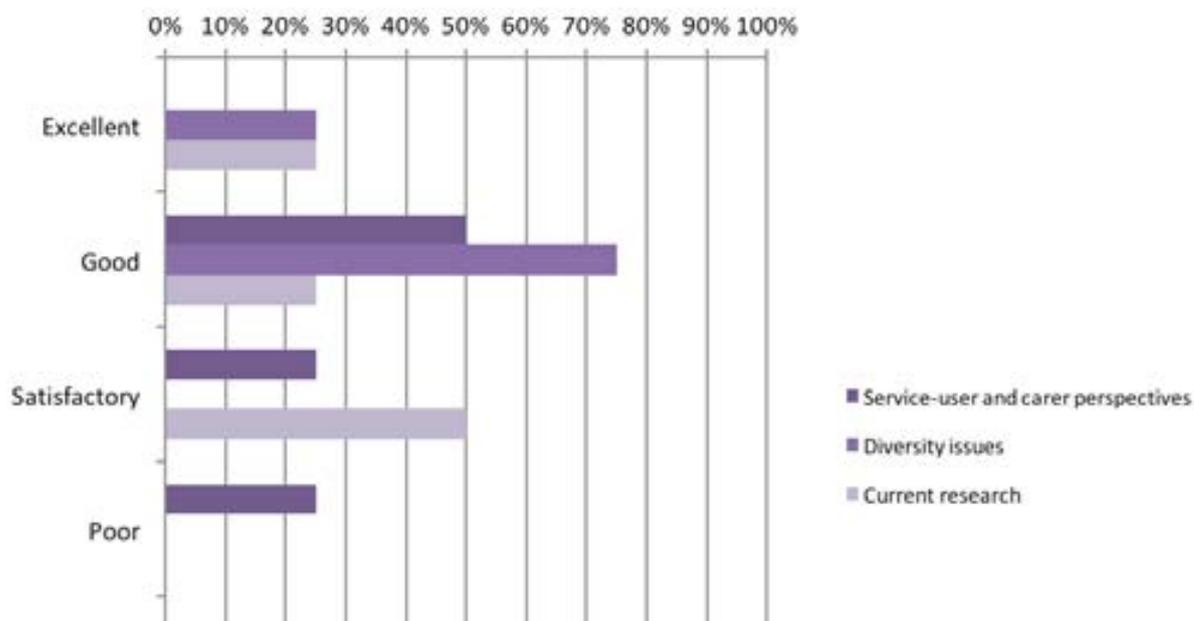
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

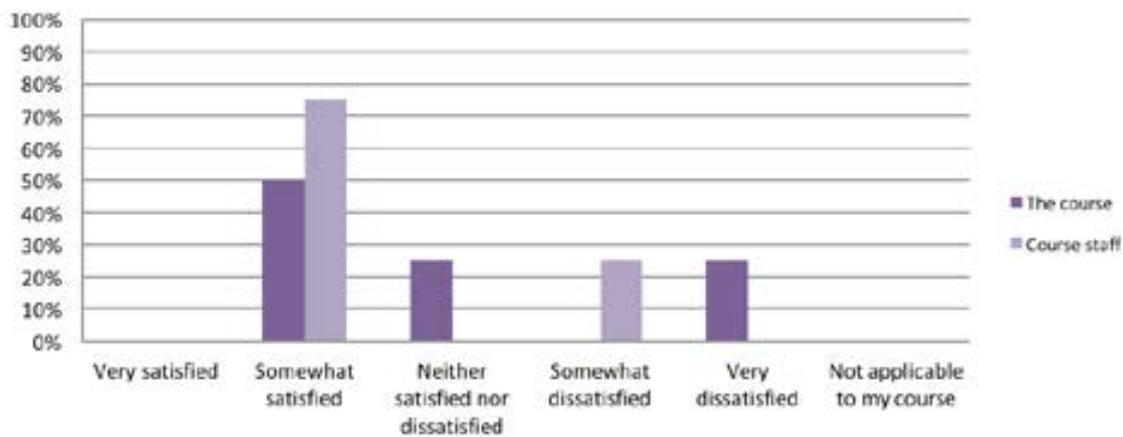
### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Juggling family and travel to placement and the course is hard. However I knew about this beforehand.
- I have found the process of selecting and forming a large scale research project in my first year unnecessarily stressful. It is a time consuming and constant process in the background of other coursework and placement demands.
- Balancing competing demands of placement, academic requirements and research.
- Demanding managing clinical work and research responsibilities together. More study days are required to meet coursework demands.

**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

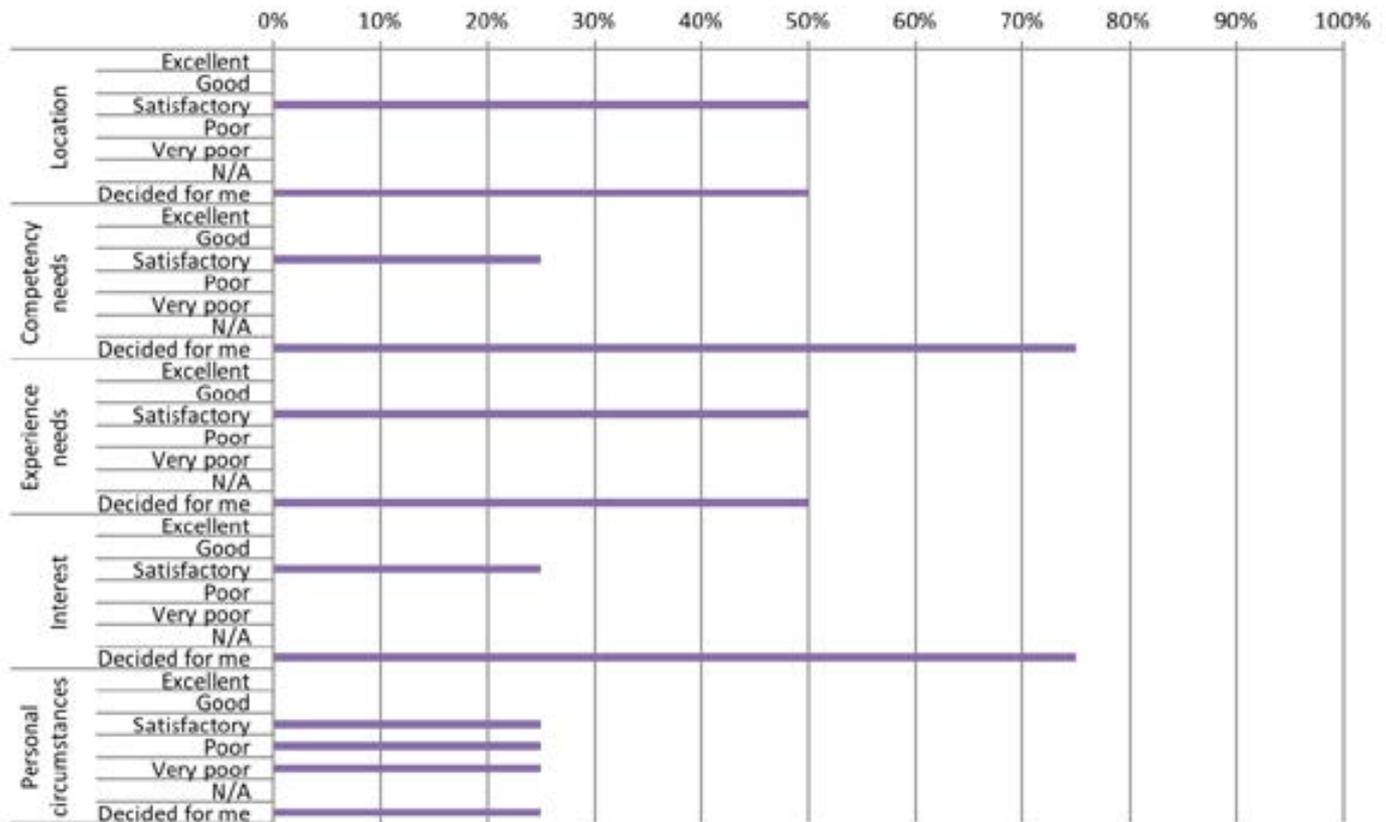
Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	75%
“Buddy”	50%
Manager	0%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	75%
Professional Mentor	0%
Personal Tutor	75%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	100%
Independent personal advisor	0%
Other	0%

**How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?**

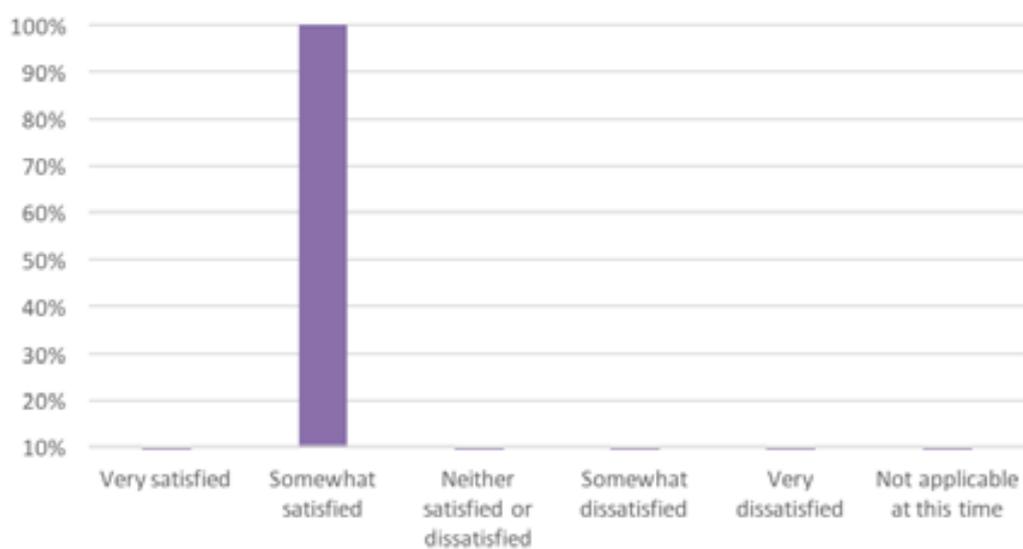


# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



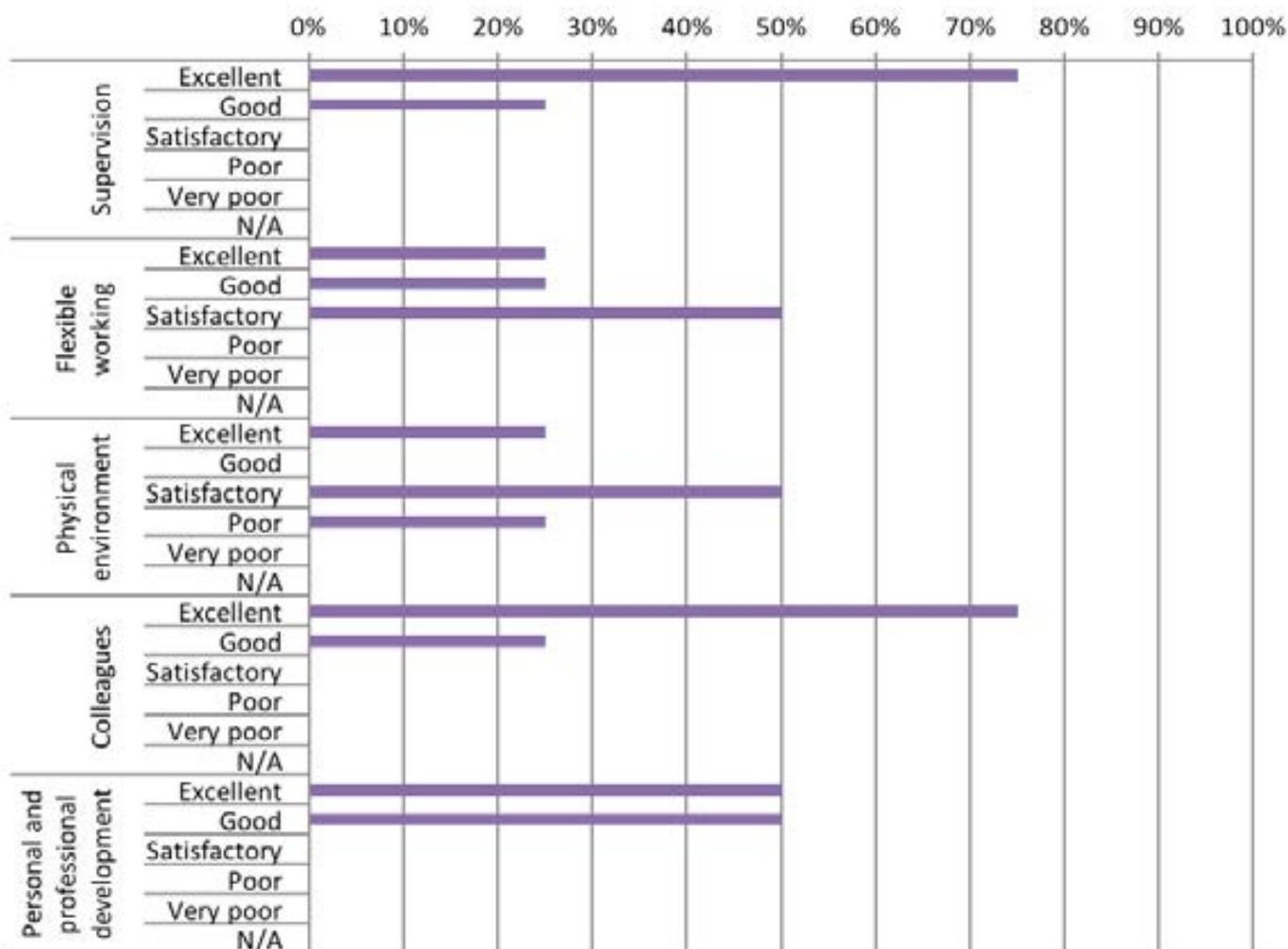
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- More time required to decide on placements, more locations required for placements to prevent excessive travel. There should be more time allocated to choosing placements with more individual choice for trainees.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- I love my placement. Supervisor and colleagues are extremely supportive and this makes the travel worthwhile. I am definitely achieving new competencies and my skills are being increased.
- Placement experience have varied depending on the supervisor.
- Placement enjoyable but travel time should be considered as a factor when allocating placements to trainees to help improve work-life balance and available time for trainees in the evenings.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	100%
No	0%
Don't know	0%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Belfast.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	25%
No	50%
Don't know	25%

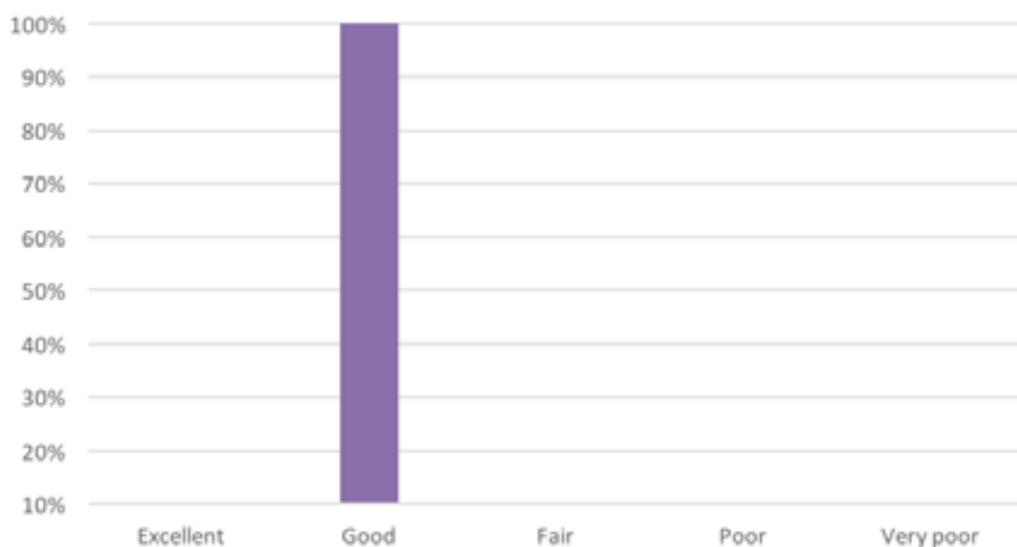
### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	0%
Fair	25%
Poor	75%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- This course is harder if you have children. My placement is not close to home and teaching requires a large amount of travel also. There is a lot of extra study which interferes with family time also. However this is offset by the quality of the teaching, support from staff and my interest in the course.
- This is something you have to carve out for yourself. I'm not sure how much it is encouraged by the course.
- The course is very demanding, it is easier to have a work life balance in first year however as training progresses it is much more difficult.
- More study days required to improve work life balance for trainees. Study days should be at least one per fortnight but this is rarely possible due to timetable/teaching demands.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- My class is amazing and we are very close. The quality of teaching is on the whole brilliant and I am definitely becoming much more competent in research skills and clinical practice. The emphasis on reflective practice and mindfulness is very useful. Finally the staff team are very approachable and give very good feedback. I do feel they are very invested in the development of the students.
- I have found the quality of the teaching to be very high and this learning is supported by high investment in my development from my placement supervisor.
- Third wave teaching.
- Developing my clinical skills through excellent clinical and peer supervision.

### Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?

- I feel that the staff here are very approachable, however I would have appreciated a clear and complete explanation of the course structure, processes and support systems in this first year.

## Courses Survey Results

**Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?**

- Interview

**For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.**

Teaching	6 week block the one day per week
Placement	3-4 days per week
Personal Study	1 day per week on occasions
Research	Not stated

**What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)**

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Royal Holloway University

44 responses (51% of 87 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	45%
Year 2	20%
Year 3	32%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	18%
25 – 29 years	68%
30 – 34 years	14%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	33%
Twice	33%
3 times	23%
4 times	7%
5 times	2%
6 times	2%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	9%
MA	7%
MSc	68%
MRes	0%
Diploma	5%
Post Graduate Certificate	9%
Conversion course	9%
None	20%
Other	7%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	11%
2 years	11%
3 years	39%
4 years	20%
5 years	7%
6+ years	9%
I don't know	2%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	68%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	18%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	39%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	5%
Research Assistant	52%
Voluntary Research Assistant	20%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	52%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	18%
Other	9%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Quite straightforward, relaxed and friendly.
- I believe the interview process has changed since I interviewed, we didn't have the pre-interview tests. However, the interview process was one of the best I have experienced. It was very open and transparent, and clear they wanted to get the best out of you. The staff were welcoming and the trainees on the course helped you feel at ease. It was very containing.
- Friendly and open, seemed as if the course staff were keen to get the best out of you rather than trying to trip you up. Was much more straightforward than other courses.
- Quite a short, relaxed half day - two interviews, both only about 20 mins long. The interviews were not too stressful compared to others universities.
- The interview seemed fair, it has changed now to have the service user component which is good. When I interviewed it was just the clinical and research with a vignette, if you knew someone who had interviewed their previously you had a great advantage. So it's good they are switching up the interviews now to give everyone a fairer chance.
- Each part of the interview was friendly, generally pain free and no big surprises. There is a demand for knowledge and experience, as well as some thinking on the spot, but nothing to send anxiety overboard.
- Excellent. The interviewers made me feel very comfortable and normalised the fact that it was an anxiety provoking interview situation. Trainees from 1st year also attended the interview process in order to answer any questions and support people through the process.
- Well organised, a good balance between clinical and research interviews.
- The interview process suited me so much. It was more academic than reflective but it also wasn't very challenging in terms of asking about theories etc. There was a clinical and a research interview, and both had vignettes.
- It was a really nice interview process. I feel that having 3 separate interviews (clinical, research and a service-user panel) really got the best out of me. The questions all seemed intuitive and you could understand how they would relate to clinical psychology.
- I feel the interview process was a fair experience and covered relevant areas to working as a clinical psychologist. I felt the questions asked had a clear rationale behind them, with a good mix of questions looking specifically at competency as well as logical/common sense thinking to get a more rounded view of each individual.
- The interviewers were friendly and approachable. It felt as though they wanted to get the best out of you and there were no questions that felt like "trick questions". First year students were available on the day for any questions we had.
- Methodical.
- It was not unnecessarily difficult and was quick.
- Really nice actually. It didn't feel like they were trying to trick you, all of the questions were relatively straight forward and the interviewers were really friendly. The only issue I had was time - the clinical interview was so short it felt difficult to get everything across.
- It felt friendly and supportive and as if the interviewers wanted to get the best out of you. There were three interviews - service user, research and clinical. All questions felt very relevant and there were no "trick" questions. Having interviewed at three different courses over a couple of years, this felt the nicest process but also maybe I'm biased.
- It was a really nice experience. There were two vignettes (research and clinical) which gave space to show skills and to think things through separately and widely. I knew about this in advance though so I would urge anyone to find out about the interview style of the course beforehand. There were

two people on the panel (one course staff and one clinician) they were friendly. I was quite far down on the reserve list following the interviews.

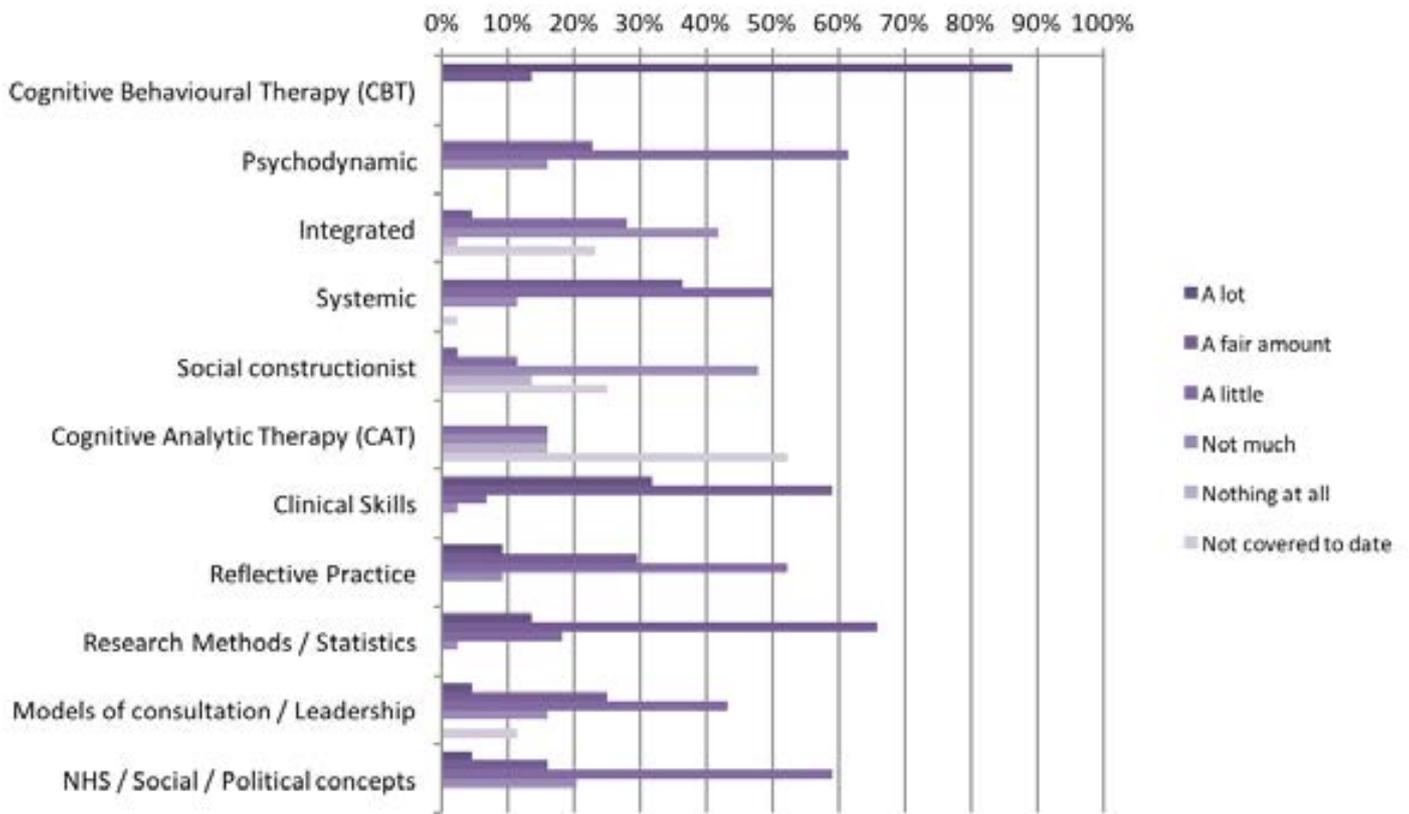
- It was a long day with three interviews, but it was by far the most welcoming experience I have had compared to other interview processes for DClinPsy. I genuinely felt the interviewers wanted to enable me to do my best, rather than seeing how I respond to trick questions. Also, the interviews and questions were completely relevant to what a clinical psychologist does, rather than asking us to interpret a graph with almost no context which is something a Clinical Psychologist would never need to do. It was a positive experience, and I felt that interviewers really wanted to get to know me, and engaged with what I was saying about my previous experience. The course is very much dedicated to its trainees.
- Nice process. Panels were friendly, and seemed to want to get the best out of you. Had to manage my own time in the interviews.
- Fine. 3 interviews in one day, so a bit long overall, but there were previous members of the course on hand to chat to and everyone was really friendly. It felt like the interviewers wanted to get the best from us.
- I found the interview process fairly constructive, straightforward and not out to trick you in any way. The case studies were a good way to demonstrate your knowledge. It was nice to have the opportunity to speak to first year trainees and fellow applicants.
- In general really supportive. I know all the courses say they want to encourage you to do your best, but I felt this was much more the case at Royal Holloway, having been interviewed by two other London courses before. It took pretty much a whole day: 3 short interviews; one research, one clinical (both 30 minutes), and one service-user (10 minutes). In the mean time you could spend time in the departmental break room chatting to the first years, who were good at calming everyone down. The staff are all very friendly, and interviewed in a way that was encouraging, fairly conversational and transparent, which really put me at ease. There was a clinical and a research vignette, which you had half an hour allocated before the first two interviews to prepare on in a quiet room. Similarly, the vignettes exercise felt quite transparent - they gave good written guidance about how they were looking for you to respond to them, then in the interviews they basically just asked you to talk about how you would approach the case/research topic. The service-user interview was only 10 minutes and focused on what you had learned from service user involvement experiences, and personal experiences that had shaped your professional decisions.
- Warm and relaxed interviews.
- A very nice day, considering it was an interview. Friendly staff, it felt like they wanted to get the best from me, they were not out to trip me up.
- Friendly panels and great atmosphere - the course really tried to make us feel comfortable on the day. First year trainees were there on the day to help out.
- I found the interviewers very warm and encouraging. They smiled and seemed interested in what I had to say. I felt the questions allowed me to talk about my experience and reflect on what I had learn. I was a more enjoyable experience than my interview at other Universities I also liked the service user interview, I felt this was a change to show a bit more of myself.
- I found that the Royal Holloway interview experience was one of support and the course genuinely trying to get the best out of us. Mixing first year trainees from the course with the applicants allow a lot of the anxieties to be dispersed as well as reducing the stress of finding the right room/building/ where to get lunch. The actual interviews were dynamic with the tutors asking follow up questions, displaying a felt sense of empathy and interest, and actively involving service user in the interview process. The interview experience did a great deal to show RHUL's focus on support and SU involvement, and was a great factor in deciding between my choices.
- I found Royal Holloway very relaxed comparative to other courses (had interview at UEL same year and Liverpool previous years). There was plenty of time to prepare and panel members were also encouraging. The small space to sit and wait was a little claustrophobic at times but Royal Holloway is set in some beautiful grounds so you could go outside and escape.

- I thought it the course made the day as relaxed as they could, and everyone was very friendly. Current trainees were there throughout the day to make sure you were in the right place at the right time and answer questions you had about the course. The interviewers were really nice and tried to put you at ease.
- I thought that the interview process was very good. The course staff helped me to feel very relaxed on the day. The people on the interview panels were warm and supportive. I have actually never felt so relaxed in an interview before.
- This was a nice interview day and felt like they wanted to get the best out of you. Questions were roughly what would be expected and they didn't try and trip you up. We had two interviews, a clinical interview and a research interview, both of which were 20 minutes long. Both interview panels were friendly and made me feel comfortable. There were current trainees around on the day to answer questions.
- I found that the interview process was one of the most straightforward that I have been to and think that this reflects the course in general. I remember that I was most relaxed in this interview than any others I had been to, even when I messed up in the research interview. I felt like I was given the opportunity to demonstrate all of the skills I had developed over the years in the process of getting onto the course.
- I found the interview process the most welcoming and anxiety reducing experience of the 4 interviews that I have had. The trainees who were on hand to help seemed like a really cohesive friendly group of people. There were no hugely surprising questions and it suited me to have follow up questions and responsive interviewers.
- We had 3 interviews, service user, clinical, and research. They were all spread out quite well which was nice on one hand to collect yourself after each interview but makes for a long day. I couldn't stay in the small common room, I went for a walk around the beautiful campus between interviews. Each interview had 2 interviews and it felt very relaxing and they wanted the best out of you. There is plenty of time between interviews to complete the research and clinical vignettes (half an hour for each).
- On the day, I found meeting current trainees helpful, they were reassuring and happy to answer any (appropriate) questions. The staff was great too, very approachable and supportive during the interviews
- My experience of the interview process at Royal Holloway was that it felt transparent, fair and allowed room for drawing on memorised content alongside more spontaneous responses. This provided the opportunity to build a good rapport with interviewers who included Clinical Psychologists and Service Users.
- On my interview day I was actually running late as a train had broken down and caused a delay to trains on their way to Egham. When I arrived for my interview, I was met by an buddy (a first year trainee) who I explained my situation to, and they were very helpful in welcoming me and guiding me to the admin office. The admin staff were understanding and kindly re-arranged my interviews to a slighter later slots.
- In between interviews all interviewees had to wait in a room together. I found there was a lot of friendly energy in the room alongside nervous energy. Although I can imagine this would feel a bit too stimulating for some, I actually found it a preferable experience to sitting in silence with others, waiting to be called on.
- In terms of the interviews - there were three, each with two interviewers:
  - (1) Research interview - which I feel provided me with a good opportunity to show my research strengths and my ability to critique papers, draw on research-practice links, talk about my own research and talk the interviewers through the design of a study linked to a research vignette we had all been shown on the day.
  - (2) Clinical interview - I had less clinical experience than many others, but felt the questions were fair and designed to tap into reflective skills such as talking through a clinical case vignette given to us on the day and providing professional and personal reflections on ethical issues.

- (3) Service User interview - I really enjoyed and appreciated the service user interview as it provided an opportunity to reflect on when things haven't gone right for us personally and/or professionally, alongside how we have supported service users in our work.
- I found the day was well structured and organised. It was nice having current trainees there to speak to between interviews. The interviews were stressful (of course) but the interviewers were very friendly and appeared interested in what I was saying by asking appropriate follow up questions. There were no curve ball questions
- well organised, friendly, no surprises
- The process was very supportive and friendly. They have a buddy system with the year above so that you can ask questions about the process or course.
- Best to find a quiet room to prepare though as sitting with other interviewees can be daunting!
- I think the interview process was very thorough, we had separate clinical and research interviews. I did find however that the 'buddy' they had assigned to me on the day, was a bit anxiety provoking and intrusive.
- Very quick, non-tricky questions, they're not trying to trick you/catch you out. Short panels and welcoming atmosphere, they try to put you at ease.
- Course staff were very friendly and tried to make you feel comfortable. I had the impression they tried to put you at ease as they wanted to get the best out of you at interview.
- Friendly, no trick questions
- I liked that there were current trainees in the waiting room to answer questions and talk to us to calm our nerves. When I interviewed there was a separate research and clinical interview and they were quite close together which was good as then I wasn't waiting around for a long time feeling anxious. I found the interviewers really friendly and didn't feel they were trying to catch me out with any questions they asked. Overall, I came away with a good feeling about the interview process.

## Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	98%
Mindfulness	98%
Schema Therapy	91%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	52%
Solution Focused Therapy	9%
Neuropsychology	73%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	30%
Other	7%

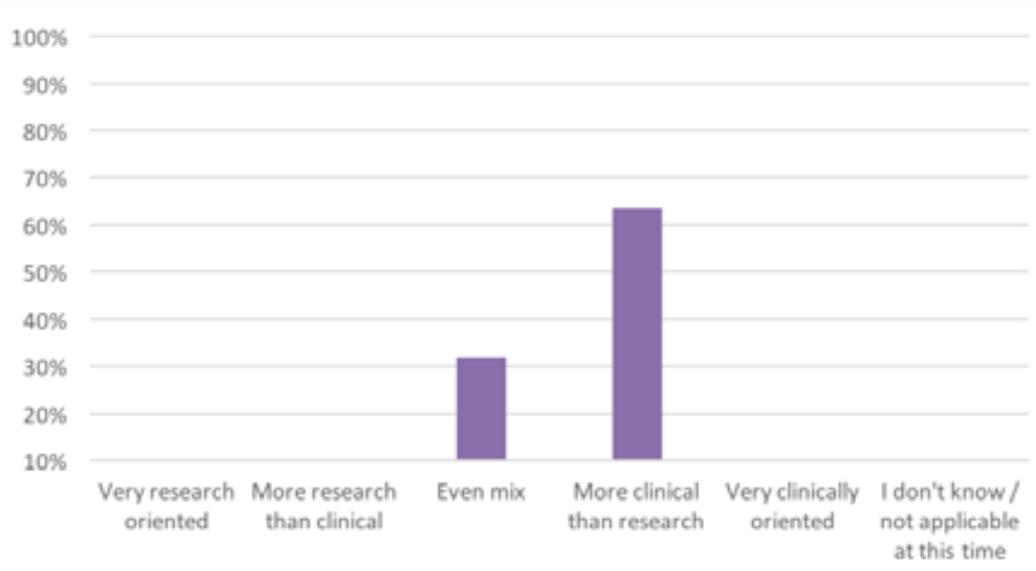
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- There is a lot of CBT.
- It is incredibly CBT heavy. It would have been beneficial to have more focus on other models. Often other models are very briefly touched on. We often get teaching on how to adapt CBT for various client groups. There is very little acknowledgement of social constructionist issues and the teaching on models such as psychodynamic was not particularly in depth.
- The course's main focus is definitely CBT, have felt that other models were learnt more effectively on placement depending on supervisor interests.
- Lot of CBT in first year which is to be expected, some really good days on Psychodynamic, Schema and Systemic too. Think the second year teaching has been a bit better and more varied topics.
- A heavy weighting towards CBT.
- Still a predominant focus on CBT but well balanced with other models
- Despite there being less teaching on some models, my placements have hugely made up for this. I have used CBT, ACT, DBT, CFT, narrative, mindfulness, systemic and schema approaches.
- I think CBT and Systemic approaches are covered thoroughly, in line with the course interests, but I think more time should be devoted to psychodynamic ways of working.
- Slight overemphasis on CBT.
- It's great to have detailed teaching from a CBT perspective and in general the lecturers are really engaging and have a great deal of knowledge and experience. However it would be nice to have more variety. My main issue with the teaching overall is the lack of critical and culturally aware narratives and lack of consideration of the role of power and social influences on individuals and human systems. The course teaches from what seems to be a fairly positivist, individualist perspective (at least in first year so far) - I can see why people suggest that you apply to courses that fit your outlook as it can start to feel as if you're fighting against the tide if you do otherwise.
- Really solid foundation. Feel I have what I need in order to fulfil my role as a trainee. Has really helped my confidence. I'm a first year, so other therapies will be covered in future I believe.
- First year especially is very CBT heavy. Teaching on other topics such as schema, mindfulness, DBT and ACT were only single or half days of teaching.
- There's a good range and the teaching reflects the skills required for working in the NHS.
- The first year focuses quite a lot on CBT for different presentations, though there's quite a lot of diversity too, e.g. 2 introductory lectures on systemic, 3 on psychodynamic, 2 days on schema, 1 on ACT, etc. We're told that second year concentrates much more on systemic (which is the other specialism of the course) and psychodynamic.
- CBT heavy but other modalities are also included.
- Would be good to have some time to discuss different models other than CBT related to different disorders.
- The teaching we do have on different modalities is not that focused on presentations, making it less applicable to our placements.
- I also feel there is an insufficient amount of time dedicated to minority issues, particularly concerning the experiences of BME service users. This always seems tagged onto the end of lectures.
- There is a main focus of CBT but the course makes attempts to dedicate whole days to other models. Much of the CBT teaching is within the first year and it seems that more diverse models will be explore in the latter years.
- There is a strong focus on CBT, at least in the first year. However, given the nature of the majority of our placements in the first this feels very relevant and appropriate. Certainly other trainees in IAPT settings who have not had this, report struggling a bit. Personally, I am grateful to have a solid

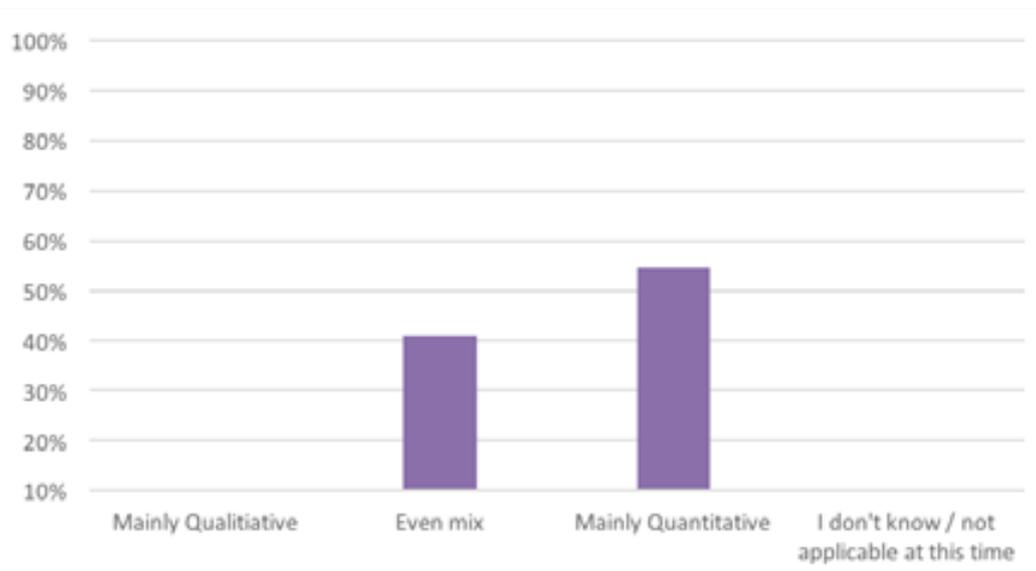
grounding in CBT and then be able to broaden out.

- We might have DBT, Solution Focused Therapy, and Compassionate Focused Therapy in 3rd year, but I'm not sure.
- Royal Holloway is a very CBT heavy course. During first year we had a lot of "CBT for... X". We have also had some systemic teaching although have had a lot less of this than CBT. I personally would like to have more teaching on social constructionism as I am interested in this area.
- I would personally prefer more teaching on integrative aspects as these seem most applicable to NHS placements in health.
- This is hard to comment because I am only in first year. The course is quite CBT focused but this reflects the services we work in and the national guidelines for treatment.
- Very CBT and disorder focused. We have had some teaching on other models which has been a nice change but more on DBT or Schema Therapy early on in first year would be helpful for those of us in secondary care teams.
- A lot of teaching provides a CBT perspective on disorders/treatment so it is important you get a chance of understanding other models on placement.
- The course is heavily guided by a CBT for [diagnosis] approach. I've appreciated this more than I thought I would as I feel it has provided me with a good structure to draw on when entering into placement and being allocated clients with presentations I have never worked with before. It would however be useful to have more lectures on integrative approaches as the reality of work can mean that client's formulations don't fit classic CBT boxes. In addition, it would be useful to integrate more room in lectures for a focus on reflexivity and psychodynamic aspects such as transference and countertransference.
- There is a lot of teaching on CBT, particularly in the first year. It would be helpful to have more in depth teaching into other treatment modalities, especially systemic and psychodynamic.
- I think our course is very CBT heavy, which became repetitive. Also, there is very little psychodynamic teaching. I had a lot of neuro experience prior to training, but I think a lot of people struggled with our neuro teaching because it doesn't adequately explain the background or how to interpret tests.
- We have mixed teaching, I think there are narratives about courses i.e. Royal Holloway is all CBT etc., but that's not the case, I think the main teaching you have is on placement. The lectures are supplementary but not limiting in terms of your development of thinking.
- I didn't have much CBT experience before getting on the course so it has suited me that we have a lot of CBT teaching in the first year. I think that I would like some more teaching on other approaches for example narrative approaches. We do have some but not that much to date. The course do ask us for feedback and suggestions on teaching we would like to have thought which is good.

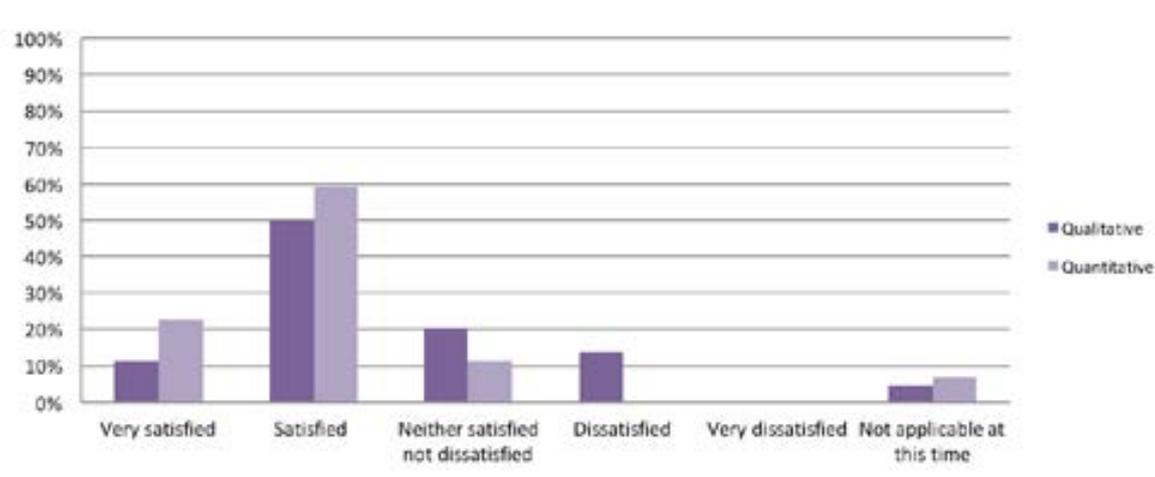
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



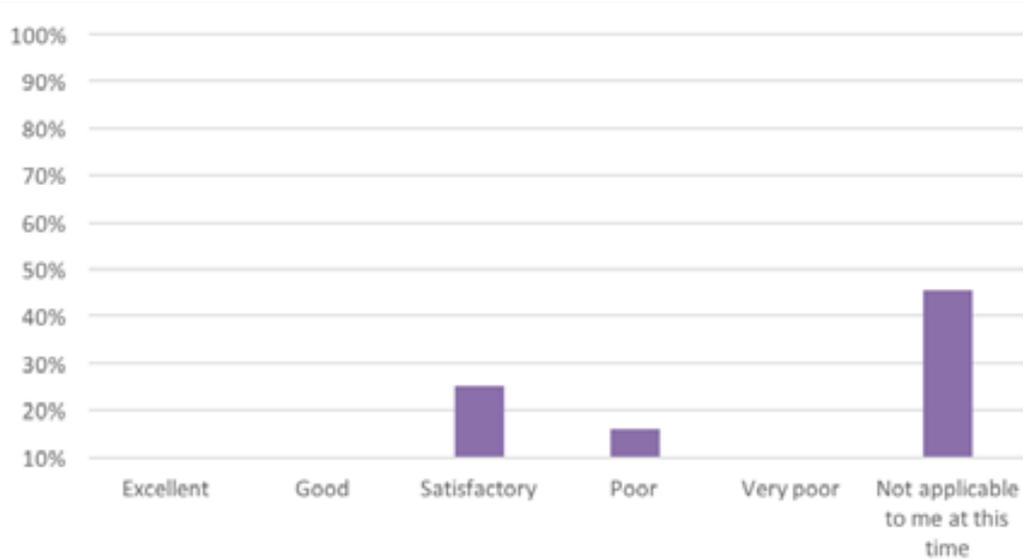
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



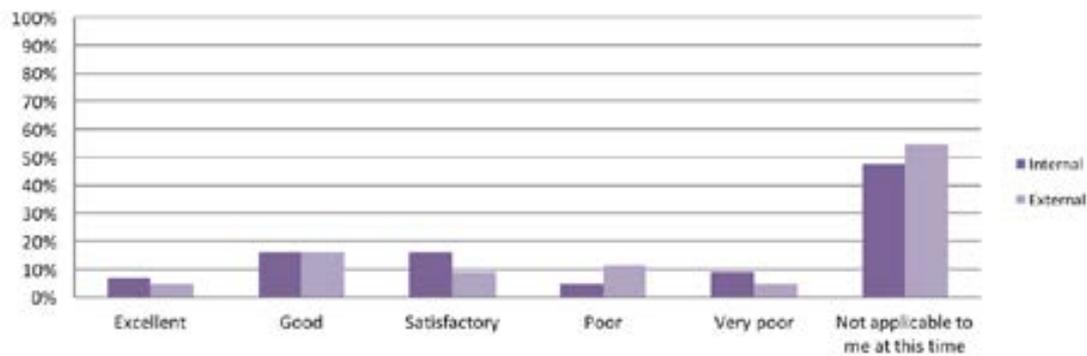
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- I have been extremely let down and disappointed by the course in terms of the research element of the course and my bad experience has been shared by many other trainees. The organisation and availability of DClinPsy projects was completely chaotic. The course limited the access to external projects, emphasising their own research areas, yet there were not sufficient staff members to enable this. Many people did not get access to projects they were interested in and I was rejected by an internal supervisor in the field of my project with no justification, despite not having any other trainees' projects to supervise. I have therefore been given a supervisor with no knowledge of the field of my project and this process has been extremely difficult. There are particular staff members who have consistently let down trainees and acted very unprofessionally, and the senior staff have not been supportive in managing this at all. This has been a recurrent problem over many years of trainees and complaints have been made, yet the course have not addressed this. It has been an awful experience and the research committee has been incredibly unhelpful for many trainees.
- Quite restricted in what thesis topics you can choose - they make it a lot easier to do a project with a member of staff, based on their interest.
- Sometimes the level of choice of projects does not seem as wide as one would hope. They are often attuned to the supervisor desires
- good quantitative teaching
- I did not have any teaching on the analysis for my research project because it was less frequently used. This was a stressful time, but research is autonomous.
- There isn't that much choice to do the thesis projects you might like. It turns out ok in the end though!
- Very appropriate to where I am in my training, and maps perfectly onto assignments.
- Quantitative theses are strongly encouraged. If doing qualitative thesis externally, support from the course is limited.
- So far I have found the research teaching to be excellent and inspiring.
- So far, I've found the research teaching (surprisingly!!) interesting and engaging. I do not have much research experience and at times I feel under skilled, but the teaching helps to bring everyone on to the same page
- A focus on practical application of these skills in teaching.
- The research assessments given are at a much higher level of understanding than what the teaching gives us
- We have to arrange our major research projects in May of first year, whereas other courses have them arranged earlier in the year. It's nice to arrange them later as it allows us to focus on the assignments which are due in now before having to think about research projects.
- Although there is more teaching on quantitative, the tutors seem open to supervising trainees wishing to use qualitative methods in their research.
- I found the statistics teaching quiet helpful
- It feels as though the research teaching is pitched at quite a basic level, having recently completed my undergraduate degree, it felt quite repetitive and has sometimes not been to the same standard.
- The research element was brilliant, very clear and I feel confident with statistics now.
- You pretty much get a list of questions to pick from, you could modify these and go with your own ambitions, but at your own peril. People have had very mixed experiences however my internal support has been excellent.

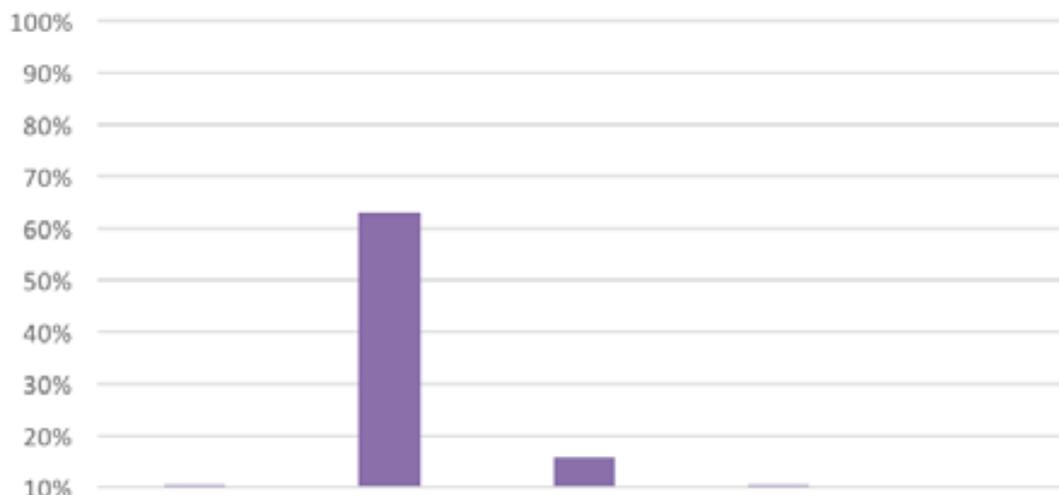
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



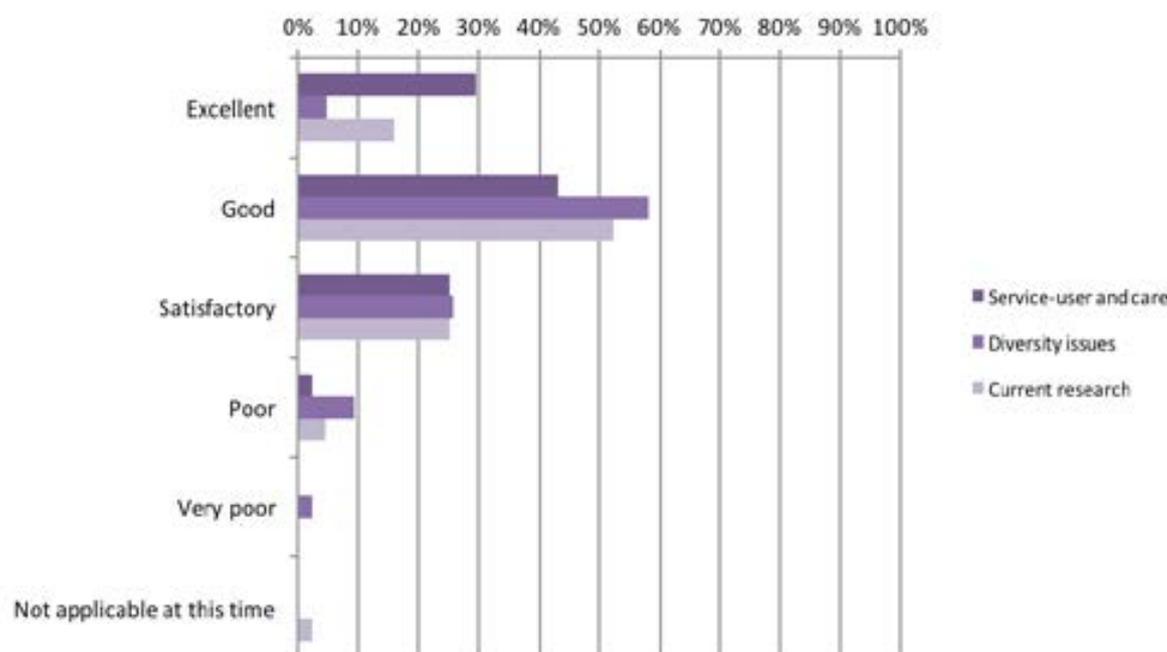
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

- One of my main complaints about the teaching on our course is that it has not encouraged debate or critical thinking which I feel is central to training as a clinical psychologist. I believe the course would have benefited from a more broad focus on different models and issues such as social construction. CBT is over-represented in the teaching.
- Overall teaching is good, we have had a couple of particularly bad days but have fed this back to the course who will hopefully remove the speakers for future years, we have also had some amazingly inspiring days with expert speakers in the field, thinking 'working with traumatized children' 'stroke rehabilitation' and 'paediatric neuropsychology' which we have had recently have been excellent and really interactive.
- The course is very poor on diversity. There is no creative thinking. The course is very inflexible. There is little reflection on our position as trainee clinical psychologists.
- There is very little diversity among trainees. There is very little self-criticism with regards to diversity issues. This is not problematized by the faculty at all. This appears to be led from the top. I do worry about some of my colleagues working with working class, or black, or Trans, or less-abled bodied persons on qualification. There is no work on our own privilege and how that might come up on therapy. It's very sad.
- I wouldn't recommend this course to anyone who cares deeply about diversity. The course should be audited on this topic.
- Would be good to have more on diversity and service user/carer perspectives - having these integrated into each lecture somehow would be great.
- Brilliant lectures, and group discussion is encouraged so it's really engaging.
- Sometimes it was unclear why certain teaching topics had been selected and at times this could feel a little repetitive but in general, teaching was interactive, interesting and appropriately pitched.
- Tutors and lecturers are approachable and the course is responsive to feedback.
- I've found the standard of the lectures to be excellent. We have lots of external lecturers from specialist services in London to give teaching on a particular type of presentation, so you get really good practical insights into how to work clinically in that area. The teaching environment is also good, the department has its own dedicated lecture room, computer room, break room, kitchen, etc.
- The can sometimes be a focus much more on the clinical aspects than current research but this is a

reflection of lecturers responding to the needs and requests of the class rather than explicit course decisions.

- We have had a lot of excellent teaching from some very experienced and knowledgeable clinicians and researchers.
- Most of the teaching has been to a very high standard. I have enjoyed having a number of different Psychologists and at times other professionals providing the teaching who bring in their own view points and experiences. The teaching has been interactive with lots of discussion by our cohort which has facilitated learning for me.
- We have had some great teaching for people who are really knowledgeable in the areas they come to teach about. At other times the teaching seems to lack passion and enthusiasm
- More opportunities for practical application of skills and reflections on overcoming clinical issues when working with the group/model.
- Some external lectures have been extremely enthusiastic with teaching which makes all the difference. When lectures are willing to do role plays and show appropriate videos it can be helpful to consolidate the information.
- Most of the tutors have a lot of expertise in fields they teach on.
- The teaching generally provides a good balance of lecturer-led teaching and group/pair work that has helped me put into practice clinical and reflective skills.
- I have found it frustrating to have had what I think was quite a large number of relatively newly qualified psychologists teaching us, if felt a bit strange that they couldn't find anybody who had greater expertise than a year or two.
- Some teaching is awful, and you sit there wishing the time away. You think that this was meant to be teaching that inspired you but is often not intellectually challenging or engaging. However things did improve in the second year considerably
- I have found that the quality of teaching has been mixed. We have had some really excellent teaching so far and this normally comes from people working in the area and who are really passionate about the subject they are teaching us. We are able to provide feedback to the course on good and bad teaching experiences.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

- 4.5% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- The course staff have caused a number of avoidable issues for people which has been stressful for the whole cohort.
- I think balancing the demands of the clinical work and the research tough.
- Multiple deadlines at a similar time definitely feels much pressured and the exams in the first year are tough.
- Applying for projects in summer of first year was stressful, if you don't have as much research experience you tend to be picked last. I ended up with a project that wasn't in my original top 5 choices. Otherwise the course is quite well structured in terms of keeping demands manageable, you usually only have one deadline to think about at a time (although this is not always the case). It is difficult if you are doing a placement that you haven't had any teaching on yet, but this will be the case on any course I think.
- Lot of deadlines in first year and exams, known in second year not so many deadlines and more relaxed but trying to motivate self to start on ethics and literature review so a different sort of stress. Overall though I am half way through and as a naturally anxious person I think I have coped very well and not got too stressed, the reflective practice groups we have are great support and we get plenty of research days.
- The course staff and organisation is structured well to make it all feel very manageable.
- Time management is the tricky part, balancing all 3 aspects of the course, teaching, placement and research.
- The commute is difficult, it takes up a lot of your week and it can be really hard to motivate yourself to do any work in the evenings when you get home so late.
- No, I think the course spaces out assessments quite fairly and sensibly.
- The travel does take its toll. You will have a long commute to either the Royal Holloway campus for lectures in Egham or placements in London, or both. It can be exhausting, especially if driving.
- Training with a lack of focus on diversity renders the training almost invalidate in a real applicable sense.
- Theory has been good.
- Choosing a thesis was quite a stressful process - for the first time it felt quite competitive. The exam period in 1st year was also a very stressful time.
- After a break from academia, managing a workload, lectures and trying to write up assignments is a bit of a challenge, but one that seems manageable at the moment. The role of being a trainee and negotiating between uni and an NHS service as a fairly junior member of staff can be tough, and in many ways being a trainee feels like a step down from being an AP, as it can feel as though you have less independence and are under more scrutiny.
- Commuting and figuring out work-life balance. But I feel this is quite common across courses.
- Mainly balancing all the elements.
- Managing multiple deadlines and tasks.
- I have found the course appropriately challenging, but not very stressful. I think Royal Holloway seem to be very caring with their trainees, and to prioritise looking after them. In comparison with the other London courses, their deadlines for assessments/forms seem to be later. Also the assessments are appropriately spaced throughout the year and not too weighty. The mark schemes for assessments are very transparent about what work you need to cover to do well. In general the atmosphere of the department seems to be relaxed whilst also aspiring to achieve high standards.
- The commute to the university is long.

- An essay in the first term was quite demanding. It was hard to know what level to write at. But we had lots of time to do it. I have been taking my academic work slow and steady and I haven't found the course to be particularly stressful to impacting on my social life.
- Not at the moment. The course have been incredibly responsive to offering support in a number of areas. I have always felt that if I need something that they would be extremely helpful and responsive.
- The usual challenges of juggling the many roles within training - student, clinician, researcher, leader and time demands. Keeping on top of course requirements and clinical/ placement related can be difficult. I do feel RHUL try their best to organise deadlines and study days to make this as manageable as possible.
- The course is as expected in terms of pressures, however exams in first year were particularly stressful as there was a huge amount to learn, alongside working clinically and attending university.
- Thus far, I have found the quantity of work completely manageable. The first month of intensive teaching was very tiring but I think this may have been because of meeting so many new people and taking in so much information.
- Starting a new placement every 6 months can be difficult as you go right back to everything being new and not completely knowing what you're doing. The time around deadlines can be stressful, although we have not had as many deadlines as I imagined there would be before training.
- Managing time between placement and teaching when thesis demands began.
- My first placement was in a service with complex clients which was difficult to adjust to with the level of experience of clinical work I had before starting training.
- Working in secondary care it took a while to build up a caseload, however now that I have, it can be challenging to manage learning about so many different presentations and models that we have not necessarily covered in lectures, while planning sessions, completing assignments and maintaining a social life! It's definitely been manageable to have a good work-life balance but do expect to do some work in the evenings if you have a tricky placement. I think it is a little easier for trainees in other services.
- Juggling academic work (teaching and assignments), placement, and research (1st small project on placement) can be challenging at times but with the right amount of support (from the cohort, friends/family, and tutors) they are manageable. The commute to Egham can be daunting (and expensive) but, again, there are breaks (Xmas, Easter, summer) so it feels doable.
- I live in London and travel into Egham every Monday and Tuesday with lectures being held from 10 - 5pm. This can be really tiring, and involve returning home really late which in winter is a bit demotivating! I recommend getting into a car share as this can be cheaper than travelling by train and also provide a good opportunity to get to know course mates and consolidate learning/ask for advice when things get confusing/tough.
- My cohort has also created our own Reflective Groups where we can listen and validate one another's experiences and support each other with our reflections on the demands of placement or assignments.
- The main challenge for me was learning to balance all the various different components of the course (research, clinical, course work) at one time. There are times when it feels like there is a lot going on at once. I really needed to stay on top of my time management.
- Course group dynamics, it feels to be a very anxious cohort this year - which is hard to navigate.
- Yes, i was bullied by my supervisor in one of my placements. I felt the course were very careful to cover their own backs legally, and I was left to manage it. It was incredibly stressful and upsetting.
- The exams in the first year were very hard and stressful. Many people found this phase difficult and had "melt downs", despite this the course seem to have continued this year on year. It seems conflicting, they try to foster a "good enough" approach yet at the same time place deadlines in ways which force us to become very stressed. The commute to Egham can be exhausting, especially year on year when people have said about having some (or all) lectures at Bedford Square.

- Juggling placement work, studying and completing assignments has been tough for me. It requires you to be very organised.
- I have found choosing thesis projects and submitting proposal and ethics applications (for the thesis) the most stressful times on the course. Sometimes coursework deadlines have been close together which is difficult because there are so many different aspects on the course. I have found that my placement supervisors have been really supportive when academic demands have increased and feel very supported by my cohort.

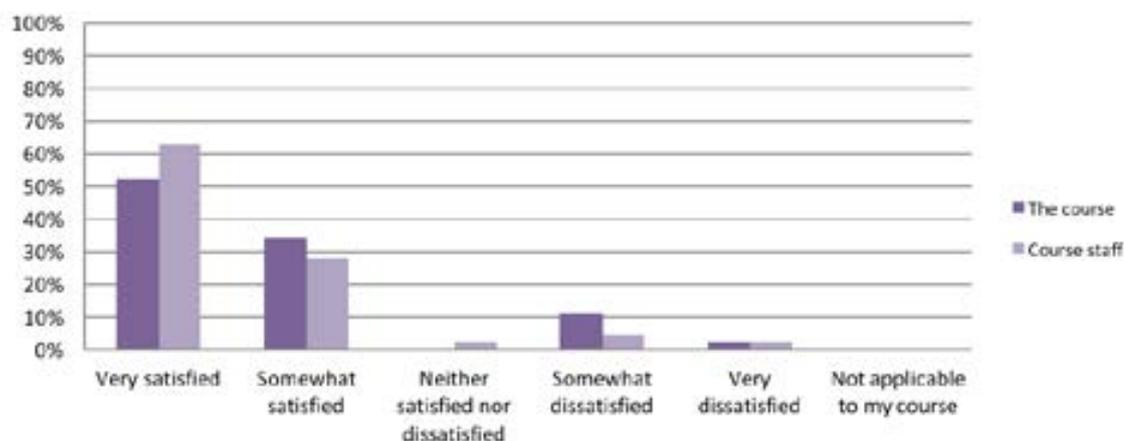
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	95%
“Buddy”	89%
Manager	9%
Placement Supervisor	91%
Librarian	18%
Professional Mentor	9%
Personal Tutor	98%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	70%
Independent personal advisor	57%
Other	9%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- You have a clinical tutor that you can go to about placement issues.
- Cohort (very close knit), and clinical tutors for placement-related issues.
- the cohort is very supporting of each other
- The rest of the cohort!
- Lovely and invaluable admin staff (who really know a lot!)

### How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

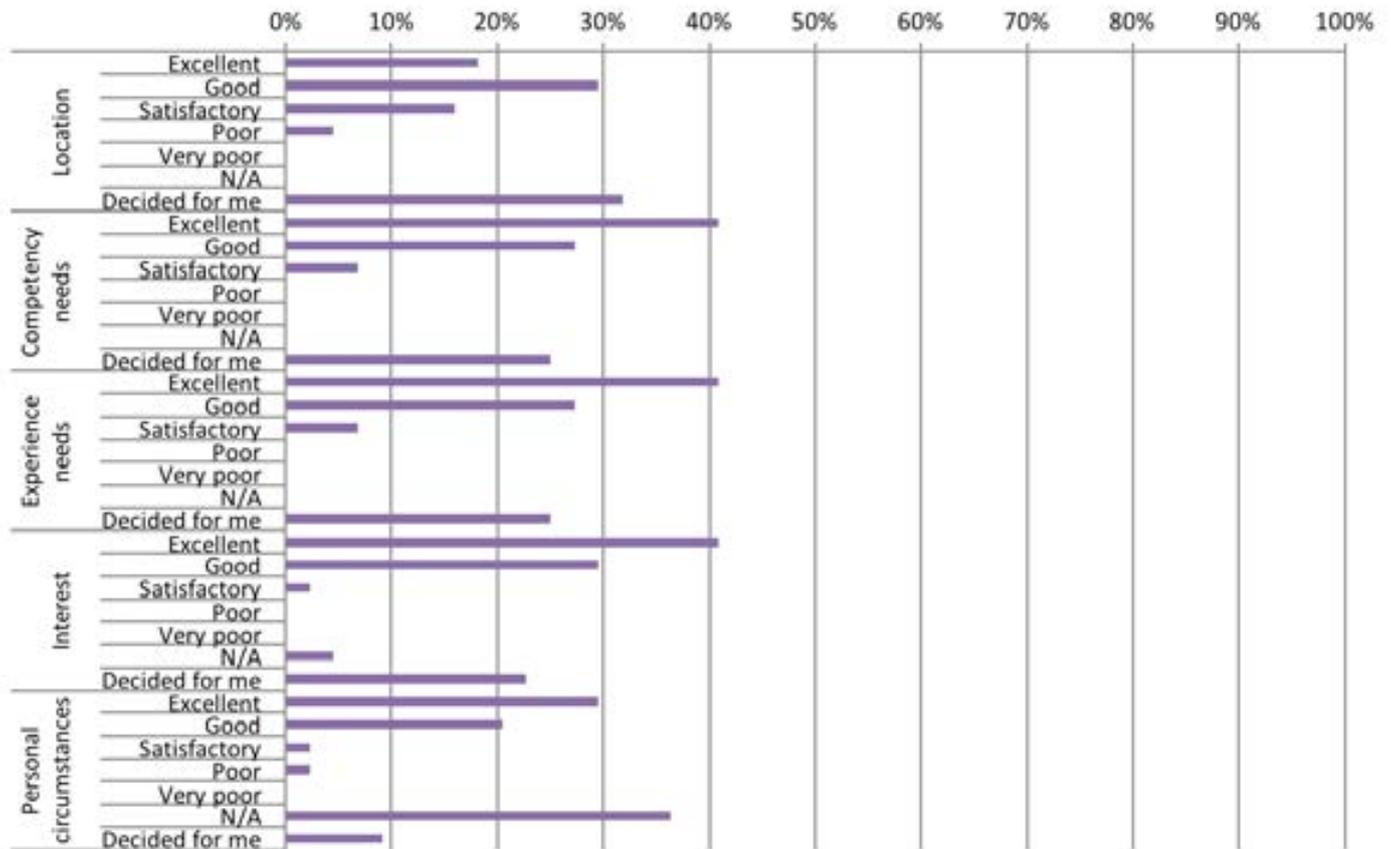


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

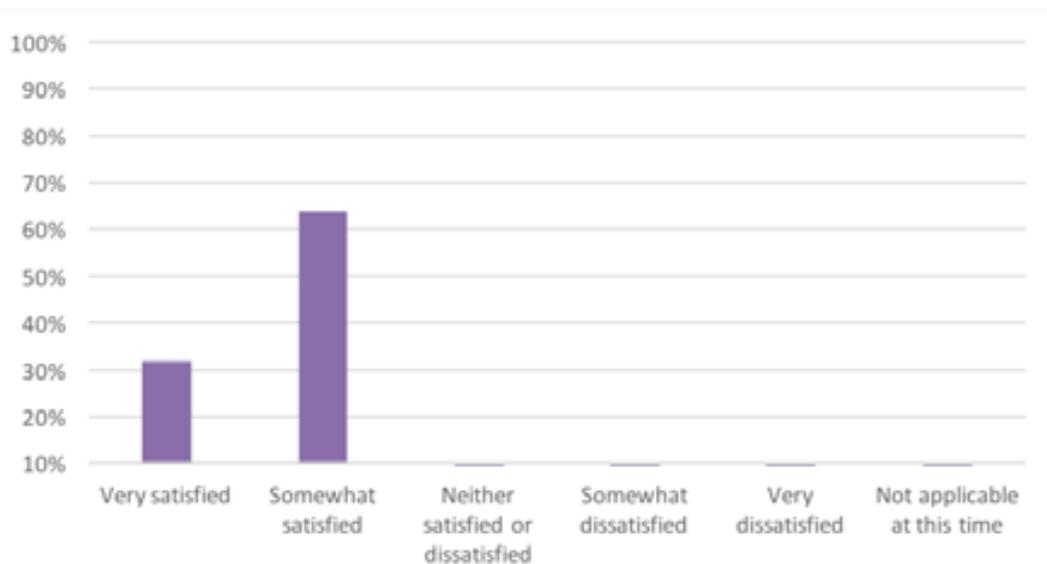
- I have had excellent support from my personal tutor although other individuals have not been so lucky with their personal tutors. Some people have had quite disappointing experiences and have been poorly supported. There are some tutors who unfortunately don't answer their emails.
- Personal tutor very supportive. It has changed once because of maternity leave but hand-over was good. Also found the buddy system really useful to ask questions about specific coursework/exam advice etc.
- My thesis supervisor has been good, very responsive to emails and considers other demands I have. Placement supervisors have also been supportive so I have been lucky. My personal tutor is helpful although I don't see them often. I have some caring responsibilities which the course have been very supportive of and taken into account when planning my placements which I have really appreciated.
- The course have been very helpful in ensuring my disability needs are met
- The course have been very supportive in helping to deal with difficult placements and helping you manage any conflicts that arise within supervision.
- All the staff at RHUL are supportive and approachable.
- This course is supportive of people with children. However, some policies disadvantage trainees who are parents. This should be looked into.
- I have a very supportive thesis supervisor. I have also found my 'mid placement reviewer' (the person from the course that comes to see you on placement) really supportive and a consistent presence throughout all of my training.
- The staff are extremely dedicated to each trainee, and you feel they are really invested in you. They remind you they are there for you and no problem is too small or 'not worth bringing up' because it's better to address things early, rather than leaving things so they get bigger.
- Staff are keen to help and responsive.
- My personal tutor has been excellent so far very supportive and friendly, and very quick to respond to any request.
- Course staff were available and responsive when I experienced personal incidents and I have felt that there is always support available.
- I think that RHUL is a very supportive course. There are lots of options to receive support and the course staff place emphasis on utilising these. They also place emphasis on maintaining wellbeing and a work/life balance.
- Course staff are available if you need to talk to them. We are encouraged to meet with our personal tutors every term, more if needed.
- In my view the timetable could be better organised to optimise time, for example reflective practice groups around deadlines. More study days to account for the work time incurred in change of thesis structure.
- RHUL staff have been very helpful from the start. They create an environment in which you feel very supported and you feel that they really want you to be successful. Having said that, I've been very fortunate with my placement supervisor and personal life so far and have not had any major difficulties to deal with yet.
- Very supportive staff - all are approachable and happy to help at any time.
- I have had brilliant support from my research supervisor, but I think the course staff overall have a tendency to be quite hands off by not answering emails, not following things up etc. I have also found that they don't take what you feel would be helpful into account, they tell you what they are going to do to support you, whether it feels helpful or not.
- When you need them they are excellent and will back you 100%.
- I haven't needed loads of support on the course so far, but when I have spoken to my personal tutor about things that have arisen I have found them to be supportive. I think my main support has come from others on my cohort as everyone else understands the demands of training. I have also been able to speak to placement supervisors about more demanding periods on the course.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?

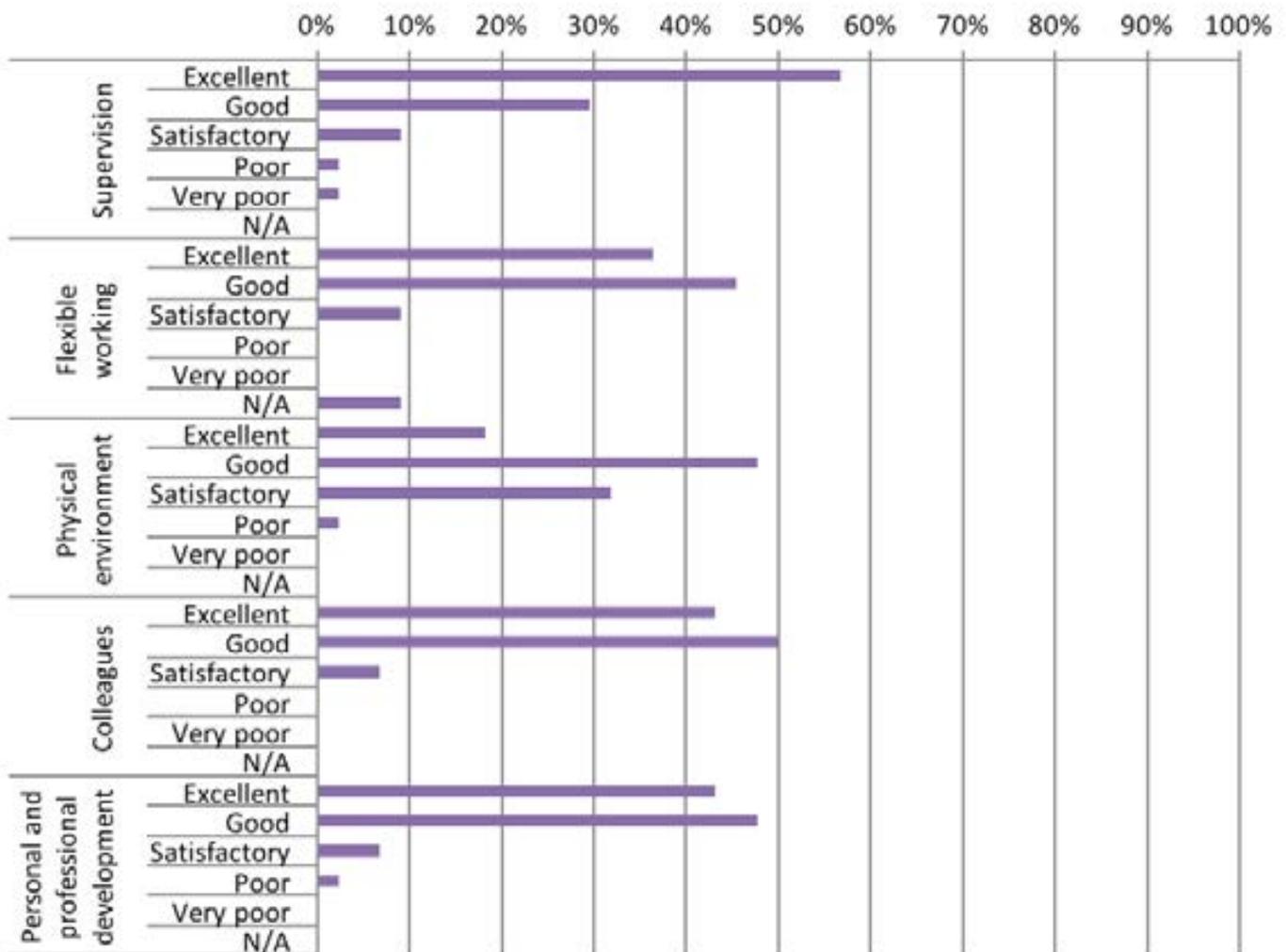


### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- Can be difficult when the teaching timetable doesn't align with the placement you have been assigned but I understand it would be impossible for this to work perfectly for everyone.
- First and second year I felt very prepared. Third year more difficult because haven't had teaching specific to where I am on placement now.
- Get a good block of clinical skills and CBT teaching at start so feel we are quite well prepared for first year placements. Have our older adult, LD and child teaching ongoing in second year but I have been lucky and had all teaching before the placement, some people have teaching on one group whilst they are also on placement, this can be useful though to quickly apply what we have learnt.
- The course were very accommodating with allowing me to select specialist placements that fit within my area of interest.
- You have to pass a role-play of a clinical assessment. It was very helpful.
- It was hard to feel prepared for the first placement (as we were all at different stages) however from there on in I think the course have done a good job of preparing us through teaching and Q&A sessions to think about placement. There are also some clinical tutors who are really available and supportive to people who have had issues on placement
- Feels as thorough as possible, and focuses on the basics to give us a solid foundation. Some placement-related teaching comes later depends on the type of placement. But the building blocks are there, and supervisors are also there to guide you.
- I don't think we would ever feel completely prepared.
- It's impossible for them to prepare everyone for all placements, especially in 2nd year when there is such variation in the type of placements we are all on.
- The teaching on the course is very good at preparing you for placement. There is the sense that they have thought about exactly what you need to know.
- First days at placement will always be nerve-racking
- It felt a little like being thrown in the deep end at first, but since then the teaching has complemented my placement very well.
- I had a reasonable amount of previous NHS experiences so some aspects of placement felt personally less daunting.
- We have had the equivalent teaching run alongside placement, which has been really helpful. For example, in first year we have adult mental health teaching, alongside adult mental health placements. In 2nd year we have child and LD teaching alongside child and LD placements.
- I am going to regular hospital appointments. The course were very responsive to this and placed me very near the hospital I have appointments.
- We receive details of our new placement about 6 weeks before starting. We are encouraged to go for a placement visit before we start.
- More opportunities to develop confidence around general clinical skills as in other courses, e.g. integrating information from multiple-sources.
- Teaching in the first year feels as if it's geared towards trainees working in IAPT, it is very CBT and disorder specific. However, if in a recovery team or CMHT, the appropriate teaching is not offered until later in the year or in subsequent years. This involves a lot of extra reading on your part, and isn't something that necessarily recognised by the course.
- In all fairness it is difficult to "prepare" us as placement experiences can be so different. The basic things have been covered and explained but real life experience on placement turns out to be the best teacher.
- We have a 4 week teaching block at the beginning of first year that includes CBT basics and clinical

skills, which is helpful when beginning placement. We also have pass outs for initial assessments, WAIS and WISC, which although they are anxiety-provoking, I think they do help to prepare you for placements. We are encouraged to complete placement visits before beginning a new placement which is nice to meet with new supervisors and the team you will be working with. I think we are prepared well for placements.

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- It's very difficult for experiences on placement to be generalisable as there is such vast differences in terms of experience on placement.
- Have had a good range of placements and it has been really good to be able to have some input into choosing placements later in the course.
- Some teams have been difficult to integrate into feel more like student on placement than a member of the team. Physical environment has sometimes been quite run down, but that's just the NHS for you. Supervision overall been very good.
- I have been really lucky with placements in terms of location and supervision. Really varied caseloads, complex cases but lots of support. Glad I haven't had IAPT I think I would have got bored, I have had quite specialised placements but I wanted that. Been able to use Psychodynamic Psychotherapy, DBT and Systemic in addition to CBT so really good experience.
- I have really enjoyed a variety of placements. The north Thames placement opportunities is really something that RHUL has going for it. Don't underestimate how much you learn on placement, with supervisors. Specialist services attract excellent people that want to have trainees and I have almost always had really great, and specialist training experiences over the past 3 years.
- I have only had one placement so far, and had a difficult experience for various reasons. This is really uncommon for a first placement, and most of my cohort have had good supervisors.
- I am getting the skills I need and being helped to develop.
- I have found my clinical work on placement the most challenging aspect of the first year. The team is great, and the work has been interesting and varied. At times I have struggled with my relationship with my placement supervisor a little bit, but this seems to be the norm for most trainees. Most Royal Holloway first placements are 1 year long and tend to be in IAPT services, though a few are in substance misuse placements or CMHTs. The focus is generally on gaining a good grounding in CBT for common mental health problems.
- I have two supervisors and subsequently two different experiences. It is a good learning opportunity to have one supervisor from a different professional training but this has raised some challenges in terms of understanding DClinPsy requirements.
- My supervisors have been excellent and extremely supportive and committed to helping my professional development.
- I have been exceptionally satisfied with my first placement. My supervisors are very supportive whilst also allowing autonomy. I have felt welcomed by the service and considering it is my first placement, I haven't felt anxious at all and have really enjoyed the clinical work and opportunities I have had.
- I have been unlucky and had a couple of placements where I've had long commutes (1.5 hours) which has been really tiring. However this has been balanced with shorter commutes for the other two placements.
- Good placement supervisor is the key to all other aspects. I've been very fortunate with mine (I've had only one so far) and I hope it'll stay this way.
- Having a good placement experience can mean different things to different people. For me, it has meant learning to manage my own and others' expectations of myself and at times having to learn to work with very stressed out NHS professionals who can behave reactively rather than reflectively. There have been times for me when I haven't felt confident that I have the competencies to work with particular client groups and that my supervisor has been busy and has carried a lot of assumptions about my level of knowledge and experience of working with clients based on my sitting through a 2 hour lecture! Learning to find some degree of peace with not being perfect and feeling such uncertainty is useful, but difficult. Talking and reflecting on experiences with others in my cohort has been very validating as I've learnt that I am not alone in my experiences and that competencies are developed over time.

- I feel that the course make an effort to listen to your interests while keeping you competency needs in mind when requesting placements, particularly in third year. I have been very fortunate to have had very positive experiences across all my placements.
- I have had really good placement supervisors so far and the course has listened to me in terms of the types of placements I would like in order to gain a range of experiences and to meet competencies. However, I have had quite long travel times to placement which I wasn't prepared for before starting training.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	2%
No	98%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	100%
No	0%
Don't know	0%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in London.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	98%
Don't know	2%

**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

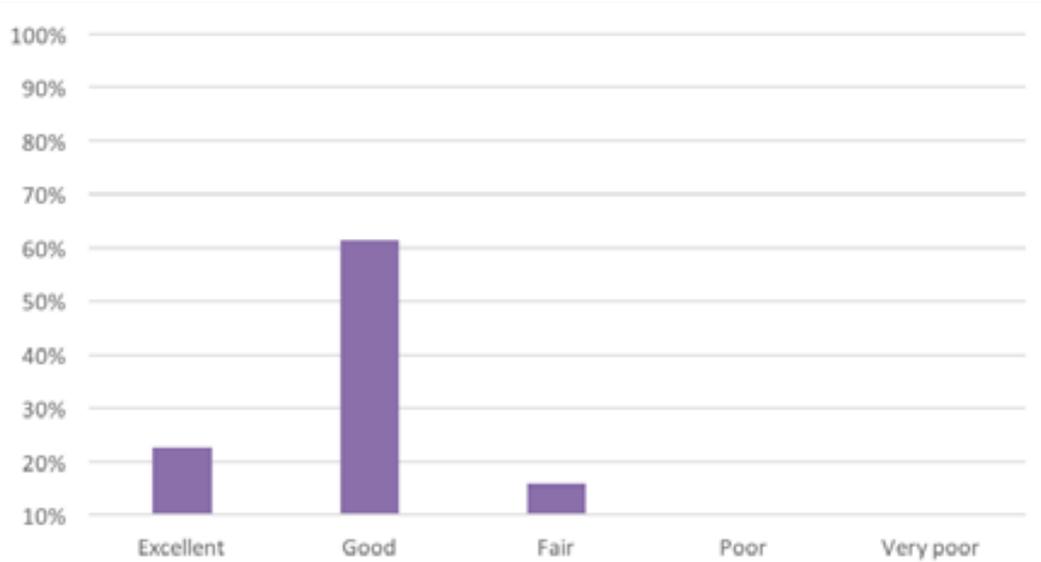
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	16%
Good	64%
Fair	20%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

**Do you have any comments about your work life balance?**

- There are adequate study days if you are organised!
- This fluctuates during the course, if you're organised it's fairly easy to maintain a good balance with the exception of exams and when multiple deadlines fall at the same time.
- I have only had to work on the weekend in the run up to exams in first year. Otherwise we are given enough study days to get the coursework done without it running over to your weekend. The only impact on work life balance has been if I am very tired. The start of placement is always very tiring.
- It is fair, I feel better in second year than first, but maybe I have just relaxed and adopted a 'just pass and get through the course' attitude now first year nerves have gone. If you use your research / study days as 9-5 you will be fine, I have rarely had to do weekend work.
- The course requires a lot of hard work. However, with planning and boundaries you can maintain a very satisfactory work life balance.
- We have a lot of coursework and exams but they feel really important to do in terms of building confidence.
- The workload feels very manageable at present.
- The commute to and from Egham from London 2 days a week takes up some time and can be a bit draining but you get used to it. Although I'm not necessarily using up more time than my role pre-training, I definitely have less energy to do things in my spare time, due to the intensity of the course.
- You need to make it a priority.
- It takes effort to strike a balance, and I think it does for any course. The course is understanding about trainee's need to juggle a lot at once, and the timing of assignments/deadlines reflects this. I find the commuting (to University and placement) quite tiring, but I still have a balance. Perhaps I would like more spare time for friends or energy, but I know that's the trade-off for having the opportunity to do doctoral training. It also depends on personal priorities and what individual trainees need. There are times when balancing becomes more difficult, but that's what you sign up for.
- We are encouraged to find a good balance, but it's difficult everyone wants to do as well as they can.
- I find it pretty good. There's enough academic work to be done learn, but not so much that you're working on it all the time. I spend quite a lot of my weekends doing non-DClin stuff. I do tend to have to work for about an hour later than I'm supposed to on placement days in order to finish my notes, but I don't find this has as a huge impact.
- DClin training will be stressful but so far work life balance has been ok - spring is going to be very stressful though. Deadlines, exams etc.
- I tend to do a few hours at a weekend which I have found very manageable. I have not notice a huge impact on my social life.

- We have lectures on self-care in the first year and we have adequate days to complete work without having to use evenings and weekends (although sometimes this is necessary).
- It can be a struggle but to me they are the realistic challenges of undertaking a clinical PhD. Its only three years.
- It varies depending on deadlines. Deadlines all tend to come at once so work-life balance is less good at this time, but much better at others.
- So far, the demands of the course have not affected my work/life balance in any way. I have done some work at weekends but I have felt fine about this.
- Work life balance is reduced around deadlines, but luckily it's been much better than I expected and we get plenty of study days in which to do coursework too.
- Deadlines could be better timetabled to anticipate increase in demands of course (e.g. at present they are close together, when we have had 3 months without deadlines).
- I've managed the balance quite well so far (apart from killer commutes in the first few months but I moved) because I try to use study days, provided by the course, to do all the assignments. Also, holiday breaks are great to catch up with any work/reading.
- I think, like many on the course I have a perfectionist streak and this means that I overthink whether I am putting in the right amount of effort! This can mean I need to put effort into maintaining self-care and taking time out to really make sure I have a good work life balance which is really important for my own mental health and also to remain human and relate well to clients.
- Overall, I think it has been possible to maintain a good work life balance. There are of course some times when a bit more work is required (e.g. deadlines) though I think can be managed with good time-management.
- I don't think it would be realistic to complete the assignments during the study days so it does take up some weekend/annual leave time.
- The work life balance aspect is very changeable - sometimes you are not too busy and you can take a breather, other times you have to work incredibly hard for long periods of time. I've found it very difficult to take my annual leave, because we have so many requirements to meet. Having said that, I think I have learned a lot about how to pace myself, and how to manage intense pressure.
- It can become all-encompassing and at times it is very difficult for the course not to consume your life.
- There are times (around course work deadlines) when you have to put in a few extra hours but I have found that if you make use of study days and plan ahead you don't have to really use too many evenings and weekends to meet the demands of the course. I think the course encourages a work life balance and I definitely think it is important to maintain this. I haven't found that the course has impacted too much on my social life.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- We are paid a good salary to train, a lot more than our NHS colleagues.
- Fine overall. Haven't struggled with money, still able to afford to go on holiday etc.
- Good, I am outside London so money goes a lot further, we get paid well as trainees.
- I work part time so pay is low but manageable.
- It's difficult to have placements in North London but our base is in Egham. Travel costs can only be claimed if travelling to placement costs more than travelling to your base- so if you live in London (which most people do) you won't often be able to claim any travel expenses back.
- Travel to Egham can be expensive £25 a week for the two days, but it is affordable on our salary.
- In my opinion, we are paid well for being trainees. Living in London is very expensive but the salary is manageable. The only thing that's a bit annoying is all those train tickets to Egham.
- Really great, and comfortable. But I'm also not making any major purchases (buying a home or planning a wedding), so that would make a difference. My only issue would be the increased cost of travel due to our "base" being in Egham, so to claim travel expenses from the trust it would need to be greater than travel from your residence to campus. This is more than other London courses would pay, but on the other hand it is nice to get a break from the city. The campus is beautiful, and there's a lot of green and fresh air. I think there's also a strong sense of cohesiveness within our cohort that comes from being away from any distractions and from traveling together there and back. It feels special.
- We get inner London weighting, so our salary is about 31150 per year. This works out at about £1800 per month minus tax, NHS pension, NI and student loan. This is a comfortable salary for North London with room to save a bit of money.
- The salary for clinical means that I do not have the pressure of finances impacting on my studies.
- There has been a great deal of debate and confusion regarding tax rebates the HMRC widening access scheme, with tax rebates being started then halted and uncertainties over whether that money will have to be returned.
- We get inner London weighting on top of the salary which is great
- Cost to travel to Egham is high.

- Travel to Egham twice a week and a placement far from where I live has meant I spend £250 a month on transport for training.
- Commuting to Egham can be expensive but you get Xmas/Easter and summer breaks so it's not too bad.
- The salary is very good. There has been some confusion around whether we are applicable for the Widening Access for Training Scheme which would mean that we don't have to pay tax or national insurance. Payroll and HMRC communication with us has been very poor and at the moment we are uncertain about whether we will be asked for money back.
- I feel that we get paid a fair salary for the work we do. It, can however, be very costly to get to university, especially during long teaching blocks.
- Obviously we are very lucky to be paid what we are in comparison to other colleagues, it is enough to live a decent standard of living.
- My pay increased when I got onto the course so I feel like I have enough money to do most of the things that I want to. Travel to Egham can be expensive a car share is much better if a few people live in the same area.

### **What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?**

- The cohort, experience gained on placements, opportunities to work in a variety of different services.
- The supportive cohort has been absolutely essential
- The cohort. I think our year have bonded very well and provide great peer support.
- The cohort - the people on the course are great, all very supportive. RHUL encourages supporting each other rather than competing with each other. It's also a nice size group just under 30 people, so you know everyone quite well.
- Love teaching days, get to learn new information, have interesting debates and spend time with my lovely cohort. Love my placement days too getting to apply what I have learnt. Royal Holloway seems a supportive down to earth course, not competitive or pressurized in the same way I have heard others being. I am enjoying training so far (half-way through).
- Placement. Clinical teaching.
- The variety of placements
- The cohort- everyone is incredibly engaged, with a very broad range of experience and we learn from each other. It's a very supportive course, and staff are very encouraging of us developing specific interests in modes of therapy and have facilitated extra lectures/talks on issues the cohort have felt are important.
- The positive and nurturing attitude of the staff and course as a whole.
- Lectures that are critical. Unfortunately, this has been a rare occurrence.
- The cohort! It's a really great bunch of people who are both supportive and fun. The variety of placements we have access to is pretty good too and generally the lectures are interesting and engaging.
- The teaching and discussions we have as a cohort during lectures. Working with clients. Being surrounded by a lot of interesting and caring people who want to make a difference.
- Training with a big group of people. Travelling to Egham for the course is actually (on reflection) a bonus. It makes the group very cohesive and close, and you need your peers during this training.
- Difficult to say. I have a great cohort of diverse individuals with different interests and backgrounds, but we are all similarly really caring people - lots of empathy and it feels safe to disclose things and talk about anything. The course staff are also very approachable and supportive, which is a huge

factor for me. It's really containing, and they get to know each of us. Also the solid foundation provided by the teaching is brilliant.

- Everyone is friendly and supportive of one another.
- Peers and placement
- From speaking to other trainees at other London courses and elsewhere, I think the real strength of RH is that it takes a very pragmatic, moderate view on all issues. By this I mean the teach you an unbiased plurality of approaches, but also focus very much on covering all the practical issues you need to practice clinically, the 'need-to-knows'. That and the fact that they take really good care of their trainees.
- My cohort, the support from staff, some very interesting lectures.
- The supportive ethos that many of our course feel defines it from other centres. This trickles down to the relationships that the staff have with the trainees and how the cohort maintains its cohesiveness and mutual support. This is also seen in the active recruitment and involvement of service users to the teaching, research and management.
- The cohort! Using each other as a resource and source of support has been so valuable and made this whole transition so much easier.
- Placement, the cohort, we've had some excellent teaching e.g. schema therapy and PTSD in CYP.
- I have enjoyed all aspects of the course so far. I feel very privileged to be able to go to university twice a week and learn from experienced Psychologists. I have enjoyed sharing the experience with 28 others and being able to speak through any concerns with them.
- The support from my cohort and the learning experiences both through taught lectures and on placement
- Support from the University (including staff, years above and my cohort) and brilliant placement experience
- Learning more about the breadth of mental health difficulties that exist via lectures and face to face client work, and getting paid to do so!
- I have really enjoyed the diversity of my placements and having the opportunity to try lots of different potentially specialisms. I have also been very lucky to be part of a great cohort who get on so well and are very supportive of one and other.
- The teaching has been great. We have had a number of external lectures who are very knowledgeable in their field and I have found them to be very engaging and relevant to placement.
- I really enjoy the variety of things that we get to do. I like having a mixture of teaching, placement and research and my placements have been really varied and interesting. I have been lucky to find a thesis topic that I am really interested in too. It never gets boring! I have also enjoyed meeting all the people in my cohort, I think they all help to make the course more enjoyable.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- I think the course need to improve their management and organisation of the research side of things. Some of the personal tutors need better training with meeting trainees needs and need to dedicate more time to this.
- Obviously people don't usually like the commute out to Egham for lectures, but you get used to it. You go there twice a week in year one and two and hardly at all in third year unless you are recruiting from there. The course staff are generally pretty supportive.
- Maybe bring some of the thesis stuff earlier on, seemed a bit rushed in the summer of first year with everything going on. Also the speakers who get consistently bad reviews for teaching, just remove them and find someone else.

- It is very structured and nurturing.
- The course is not dynamic or critical, but they are supportive in helping as many trainees as possible graduate - they aren't trying to catch you out.
- I heard before applying that RHUL is a friendly course with a relatively non-competitive culture - that has in general been my experience. The grounds at Egham are lovely and it's nice to be out of London 2 days a week.
- Trainees here are high achievers, hardworking, passionate, and reflective; but also balanced individuals with a sense of humour! It doesn't feel overly pressurising, even though there's a lot going on its just right.
- It's a really fantastic course. The teaching is pluralistic and inspiring, and the department is very supportive and encouraging. The cohort I'm in is also a really great group of people from a variety of backgrounds. I'm really pleased I ended up going here, though I knew little about it when I applied. The overall ethos of the course emphasises the scientist-practitioner model and service-user involvement in research and clinical practice. The only real problem I can think of is that the placements are in North London and the University is in the South East, which means it make sense to live in North/Central London, but you will have a two hour commute into RH on lecture days (typically two days a week) and not be able to claim any NHS travel expenses. However I don't think this is a huge problem.
- It is a great course I am so pleased with all aspects of it.
- I think royal Holloway is a great place to study and I'm really glad I am on the course here. I find the lectures interesting and they stretch me, without being too difficult. They complement my placement. The staff and really nice and approachable and the cohort are lovely.
- The only downside is the travel, but you tend to travel with other people. My commute is about 1 hour 45 each way, and it really doesn't feel that long. If travelling is putting you off royal Holloway, don't let it.
- The journey from London to Egham can wear thin but it is worth it. Travelling in with your cohort on teaching days is something we look forward to.
- I like RHUL more flexible approach relative to what I have ascertained from working with trainees on other London courses. They are supportive and personable, which suits me to a T.
- Do not underestimate how tiring the travel can be!
- Otherwise it has an extremely friendly atmosphere which has been really helpful in dealing with the anxieties of starting training.
- The course actually does try to improve every year which is based on feedback form every cohort. And they do listen and amend things if they can. There are also many opportunities for trainees to get involved with various initiatives all along. The cohort is somewhat large and it is difficult at times to integrate with everyone but overall this University is really good (it was my 1st choice so my view may be slightly biased).
- RHUL is a great course to attend. Most of the time I feel engaged and interested in the teaching provided and connected to my very friendly cohort who are supportive and reflective and bring to the course of a range of life experiences, which include lived experience of mental health difficulties. There is an openness and willingness to share in lectures and to keep reflecting and asking questions to help us to understand the material further with the aim of integrating our learning into our work with clients and teams. Course tutors are approachable and supportive and willing to listen where there are placement issues and changes need to be made to support trainee's experiences (e.g. advocating for a change of placement). I feel it's one of the London courses which supports a greater degree of cohesion amongst trainees and open reflection where things are difficult or stressful rather than encouraging us to be stiff upper lipped and put on our expert masks at all times! I'm so glad I applied and was accepted to train here.
- I am really enjoying training at RHUL. I feel as though it is a very easy going course (compared to others).

- We were encouraged to discuss any stresses or difficulties we may be having even before we felt they were 'big enough' to raise. I would really recommend doing this as the staff are very approachable and supportive.
- Don't believe the narratives around certain courses, if you want to be a particular practitioner i.e. very reflective, you will become that person regardless of the course you are on.
- I think that overall the course is well run. I would like to have more emphasis on personal therapy on the course with perhaps some more affordable options. I think it would be helpful as a learning experience to have personal therapy.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- online judgement test, 3 interviews (research, academic, service user)

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	30%
Placement	50%
Personal Study	10%
Research	20%

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# Sheffield University

27 responses (50% of 54 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	44%
Year 2	30%
Year 3	26%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	15%
25 – 29 years	63%
30 – 34 years	7%
35 – 39 years	7%
40 – 44 years	7%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	19%
Twice	52%
3 times	11%
4 times	7%
5 times	11%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	4%
MA	7%
MSc	63%
MRes	11%
Diploma	4%
Post Graduate Certificate	11%
Conversion course	0%
None	19%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	19%
3 years	33%
4 years	15%
5 years	11%
6+ years	22%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	74%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	44%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	19%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	11%
Research Assistant	37%
Voluntary Research Assistant	22%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	59%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	4%
Other	11%

# The selection process

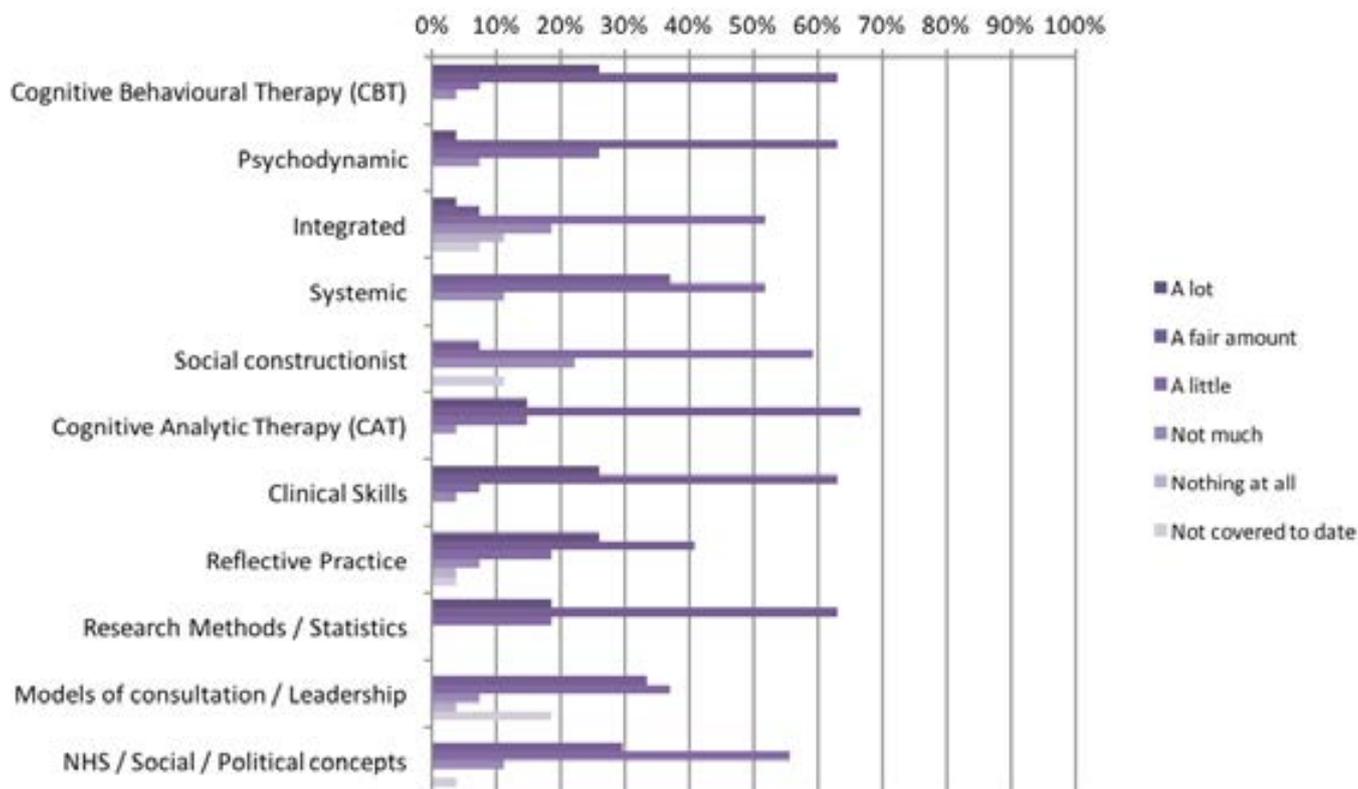
## What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Very supportive and fair, explained clearly what was to be expected and tested different aspects so was some leeway to do less well on certain parts.
- Opportunities to show 'true' me through series of different interview tasks.
- All the staff were really friendly and considerate of the fact that we were all nervous. Current trainees were there to answer any questions or just for a chat which was really helpful. The interview itself was quite intense, due to the multiple parts - group task, written task and clinical interview but it went really quickly.
- I was really nervous about the day but once I arrived I felt much calmer as the trainees and tutors running the day were really supportive. There was plenty of time for questions and the whole process was not as daunting as I first thought it would be.
- Friendly day. It's quite a long day though with the different tasks.
- Statistics and critical review of a research paper task. A group task and an interview. The whole day was very friendly and trainees were on hand to answer questions and re-assure candidates.
- Obviously nerve-wracking but the actual interview was over very quickly. The group task was fine and it was quite nice to meet a group of applicants. Tests were quite stressful but seemingly it was all okay in the end.
- Good idea having current trainees on hand on interview day. They helped take our minds off the competition element, as all candidates sat together. Group task and interview questions felt like a useful way to demonstrate skills and knowledge. The maths test was unclear as to how it would be used.
- Well organised, very friendly team. There is a group task, statistics section and then a personal interview with a brief role play.
- I enjoyed the interview experience for Sheffield much more than another interview I had at a different University. When I arrived, the people were friendly and we were given clear instructions about what to expect on the day. I found the group task to be really interesting and enjoyed being given an opportunity to interact with the other applicants. I did not like the written task - I found it really difficult and felt like I had done terribly when I came out. The interview itself was not half as bad as I was expecting, although I felt some parts I answered well and others I answered terribly. I really enjoyed doing a role play in my interview. It helped me relax and I appreciated being given a chance to show skills that won't come across in an application or in interview questions.
- The interview process felt fair, there is a range of tasks on the day to assess you across a range of competencies (i.e., group working, reflection, clinical skills, and research skills).
- Very good. I felt very supported by the trainees that were helping out, while going through the difficult process of interviewing and group task.
- A long day but generally very supportive. There are lots of tasks but that means that if you mess up on one all is not lost.
- I felt well supported. Sheffield had a really good feel compared with other course interviews I attended and I came feeling that it was my favourite. The atmosphere was nice.
- Scary, but lots of smaller tasks gave lots of opportunities to show my strengths.
- It was a difficult day, but the course was very supportive and managed to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- They were supportive and containing.
- It sounded really intense to read about the interview process, but on the day it wasn't as bad as I'd anticipated. Everyone was really friendly and things we put in place to help ease your nerves, such

as a room to study/gather yourself. I also liked that it had lots of elements to it i.e. test, interview and group task. I felt worried about the test but I think I'm better at interviews, so it was good that all decisions didn't hinge on one thing.

- I enjoyed the experience as a whole. Having current trainees helping in the process was useful and helped to dissolve a little of the tension in the interview group. The three portions of selection felt distinct and contained allowing me to mentally prepare for each one as it was needed. The anxiety and pressure felt very real; however, this felt the same as a "normal" interview just that it was stretched out over a few hours as opposed to being over in 40 minutes or so.
- It was good because I had a morning slot was finished by the early afternoon. Great having trainees there to talk to and the staff on the day were really supportive. The interview was tough but got through it.
- It was an intense day, but the staff were very welcoming. Although daunting, it was useful having different aspects to the selection process (e.g. group interview, written test, maths test and individual interview) as it gave you a chance to show strengths in different areas. I got the sense from the course that you didn't need to be strong in all areas and if you struggle with maths then that was ok.
- Fairly straight forward. It was what I expected. It was a long day but all the staff and trainees supporting the day were really friendly and welcoming. I felt it was a nice atmosphere in the department, in line with the supportive course ethos.
- It was a really long day for me as I was one of the last to interview - starting around 8.45am and finishing about 3.30pm. The current trainees helped with answering questions and were helpful additions to the day. I feel that the process (group task, academic task, interview) is quite a well-rounded way of selecting trainees as it does not all feel like it comes down to one single task, instead, you have different ways of showing your abilities which does feel fairer.
- I thought that the different components allowed you to demonstrate different skills and I enjoyed the group task. However, I did find it to be a long and intense day.
- The interviewers were extremely friendly and put me at ease, reducing my anxiety. I enjoyed having other trainees around so we could ask questions which the answered honestly. Having the trainees there was very containing. In terms of the tasks the group task was better than I had experienced on a previous trainee interview. You are given quite a bit of time so it feels like you are not fighting to say something because you're so time pressured. The academic task was a mixture of stats and critiquing a paper. Some of The questions asked on the maths paper were unexpected (algebra which I hadn't looked at for years). I think these questions should be more related to the type of statistics we do in psychology as I have never had to use algebra on the training course thus far! I think it gives people who have already had an interview previously or know people on the course an unfair advantage.
- Varied tasks, well supported by current trainees.
- The interview was a half day therefore quite stressful in of itself. The staff and current trainees were very supportive and welcoming. I found the interviewers to be friendly and felt that they were interesting in getting the best out of me.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



**What other topics are covered by your course?**

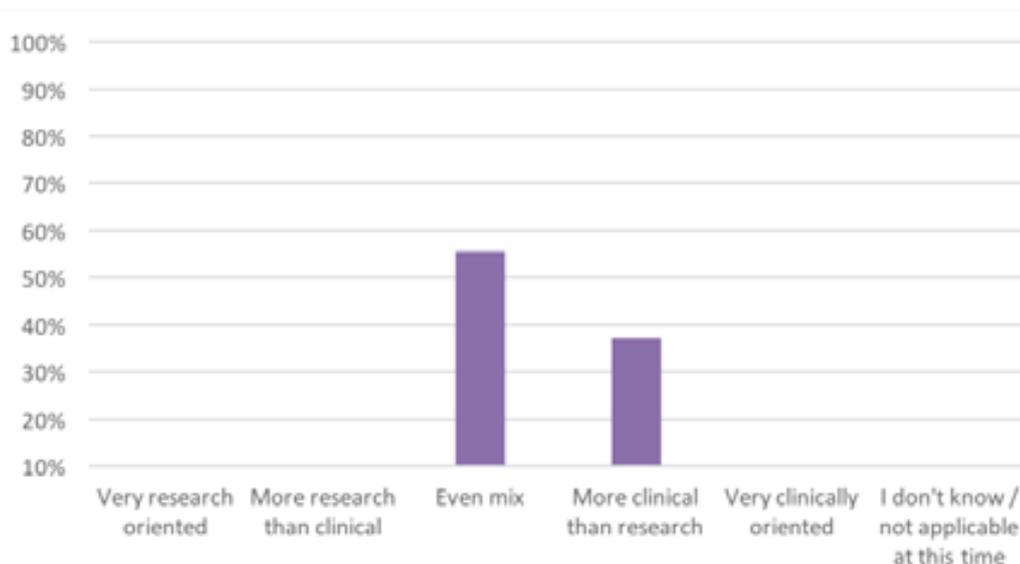
Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	70%
Mindfulness	70%
Schema Therapy	7%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	26%
Solution Focused Therapy	37%
Neuropsychology	85%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	67%
Other	7%

**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

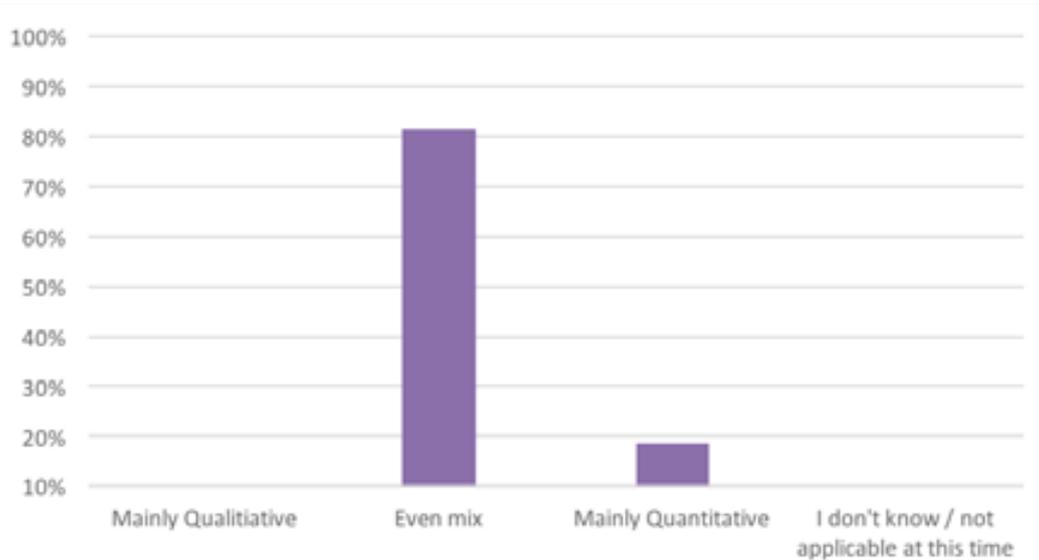
- A really wide range which is great.
- I think Sheffield do more CAT teaching compared to other courses.
- There is a good mix of teaching, some of it is covered further into the year than we would prefer.
- There seems to be a good spread. Sheffield is quite a CBT, psychodynamic and CAT course but it is good to have such experts as part of the teaching staff.
- The course focuses on CBT and a relational model (usually CAT or psychodynamic). This is reflected in the staff team. There is very limited teaching on third wave models.

- More focus on third-wave therapies would be good. More CBT at the start of the course would be useful. No set teaching days on other approaches e.g. DBT which would be useful.
- We could have more basic CBT training. We have quite a lot of CAT teaching.
- I think the course provides more CAT teaching than perhaps the average course to reflect the expertise in the local area. There's an even spread of other models, almost everything gets covered, with the exception of schema therapy. There isn't lots and lots of teaching on CBT which I've quite liked.
- We've had a good mix of teaching so far, not just CBT, which I am really pleased about.
- Wish there was more third wave.
- Most of my model learning is done on placement, which is a great shame.
- A bit too much CAT teaching.
- I would like more teaching on third wave therapies, but I'm only in first year so it might be that there is more teaching on this later on in the course.
- The first year feels very CBT and CAT heavy. 3rd Wave therapies feel like "niche" additions in the 3rd year. A little more of these approaches earlier in the course could allow trainees to begin to try and develop interests in different therapeutic models; however, teaching time is limited and therefore this is understandably difficult to facilitate.
- It depends a lot on what you do on placement.
- There has been a specific focus on CAT and CBT throughout the course. More breadth than depth with many other models but a lot has been covered.
- There is not much time taken for thinking outside of protocols, and this is reflected in the assessments (i.e., case studies with protocol driven interventions). Other wider issues are not covered (or not covered in enough depth) to enhance our ability to challenge systems or cultures - e.g., social construction, ways of working within the current political context.
- The teaching can feel quite superficial and we get a lot of 'Introductions to...'. "
- I have been happy with the time dedicated to different areas so far.

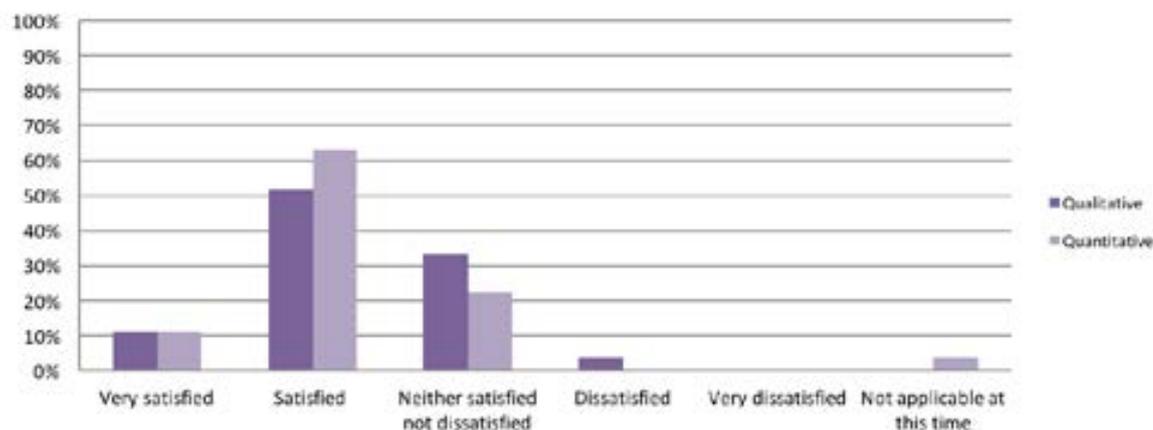
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



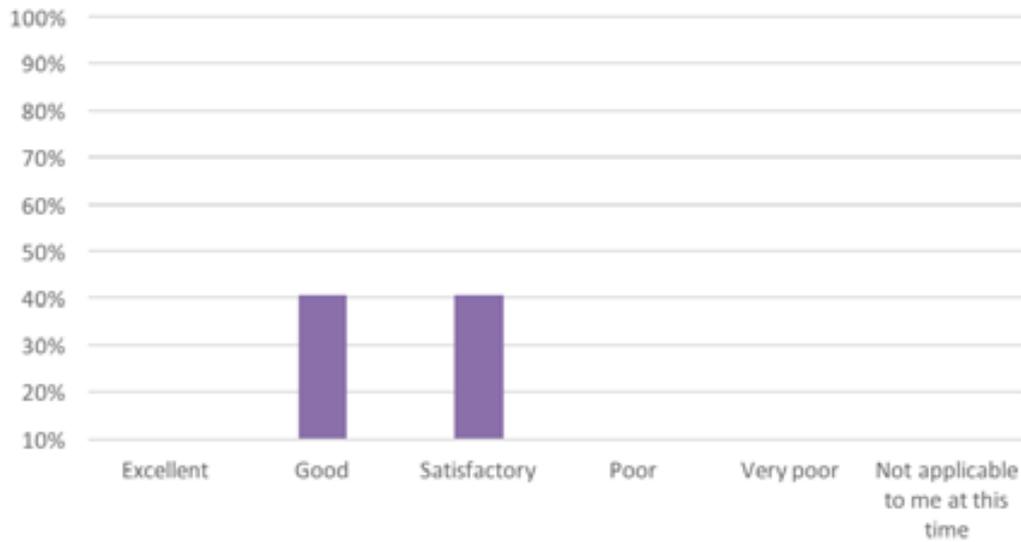
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



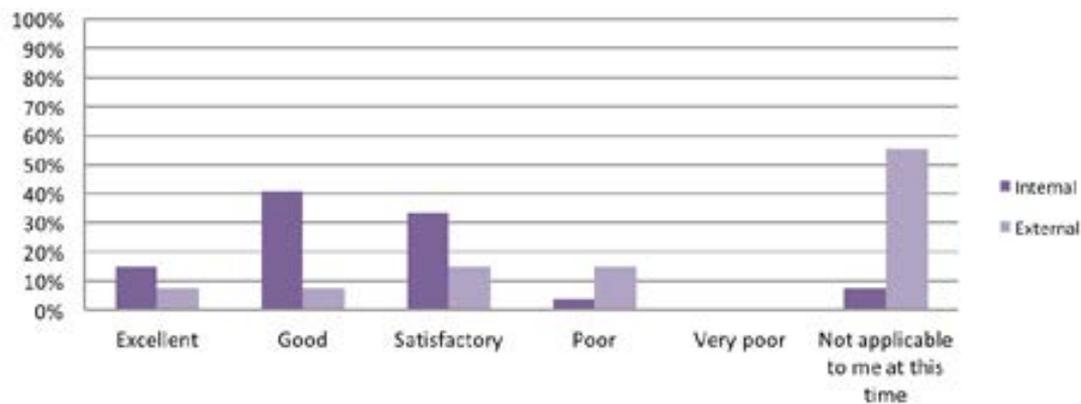
**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- The choice of research projects is narrower than some courses.
- Very wide research teaching but upon completing research there is a lot of additional support/advice from supervisors and statisticians. Only negative is lack of freedom in choosing a research topic, we were very guided by available supervisors.

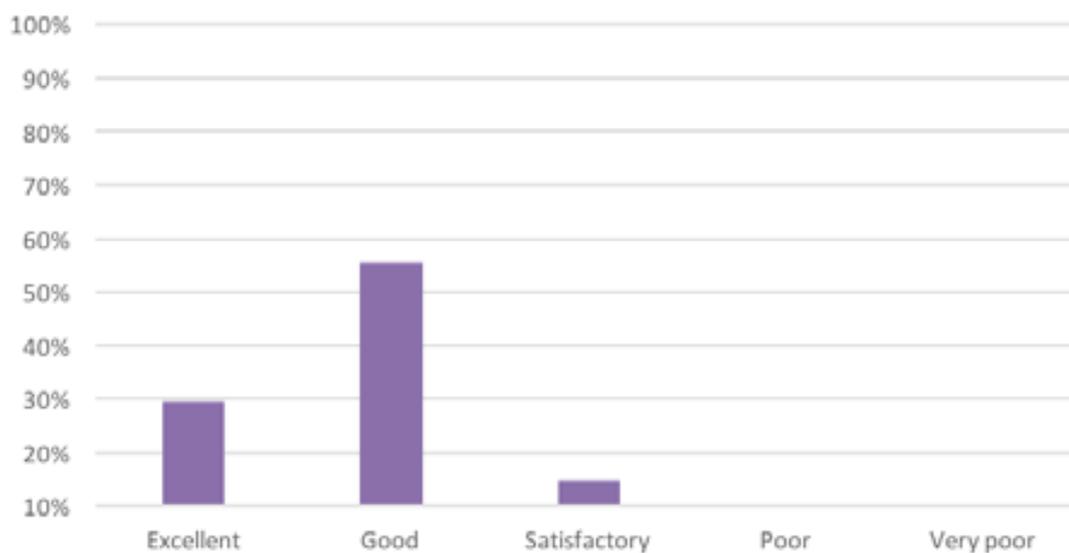
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



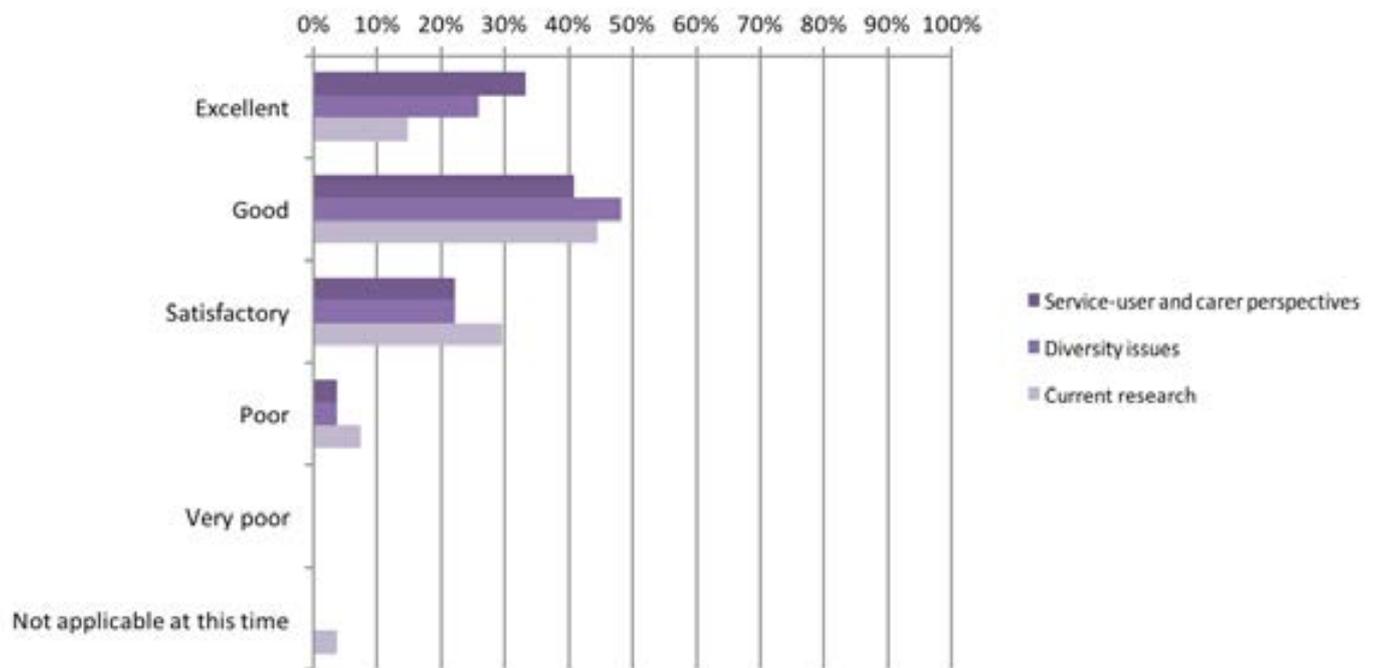
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



### How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



#### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

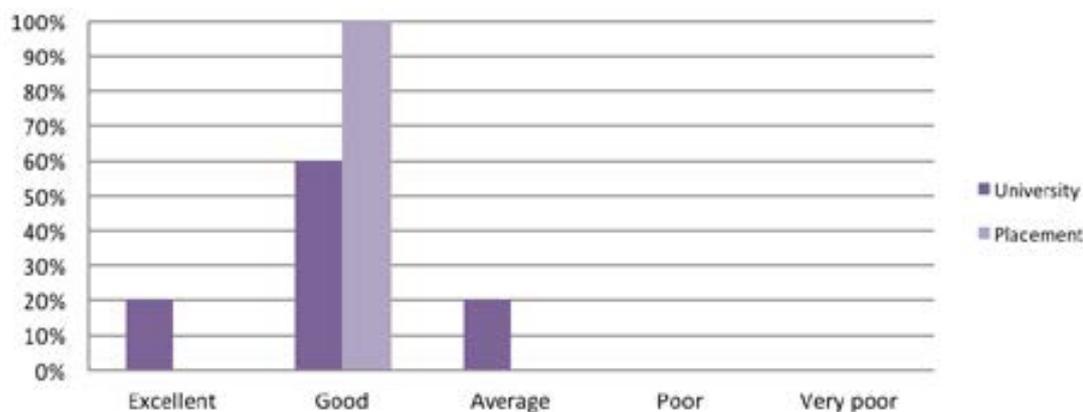
- You get a wide range of teaching from diverse practitioners.
- We have lots of experts by experience which is useful.
- My cohort have really enjoyed sessions that have involved experts by experience and we have feedback to the course that we would like more of this kind of teaching.
- I have really enjoyed the teaching so far, they keep you very engaged and it is challenging but I have learned a lot.
- Some teaching can feel crammed in and other sessions would probably be most useful at other times of year from when they are delivered. Teaching can also be cancelled from time to time then rescheduled on study days, which makes it difficult then to manage your time.
- It feels like more could be done around up to date and hands on understanding of diversity.
- Not sure if teaching is always backed by current research more by current practice.
- Teaching is very experiential and provides opportunities to discuss and practice what is being taught in a safe space.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

18.5% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Choosing a research project, dealing with difficult supervisors.
- Generally balancing the number of demands on training is challenging. There were a lack of study days in first year, but this improved in second and third year. Coursework deadlines are lumped together which is quite stressful.
- There is a lot to think about, and lots of demands to juggle, such as placement demands, academic demands and just general life demands but this hasn't been a negative experience.
- Managing your own anxieties about having to learn everything from scratch. Can be quite daunting but I am learning to embrace it and just learn.
- Balancing research, placement and annual leave is difficult in third year.
- Study days are not always at the most ideal times, meaning deadlines in April and October in the second year are particularly difficult.
- Feeling unsure with regards to what is needed to pass/fail assignments and not knowing who to go to for a clear answer.
- Lots of coursework which falls at once. Managing research project days and study days for other coursework.
- Lots of deadlines all around a similar time. The course requirements and placements do not neatly match up.
- Managing the assignment workload - we have not had a study day every week, we have them rarely which makes it quite stressful trying to find time to complete assignments. Especially for people

who commute or who have children and families to care for.

- I think the latter half of the second year and third year are demanding as there are lots of academic demands at these times. I found the first year very manageable academic-wise, it gave me the space to focus on my placements.
- There is quite a lot of work to do outside of study days.
- You have a lot of different things to juggle plus I commute, so I have noticed greater need to take care of myself. The individual tasks are ok but the combination can be demanding particularly leading up to deadline.
- Lots of different coursework deadlines to “juggle” along with placement and teaching. The course can easily take over!
- Deadlines often seem to be at the same time. This year many have also fallen around Easter, so most staff members have taken leave at a time when we would want to ask questions.
- No - course work is generally tough but it gets done.
- Deadlines being scheduled for the same day.
- Balancing the competing demands of the course seems to be difficult for all trainees, and this has also been my experience.
- There seems to be a non-stop attitude to coursework - at times this can be very overwhelming and feel that coursework requirements come above the actual clinical practice.
- Having several deadlines on the same day.
- Deadlines tend to come all at once, twice a year. Therefore being organised and planning ahead is a must. At certain times there will be several demands placed on you at once e.g. thesis, coursework, clinical work, but I don't think this is unusual for a Dclin course.

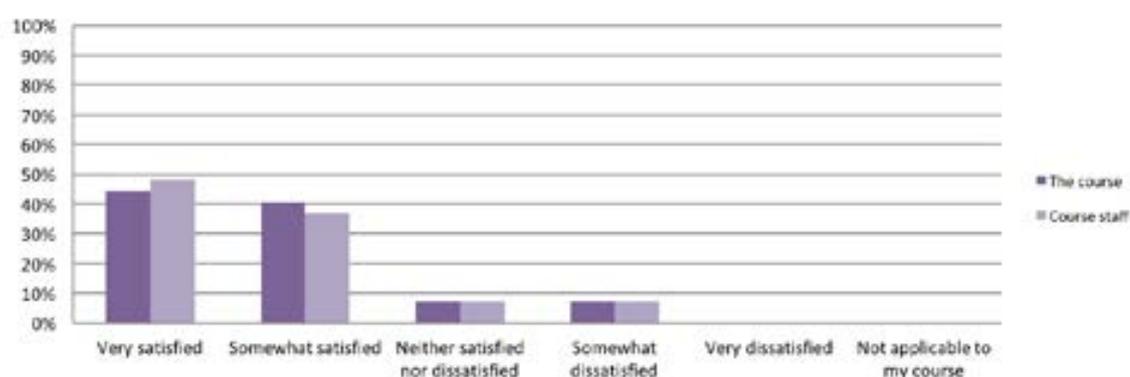
#### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	41%
“Buddy”	100%
Manager	48%
Placement Supervisor	96%
Librarian	37%
Professional Mentor	81%
Personal Tutor	96%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	89%
Independent personal advisor	7%
Other	26%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- Mentor
- Peer supervisor
- Year meetings, academic tutor
- Clinical tutor
- Formal and informal peer support
- Mentor, a clinical psychologist who is not related to the course. Peer supervisor
- There are other department team members who are also very supportive.
- Clinical tutor, mentor

### How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

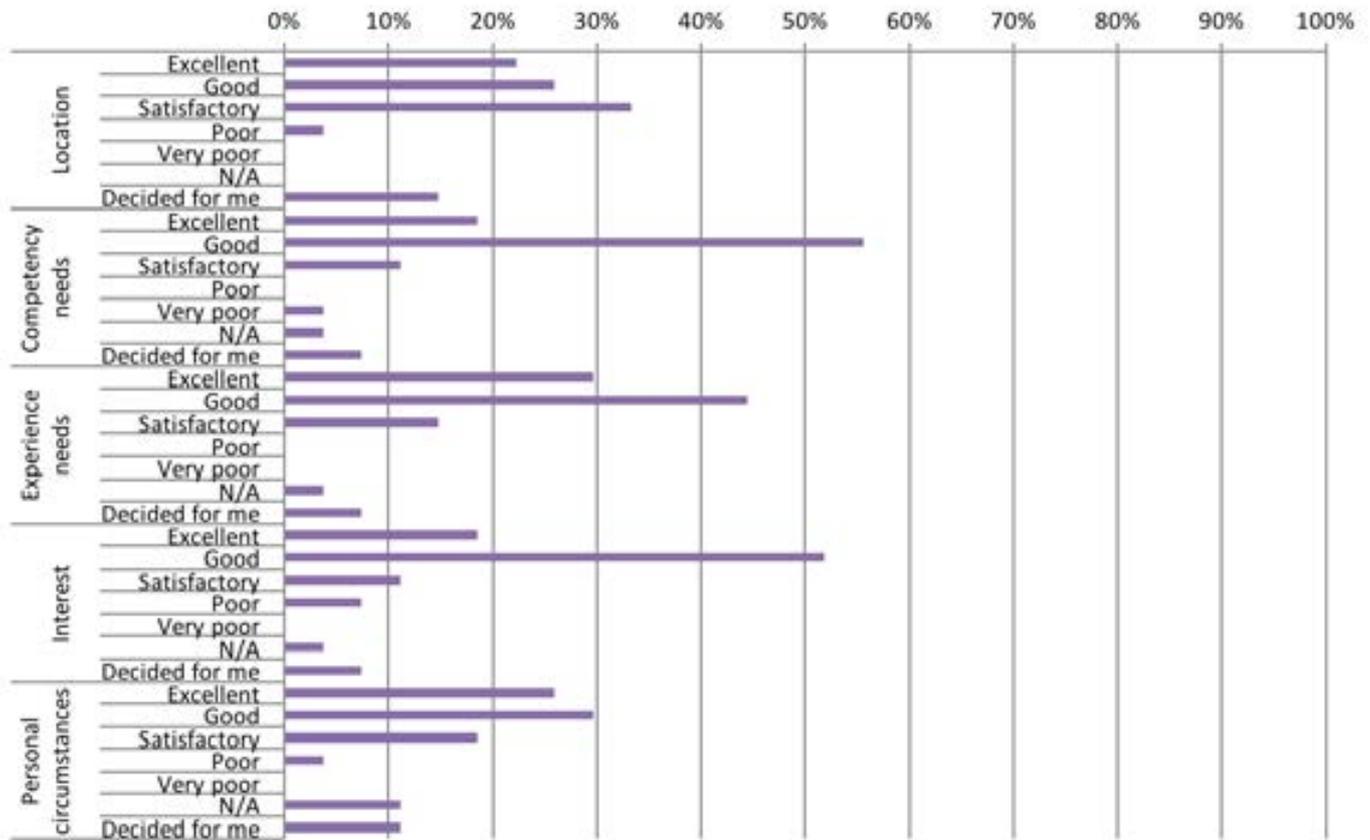


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

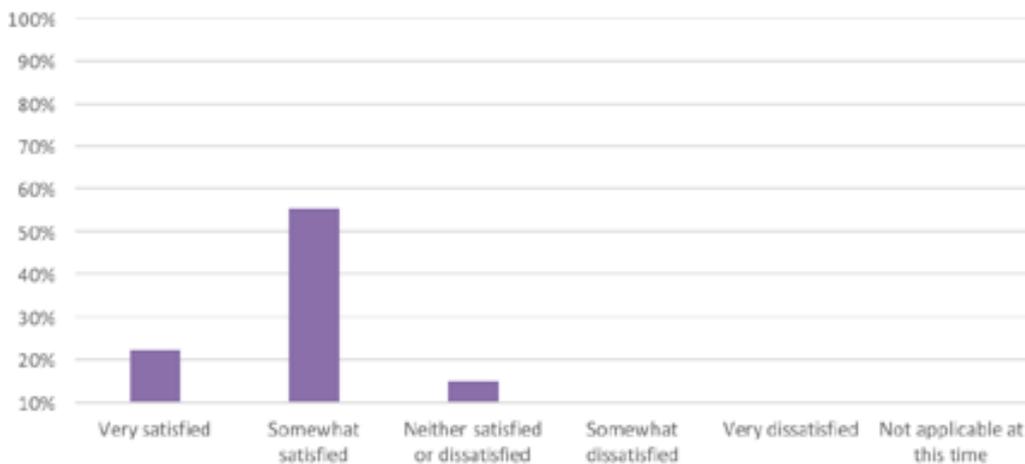
- There are lots of different places that you can get support, so if you don't want to raise something with one person there are many more ways to get help.
- Although we are provided with an 'impartial mentor' the majority of the mentors are well known to the course and the staff, which has felt like they are not completely impartial.
- Support of clinical tutors has been really useful in matching competency needs and guiding case studies.
- Quite difficult to get a good amount of time with your academic tutor as they have so many trainees to meet with
- It is difficult to access staff at times due to many of them being part time. Also with staff holidays our coursework deadlines for reviewing our work have been brought forward. Overall good support.
- Sheffield provide you with a number of support systems, from clinical to academic supervisors, buddies and mentors who work outside of the course. However, I feel that a lot of the tutors on the course work part time which causes problems when you are in need of support on days where they are not in work.
- More difficult with part time staff.
- At the beginning it feels like a lot of support. Some use more than others, it generally feels really supportive.
- The support I have received has been great. I have built particularly supportive relationships with my clinical tutor, personal tutor, thesis supervisors and most placements supervisors.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



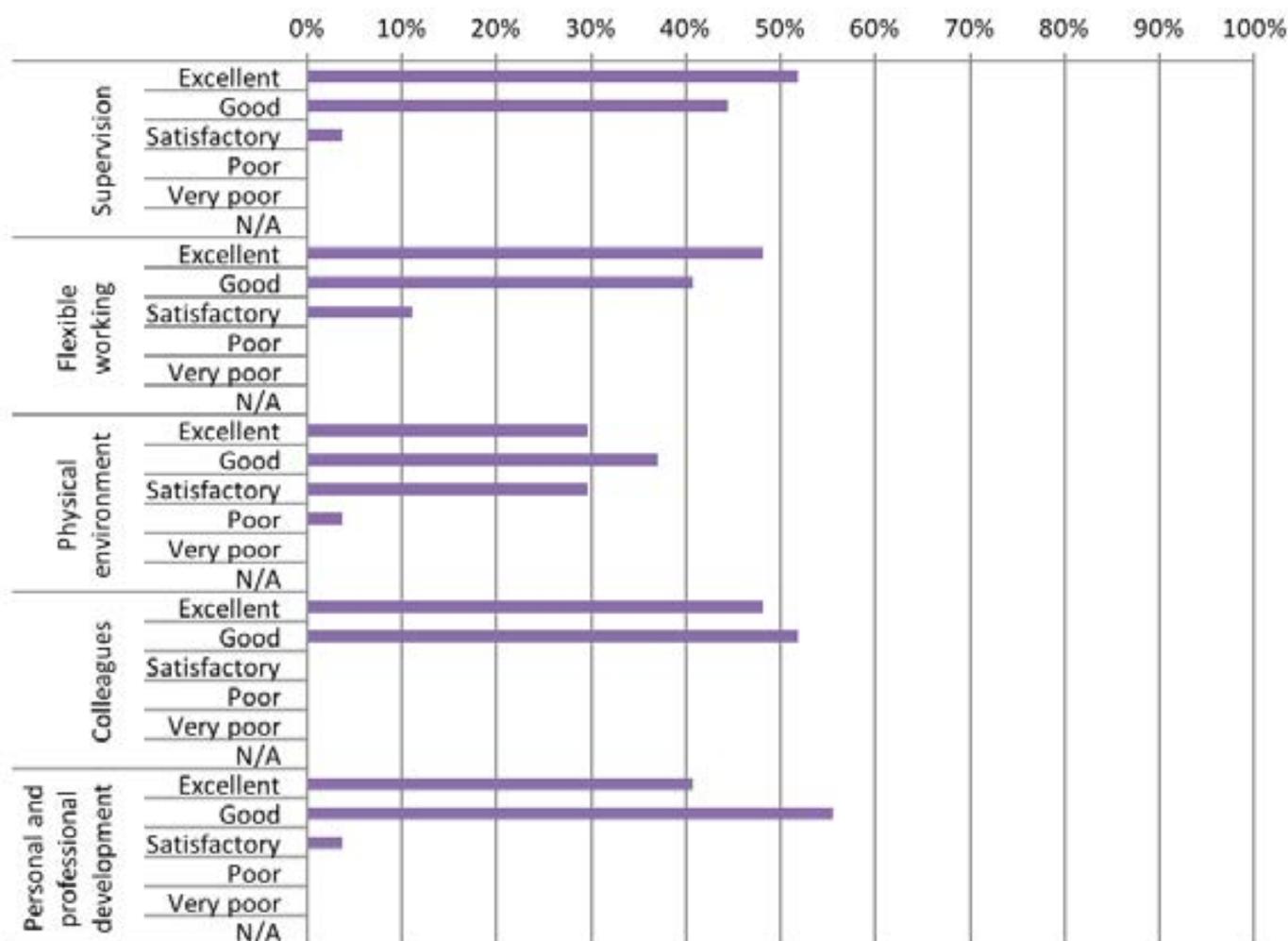
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- We are very much expected to be able to ‘do’ therapy from the beginning, however for some this is a completely new experience and this was not always appreciated.
- Could have more therapy teaching earlier on.
- I am not sure we get that much support before going into placements. I have only had one placement so far and waiting to hear where I am going for my next one.
- We have teaching weekly throughout the course (rather than a few months at the beginning like some courses). So for some people this means they get relevant teaching after they have been on placement. However you are still supported on placement and can do reading, and having the teaching spread out means it is not all forgotten as time passes, plus you get out onto placement and learning quicker.
- Again, limited teaching of models makes me feel ill prepared for placement work, particularly in the first year.
- Could tell us the placements earlier.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- On placement it can be difficult hot desking and as you are only there for a limited time it is difficult to be fully integrated into the team.
- I have had a very good first placement where I have felt fully supported by my supervisor, have had a fellow trainee on placement with me which allowed for peer support, had our own office space and have been given numerous opportunities to develop my competencies. However, i am aware that other trainees have not had this experience.
- I've been very lucky with having a good supervisor for placement one.
- The only complaint would be IT issues.
- There is potential for placements abroad.
- Placements so far have exceeded my expectations. Supervisors have been very flexible and work around my level of competency to really help me improve and learn.
- I thoroughly enjoyed my first placement and had a great variety of experiences.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	41%
No	41%
Don't know	19%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	70%
No	7%
Don't know	22%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Sheffield.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	4%
No	93%
Don't know	4%

### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

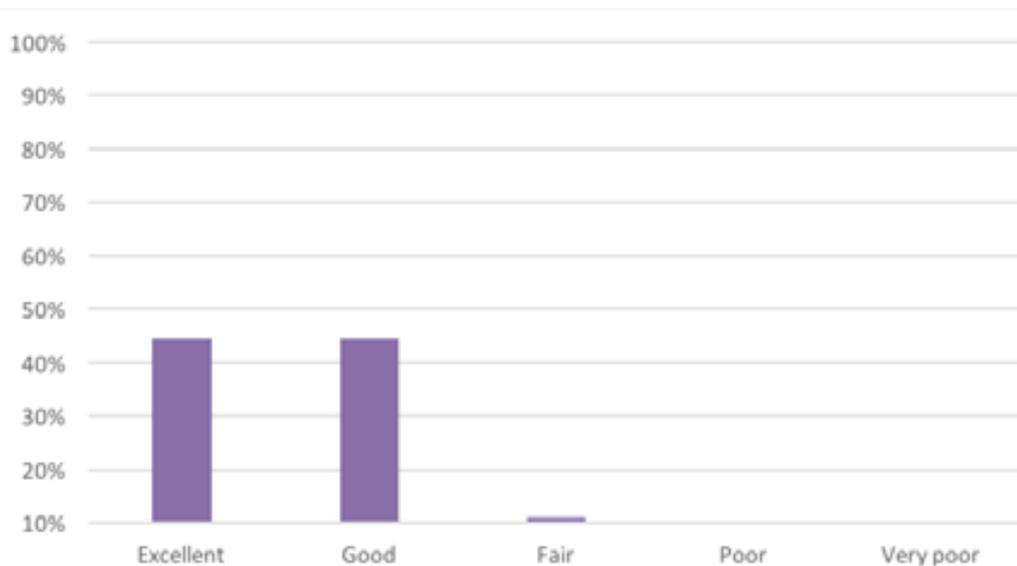
Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	7%
Good	37%
Fair	37%
Poor	19%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- As long as you are organised you can have an excellent work life balance.
- I work hard to maintain this. I understand the need to work outside of work time, and I am happy to do so. I make sure that my evenings are free, however I sacrifice some weekends to complete assignments.
- Generally good but third year is a challenge.
- Work life balance is good in the first year, but poor in the second year.
- Sometimes weekends need to be used to meet deadlines but it could be much worse!
- At the moment it is good, but in the run up to deadlines it will significantly go downhill.
- I have had to give up a lot of my weekends to work in the library because the course have not allowed for weekly study days. We have gone whole months without study days also.
- I commute so I have found the work-life balance difficult at times, particularly leading up to deadlines. We don't get so many study days so we are finding that we need to work at weekends to keep up.
- The course encourages self-care, but it can sometimes be hard to maintain a work-life balance.
- I try to keep a good work/life balance, but it doesn't seem possible on the DClin.
- Very few people seem able to complete academic work without using evening, weekends and even holidays.

- Deadlines are approaching at the moment so it's not great now. But I expect that after hand-in it'll feel more balanced.
- At this point on the course I have been able to manage time demands without the course overly influencing what I am able to do in evenings or weekends and we are actively encouraged to take time for ourselves away from the course.
- If you are organised it is fine.
- I think work life balance is manageable throughout if you put the effort in and manage your time well. I personally have had better and worse periods of time when my balance has been more or less in check. However I have not had to miss out on anything important and I have continued to have a good social life.
- It can feel overwhelming some of the time and it does not always feel that the course is supportive of commitments outside of the course. Although placement supervisors have been very flexible with life commitments, the course is less flexible and it feels like we have to prioritise the course over everything else. However, this is difficult especially as we are required to have so much experience prior to getting on the course that a lot of people are at a point of having families or mortgages (not easily uprooted) and it can feel like we need to be able to leave that at times for the course.
- It is acceptable if you are organised but becomes difficult before deadlines as they all come at the same time.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- You have to take into account the expense of commuting and parking.
- Cannot complain about the financial situation. We are very lucky to receive the banding we get and be part of the widening access scheme so I feel very happy with my financial situation.
- I'm not NHS funded. I'm international and my scholarship provides sufficient living expenses but for considerably less than other trainees.
- I think we are paid well as trainees.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- The support and the way the course constantly adapts to improve.
- Teaching and variety of experiences you get from placement
- All aspects of it are great, however my excellent peer group makes it fantastic!
- My cohort - they are amazing and we are all so supportive of each other.
- Clinical placements and Sheffield is a great city.
- Excellent cohort and the way the course is structured really helps you to bond. The teaching is delivered really enthusiastically and there are interesting placements available.
- Clinical placements professional development, supervision.
- My peers and teaching.
- I really enjoy going to University and learning. I particularly enjoy when experts by experience come in to teach us and think this is an excellent way to teach trainees. I like how interactive the teaching is, and how it always provides opportunities for discussion. I have been able to develop my confidence in speaking in front of others, as this is something I now have to do every week as part of the work we do and I am very grateful for that. I enjoy going on placement to learn about working with different client groups. I also like learning about new models, and delivery different therapies.
- I also feel very lucky for the fellow trainees in my year. I feel we have all bonded and it makes this experience so much more manageable.
- The teaching in varied models and allowing trainees to develop their own interests and specialities rather than feeling pushed towards a particular model.
- Placements. Actual clinical work.
- My cohort, my advice is to get on with your fellow trainees. Teaching from experts by experience.
- I enjoy the teaching and the clinical side. We have become close as a group and have made good friendships.
- The cohort are amazingly supportive! Its hard work but I expected this, and it's what I want to do.
- The best aspect of the course is my clinical work with patients.
- Some of the teaching has been good. Some aspects of placement have been excellent
- I have really enjoyed opportunities for discussion in teaching and placement.
- Personally I have enjoyed the clinical placements and having opportunity to put theoretical learning in to practice. I think learning on the course through teaching and peer supervision has been brilliant. A very supportive and encouraging year group and course.
- Placements.
- The teaching is brilliant lots of diversity and staff are open to improvements. For example we felt we wanted more practical CBT skills as a year so they put on a day for practical CBT skills and several weeks of smaller one hour CBT skills sessions for any one that wanted to go. (Though it wasn't mandatory to go).
- Developing clinical skills

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- It is a real privilege to be on the course, knowing that helps through the difficult times.
- I've been finding it difficult to pursue my interest in Neuropsychology (e.g. on placement or in research) but this may change as the years progress.
- It is a good course with a wide variety of staff interests. You get lots of support - buddy in the year above, external mentor, peer supervisor, line manager/clinical tutor and personal/academic tutor.
- I feel that potential applicants should think about their time management and organisation skills as this course requires a lot of forward planning (e.g. managing two assignments that are due on the same date etc.). Also, with this course and I am sure it is the same with others, you have to hold a lot of information in your head at one time. Talk things through with your cohort in case you've missed something. Don't come onto training in 'competition mode' which I think can happen when you are fighting for places to get onto the course. Once you are on, it's about supporting your cohort and helping each other out. It is not an easy process to get through on your own!
- It would be nice to have more regular study days and I do feel tired sometimes, however we knew a doctorate would be hard work! I am grateful to be on the course and I'm enjoying it.
- Some courses offer financial assistance if you need to stay away, so it's probably worth knowing that Sheffield doesn't do this.
- If you are interested in CAT lots of opportunity here, but there are sites that offer Systemic, CFT, DBT, and Psychodynamic placements too.
- I think it is important to go in to the course with a motivation to maintain your work life balance is important to help sustain it throughout and therefore make the experience more enjoyable. I also believe being open to support (both giving and receiving) is helpful to get through the inevitable challenges of the course.
- I think if the deadlines were more spread out, it wouldn't be as stressful.
- I have had a fantastic experience at Sheffield. It's a lovely city the staff are warm and containing and I've enjoyed all placements.
- Good diversity within cohort.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Tests, interview, role play and group task

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	20%
Placement	57%
Personal Study	20%
Research	3%

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

# Southampton University

19 responses (49% of 39 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	47%
Year 2	32%
Year 3	21%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	89%
30 – 34 years	5%
35 – 39 years	5%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	11%
Twice	26%
3 times	32%
4 times	21%
5 times	11%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	68%
MRes	5%
Diploma	0%
Post Graduate Certificate	37%
Conversion course	16%
None	11%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	5%
2 years	0%
3 years	26%
4 years	26%
5 years	16%
6+ years	26%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	74%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	37%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	68%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	5%
Research Assistant	42%
Voluntary Research Assistant	32%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	47%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	32%
Other	16%

## The selection process

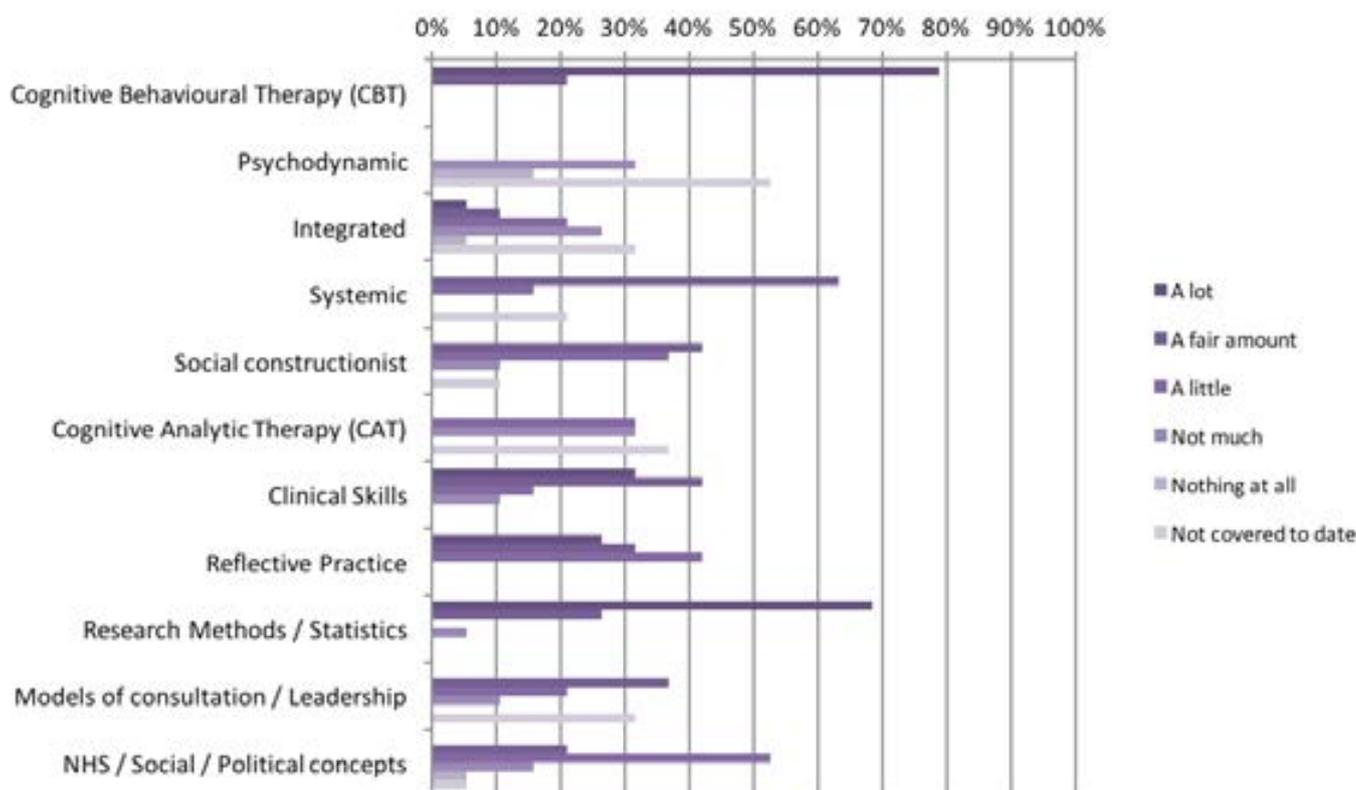
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- The interview process was actually very positive. In each of the interviews it was evident that the panel wanted to see you at your best and were really encouraging. The questions were straightforward and it was clear they wanted to get an idea of what you are like as a person in addition to the skills and knowledge you have.
- The panel want to get the best out of you - pleasant experience
- My interview at Southampton was the one in which I felt more comfortable. The questions are fairly broad and they seem to be really interested in what you have to say. There is also a sense that they have just read your application prior to you coming in, so certain questions are specific to you. There were no “tricky” questions; staff were very nice and welcoming and previous trainees were really helpful. Overall a really good experience.
- As a final year trainee at Southampton, I am aware that the course have more recently added a role play to the interview process. However, the academic and clinical interviews have remained broadly similar to when our year was interviewed. During these two interviews the interviewers were very encouraging and really wanted to get the best from the candidates. Everyone on the day was very supportive and the feedback was very helpful. Overall the process felt very positive and strength based.
- The interview process was not excessively long which helped. It is well organised on the day. The role play gave an opportunity to demonstrate clinical skills. The interviewers are friendly and genuinely want to get the best from you. The trainees available to talk to are really helpful.
- The interviewers were really friendly and welcoming which took some of the stress away. I had three interviews; research, clinical and a role play. The questions were very open, it felt more like a conversation and that they were genuinely interested in your thoughts and experiences and were trying to get the best out of you. There were some first year trainees in the waiting area throughout the day and they were able to answer questions we had and were reassuring.
- The whole day felt very relaxed and supportive. There were current trainees around to help out and answer questions throughout the day. There were three elements to the interview (clinical, research and role play). The interviews felt professional yet conversational; interviewers asked lots of open questions to fully understand what I had said and it seemed that they really wanted to get the best out of you. Definitely the best interview experience that I had.
- The interview felt fairly relaxed and I got the sense that interviewers just wanted to get the best out of me. Current trainees were around to chat to in between interviews and they helped to create a really relaxed and friendly atmosphere.
- Put me at ease having current first years there at hand to talk to. Interview process was straight forward, not trying to catch you out. Everyone was friendly
- I really enjoyed the interview for the Southampton course. Everyone was so friendly and welcoming. There were several current trainees available to talk to which also helped calm the nerves.
- They are supportive. I really appreciate their ethos in wanting to get the best out of you, which reflects in the interview style (encouraging, use of probes to find out more), the availability of current trainees there (to help you feel at ease and answer any questions rather than to rate you, as in other courses) and the admin staff being welcoming. They also provided lunch and refreshments.
- I had a very positive experience of interview overall even though I didn't think I had done that well. The interviewers collect you for interview from a central room, and they were really friendly. There were also some current trainees to chat to, and it helped to reduce my anxiety.
- I enjoyed it and felt the interviewers genuinely wanted to help me to do my best.
- I was really nervous beforehand but felt really at ease during the process. It was great having other trainees to sit with us whilst we waited for each interview. The administrator in charge of arranging the interviews was really helpful as well.

- The interview consisted of 3 parts: a clinical interview, an academic/research interview and a role play. The clinical interview had a service user on the panel. The day as a whole was very relaxed with current trainees on hand to answer questions. There were no strange or unexpected questions and the interviews were more like conversations rather than an interview, as the panel were interested to hear my thoughts/ reflections and would question further (in a supportive way!) if they felt I hadn't quite answered fully.
- All very professional, well organised and run smoothly. Other trainees were around to welcome and answer any queries. It was quite busy in the waiting area with other candidates chatting away which was good as a distraction, but could be a bit much when you want some quiet time to get in the right mind-set. The interviewers were generally welcoming, friendly and fair though some are hard to read so don't be put off by this.
- From start to end, we were made to feel at ease. I found it very helpful to be able to talk to some of the first-year trainees, who gave us an insight into what the course is like. The interviewers were very nice and it really felt like they wanted to get the best out of me. The interview felt more like a conversation, rather than a question and answer type of process.
- The interview day was actually ok. There were two interviews and a role play but all the interviewers were lovely and seemed genuinely interested in what I had to say. There were three questions in each interview with 10minutes per answer. This gave time to really reflect on my answers and show aspects of myself. Current trainees were around throughout the day and were really lovely.
- Really supportive and I didn't feel that any question that they asked was unfair - they seemed to want you to do your best and provide the best answer that you could, rather than trying to catch you out.

## Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



**What other topics are covered by your course?**

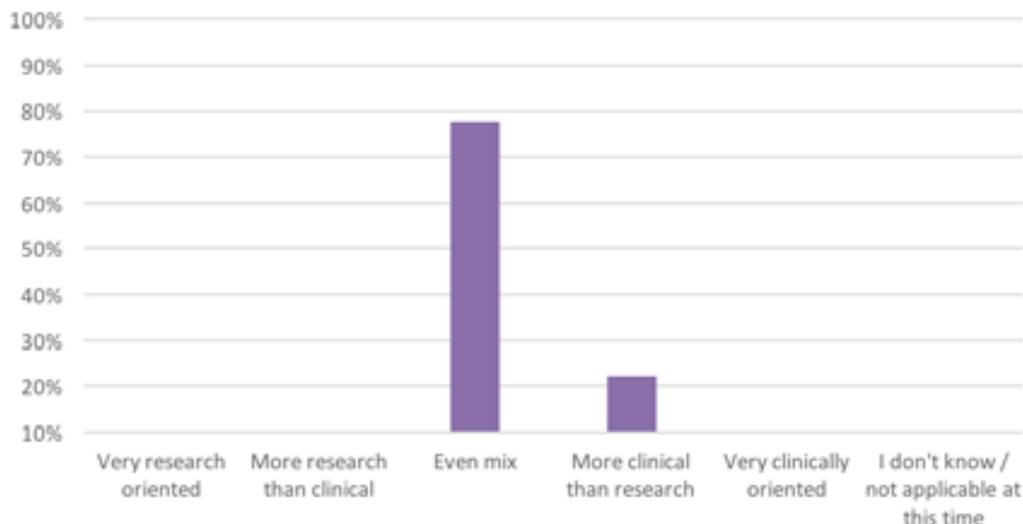
Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	78%
Mindfulness	61%
Schema Therapy	39%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	78%
Solution Focused Therapy	50%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	33%
Other	11%

**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

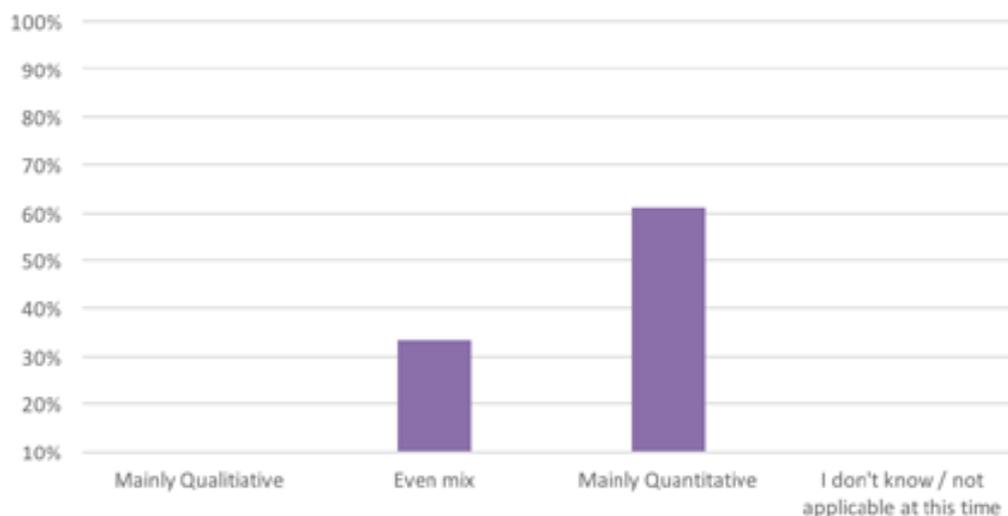
- There is definitely a 50-50 split between research and clinical. The research element is particularly heavy in the first year.
- The third year trans diagnostic module is possibly the best, combining various approaches to work with complex clients
- The course has recently undergone some changes to the timetabling to ensure that there is more of an even split between the two primary models: CBT and systemic. The course is still very CBT orientated, but over time this is becoming more balanced. The course also provides training on evidence based practice which is invaluable.
- The main approaches are CBT and Systemic. We have had a day or 2 on other approaches which is helpful to get an introduction, however we have had to request some of these and take time out of study time. There is research methods teaching for first year which takes up a lot of time, however this does not continue in 2nd or 3rd year. There is quite a lot of neuropsychology teaching in first year which is quite intense.
- The course is very CBT focused with added systemic teaching in the second year. There is a neuropsychology module in the first year which was in depth and was helpful in preparing for some of the first year placements. There were a couple of study days in the first semester however these did not tie in with assignments so did not feel that useful. There is a half day research lecture every Monday and four research assignments to complete in the first year which covers qualitative and quantitative methods.
- CBT is the main model of the course, and the first year has a heavy focus on this. Systemic is the second model, and this gains more coverage in the second year, but it is not equally weighted to the primary model. Year one also covers a neuropsychology module, and several research methods modules. The course have added in more teaching on evidence-based practice which has been a welcome addition. Second year is less model-specific teaching, focusing more on adapting key models for different populations, and there isn't any statistics or research modules other than thesis. We have only had a single day's teaching on CAT, ACT and SFT. We have not yet covered any other specific models, I believe these are covered in third year in more depth along with teaching on trans diagnostic approaches and leadership.
- We have reflective practice for one hour approximately every 6-8 weeks, in addition to systemic round-tables where we can reflect systemically on cases, which are approximately 1.5 hours every 6-8 weeks.
- It feels just right, and the timing of the modules has worked well as it has allowed me to apply my learning on placements. The emphasis on CBT has been useful as it has allowed me to feel confident in a specific model and consolidate those skills, before learning about others.

- There is a lot of statistics. This seems to be more so than other courses (from speaking to friends on other courses). Still in first year and not had systemic teaching yet.
- The University's primary theoretical orientation is CBT, therefore I'm happy with the time split between different modalities.
- There is a trans diagnostic module in final year where different models are briefly covered (one day of teaching each on ACT, CFT, DBT) and we consider how they can be applied trans diagnostically.
- I realise that time is limited but it would be nice to cover a little bit more psychodynamic theory (and the different branches of this which are funded by the NHS).
- The first few months are CBT and neuropsychology heavy to prepare you for placement.
- It is mostly CBT taught with high intensity trainees, we have teaching days dedicated to most common mental health problems. The first year starts CBT heavy then moves into systemic approaches in the second part of the year.
- The main focus is on CBT and then systemic models. As a first year trainee, most of our teaching has focused mainly on CBT so far, however, there seems to be a significant amount of systemic teaching coming up in the next few months. With regards to neuropsychology, we had a whole module at the beginning of our first semester, which felt quite overwhelming at times. However, it gave us a good grounding into the basics of neuropsychological theory and practice, upon which we could continue to build during our placements.
- The course is CBT heavy and time given to third wave approaches is limited. However, the second model is systemic and the course offer more teaching on this.
- There is a heavy focus on CBT in the first year, however the guest lecturers on the various topics include the most relevant therapeutic interventions so we get teaching on DBT, ACT etc.

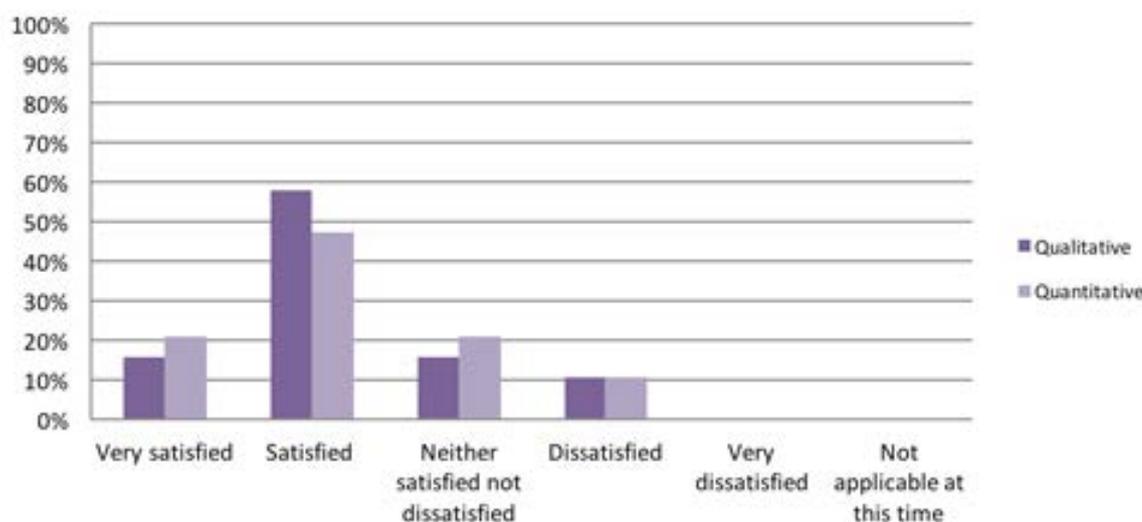
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?

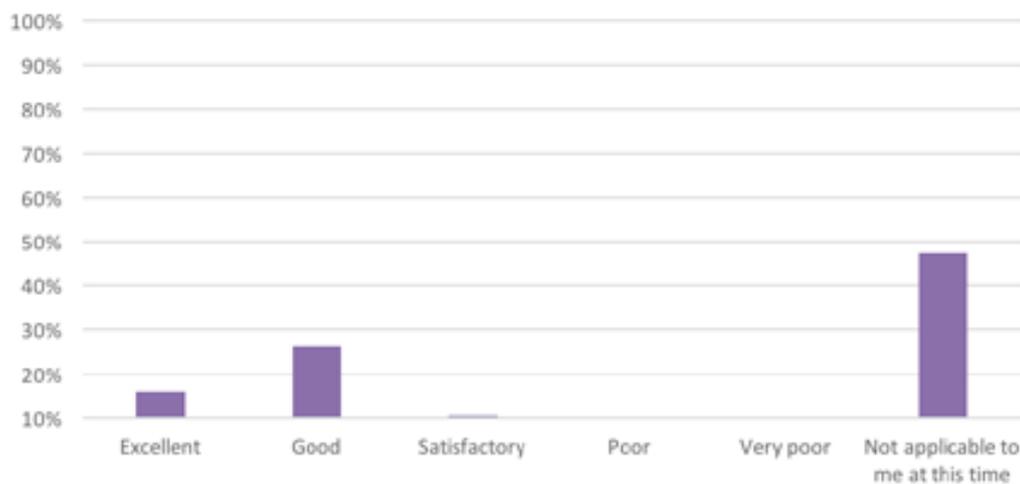


### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

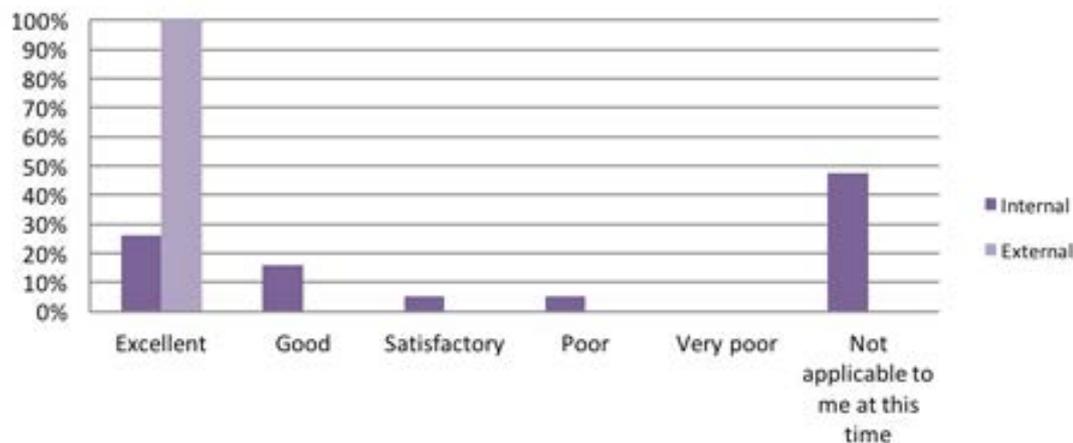
- The DClin department has very close links to the psychology department at Southampton with a vast majority of research interested being supported by a member of the team or wider department.
- There are four research assignments to complete in first year which has felt mainly self-taught as the lectures are read off a slide.
- I think our course has worked hard to provide robust teaching in research and allocate sufficient time to working on this, which is reflected by the fact that we have a research placement (4 months) to work on our thesis. The evidence-based practice module in year one was a helpful addition and well timed with completing SSRP and preparing for thesis. We do not have any teaching on advanced statistical methods. The course is quantitatively focused; the qualitative teaching is a single module which provides a brief overview of approaches and an opportunity to do a brief piece of thematic analysis.
- A lot of the teaching was held with MSc students, which made the group large and if felt difficult at times to keep up or ask questions. The pace was generally a little fast too.
- A lot much statistics teaching and assessment, not needed until third year

- For the quantitative modules, the main lecturers have not been very good at getting concepts across, however there have been some good ones and the teaching assistants have been very helpful. The resources provided for the teaching have been excellent - computer lab and teaching assistants.
- Good quality teaching, high standard of research methods education.
- The research lectures took place in very large groups and very fast-paced at times, which made it difficult to properly understand the concepts. On the other hand, I found the tutorials very helpful as it gave us an opportunity to apply our knowledge to practical research scenarios, and ask questions to the teaching assistants if we needed to.
- Trainees attend teaching with the MSc students in the first year which does not always feel relevant or helpful. There is little provision for people wanting to do a qualitative thesis, however the course will try to accommodate.
- The statistics teaching for quantitative is not particularly useful and you end up doing a lot of individual reading.

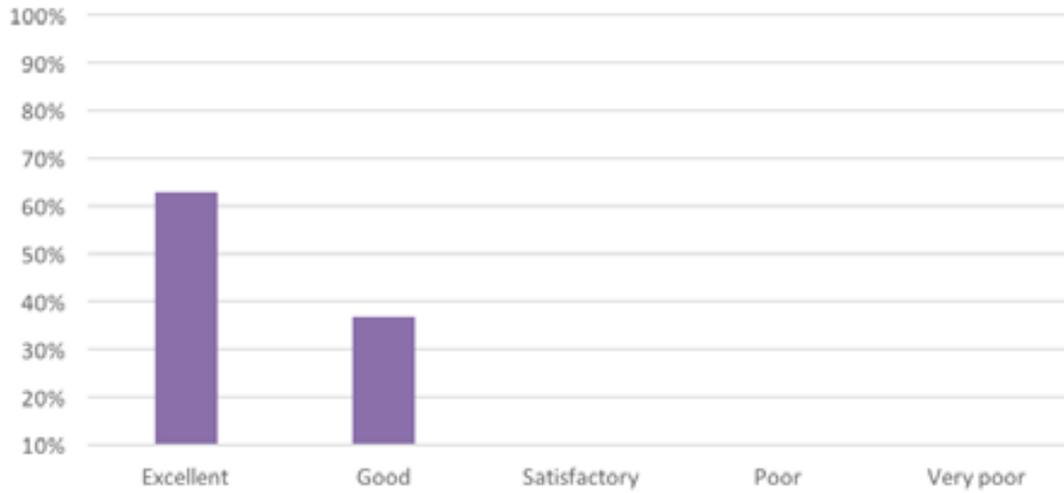
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



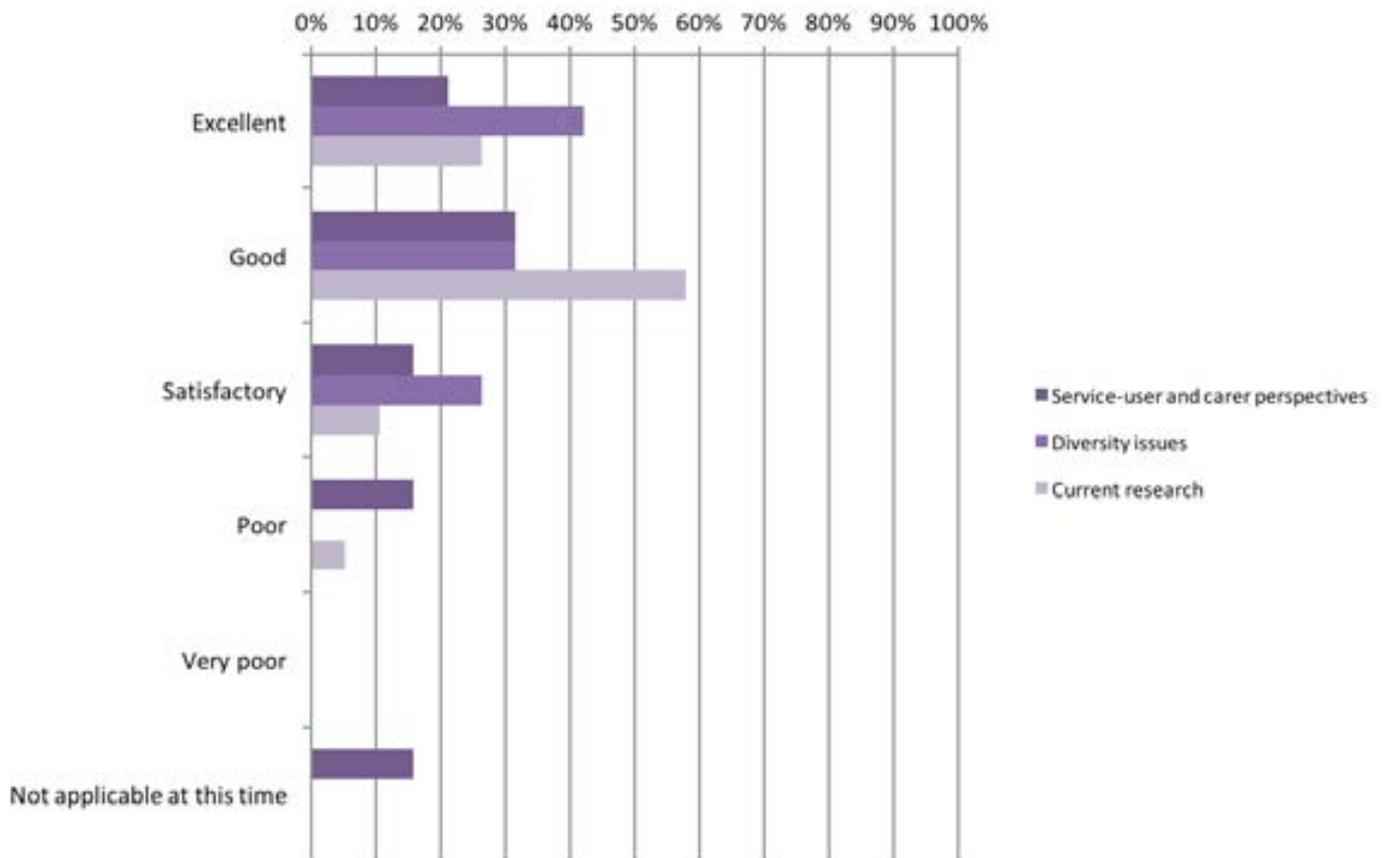
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

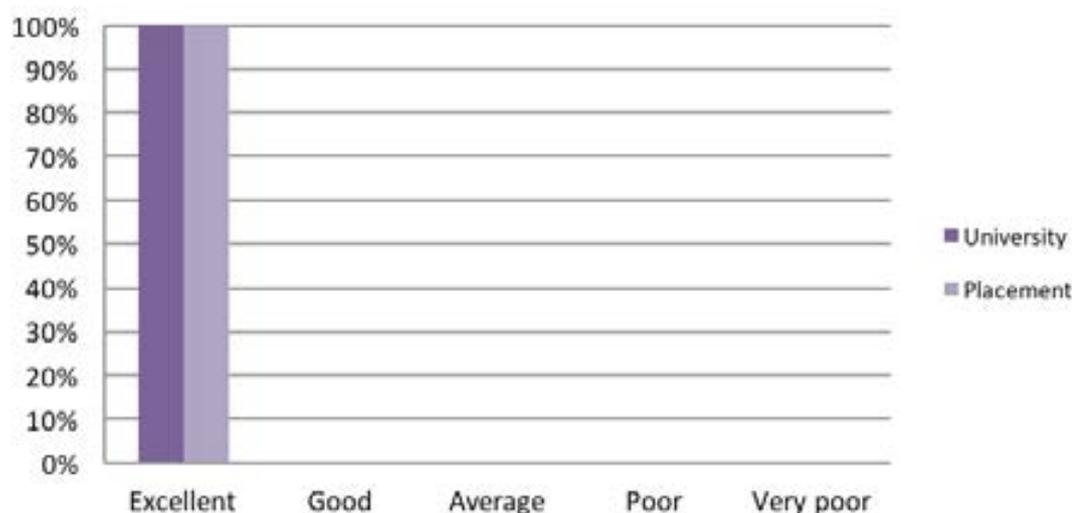
- The teaching is one of the best parts of the course.
- The teaching at Southampton is predominantly facilitated by external lecturers who are experts within their field. This enables the teaching to be brought to life with real clinical examples. The enthusiasm from the teaching staff is excellent!
- Teaching has been done by academic staff as well as by clinical psychologists currently working in the NHS.
- As systemic is our second model, we often reflect on the social graces and power within our teaching. We also have a module dedicated to adapting clinical work for different populations within the first year of teaching.
- There is less teaching devoted to service-user perspectives and carers, however, this is often a feature of our lectures. The course have begun to invite service users to some of our teaching, which has been a welcome addition and it would be great if more of this could happen.
- The evidence based practice module focused on current research and drawing theory practice links. We also have additional seminars that discuss ongoing research within the department and invited guest speakers.
- Teaching overall has been excellent and highly engaging, with current research being presented as part of each teaching session and resources for further reading given. However, we have had very little teaching about carer or service-user perspectives.
- It has been mixed but overall very good. Good balance in depth and breadth.
- The majority of the lectures are facilitated by Clinical Psychologists working in the local area. Teaching is always really interesting, interactive and tailored to the needs of the cohort.
- You have a long teaching block to begin with and start placements in December.
- The lecturers are mostly clinical psychologists; each seem confident and knowledgeable about their area of specialism. The lectures are engaging (they make you work), with case studies, reflective tasks and group tasks (much more than I found at MSc or BSc level).
- I found that I got more out of the teaching sessions, when the teaching took place in smaller groups, as there was much more room for cross-discussion and feedback.
- Individual teaching sometimes mention current research, however this is often fleeting.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

5% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Juggling assignments with clinical placement and trying to maintain life outside of the course has been a constant struggle for the whole cohort.
- The forthcoming months will be incredibly demanding with several deadlines close together
- The placements are spread across a wide geographical area and include the Isle of Wight, at times this can make it difficult to develop a work-life balance.
- There were many deadlines and assignments in the first year which was very demanding alongside placement.
- Balancing assignments and placements without having many study days has been challenging at times especially when deadlines are close together but everyone has been well supported by their personal tutors.
- I wouldn't say anything is particularly demanding, above what you would expect from a doctoral level program. First year is quite busy, with lots of deadlines and assignments, and just generally adjusting to balancing the competing demands of the course, but this does get easier in second year.
- First year felt the most difficult because we had lots of assignments and very few study days. However, our timetables and workloads reduced a little in second and third year, allowing us to focus more on the larger projects e.g. thesis.
- Amount of assessments in first year. Apparently this lessens as time goes on.

- Nothing more than other courses
- The first year was the most demanding in terms of deadlines and coursework, however personal circumstances made this more difficult.
- First semester of first year is very demanding with many assessments, plus starting placement and getting to know cohort, I found this very stressful.
- There are a lot of assessments but this helps us to learn more. It's also quite hard constantly switching between different models/populations (e.g. child and LD in second year).
- There are lots of deadlines in the first 6 months so you need to be organised and use your study days effectively.
- The amount of assignments - 16 in the first year. These sometimes come at once e.g. 3 in January. Getting the balance between placement and academic work and learning how to apply academic knowledge clinically is a learning process because they can seem separate where the university work topics don't seem to match up directly with your placement.
- I would not say that there were aspects of the course which I have found particularly demanding so far, beyond what I would have expected of a doctoral level of training.
- The deadlines are set close together so you are always working on something and some of the deadlines overlap. It can be difficult to plan your time effective as sometimes study days are taken up with teaching.

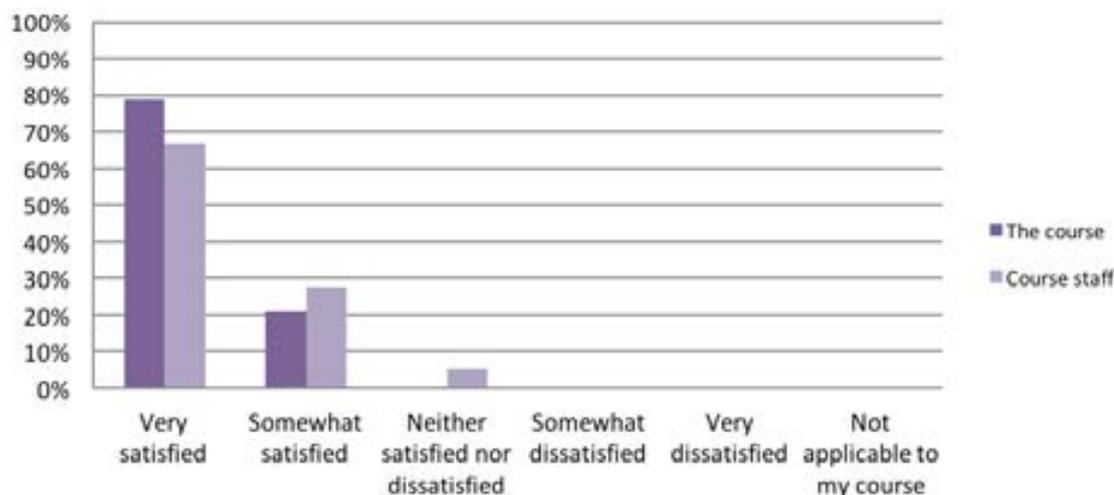
**In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?**

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	84%
“Buddy”	100%
Manager	47%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	47%
Professional Mentor	89%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	58%
Independent personal advisor	0%
Other	21%

**Under “Other”, responses included:**

- There is a reciprocal agreement with Bath University for access to 6 sessions of free and confidential counselling.
- Most members of staff on the course are approachable and supportive and I have sought support from them and found it to be helpful. Reciprocal agreement with the Bath course of possible therapeutic support from psychologists from the course. Support from your cohort is also key.
- The University has links with Bath University to offer Clinical Psychology support to trainees if needed.
- Mentor

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?



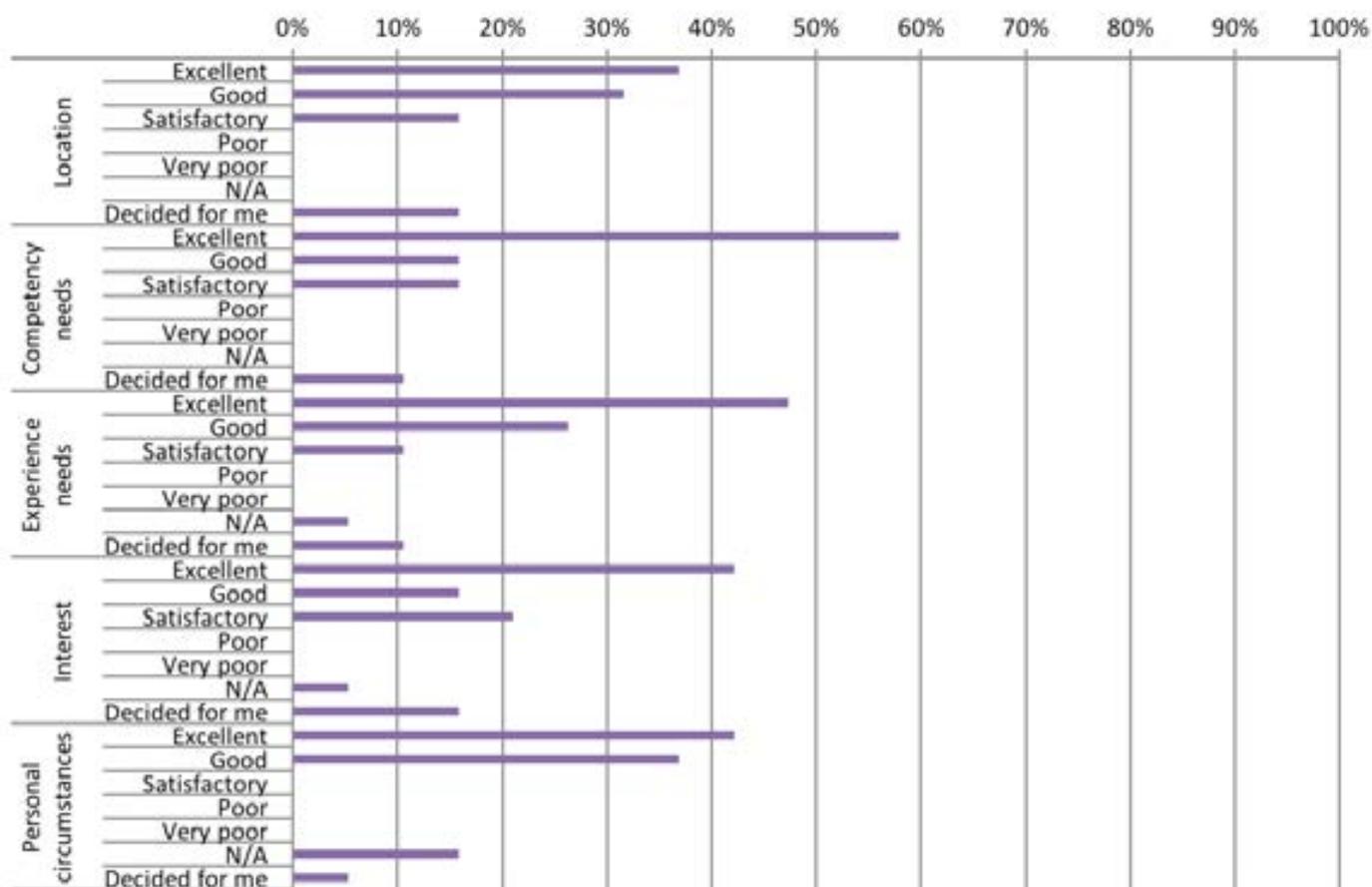
### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

- The systems in place for support on the course are very helpful, particularly the external mentor who can help act as an independent person to the course when there are some difficulties.
- When I experienced personal difficulties in my first year the course were very supportive and did all they could to ensure extensions were granted and that the clinical work on placement was manageable.
- The course is very well supported, everyone has multiple ways of accessing support and we have regular reflective practise group with our cohort which has been really helpful.
- The university ensure that there are a wide range of support systems available and in place, and it is up to you how much of this you make use of. Personally, I have found the support of my personal tutor and my mentor fantastic. My thesis supervisors are brilliant, extremely supportive and responsive.
- Many of the course staff work part-time so there can be a delay in their responses, but they do work hard to be available when they are at the university.
- I have had to seek alternative internal thesis supervision and found this process difficult as it was unclear which clinician would cover this role, however the course did its best to accommodate these difficulties. Apart from that, I personally have felt that course tutors have been available and supportive when I have needed it.
- The support here is a huge strength. I have been extremely impressed by the support system here and the general attitude towards supporting trainees. I have had personal experience of this and staff members have been approachable, encouraging and supportive.
- The University were really good at supporting me during difficult personal circumstances. There are numerous people to contact for support. The primary source of support however comes from your cohort.
- I have found that staff are perhaps not overly pro-active at getting in touch when trainees have been experiencing difficult personal life events, it very much relies on the trainee to get in touch and ask for help. They are very helpful and supportive when you do ask for help but this is reliant on the trainee knowing when and where to ask for it - which can be difficult when you are in distress.
- There are so many support systems in place for you if you want to use them.
- Generally good, different types of support available which has been helpful to get support when needed, my information has been dealt with sensitively.

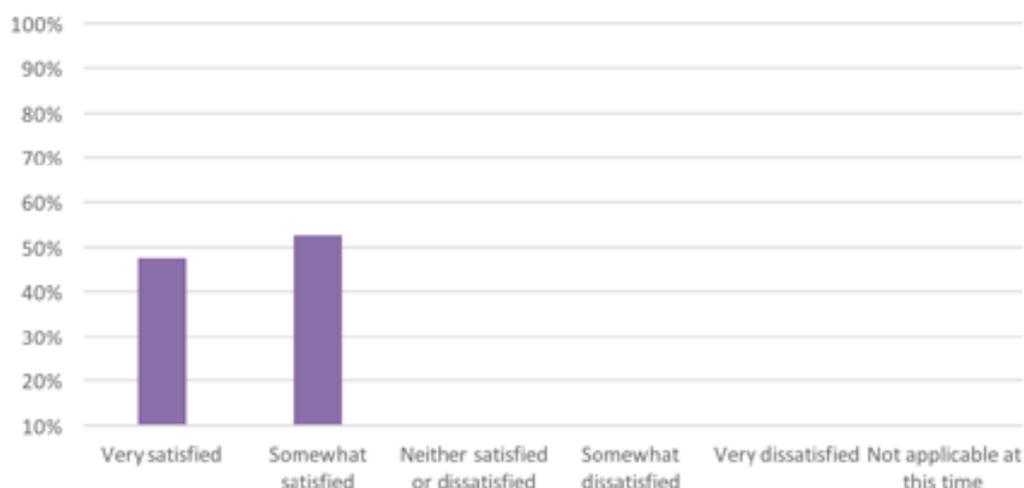
- Shortly after I started the course, we had a baby which inevitably brought its own challenges and stresses. However, the support I received from course staff and placement supervisor has been excellent. They made me feel like I could easily turn to them for support if I needed to, which has made a massive difference. Without their support I do not think I would have been able to cope with the combined demands of the course and those of fathering a new born baby.
- There is a large support network for the course.

## Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



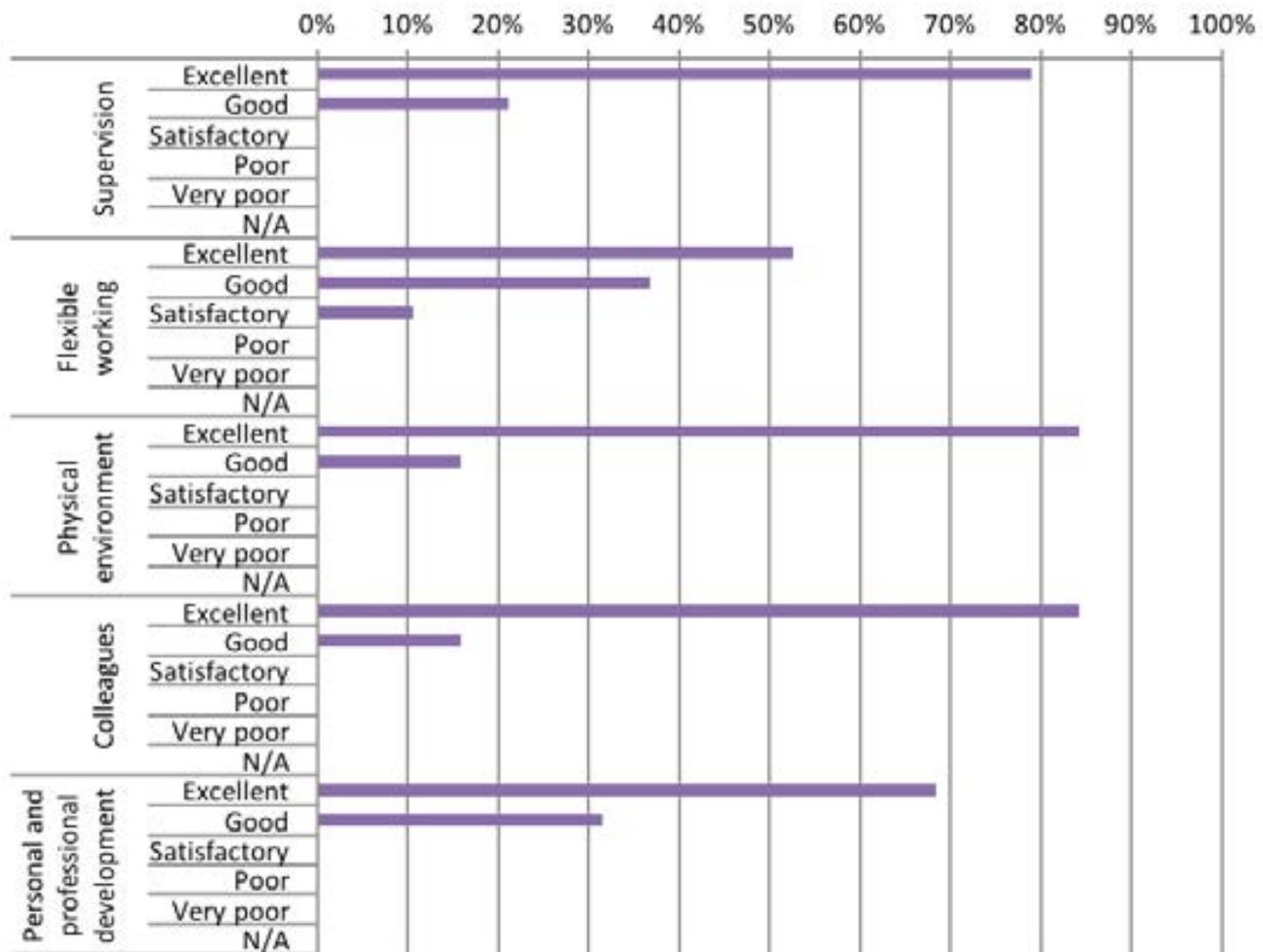
### With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



#### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- The course prepare trainees for placement at the beginning of the programme, and ensure that the teaching blocks prior to each placement are applicable to the following placement.
- First year teaching has been excellent in preparing for first year placements.
- We generally get notified well in advance of where our next placement will be to allow us time to liaise with supervisors and prepare. We are always invited to discuss our learning needs and personal circumstances with the clinical director during the allocation process, and in my experience these have always been considered and responded to.
- Teaching has felt well-timed on the whole, and has mirrored placements well. Sometimes placements were not confirmed until a little late in the process, however generally I have had confirmation in a timely way.
- You get thrown in at the deep end, but my supervisor was really nice so that was helpful to make me feel more at ease
- Southampton has a 2 month teaching block ahead of placements in the first year. While this seemed overkill at the time and squeezed the start date nearer to Christmas, I am grateful for this as I was more prepared for placement and had a lot of knowledge and techniques to refer to as and when needed during placement.
- In the first year, you are gently eased in to your first placement by having an observation week. Teaching corresponds to the clinical groups you are working with which is very helpful.
- I would like more hands on practise and experience of therapy models within teaching - e.g. role plays.
- We don't get sent an introduction about our supervisor's background, like they receive about us.
- The first 6 months are very CBT heavy and as you need to write a CBT case report it does not give you the opportunity to use different models on placement one. However, we are due to begin systemic teaching and so hopefully there will be more opportunities on my second placement.
- In the first year they did a couple of sessions on it which was mainly in relation to paperwork. You get some grounding in CBT before 1st placement which is useful in as much as this is the main orientation of training so you can get going early on. Sometimes the lectures don't match up with placement but I guess that is to be expected.

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Placement has been brilliant, full of opportunities for learning and development
- Placements have always been structured very well and as a trainee I have always been welcomed into the team. I have been on the Isle of Wight placement; the course are very supportive with providing information about the journey, accommodation and environment prior to selecting the placement.
- There is naturally some variation across placements and personal experiences of these. However, my placements have been good-to-excellent. I have had some fantastic supervisors who have supported me to push myself and develop personally and professionally. I have had some really good quality supervision.
- I also have some occupational health needs, which has required me to work flexibly and adaptations made to my working environment. Every placement has been responsive to these needs and made appropriate adaptations for me.
- Clinical rooms have been a real difficulty in some of my placements and it has impacted on how many clients I could see or how flexible I could be. Accessing in-house teaching while on placement has also been possible and supervision has generally been very useful and supportive.
- I've only had one placement so far but it has been really good
- My placement personally has been excellent. Perhaps I have just been very lucky, but I struggle to

think of any downsides. Supervision, MDT teamwork, work hours, location and parking have all been excellent.

- It's difficult to comment on placements in general, as each placement feels very different and has its own particular strengths. Overall however I've really enjoyed my placements and feel I have developed immeasurably as a result of the experience and supervision.
- Sometimes hot-desking is used and occasionally I have not had a suitable place to sit and work - not the fault of the course but a general issue in NHS teams in the area. Colleagues, supervisors and the teams themselves are excellent.
- I have had an amazing first placement with a supportive supervisor. The commute to placement is far and you need to be prepared to be on placement quite far from home. However, my second placement is closer to home and I think they try to balance this out across the cohort so you do not get two placements back to back that are a considerable commute.
- Supervision has been excellent, breadth of experience has been good, opportunity for getting involved in different things has been good, colleagues have been super friendly and supportive. Generally a solid experience. It feels like you're skimming the surface of a particular specialism but that's the nature of training in some respects.
- The course do try to place you as close to home as they can. The placements I have had have been really good learning opportunities and have been welcoming of trainees.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	89%
No	5%
Don't know	5%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	37%
No	53%
Don't know	11%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Southampton, Portsmouth, Reading, Bournemouth, Dorset and Winchester.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	26%
No	58%
Don't know	16%

### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	16%
Good	47%
Fair	32%
Poor	5%
Very poor	0%

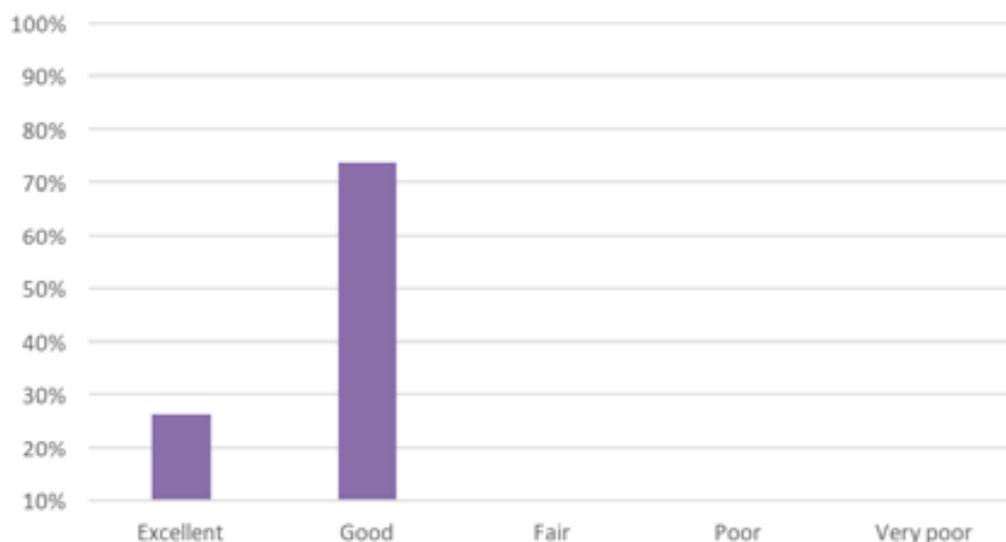
### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- Lots of assignments in the first year has made it quite tricky to maintain a healthy work life balance. There is more of a work hard play hard culture.
- The course makes every effort to provide Fridays for study days where they can and this has helped enormously towards maintaining a work life balance.
- During the first year a work life balance can be difficult, however, with the introduction of specific work related study days in second and third year this becomes easier.
- We also have a research block dedicated to thesis in the final year which is extremely useful for balancing the workload of the thesis.
- The course tries to promote a work-life balance, but the reality of placements, assignments, deadlines means that this is not generally balanced. However, 2nd year has been less demanding than 1st year. The course require our attendance at seminars on a Monday lunchtime and we also need to meet with thesis supervisors during this time. This means that we are not able to take a lunch break which is indicative of the reality of the work-life balance.
- At times it has been difficult to manage multiple assignments and placements without study days especially when assignments are quite close together, but there is a lot of support available.
- Naturally, this varies at different times of the course, with deadlines feeling a bit more pressured. However, on the whole I have been able to have a good work life balance. I have rarely had to work on the weekends or evenings, and study days are generally sufficient to do all the work required. This was not the case in year one due to lack of study days, but in second year we have much more personal study time. We are able to use our leave to good effect, and whilst we are not permitted to

take many teaching days off, I have been able to take time off to go away and have a proper break.

- On the whole (particularly second and third year), study days and research block have been sufficient to get most academic work done. This has mostly kept evenings and weekends free and has allowed me to have a normal family life and really be able to 'switch off' at the end of the day.
- Southampton are great in giving us study days dotted around the semester. This has been invaluable in being able to complete assignments and studying without eating too much into evenings and weekends. Deadlines and tests are more in the first year than in other years, however are reasonably spread out.
- This really varies. During times around deadlines and exams it can be more difficult to maintain a healthy work life balance and you do really need to put the extra hours in, however I'd say this is the best balance I've been able to achieve so far in higher education!
- If you want a balance you need to work at it - you need to be organised and get ahead of the deadlines. You only need to pass the assignments so I have learnt to lower my expectations of myself, as with all the competing demands it is not realistic for me to be the perfectionist I used to be. This has helped greatly with my work life balance.
- You will have to work some evenings/weekends in first year. Few study days in first semester, these increase in second semester.
- The first year can be demanding. However, this gets much better in second year.
- With the number of deadlines it can be difficult to fit everything in, and the 'life' part is the stuff that goes.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Expenses paid, no longer pay tax.
- Whilst I took a pay cut upon starting the course, overall I am very happy with the financial situation and being paid to study. The council tax exemption and student discounts really help, as do our travel expenses.
- The salary is enough to live a normal family live, keep a dog, go on holidays and have money spare to save. The impact of having a tax refund is not to be missed either, as this has enabled me to save even more money each month.

- I really appreciate that the course reimburse your travel expenses to university and to placement. Also, I've lived in London before and although no longer earning London allowance, my quality of life has actually improved due to higher purchasing power here (lower rent, etc.).
- Being paid to study is incredibly important for me.
- You are reimbursed all your travel expenses.
- Good however the widening access scheme has recently been reviewed and therefore our income tax exemption is due to stop which will impact us financially.
- Better than an AP salary

### **What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?**

- The clinical teaching and placements offered
- The placements and trans diagnostics module.
- The variety of placements and the excellent teaching from external and internal lecturers.
- The rest of the cohort.
- Definitely the people in my cohort! We all get along really well and everyone is incredibly supportive of each other.
- Placements have been my favourite aspect of the course. I have taken so much away from these, learning about myself, service users, colleagues and the NHS in general. The university have also been instrumental in ensuring we are able to take ownership for our own learning and development.
- My mentor has been a fantastic support and instrumental in my development throughout the course, and I have found her invaluable.
- The quality of the teaching and having a fantastic cohort, who are supportive and whom I consider a very important part of my life.
- My course mates, everyone gets on really well and we all look after each other.
- The level of support from the staff is great.
- The excellent teaching programme which creates a stimulating learning environment, and then having the opportunity to apply the learning to practice during placement. I also feel that the course are receptive to feedback and I like that they ask for and meaningfully respond to it. My cohort have been amazing - supportive, fun and diverse, which really adds to ideas and learning. The university itself is an exciting place to be in with lots of ideas, events, activities and facilities to benefit from, even its own theatres, gallery, cinema and sports centre.
- Although I really enjoy the placements and the clinical application and work with clients, in terms of the course I have two favourite aspects that stand out. The first is the teaching - I really enjoy teaching days as they tend to be really enjoyable, engaging and often very interactive. As the teaching is delivered by lecturers in the local NHS (and some private practice) it's also a great opportunity to network. The second is my cohort itself! Being a relatively small cohort, we are extremely close, and my cohort has been a crucial source of support.
- My cohort, and the fact that most teaching is outsourced from local Clinical Psychologist so there is a wide variety and you have the opportunity to learn from lots of different practitioners. Also the Specialist Skills Module and Trans diagnostic module in final year are strengths.
- The variety!
- The cohort is small enough (15) for you to get to know everyone. My cohort are truly wonderful. When I began the course I had some things going on in my personal life and my personal clinical tutor was fantastic. We do have a fair few study days also so this is very helpful.
- Lectures on different aspects of diversity e.g. race, religion, culture, spirituality, gets you thinking about people as people more than clinical cases.

- I think my favourite aspect is the placement because it gives me the ability to apply my knowledge into practice, as well as learn from my own clinical experiences and work alongside other professionals.
- The teaching is excellent. We have lots of teaching from professionals who are specialists in their area.
- The cohort itself- there are 15 of us and it's nice that we all get along!

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- The course is absolutely brilliant. The teaching modules are well structured and interesting and relevant. The only problematic part has been the number of assignments and academic workload in first year- which in comparison to many other courses appears to be heavy.
- It's a course that is 50/50 in terms of academic and clinical. There is a big standard for the academic side of work, which I think better prepares you for research beyond training.
- Organisation and communication could be improved, and that can be frustrating and difficult for trainees especially in first year.
- One of the great things about the course is that they are really responsive to our feedback and clearly want to improve things. However, this does mean that there continues to be lots of change. As a result, trainees need to be able to tolerate uncertainty and the possibility of changes, confusion or short-notice for assignments and timetabling. This also means that all three years of current trainees will have had different experiences. However, this is very much worth it as we are able to see the improvements and reap the benefits of these.
- Having a 3 month research block makes this a particularly appealing course for me, as it allowed me to really concentrate on my thesis and give it my undivided attention.
- It would be helpful to spread out the initial assignments as it's very overwhelming.
- Teaching in some areas can be improved - Teaching in the quantitative research modules so far has been predominantly so-so and sometimes poor; and more support is needed in preparing trainees for practical exams.
- I am understandably biased, but for me Southampton was a clear winning choice. Everything through from the interview stage felt incredibly well supported. Having a small, close cohort has enriched my experience.
- I love that our cohort is so small, because we all gel really well together and always support one another.
- Parking costs at the university are astronomical. You need to park on some of the streets around and walk in.
- Just pace yourself and learn to be 'good enough', you should start to calibrate around semester 2 in terms of how much work you need to put in to keep things ticking over. Don't be afraid to get support from your cohort and other support lines (e.g. mentor) when necessary.
- Be prepared to work hard for 3 years.

# Courses Survey Results

## Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

## What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Role-play, 2 interviews (academic & research, clinically-relevant skills)

## What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	0%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	0%
Other	0%

## Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

## Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

## Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Staffordshire University

15 responses (33% of 45 trainees)

## About the trainee

What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	67%
Year 2	27%
Year 3	7%

What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	13%
25 – 29 years	60%
30 – 34 years	20%
35 – 39 years	7%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	27%
Twice	27%
3 times	33%
4 times	13%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	7%
MA	0%
MSc	36%
MRes	7%
Diploma	14%
Post Graduate Certificate	21%
Conversion course	7%
None	43%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	0%
3 years	27%
4 years	27%
5 years	27%
6+ years	20%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	60%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	47%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	47%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	20%
Research Assistant	27%
Voluntary Research Assistant	27%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	67%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	13%
Other	13%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

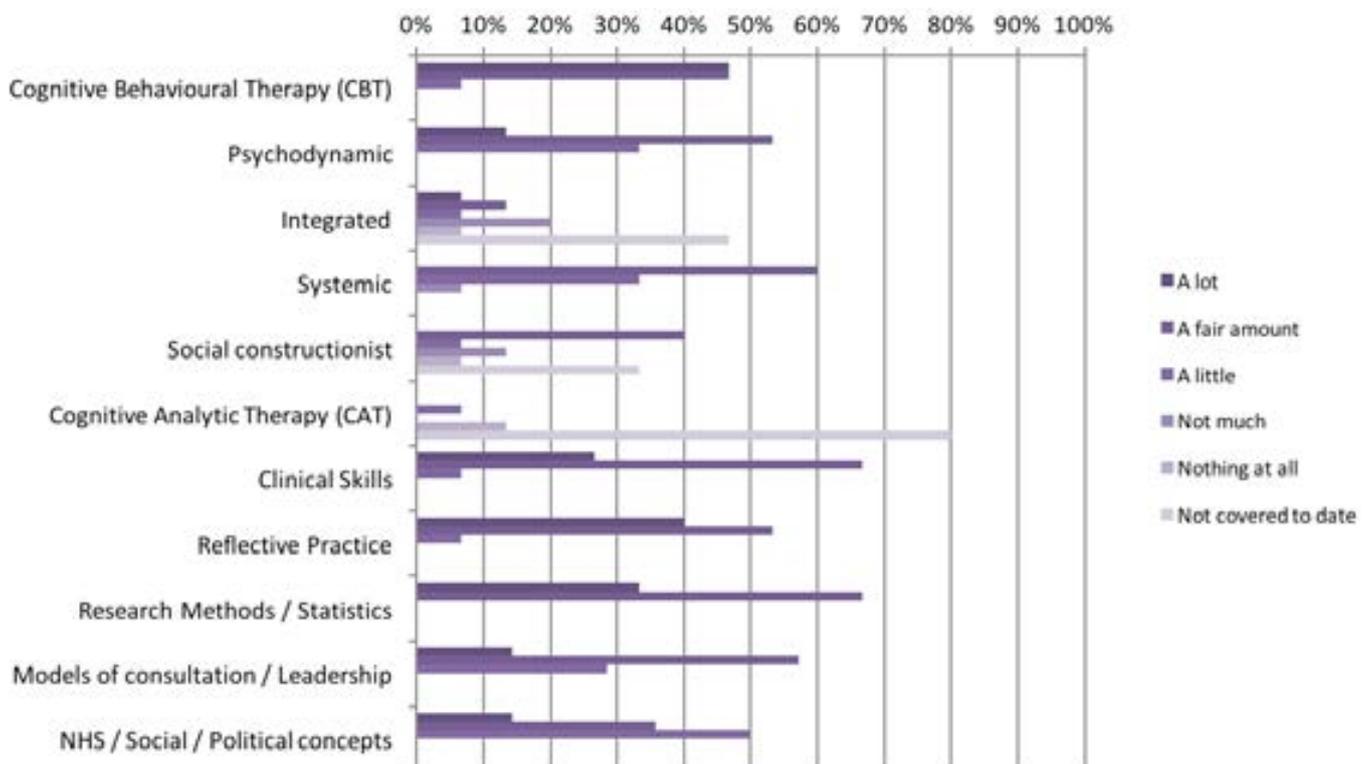
- Positive. Well organised and friendly
- Very warm and friendly. No trick questions, interviewers genuinely wanted you to answer the questions to the best of your ability. Small groups interviewed at each time (~4) with two current students for support. This meant your anxiety didn't increase too much and you had time to talk to the current students.
- Interview was a positive experience. The panel included a course staff member, a service user/cater consultant, and a local clinician/supervisor. I felt that the interview itself was quite relaxed and I got the feeling that the panel really wanted to get the best from you.
- The interview process at Staffordshire University was a pleasant experience. The University organised for current trainee's to be present for any advice needed by the candidates. The interview panel, which included course members, service user and carer consultants and clinical psychologists were friendly and made me feel at ease when answering the questions and when I wasn't sure how to answer and needed time to think.
- I found the interview to be more relaxed than the screening test. I felt during the interview that they really wanted to see the best of me and really get to know me, which put me at ease.
- I felt that they tried to create a relaxed and supportive environment during the interview process. It helped having some of the current trainees on the course there to have a chat with. I didn't know much about what Staffs was like as a course until the interview process. I found the staff and trainees to be very warm. As far as interviews go, they can be anxiety-provoking but aside from that I felt that the University just wanted to get a sense of what I was like as a person rather than trying to trip me up.
- Good - the panels were friendly, it was well organised and I felt the interview process aimed to get the best out of people.
- There were two elements to the interview - a clinical interview and a role play. Although the role play seemed daunting beforehand, I think it was helpful as it allowed you to demonstrate your skills & abilities working with people (rather than just what you say about them!).
- In the clinical interview the interviewers were very warm and friendly and seemed to do their best to put you at ease. In my interview, the questions were written out on slips of paper. I found this very useful as I could refer back to the question to ensure I was on track. My mind tends to go blank when I'm anxious.
- It was nice (as nice as it can be!) You were only there for the time you needed to be there, very little waiting around. The staff were friendly and welcoming. It felt like they wanted the best out of you. Trainees were there to show you to rooms and to chat to which was really helpful. It didn't feel pressured or competitive when waiting with the other candidates.
- Absolutely lovely, really felt they tried to get the best out of us. Friendly and co-operative panel members and the role play really gave you a chance to show your real world skills - and it wasn't scary at all, just felt like a day at work once it actually started.
- Interview process was excellent, well-paced, and not too intense.
- The interview process was in two parts; a clinical and research interview, and a situational role play. During the interview it was stressed that the interviewers would not have read our applications, and we should highlight key experiences as part of our answers. I found this helpful as it reminded me to bring up these details, and it meant that the interviewers weren't pre-judging any of the candidates. We were also provided with printed slips with the interview questions on them, which really put me at ease and meant I could check the original question throughout the interview.
- I was most nervous about the role play, but actually as long as you treat it as 'real' and act as you would during your professional life then it's absolutely fine. They also give you the opportunity to

reflect on how the role has gone, so you can review your performance and correct anything that you would do differently. Also giving you the chance to demonstrate your abilities as a reflective practitioner.

- The interview process was relatively quick straight forward involving a short role play and a 30 minute interview. We were made to feel at ease and it was evident that the interviewers wanted us to do our best.
- The interview process was well structured, panel members and course staff were warm and encouraging. All stages of the role play and panel aspects were explained clearly. Overall the interview process seemed designed to enable candidates to perform to their best ability on the day.
- It was clear that the course made every effort to reduce the anxiety associated with the experience as far as possible. We were given precise time slots for the interviews (rather than having to wait around all day) and sat in groups of 4 while waiting to start the interviews which meant the environment was calm and relaxed (rather than chaotic and noisy as has been my experience of larger groups). There were 2 interviews; personal and professional values and academic/ clinical. The personal and professional values interview was based around a realistic role-play of a clinical situation with an actor. I felt that this gave me a very good opportunity to utilise my clinical experience and interpersonal skills. The second interview was more question and answer based. Again, it was clear that the course made efforts to support applicants through the process; for example, providing typed copies of the questions asked in case of forgetting and to allow thoughts to be gathered.

## Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



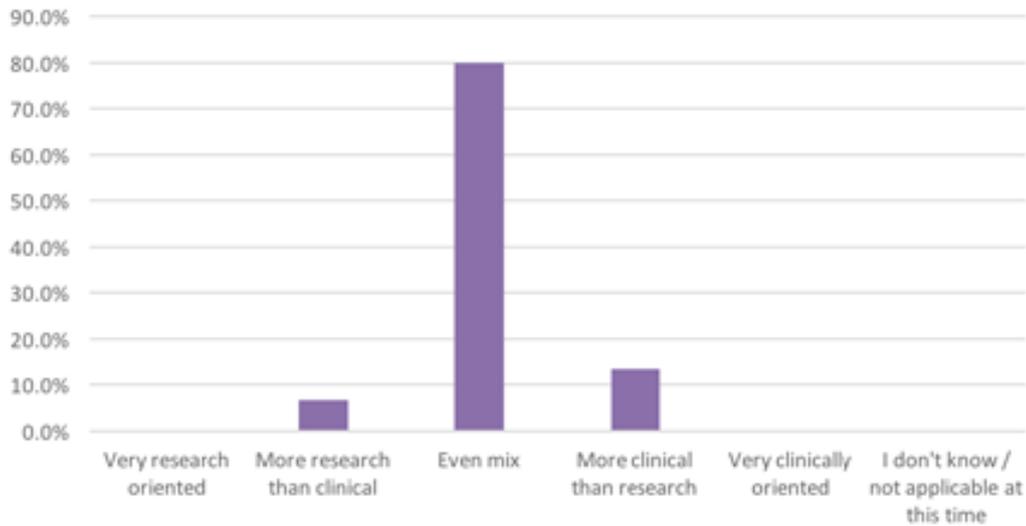
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	67%
Mindfulness	25%
Schema Therapy	17%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	25%
Solution Focused Therapy	17%
Neuropsychology	42%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	67%
Other	8%

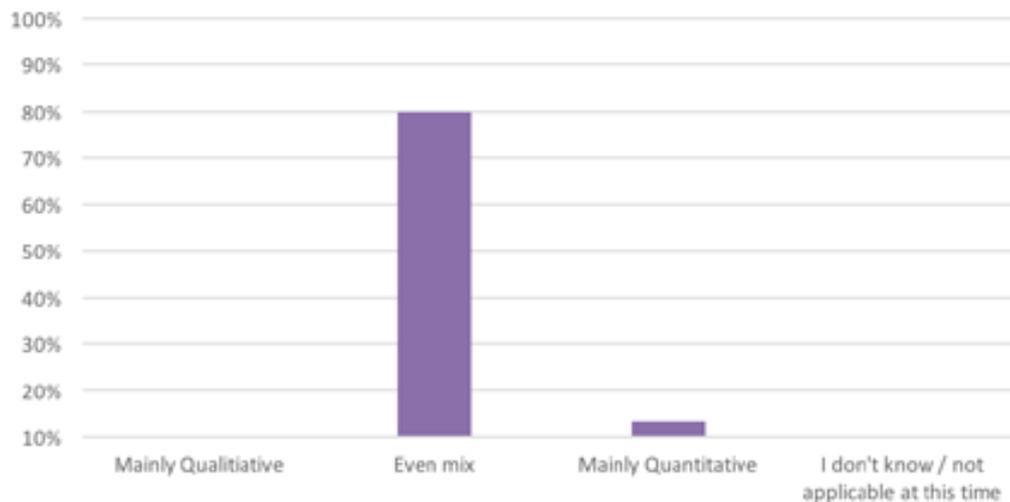
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- Currently there is a decent amount of spread in terms of the core models. Some are taught by external speakers and some within the University staff team. Some are given more weighting than others, for example Functional Analysis has been covered in one session, whilst CBT has several sessions for several presentations (e.g. CBT core principles, CBT for low mood, CBT for anxiety, etc.). Despite this, there is a sense that the university is not trying to mould trainee's towards particular models and we are able to think independently about which models suit our way of working.
- In general, it was a surprise to me that teaching did not cover an extensive amount on each of the models. I had expected a manual for each model but the reality of training is that you will have bits of teaching on the models and you will learn and apply the models whilst on placement.
- We share time between CBT, psychodynamic, and systemic, so by the time you start your first placement you have an introductory knowledge of applying these three approaches in practice but may not feel totally prepared to physically use any of them. However this means that whichever focus your placement will have, you do have a grounding, and your placement supervisor should be there to fill in the gaps.
- As I am in year 1, much teaching has focused on core areas so far. I am not able to comment on teaching of other areas at this stage.

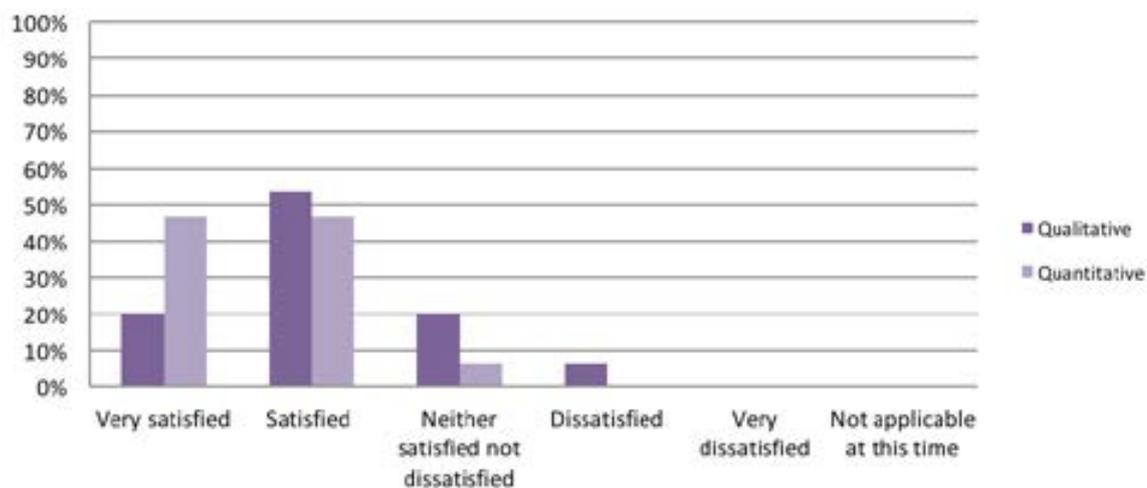
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



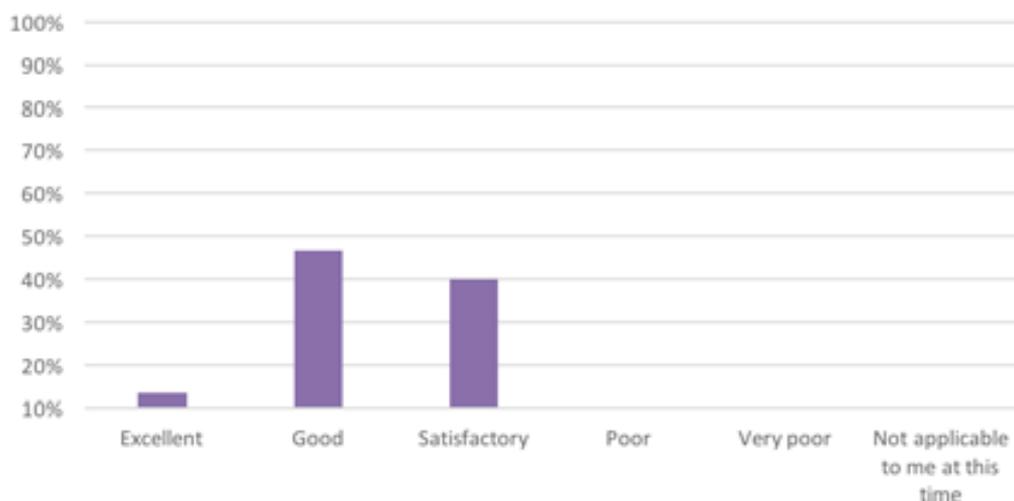
**Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?**



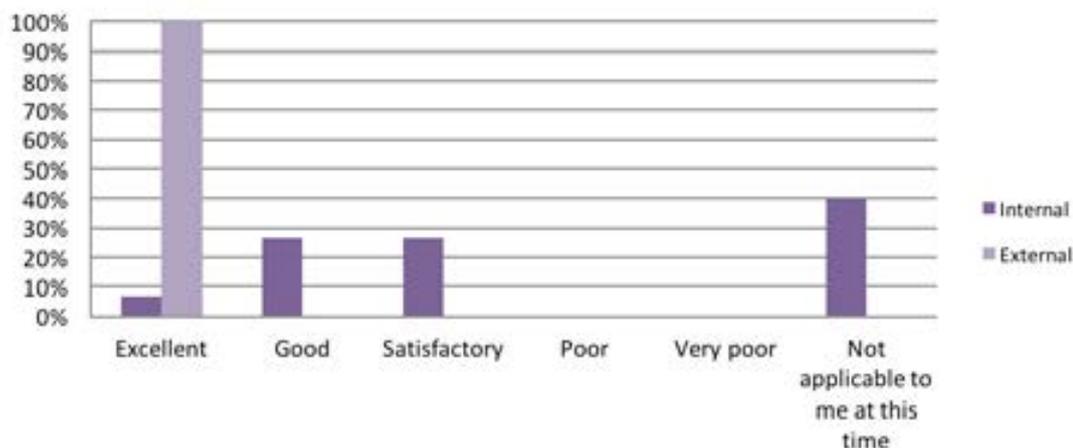
**Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?**

- Quantitative teaching can range from the very basics to being quite complex. Sometimes it feels as though there is no middle ground. Qualitative teaching has occurred but not as in depth as quantitative measures.
- I come from a research background, so I am more familiar with research methods than some others on the course.
- The research module is accessed by an exam in the first and second year.
- People start the course with very different research backgrounds, but I'd say that they are supportive with this element of teaching and also encourage us to share knowledge between trainees (we're all in the same boat, so share the skills and previous experiences you have).

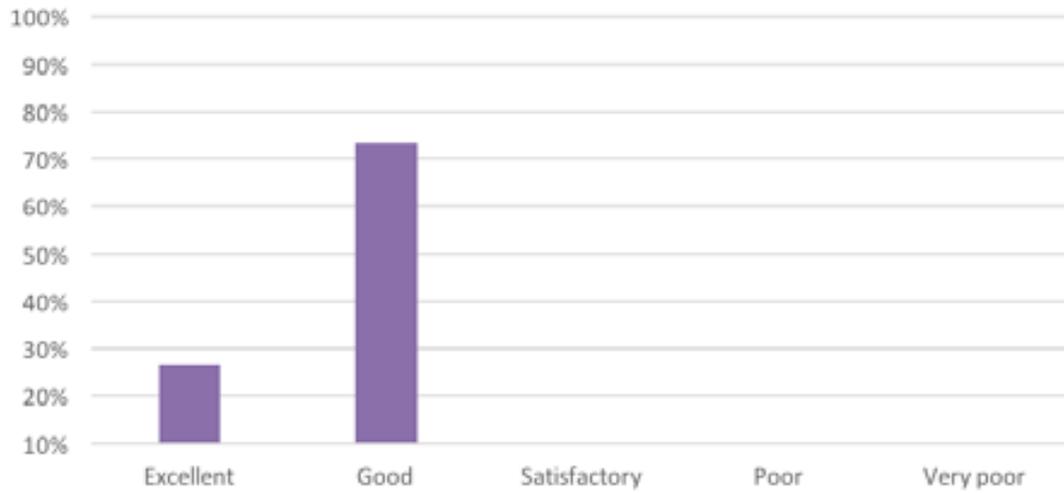
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



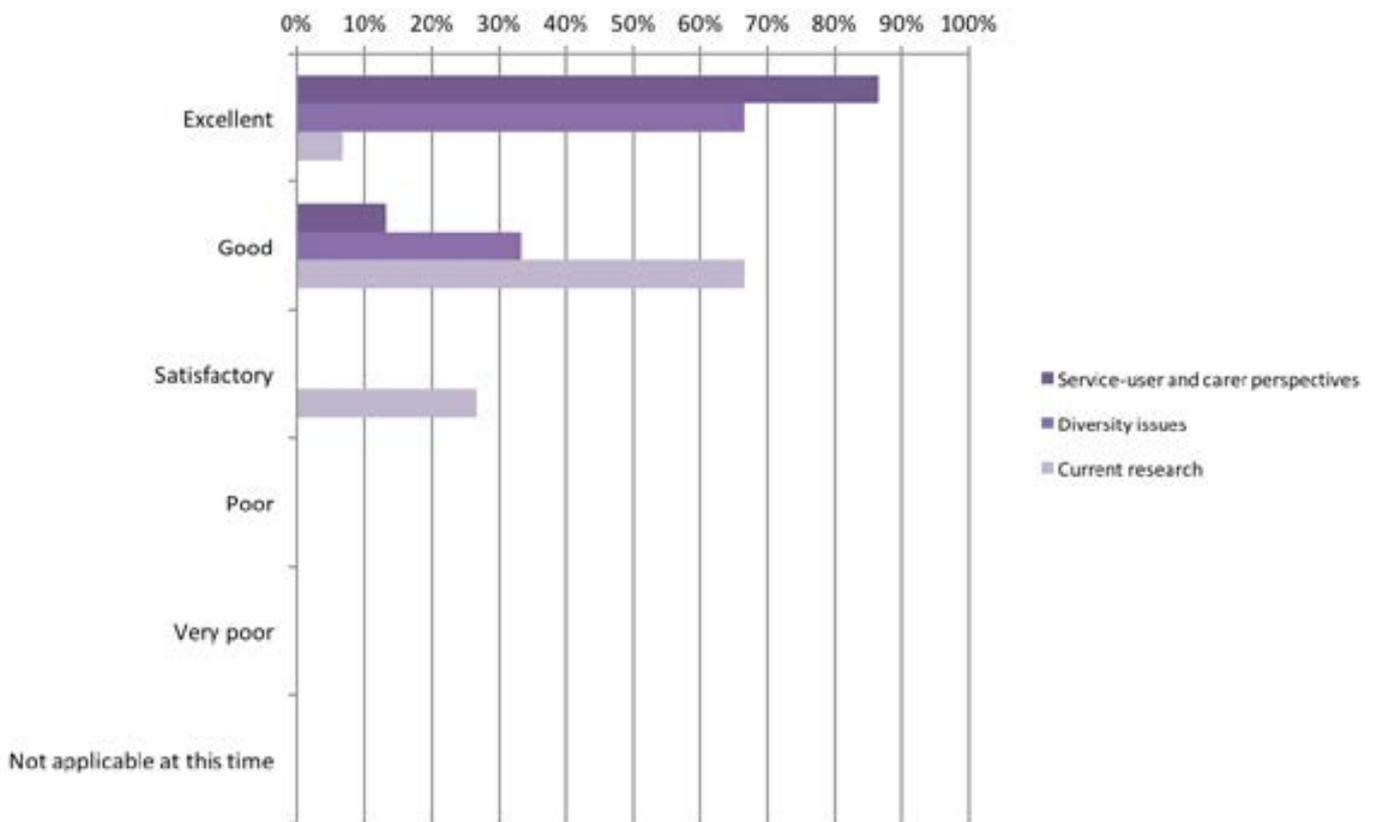
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

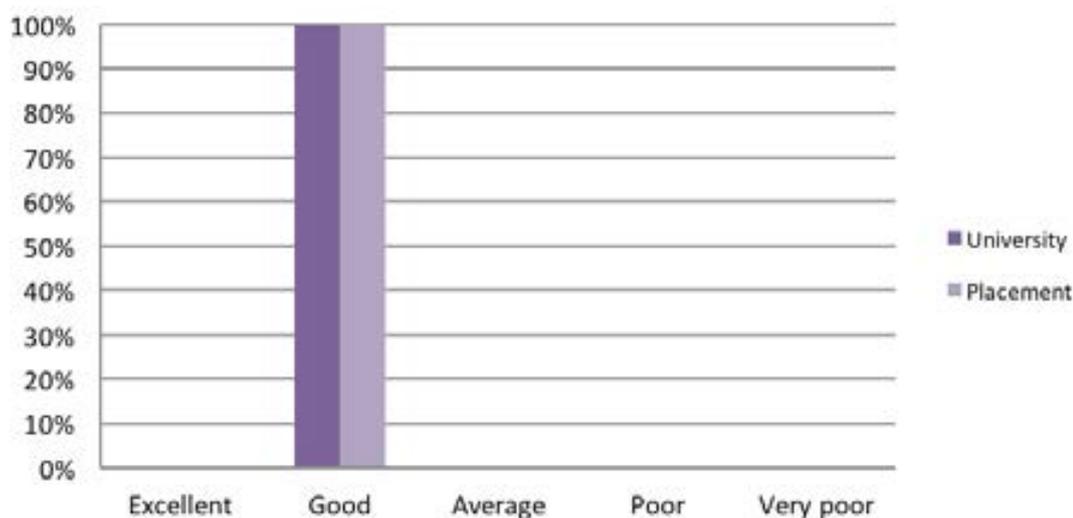
- Some topics are covered very well and in great depth. This is particularly true when external teachers come to deliver talks on topics they are familiar with. Some in-house teaching could definitely be improved. There is usually a good amount of activities, discussion and didactic teaching. As teaching is now between 10am - 4pm, sometimes the sessions can feel rushed.
- Staffs has service users and carers who have been a part of the teaching time for many years. You can tell that they are a valued part of the team and not just there as a tick box exercise. We have had some powerful teaching done by service users about their experiences. They are also involved in clinical skills workshops to give input on their perspective.
- There can be a lack of general teaching to support the thesis, especially for those who haven't conducted research before - lots of extra 1:1s and peer support has been required to help with the process of ethics etc.
- I very much enjoy the teaching on the course, and we have a range of external speakers and experts that add to the diversity of our learning. We're also encouraged to add to discussions in our teaching, nurturing a critical psychology perspective. It is sometimes disorganized though, and the time at which our teaching days finish can vary. The University has undergone some changes in the last year though, and the reduction in admin staff particularly has meant that teaching staff have taken on more of these responsibilities, leading to some disorganization. They give us as much notice as possible if our timetables are changed.
- Teaching is well structured and delivered by staff who have a mixed range of experience, interests and specialities. Teaching is engaging, with good opportunities to consider application of theory to practice and encourages trainees to be supportive of each other in their learning.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

**Do you have any disabilities?**

6% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

**Please describe how well your needs are met at:**



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Developing and writing thesis alongside university and placement.
- Currently the course is structured so that assignments have not overlapped and it has not felt particularly demanding.
- The commute can be draining but it has been manageable so far.
- The commuting has been tiring as I chose not to live in Staffordshire. Placements can vary across Staffordshire and Shropshire, so do expect to have to travel at some point.
- Not so far!
- Juggling deadlines
- Ethical process for the thesis can feel scary and unexplained.
- The course covers a very large area, Staffordshire and Shropshire - there are some distant placements regardless of where you live.
- Balancing my placement and assignment requirements, whilst also preparing to begin the service evaluation and research project. I imagine this is the same on every course though.
- There is an expectation prior to training on any course that it will be demanding, and at times concurrent placement and assessment pressures and deadlines can present challenges.
- Not particularly. We have completed a number of assignments (e.g. group presentations, an exam, a written assignment) but I feel that these have been well spaced out across the modules.

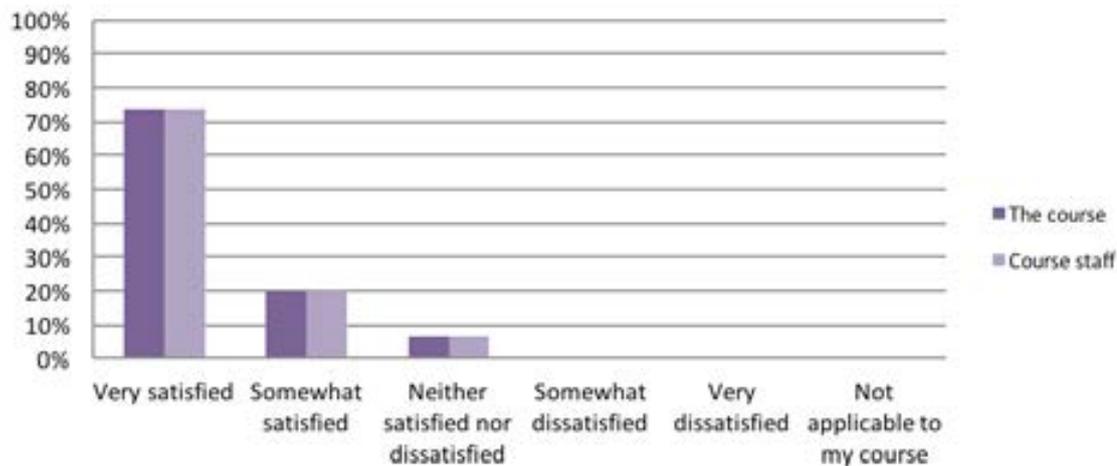
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	93%
“Buddy”	93%
Manager	27%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	80%
Professional Mentor	20%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	80%
Independent personal advisor	7%
Other	7%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- During the induction week we were made aware of a wide range of additional support systems that we are able to access if necessary. This included signing up to a ‘therapy network’. As well as having an assigned Personal Tutor within the teaching staff, all members of are very approachable and have been happy to support both myself and fellow trainees with various issues by e-mail, phone or in person.

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

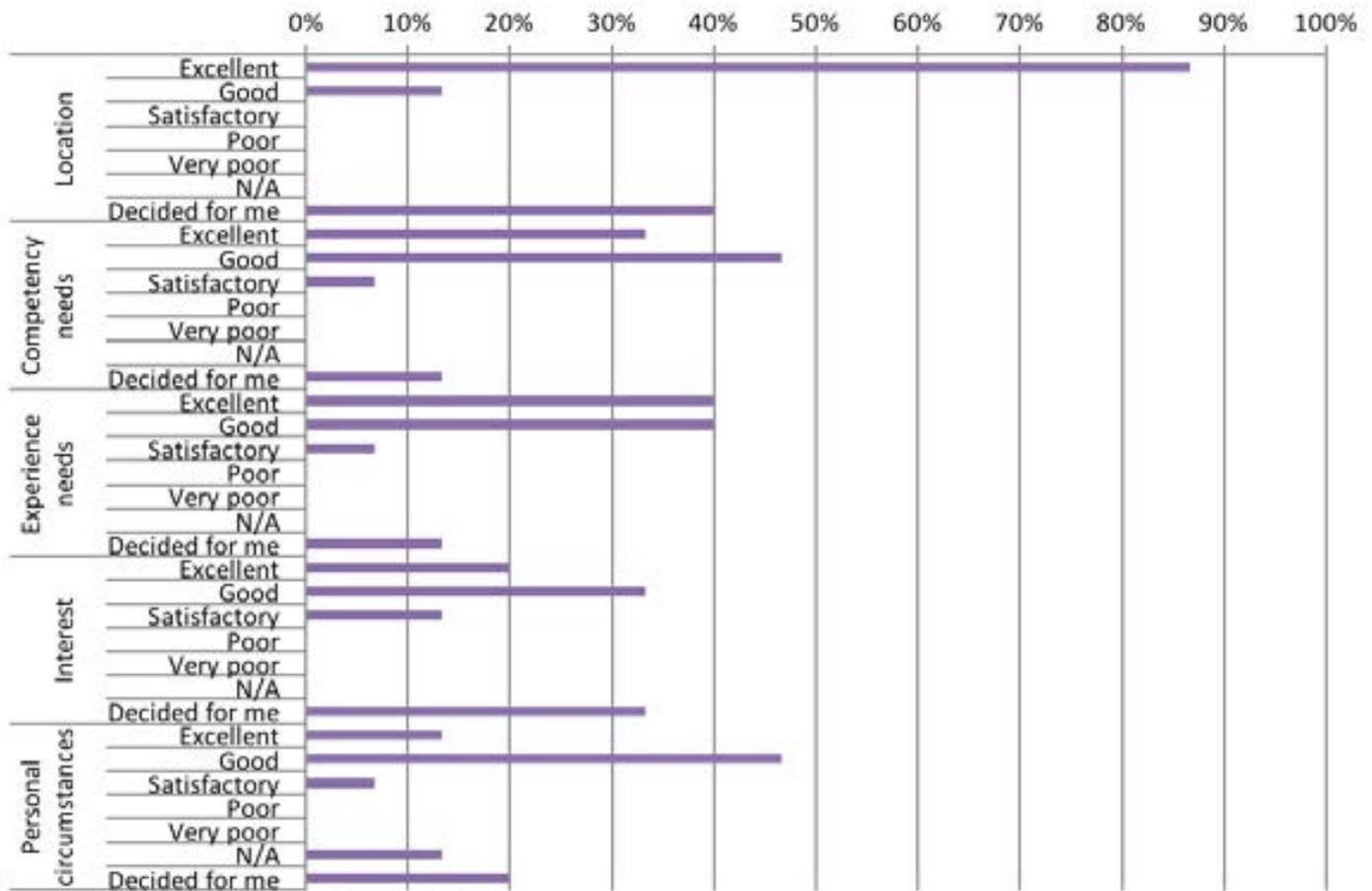


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

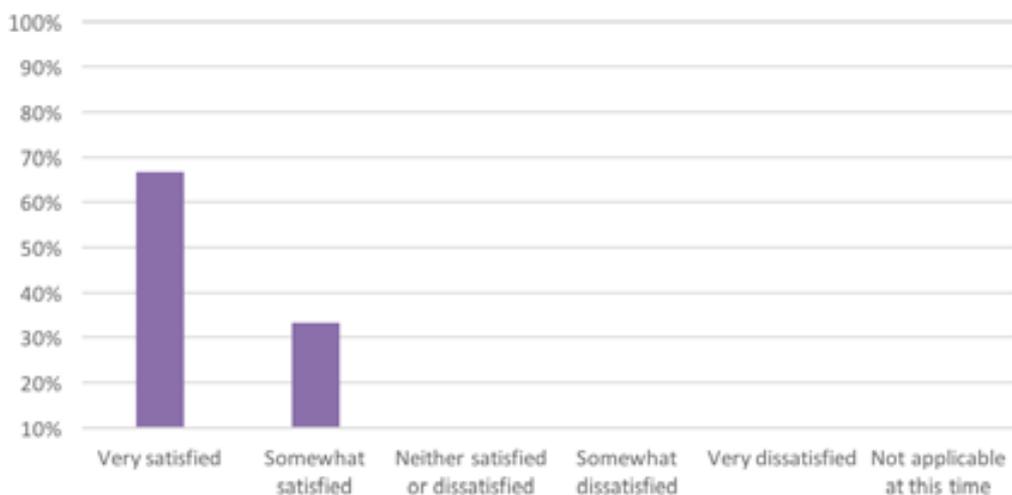
- From the first day of the course there was an emphasis on the support available as trainees and we were encouraged to access it - included professional mentors, West Midlands Therapy Network etc.
- Always available, everyone is very friendly and approachable.
- Staff are always willing to offer appointments and particularly following feedback for assignments. Generally, they are also quick to reply to emails and to answer questions. They are all very approachable too!
- The course seem very supportive of the trainees. Teaching staff encourage us to seek support from them and are willing to find time to see us.
- We have reflective groups approximately once per month. These are a good opportunity to get support from an independent person.
- The course arranged a buddy for us. This has been very helpful.
- I've also found I get a lot of support from the other trainees in my cohort. We all get on well and draw on each other's strengths to learn from each other.
- Staff are mostly friendly and approachable.
- Teaching staff on the course are part-time, which limits their accessibility, but they respond to emails promptly and there's normally more than one member of staff that could answer a question or support you.
- The reflective groups, facilitated by an external psychologist, are particularly helpful and supportive. They are held once per month on a study day, but well worth the trip into Uni. We are split into two groups along our 14 member cohort, and the groups are completely respectful and confidential.
- Programme staff are extremely supportive, available to trainees and approachable. I have found the programme to be responsive to trainee experience of the course and feedback. Reflective group is a valuable source of support.
- I feel very supported by the teaching and admin staff at university as well as many external teaching clinicians who offer e-mail addresses etc. for further discussion of topics. I also feel supported by the Trust Manager, placement supervisors to date and other local clinicians (e.g. those leading the service evaluation project).

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



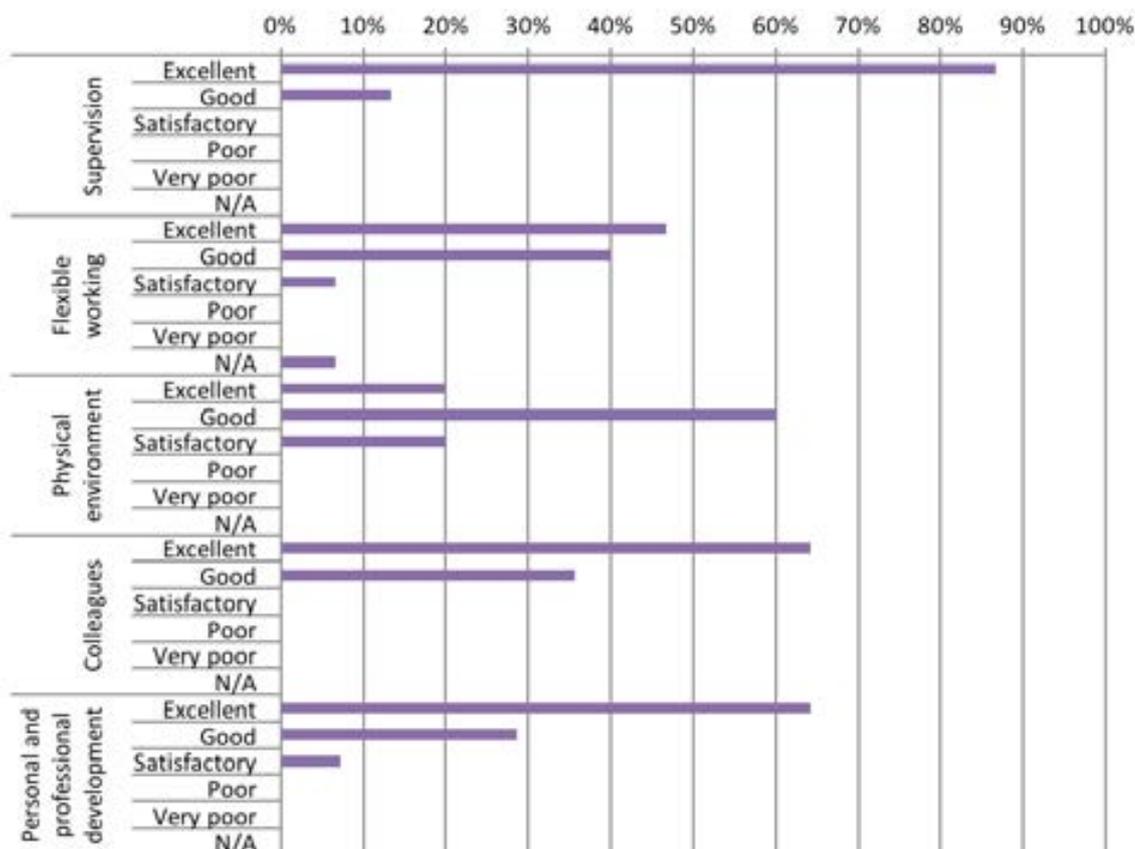
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares yo



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- There is teaching during the induction block which prepares us with different models of supervision/ reflection, supervisory dilemmas and also the expectations in terms of forms needing to be completed during placement.
- There are a few days dedicated to preparing for placement and they also talk through scenarios you may encounter on placement and ways to deal with them. The course also explicitly encourages trainees to speak with their university tutor as early as they can if they are experiencing any difficulties on placement. There is a mid-placement review with the university placement coordinator, placement supervisor and trainee which really helps in reflecting on your progress.
- As is common, university teaching doesn't necessarily join up with the placement you have at the time.
- We had teaching sessions about the placements before placement started. These covered an introduction to the geographical area, the paperwork that we would need to complete, potential challenges we may face and reflective and supervisory models we may use. We also had some sessions to role play therapeutic skills. I found this very helpful.
- Really helpful
- We have plenty of discussion time in University before the first placement, and we also have specific teaching on leadership styles, professional communication, and key recent policy documents, in order to prepare us for going into the work environment.
- Dedicated placement preparation teaching, placement tutor available to contact for support and to help resolve any issues.
- No. Very thorough introduction to placement (particularly all of the paperwork requirements) during induction block.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- My first placement has been a good experience. We are supported by the university and we complete placement contracts prior to starting to set our learning objectives. These are reviewed at the mid-point and end of placement.
- I have only had one placement so far. My supervisors and colleagues have been excellent and I have learnt a lot from them.
- Large discrepancies between being a north staffs/south staffs trainees (including expenses etc.) which trainees should be given more info about before committing to one trust or the other.
- Placements have been allocated (location-wise) very fairly, accommodating those who live out of area and also those who do not drive.
- I have been very well supported on placement, with plenty of time to shadow and ‘learn the ropes’ before starting to take on individual caseloads, and have always been able to find support from either my supervisor or other members of the team if required.
- If there are problems on placement, the course staff are supportive and quick to address this.
- I have had 1 placement so far. Pre-placement teaching, contracting, an initial meeting with my supervisor and placement tutor, a mid-placement review and planning meeting and option to access placement tutor as required have all contributed to a positive placement experience. I was able to develop skills and meet competencies on placement, had good access to supervision and felt supported by both the university and my placement supervisor in achieving required learning outcomes.
- I have only undertaken 1 clinical placement to date. This was within an area in which I had no prior experience but I was well supported by my supervisor and all other staff within the organisation. The experience was thoroughly enriching. The location was a convenient drive from my home and also had good public transport links.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	47%
No	47%
Don't know	7%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	13%
No	40%
Don't know	47%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Birmingham, Manchester, Stoke and Stafford.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	80%
Don't know	20%

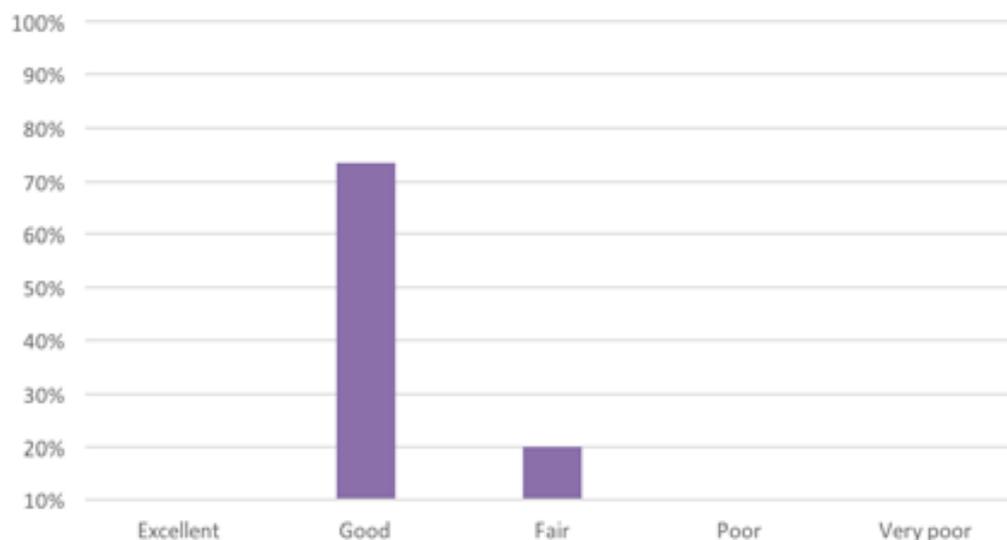
### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	27%
Good	60%
Fair	13%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- We have study days once a week. Currently, due to the lesser-workload, there is plenty of time to complete assignments when needed and I have personally only had to work on a few weekends to complete a major assignment.
- So far my work life balance has been good. The study days have helped as I have been able to get work done at home and avoid the commute. I have used some annual leave to work on assignments, however that has been more through personal choice rather than necessity.
- Although you start assessed work early on in the course, they generally ease you in during the first year. It has not felt too overwhelming and so far I have been able to maintain a reasonable work life balance.
- Work life balance is generally very good. It slips a bit around assignment deadlines (to be expected).
- Second year has a lot of assignments where deadlines fall close to one another and longer terms projects which finish in second year so can feel like little progress is being made, but that everything needs doing at once.
- Very much within our control - you can manage the workload within just Monday –Friday 9-5 if you work hard and are focused.
- I have found it very important to keep up my outside hobbies. It is tempting to dismiss these and fill the time with work instead, but I find I have more energy and drive to complete my work well if I still give myself this 'down-time' and have other interests.
- Commuting from North West can affect this to some degree.
- Generally this is good but varies at times, for example, when an assignment is due.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- A lot of money on fuel!
- I pay quite a lot out on petrol for the commute, however this is generally as I expected.
- Lots of local areas which are very reasonable rent-wise.
- The 'improving access' status is fantastic and means that I can afford to travel the long distances to placement every day. However I fear that this will be stopping soon, and will make a large difference to my financial QoL.
- Confusion regarding the WAT scheme during recent months has resulted in a number of changes in pay.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- Placements
- Cohort, supportive and non-competitive ethos
- The variety of models and theories explored and the input from local clinicians to teaching.
- The ethos of the course and how everyone is very supportive and there is a clear supportive environment. There is no sense of competitiveness either among trainees.
- My cohort who are so very supportive and the lecturers who really seem to want you to do well and they support you to reach your potential.
- The induction block is a good way of helping form a bond with your cohort and in getting to know them. I have found the warm and supportive environment has eliminated competition between us trainees in our first year.
- My fellow trainees!
- How well my cohort gets on.
- In terms of teaching we have had some excellent external teachers especially in the leadership and organisation module who have really made us think about ourselves as leaders and what this might look like clinically. Supervisors on placement are good and try to create a varied and enjoyable experience.

- My cohort who get on really well and are massively supportive - I don't think I would have managed to get this far, this sane, without them!
- Wonderful cohort, a good size at 15. Teaching is well paced. Staffs University science building is lovely. Nice balance of academic work and placement.
- Being mentally challenged every day in a positive and supportive environment, with a great, supportive cohort.
- The amount of support available to us from academic supervisors, professional supervisors and peers on the course is excellent.
- Varied and engaging teaching.
- The degree to which the course values service user and carer involvement. We have had a number of teaching sessions led solely by the 'Service User and Carer Committee'. Regular members of the group have been involved since the screening test, through to clinical skills workshops and have been very helpful and supportive throughout.
- I also appreciate the consistent emphasis placed on the importance of context when considering an individual's difficulties.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- When going for the Staffs interviews - just be yourself, show that you are a real person and have a life outside the realm of clinical psychology. It is so easy to get caught up in the cycle of wanting to get on the course, take some time to develop your own interests outside of this and this will help you get through the demands of working within mental health in the long run.
- I feel the staff really care about us, support us and want us to do our best.
- Be prepared to travel.
- The Staffordshire course immediately removes all thoughts of competitiveness between trainees, and encourages us to see each other as future colleagues, who we should want to be as competent and well-adjusted as possible. The process of getting onto clinical training is stressful and competitive, so having this explicitly removed was an important and necessary step I feel. As a cohort we get on very well, and support each other a lot, a huge plus in this daunting journey.
- Poor access for North Staffs Trust employees with regard to completing work offsite e.g. at home on non- placement days/outside of placement working hours. No secure software system e.g. Citrix in place to enable access to storage drives, documents, intranet, databases offsite from non-trust computers. Time could be used more effectively to complete and plan work and case related assignments if something were in place to enable this. South Staffs employees are provided with trust laptops and can work in this way, North Staffs employees are not offered laptops and can only gain access to electronic systems, except for email, when onsite. This is an added challenge for me as a trainee who commutes a fair distance.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Written paper

For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

- No Information given

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	0%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Surrey University

30 responses (35% of 86 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	57%
Year 2	30%
Year 3	13%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	17%
25 – 29 years	73%
30 – 34 years	10%
35 – 39 years	0%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	30%
Twice	20%
3 times	37%
4 times	7%
5 times	7%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	0%
MSc	43%
MRes	3%
Diploma	7%
Post Graduate Certificate	33%
Conversion course	3%
None	27%
Other	0%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	3%
2 years	7%
3 years	37%
4 years	27%
5 years	7%
6+ years	20%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	70%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	30%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	47%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	7%
Research Assistant	20%
Voluntary Research Assistant	13%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	50%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	40%
Other	20%

## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- I really enjoyed the process, I felt it showed you rather than what I memorised from a textbook.
- I really enjoyed it. It wasn't something you could prep for but rather a process that tested your ability to formulate and be reflective which I believe to be more essential skills for a psychologist than an ability to give rehearsed answers. I valued the opportunity to apply the knowledge I had.
- The personal interview was a very different experience and was very new to me. I enjoyed the professional practice interview.
- It was useful to have trainees present during the interview day to talk to. It would have been nice to hear back about the result of the interview faster.
- Overall it was a very well managed process where everybody tried to put us at ease as much as possible. I found the process of being in a room full of other applicants and university trainees to be quite daunting. I found the working with people interview very positive; the interviewers (a regional psychologist and a service user) were very relaxed and encouraging and really brought out the best in me. I struggled more with the personal interview. I felt pressed for answers when I wanted time to think, and felt probed for more information that I didn't know how to provide. It felt quite strange being asked personal questions within the structure of an interview as there was no validation or feedback on your answers.
- I had been told from people in the year above that the Personal Suitability interview was incredibly personal and tough I did not find it that bad. There was quite a long wait between interviews and hearing the decisions, which was frustrating. The Working with People interview (with a video) was really interesting. I actually (perhaps masochistically) quite enjoyed the interview process.
- Friendly, personable and fair. I thought the information given beforehand as well as the introduction at the beginning of the interviews was helpful and true to what happened. The free tea and coffee was a nice touch and made me feel welcome. The trainees that were there on the day were friendly and I never felt like I was being 'assessed' by them.
- The course team made me feel as welcome as possible for both the exam and the interview days, reminding us that it was also about us getting a feel for the university as well as them assessing us. It was well organised and clear from the outset what would happen which helped massively. The interviews were challenging but conducted with supportive members of the course team who made it clear that they were not trying to trick us but really wanted us to do the best we possibly could.
- Surrey have a personal and clinical interview. I actually quite enjoyed the clinical interview because I felt that I had sufficient clinical experience and I enjoy the work and talking about it. Also I had a clinician interviewer who was really encouraging; smiling and nodding and a service user or carer interviewer who liked some of the work that I and the service I was in at the time had been doing. The personal interview felt a lot harder, I'd put a lot of effort into self-reflection in preparation but still felt like I could only reflect on the surface level. My interviewers were encouraging and not too scary so although it was difficult it was still a good experience.
- Challenging. First time round didn't anticipate what the personal interview would mean. Think about what you are willing to discuss and what feels safe given you are talking to strangers and in a stressful situation.
- Overall it was good. Current trainees were around to talk to about their experience, and settle nerves a bit. The interviewers were friendly, and didn't rush you to answer their questions
- There were two interviews. One was a more reflective interview about my personal experiences and one was an opportunity for reflection and to demonstrate clinical understanding in response to a video clip.
- The interview felt more about having a reflective conversation than about demonstrating lots of impressive knowledge and skills. An unusual and noteworthy feature of the interview at Surrey was

the large focus on the interviewee's personal experiences and I think it is important to know to expect this. The course team were warm and professional, the tone was a supportive one.

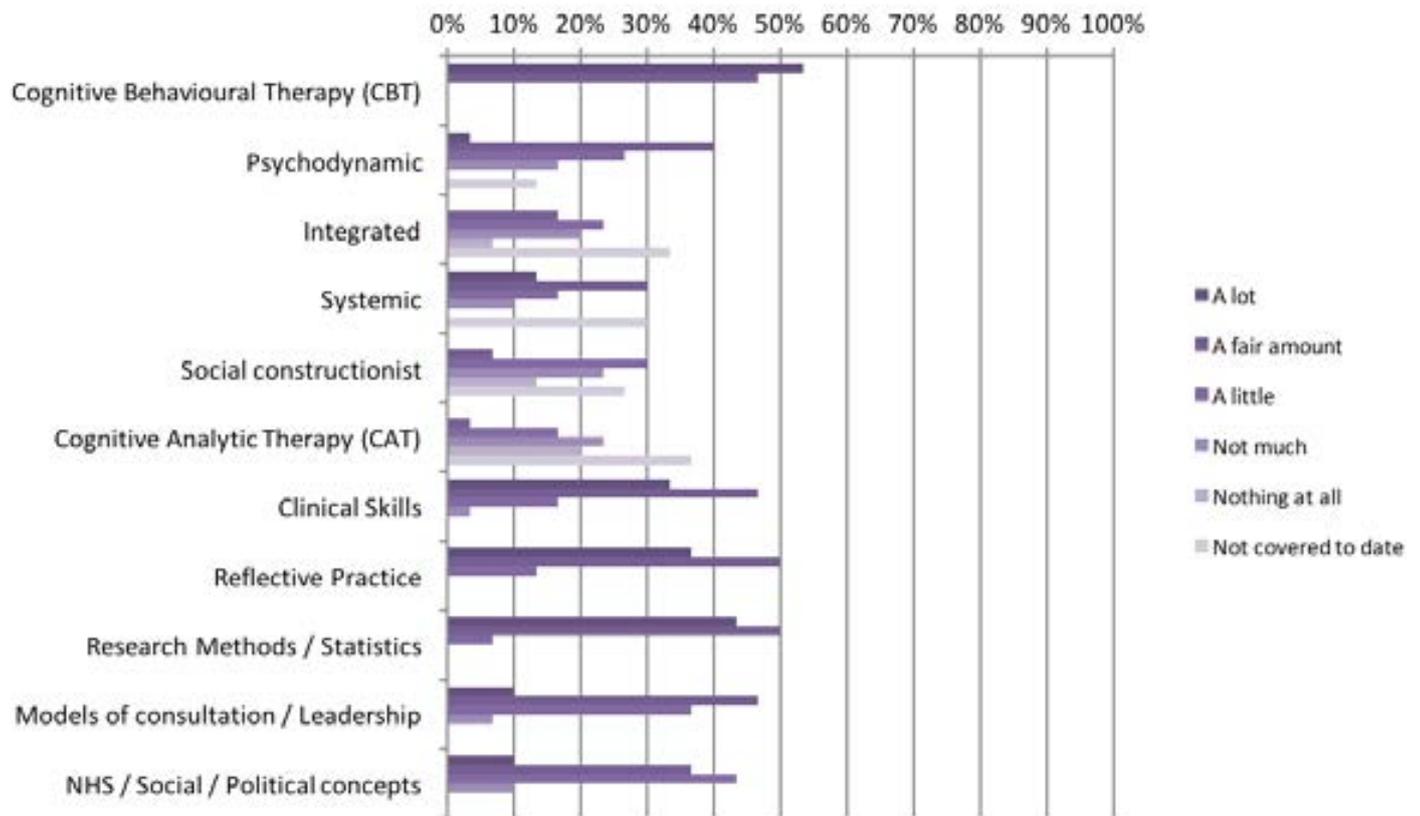
- I found the interview day really supportive and reassuring. They had current trainees around with friendly faces who were very kind and calming. It was helpful to ask them questions about the course. Staff too were extremely supportive on the day.
- The interview was split into two parts, one focused on clinical work with people and one personal suitability interview. Both were challenging, but I found the interviewers supportive and friendly.
- I interviewed twice at Surrey. The first time was a lot scarier as I didn't know what to expect and it was a lot more personal than I was expecting. But the second year I was more familiar with the process. The interviewers were very supportive and try to get the best out of you.
- Overall, a very demanding and stressful process, as I expected it to be. I think having two interviews on the same day, one based on a video task was quite new to me and was unsure what to expect. However, having trainees there definitely helped ease some of the anxiety. The personal interview can be quite demanding as a lot of personal questions are asked and you need to be able to identify your own boundaries and how far you want to go in your disclosure. However, that generally matched my ethos about training, which I feel needs to be a lot about self-exploration and learning, so although leaving the interview might leave you feeling a bit exposed, I felt it was important for them to get to know the potential trainees at a personal level as well.
- Prior to undertaking the interview, the offer letter I received was very clear in its instructions and expectations outlined for the interview day. On the day of the interview we were given a warm and encouraging welcome by the course director. Emphasis was placed on the importance of Trainees taking time during the interview day to consider whether Surrey would be a 'good fit' for them as well as attempting to successfully secure a place on the course. There were current Trainees there who helped us to navigate from one interview to another and helped to make it a little less anxiety-provoking.
- Despite the inevitable nerves I was quickly put at ease during the service user panel interview and was given sufficient opportunity to reflect on my previous experiences. Looking back this felt quite conversational rather than the tradition question/answer interview. The personal interview was more like a 'traditional' interview approach and required drawing upon quite personal information in order to engage in the reflective process.
- Everyone was warm and welcoming. It felt like quite a strange interview, all about who I am as a person and my ability to reflect on that and on wider issues within the NHS. It was difficult to know what they were looking for, but they all seemed to want to get the best out of me.
- Positive and interesting, although quite taxing.
- Compared to some of the other courses where I had interviews, the interview process at Surrey was more reflective. It felt like they wanted to know who I was as a person rather than just theory that I knew or work experience that I had gained.
- Whilst the day was nerve wracking, I enjoyed the interviews and felt that I was able to be myself and let my personality come through. It helped to speak with current trainees before the interviews, to hear about the course and for them to answer any questions we had.
- I found the interview process at Surrey a nerve-wracking but exciting process. The reflective interview allows you space to consider your journey into psychology and your suitability for the role, whilst also leaving you feeling the course staff are interested in and curious about you as a person. As a result, I left the interview feeling quite valued and this experience encouraged me to pick Surrey over the other training offers I received.
- I quite enjoyed the interview process with Surrey and I'm not just saying that because I got on to the course! However, whilst I didn't enjoy sitting the exam, it was helpful in preparing me for understanding research to the level required for starting the course. I remember the interview day being really relaxed and friendly. I didn't anticipate sitting in the room with everyone waiting to be interviewed but the atmosphere was so comfortable and reassuring; having current trainees show you around made it feel even more relaxing and they were particularly calming on a very anxiety-

fuelled day. I remember feeling like everyone was on the same team. I was also impressed with the interviewers they really engaged with you during the interview. When I walked away from the interview process I genuinely found that I had enjoyed the day.

- I felt very well supported on the interview day by current students being on hand to answer questions about the course and to talk about my previous work experience. I found out I had got on the course within the deadline they told us they would get back to us by.
- The working with people interview was really good. Interviewers were friendly and warm. The personal interview was much more stressful.
- It was extremely anxiety provoking as I felt it was difficult to get a sense of what my interviewers were looking for, however, I did feel that my interviewers attempted to put me at ease by being friendly and offering to answer any questions I had.
- I found the interview to be very reflective and definitely got the sense that my interviewers were trying to see my personality and how I handled a variety of different situations
- I found the interview process was aimed at getting to know you as an individual. It felt very reflective and it wasn't necessarily something you could 'prepare' for as such. I felt both panels were interested in my experiences, thoughts and emotions around certain topics and it felt both structured yet conversational. I was thrown by some questions but I don't believe they expect you to have all the answers, more your process around answering a question. It felt that personal characteristics were valued more than theory-knowledge links which I personally feel is important. If you have the personal foundation you can build the knowledge later.
- I found that having other trainees there was very helpful. It was easy to find the place where interviews were taking place on campus. The talk from the director was a little bit intimidating, and interviews themselves were fine as good facial expressions from interviewers. The personal suitability interview was very interesting as I understand it's not like other interviews but thought it was a really good way to assess personality and readiness for the course.
- It was obviously pretty terrifying, but having current trainees to talk to before and between the two interviews (clinical and personal) definitely helped. It felt like both my interviews had a 'good cop' (a local Psychologist/service user/carers) and 'bad cop' (a member of the course team). I now know that both the bad cops are actually really nice and supportive, it just felt that I didn't get much back from them during the interview.

# Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	59%
Mindfulness	48%
Schema Therapy	41%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	41%
Solution Focused Therapy	15%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	7%
Other	4%

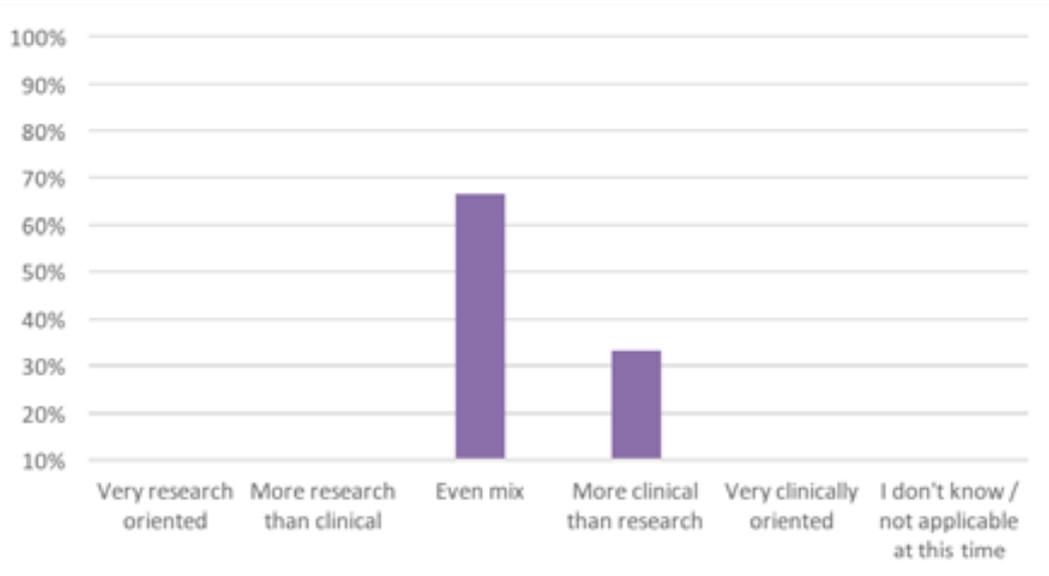
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- Personally I would prefer more psychodynamic and less CBT, but I appreciate it the topics are representative of the system we will be entering when we qualify.
- CBT is the main focus of teaching in the first year. You have two teaching blocks (1 week each), the first is more generic CBT skills and the second is more disorder specific. We also have a psychodynamic teaching week later in the first year. We've had personal and professional development sessions on regular intervals and sessions on leadership and management. There are a lot of research methods sessions in the first year, these are all mainly focussed around the key things you need to know to get you through research coursework so are practical at this stage in training.
- First year is quite CBT heavy until Psychodynamic week in June. Teaching on Research Methods starts quite soon, to prepare you for your Major Research Project, which starts much earlier than other courses.
- The course team are clear about the tension between what is required by the BPS and the range of what they can teach us in the time allowed. I feel the teaching has been of high quality with a good mix of CBT, systemic and other approaches.
- In first year CBT is the main model covered. We have a psychodynamic week of teaching which we're yet to have and systemic teaching at the beginning of second year. IPT is also taught although we haven't had that teaching yet. Reflective practice is more prominent than other courses I think which I've found really helpful for my own personal and professional development. Leadership has been discussed from early on hopefully aiding us to start developing these skills while we train.
- 1st year can seem very CBT heavy with a little psychodynamic. 2nd year has felt more balanced with a focus on systemic and psychodynamic teaching rather than CBT.
- Lots of teaching on attachment.
- Our first year is mainly focused on CBT with the odd teaching session on other areas such as psychodynamic. The teaching staff encourage us to adapt clinical work to include aspects from different areas.
- The first year is very CBT focused, whereas more models and integrative approaches are favoured in years two and three. Research is covered over all three years, as is neuropsychology.
- Surrey do a really good job of introducing different approaches, but the main focus is on CBT, Systemic and then Psychodynamic with a full experiential psychodynamic week in year one. There are options to explore other approaches in your specialist placement (final year).
- I am a first year trainee, and so far there has been a huge emphasis mainly on CBT. However, it seems that the course covers more in the years to come, as well as circulating a lot of emails on additional training going on at the university or around the country, which allows you to expand your learning skills.
- I am still in my first year which is very CBT focused. However, we have a Psychodynamic teaching week in the summer and other models are integrated/referred to periodically within the teaching programme. We have received a number of lectures on Attachment Theory.
- Very CBT heavy in the first year. Unsure what will be covered in upcoming years. It is becoming clearer however that should you really want to become a specialist in an intervention, it's likely you'll need to undertake further training post qualifying.
- In first year, the majority of teaching has been focused on CBT (in line with CBT placements).
- The two main models taught are CBT and systemic, and Surrey are really transparent about this from the start. I personally would have liked more teaching dedicated to psychoanalytic/psychodynamic concepts but there are some opportunities for this on placement. There is also quite a bit of teaching on attachment in the first year which I think sets a good foundation for understanding psychopathology.
- Most of the approaches only give you enough teaching to know whether or not you might be

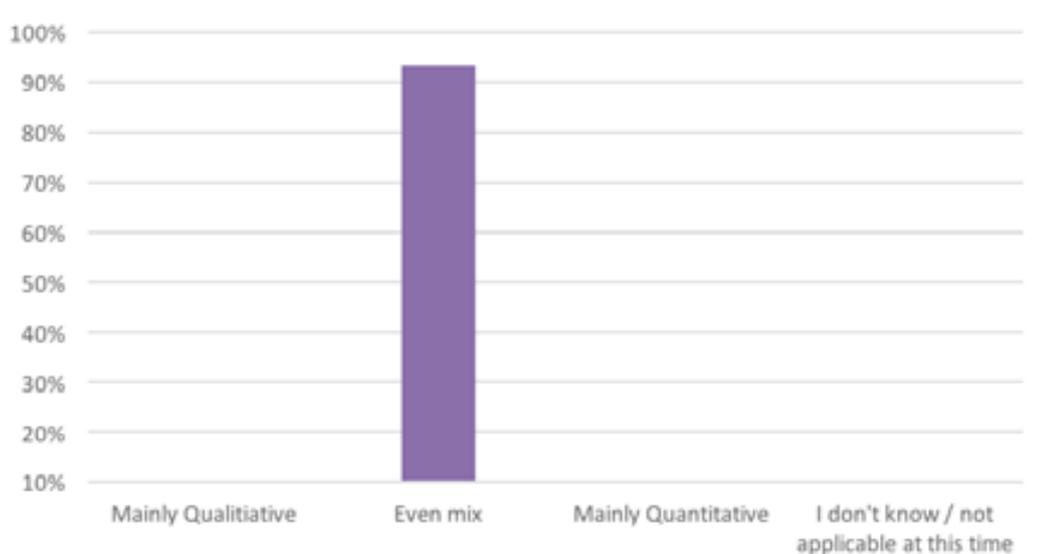
interested in that approach. However it's not really enough teaching to be able to use the approach in practice. It is up to you to develop your own knowledge e.g. find people on placement who use the approach, find conferences, find other training courses etc.

- It would be useful to have more teaching on therapeutic models of working and more practical teaching on advanced CBT skills
- As a first year 6 months into training I am aware that there are other models and theories that will be covered in future training. The course are responsive to our needs, if we feel we have not had “enough” training or lectures they have facilitated additional sessions. The course is an interesting mix of three models-CBT, Psychodynamic and Systemic.
- Teaching hints at other treatments such as ACT but doesn't teach them. It would be helpful to have a day or two on some of the bigger third wave therapies as there are patients on adult placement that we are expected to treat with these e.g. DBT, schema, CFT
- More on CBT skills to apply in clinical practice (i.e. not just the theory) would be very helpful earlier on (i.e. before/during the first placement). But, the course team are very responsive to feedback and added in an extra day on CBT skills to our timetable following our feedback.

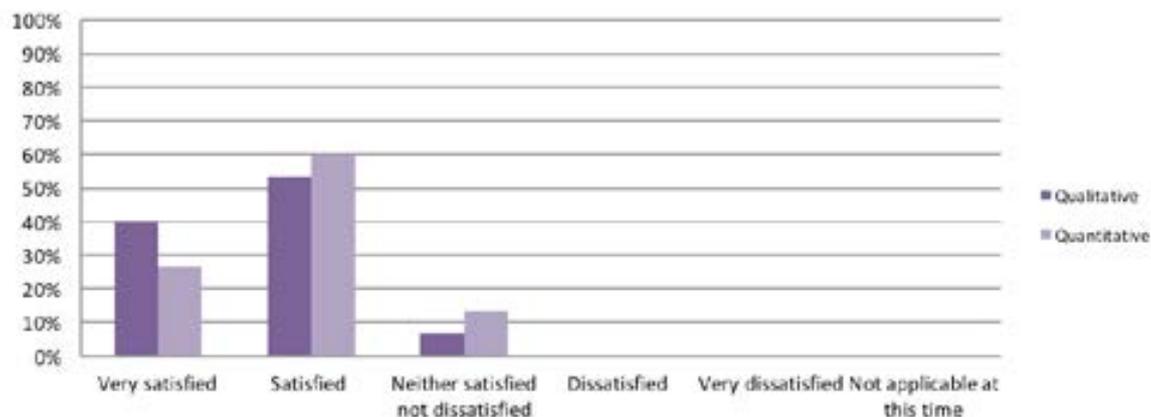
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



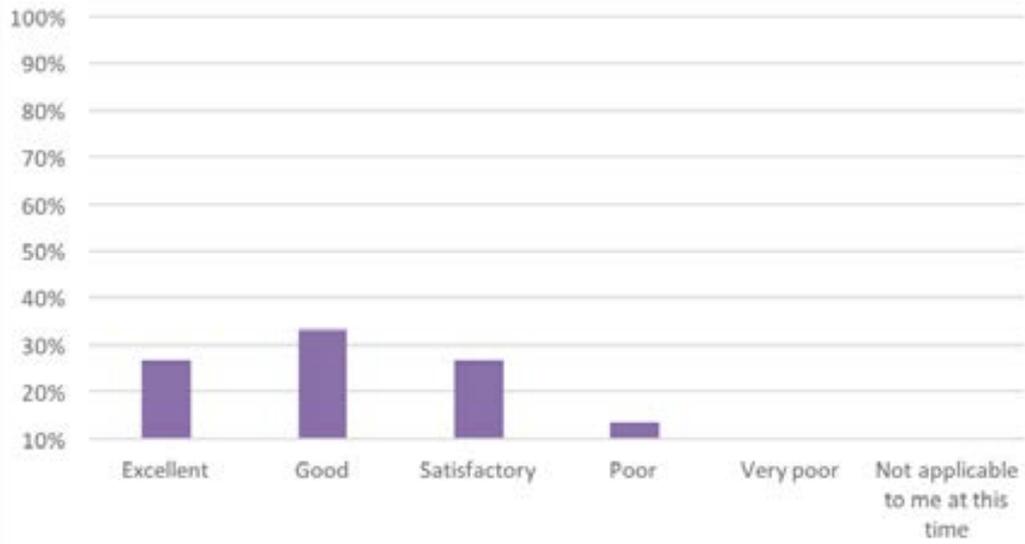
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



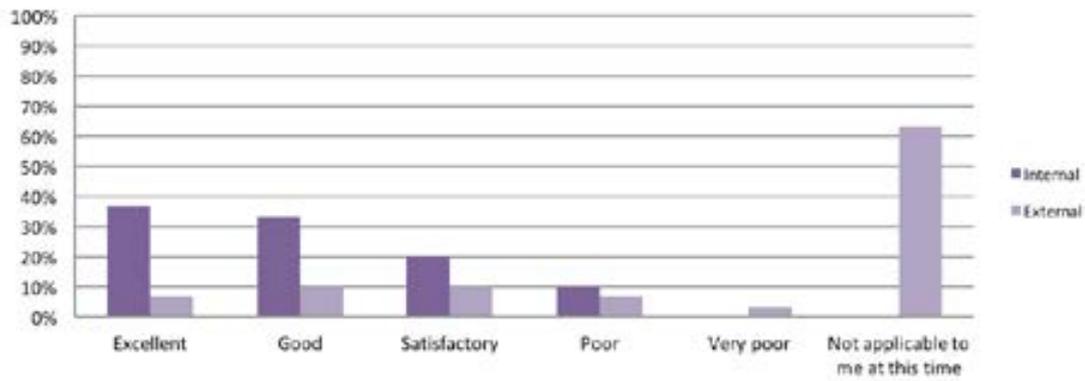
#### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- I find research more challenging than clinical but have felt supported by my research tutor.
- Good teaching.
- Our lectures are focussed around the skills we need to undertake our research on the course (service related projects and major research projects). The teaching in research methods has been excellent and very engaging even for a research-phobe like myself.
- The major research project decision happens fairly soon in first year which I think is a good thing.
- Research lectures have been timed around the coursework that we are doing which has been really helpful. Both qualitative and quantitative has been covered. Currently I think we're getting more qualitative lectures which I think is because typically people come onto the course with more quantitative than qualitative experience.
- There are research staff who have skills and experience in both qualitative and quantitative and they are always approachable if you need additional support with either.
- Research teaching is excellent on the course.
- I feel that the course staff are aware that trainees come to the course with a vast array of experience and therefore take time to attempt to ensure that we are at a similar level.
- You start with your research thesis very early. You're expected to align with the research interests of the faculty, which is worth bearing in mind when applying if you're particularly wedded to a specific thesis idea.
- A good amount of time has been dedicated to research methods
- I am working more qualitatively so it may feel that i understand this area more than quantitative methods.

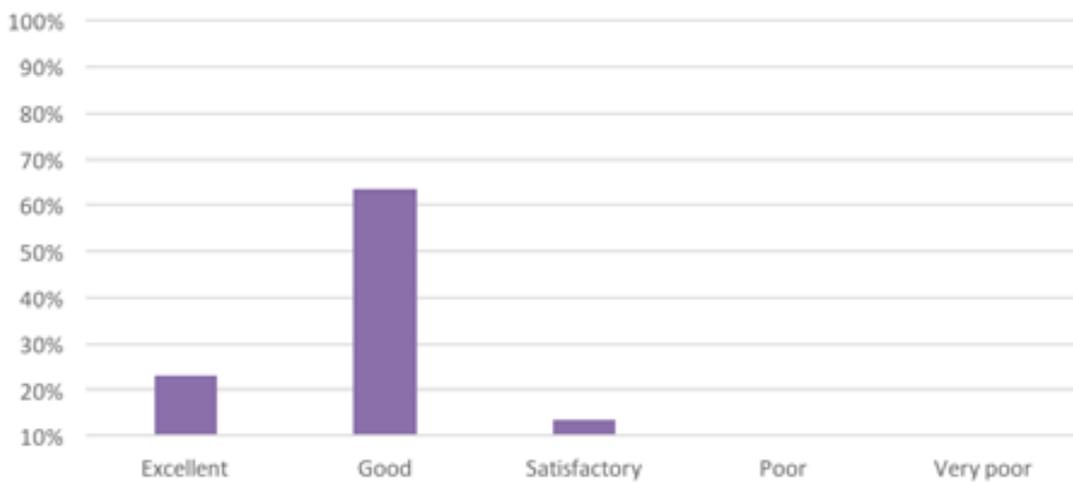
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



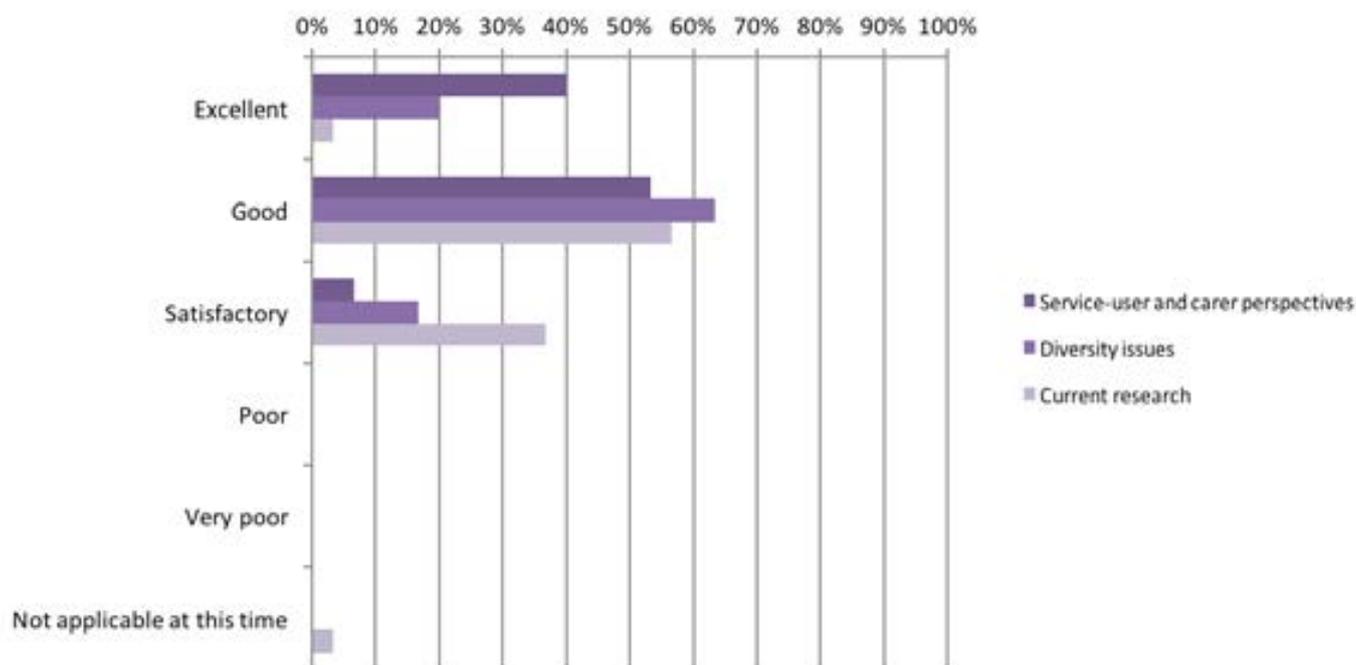
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

- Diversity teaching has been best when integrated rather than tokenistic. We have occasionally had opportunities to reflect systemically on our diversity issues as a group and I have highly valued this.
- Some of the CBT teaching has not been as useful as I would have hoped.
- The teaching overall has been of a good standard. There were some problems with the CBT teaching we received, which were feedback to the programme team who then arranged for us to have additional optional teaching at a mutually agreed time. A new staff member with specialist knowledge in CBT started at the university recently, and met with us to discuss our learning needs. The subsequent teaching she provided on cognitive strategies in CBT was exemplary. The course team appear to listen to our feedback (we complete online feedback on each lecture) and make adjustments to improve the teaching. I feel confident that the CBT teaching will be of a good standard in the future. I am looking forward to the psychodynamic teaching week as the main lecturer in this is fantastic.
- Teaching has been varied. There are a mix of internal and external lecturers, and the quality has varied somewhat. But the senior course team have been responsive to our feedback, e.g. arranging extra teaching to cover a topic that we felt was not well-taught.
- The teaching is provided by a mix of the course team and outside clinical psychologists. They have put on extra sessions by specialists on areas we would like further information on.
- The course have been really responsive to areas where we felt we needed additional teaching. Which does mean that we were not always happy with the quality of the teaching but the course asks for regular feedback and responds to this. Over all the teaching has been good.
- The internal teaching is always to a high standard but I haven't enjoyed some of the teaching from external local Clinical Psychologists who can be too didactic / read off research slides. The course are very responsive to feedback about teaching we have found poor. Some lecturers have brought service users to sessions to talk of their experiences which has been very helpful.
- We have lots of external speakers who bring real-life examples of clinical work using the techniques they are teaching us about. We have also had a lot of involvement with service users and carers which has been invaluable.

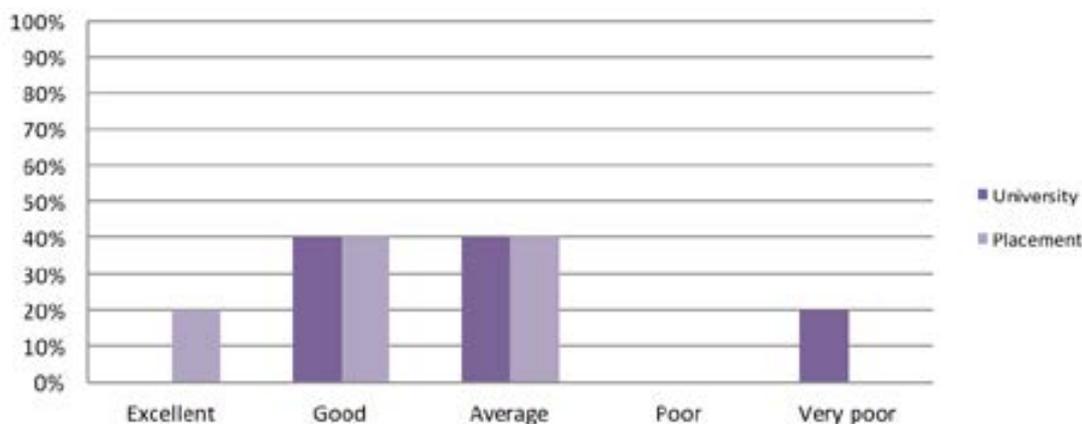
- Surrey has a service user and carer advisory group that they draw upon for the interview process, teaching and consultation for research. This has been really valuable. However, there is a module entitled the 'social context' which is dedicated to issues related to culture, diversity etc. Having this as a separate module can feel like an 'add-on' (which I know is not the University's intention). The best lectures have been those which incorporate these issues as part of our normal practice, rather than giving separate space to explore them, in my opinion.
- Includes a lot of external speakers, which is brilliant as it helps get teaching from people who are out in the field but also up to date with the current research. Sometimes it might feel that the speakers have a very niche experience, so cannot provide a very general teaching, which might provoke some anxiety (to first years at least!), but overall very useful.
- There is a service user and carer group attached to the course who have input on teaching, which is very useful and is not done in a tokenistic way. There is an awareness of diversity issues and they try to incorporate teaching on this however this is limited as the course isn't particularly diverse.
- Lectures are very interesting although they has been some criticism about not having much skills-based learning this year I think.
- I believe the course provides a good foundation of teaching applicable to stage of training. The first elements are about building engagement and core therapeutic skills which is important for starting placement.
- Teaching has been hit and miss some really brilliant speakers and some very poor. However, course is responsive to feedback e.g. Offered more teaching on subjects we weren't happy with which increased confidence. Many of the staff are also free for you to ask questions if you want help

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

17% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Yes-lack of support with academic assignments.
- Standard of writing but I expected this.
- Having to read a large quantity of materials.
- I am on a split placement and so it has taken some time to settle into both teams. I am based at the university two days a week, with one day a week in one placement, and 1 1/2 days a week in the other. I have had to keep myself very well organised to cope with this. Managing coursework so far has been absolutely fine. You have plenty of study days in which to work on it and I have rarely had to use my own personal time to do this.
- The commute to placement has been the toughest part for me; unfortunately at some point during the course you will have a long commute as the placements are spread over a wide area. You have to pick a Major Research Project topic quite early on, and get the proposal submitted by June of your first year, which has been challenging for someone like me who has no postgraduate research experience.
- The balance of teaching, placement and study is always going to be tricky. The course are supportive but there is a certain level of resilience needed to just keep going while there are deadlines overlapping with clinical demands.
- As is the nature of the course, there are lots of competing demands on our time which at times is difficult to juggle and complete all tasks to the standard I would like to be able to. However there are also quieter periods of the year and many sources of support put in places to make managing these demands possible.
- Trying to juggle all the different requirements has been difficult but also a great self-development process.
- Clinical work can be very demanding especially going into high risk settings if you are from a much lower risk background work wise.
- It is a demanding course and can feel overwhelming around deadlines and towards the end of placements.
- I live quite far away from the University and therefore travelling has been demanding. The course team have been supportive and have tried to accommodate my placement days so that travelling is easier.
- The entire course is very demanding. In the first year, there are many deadlines between February and June and a lot of work needs to be done in the evenings and weekends to meet the demands. There are less assignment deadlines in years two and three, but level of autonomy on placement increases (which can be demanding as lots of independent learning is needed) and a larger focus on the thesis work occurs. Aspects of the teaching and placement can also be emotionally demanding and challenging at different times.
- Balancing demands on placement at the same time as coursework deadlines (but I imagine this is the nature of the course).
- Work-life balance. My placement is quite far from home (Brighton), which means I need to stay at a B&B for two nights every week, which can be disorientating at the beginning. Managing placement demands and balancing that with University demands/deadlines and personal life has been the biggest struggle I think. But the course team are very supportive, there is always someone around you can talk to and seek support.
- The inevitable difficulties in terms of managing time and my workload can be challenging at times. Being organised helps! This contributed to by the fact that I have a split-placement, both based in Sussex and my Service Related Project is based outside of the services in which I am undertaking

my placements. I am therefore required to undertake a lot of travelling between placements and meetings.

- The University require a lot of paperwork completion which can be difficult to manage, especially when my placement supervisors are required to complete and sign evaluation forms.
- At times, it can feel like there are lots of things at the same time with deadlines, thesis and clinical demands, but this is generally balanced by calmer moments.
- Year 1 has a lot of deadlines and Surrey are quite heavy on documentation. As with every course I imagine there is a lot to juggle however I found the course team supportive.
- Juggling demands from teaching and placement along with multiple assignments, although we do have a fair amount of study days to help with assignment prep and there is a lot of support in place.
- The balance of research, clinical work, and course assignments was always going to be tough, however bunched deadline periods can be a struggle. The course however have been quite flexible and adaptive to feedback on this.
- Just the literature review. I think the standard of work expected on the course is fine. Sometimes it's tricky managing lots of deadlines close to each other but that doesn't happen often at Surrey. What I have found more demanding is trying to have a work-life balance, but this applies to all clinical psychology training courses.
- Managing all the competing demands with research assignments, placement tasks and clinical reports.
- The literature review has been very challenging for me. Also finding a thesis idea was very difficult and took the most part of a year.
- Balancing workload. the course requires excellent organisation skills
- I have found the trust handling of HR issues extremely poor.
- I have found being on a split placement in a location far from home difficult. Although the course have been accommodating in that they have provided a budget for B and B stays I prefer being in my own home and commuting. This means I can be more tired and it is more difficult to study after work.
- Thesis - having to choose a topic in the first couple of month of starting the course and then doing a literature survey (which have never done before) feels overwhelming
- Working individually with patients before having any teaching on how to work with them, if hadn't had PWP training would have really struggled with this.
- Getting used to the trainee role having worked as a manager in the NHS for a few years. Getting back into writing assignments etc. Learning how best to manage my time in order to meet all the various demands.

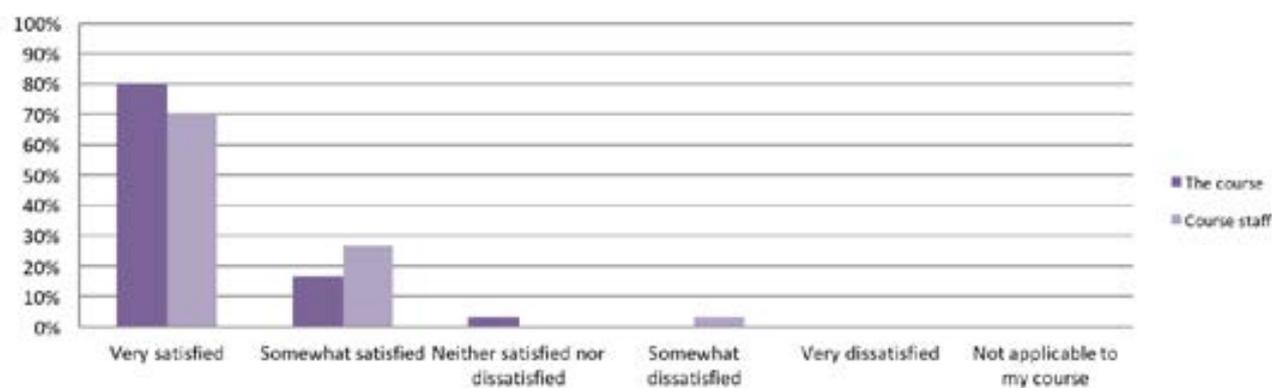
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	83%
“Buddy”	97%
Manager	40%
Placement Supervisor	93%
Librarian	53%
Professional Mentor	83%
Personal Tutor	87%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	97%
Independent personal advisor	10%
Other	13%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- General peer support is great
- Personal and professional development group
- The cohort are really supportive generally.
- Mentor

### How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?



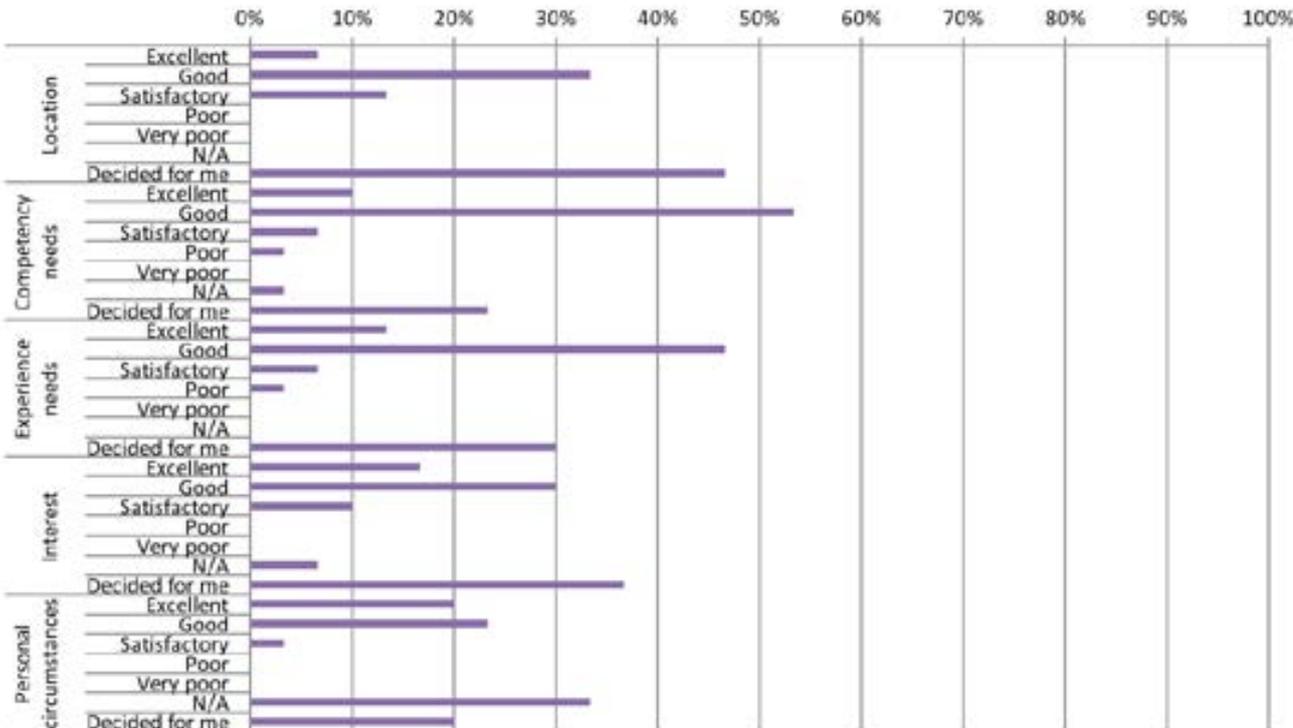
### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

- I wasn't getting enough support I complained and now have much better support.
- The course staff were great but I had a negative experience of the assistive learning support at the University.
- I have not had any real need to access support, but I would be comfortable in doing this and feel confident that concerns would be addressed. HR support has been poor however.
- Personal tutor has been great at being responsive to my needs at different points in the first year. It has been difficult to arrange meetings with my mentor (who is external to the course and NHS trust) and I'm not sure the purpose of the mentorship scheme is very clear, especially to first years. I can see how it will be valuable in third year as we come to apply for jobs etc.
- I have had excellent support. I particularly like the external mentor idea - my mentor is approachable and great to have someone external to the course who has been through it but not directly connected to the course.
- I've personally felt very supported. I have a great buddy from the year above and my thesis supervisor is very calming, knowledgeable and supportive. We also have reflective groups which involve people in our year and they stay the same across the 3 years. This has been really helpful to have the space to properly get to know each other and support each other.
- Talk to your clinical tutor. They are on your side and are very helpful in negotiating and navigating any difficulties, including getting enough supervision on placement. This can feel intimidating at first as you may feel as though you are being evaluated by the university but once I did this in has helped immensely to know that she has my back. Also I have found the mentoring system to be incredibly helpful. My mentor has been brilliant in helping me understand how my own stuff impacts on my clinical work and vice versa.
- Whenever I have approached the course team or placement supervisors with any difficulties I have always found them very supportive
- The University goes the extra mile to reach out and offer support to you. The library staff in particular are excellent
- The course team are very friendly and approachable and any queries or concerns we have are dealt with quickly. They are always available to speak to either via email or in person.
- I personally have found the course team and other external supervisors extremely supportive and available. But of course there will be some variability in experiences. The most important thing (which is emphasised by the Surrey course) is that when you need additional support, this is easy to access and quick to respond, which I have found it to be.
- The course team are generally very easy to approach. Although so far I have only required support or assistance on relatively minor issues, I have received a very timely and helpful response.
- A good range of different sources of support. The buddy system (where you are paired with a trainee in the year above) has been helpful for advice with assignments.
- Surrey have amazing support systems; you are never short of support there. I've found incredible encouragement, particularly from some members of the staff team. I honestly don't know how I would have gotten this far without some of them. Training is definitely a challenging time of your life but staff believe in you and they know how to provide a secure attachment base for you.
- There are many channels of support here at Surrey, I'm very happy with the level of support available.
- There are lots of different places to get support from. I have found this difficult as the contact with each support system is very minimal. Therefore when I had difficulties I wasn't sure where to go and I felt I didn't have very good relationships with any of the support networks, or the person I felt most able to go to and had the best relationship with, it wasn't actually their job to support me, so I felt unable to seek help from them. My Clinical Tutor did not respond initially when I asked for help, it took a few months. I know that other people on my course have had slightly different experiences to me.

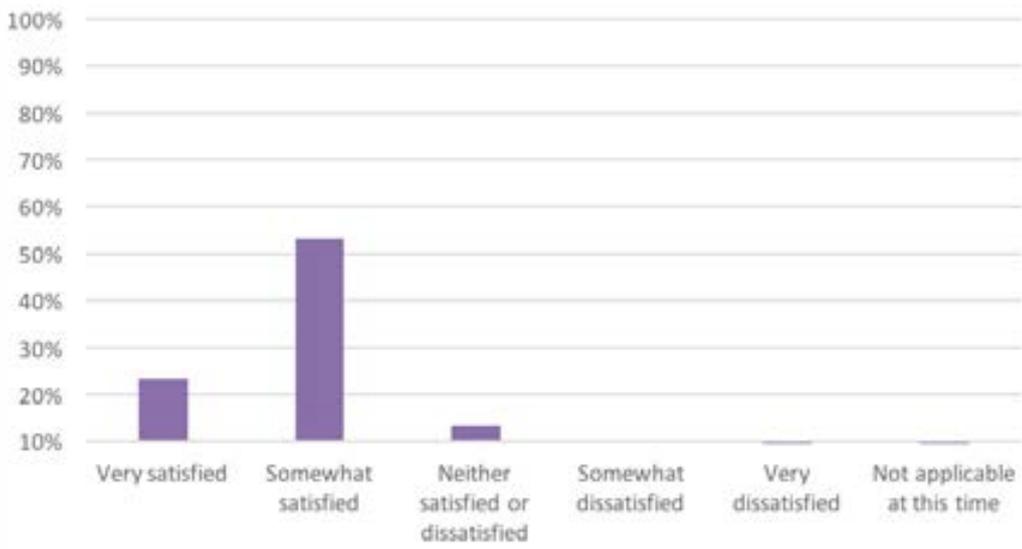
- The course staff are approachable and extremely supportive.
- There are lots of support systems in place-it can feel like an additional thing to consider arranging meetings between them all. But generally useful to know there are various people to discuss difficulties and positive things with.
- Have a lot of support in theory but none there to help you manage anxiety or if you want to have a debrief randomly. Told to get therapy for that.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?

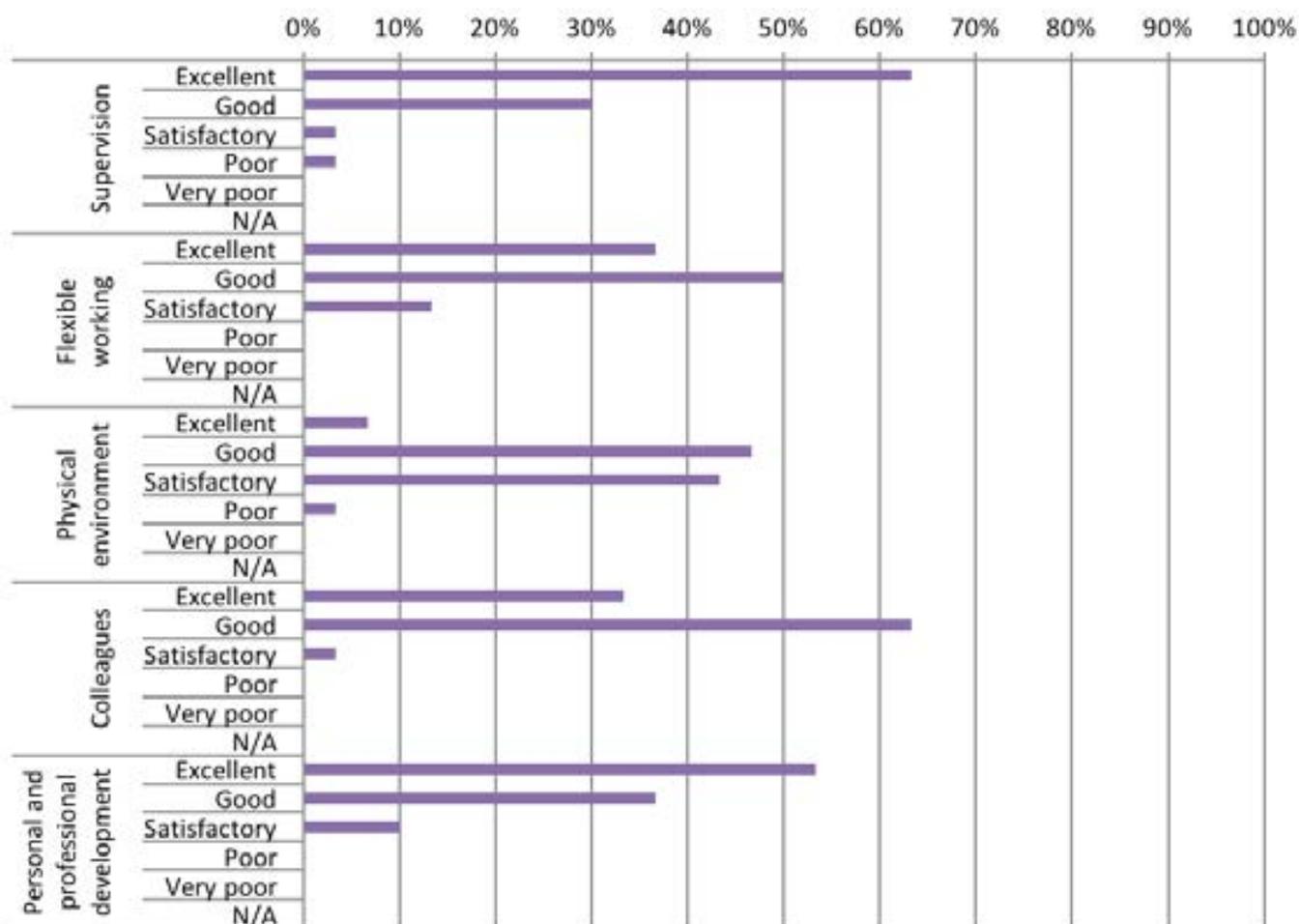


### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- Location seems to be a bit pot luck. I've only had two placements with long commutes out of six.
- Timings of lectures can be a bit off e.g. Receiving a lecture when you have finished your placement in this area but I appreciate timing lectures to meet all needs is very difficult
- It would be impossible for the course to teach us everything we need to know prior to us starting placement. I think you rely on your prior experience to get you through placement to start with. There are numerous handbooks including a placement one that we are required to read at the start of the course but it is very hard to take it all in. The University rely on you taking responsibility for doing all the relevant paperwork throughout training, but if you are organized and have initiative it is fine.
- There are so many teaching sessions which I wish we could have had before we started placement. E.g. we have two CBT weeks in first year (one in mid-December, one in May) - for people without much CBT experience, this might feel a little too late (placement starts at the beginning of November).
- I think it's impossible to feel completely prepared for the first placement but I felt as ready as I could following the initial teaching block. The course aims to buddy you with the 2nd year who was on your placement before you which is really helpful as you can get real information and advice about what it's going to be like.
- If you are not from the traditional route into training (IAPT/NHS assistant psychologist) it feels like being thrown in the deep end to make the jump straight to secondary care adult mental health where risk is high and there is much complexity of presentation.
- The course could be more transparent about how placements are allocated when people are not allocated any of their choices.
- The course focuses on preparing us with good basic clinical skills at the start of the course before placement. This helped me feel confident that I do have some communication skills to fall back on when working with clients.
- It would be helpful to have more practical CBT skills before being placed in settings where we see clients quickly. The teaching has been helpful but felt it could have been provided slightly earlier in the timetable than it has been.
- Excellent teaching on therapeutic skills prior to start of placement. This goes a tremendous way in preparing you for 'being' with clients.
- It's quite difficult I think for the course to prepare us all to the same level as we all go into different areas which might have different demands. As far as basic knowledge is concerned, the course preparation was excellent, we discussed potential barriers, our support system in case placement was not going as planned as well as basic skills required to begin placement.
- I appreciate that it is difficult to manage the balance between what to teach when, and how best it fits with when we are on placement. However, given that my previous experience was mostly with children and LD, I have found it challenging to implement CBT with complex adult cases, and some of the CBT teaching in order to aid this has been limited and mediocre.
- You get 5 weeks teaching in the first year. But you learn a lot whilst on placement.
- I did feel that I needed more CBT teaching and skills prior to starting placement (as CBT teaching block is in December) but once I had started placement I found support from supervisors helpful.
- You gain a good foundation in basic clinical skills, common and severe mental health problems in adults, and CBT before heading to placement. Introductions to systemic, psychodynamic ideas, and advanced CBT come late in the year. Your second and third years have a more even balance between child, older adult, and learning disability skill as well as advanced systemic and psychodynamic workshops.
- It would have been useful to have had more comprehensive CBT teaching prior to starting placement, and also more opportunities to reflect on our clinical work

- The first teaching is based on core therapeutic skills and beginning clinical work. I am glad that I have a foundation of clinical experience though as lectures to clinical practice can be a leap! working with clients with more complex difficulties has been a challenge (but a good one) and I think it is hard for the course to provide all the training necessary before starting placement, you learn by doing and seeking support and supervision from your placement supervisor.
- My PWP training and placement supervisor have more help than the teaching I have had on the course. Exception to this is work on formulation. However, have to get everyone to same level so hope that CBT and psycho dynamic teaching later in the year will be more beneficial
- More teaching on practical skills (what to 'do' in therapy) and opportunities to see therapy in action (e.g. videos/audio recordings) would have been helpful, in CBT and other models.

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- I had one difficult placement that the course was super helpful and supportive
- Specialist placement was fantastic.
- The supervision I have received has been very helpful in building on my previous experience. Coming from a CBT background I have found it really interesting to explore psychodynamic approaches in supervision and to consider processes within the therapy room. My placement has been very accommodating to my personal circumstances and allowing me to adjust my working hours. Working environment differs between placements, but I have generally had no problems in accessing a desk and computer. My colleagues have all been very welcoming and I feel part of the team.
- I've had a really good first year placement experience, with a fantastic supervisor. However others in my year have had supervisors who are not always responsive, or placements where it's difficult to see individual clients (which is required for first-year assignments).
- I'm in a placement which has had links with the course for many years so they're familiar with the course requirements and the learning experiences I'll need.
- Getting supervisors to give you the amount of supervision specified in the contract is challenging due to their work pressures. However you are their trainee and they have a responsibility to you and your clients and so you need to be firm on this. Use clinical tutors to help negotiate. But even they can't sort it all the time.
- I have had excellent experiences on placement. I have had supportive supervisors who have allowed for flexible working and provided opportunities for reflection and my development. My only critique would be the working environments: Trainees often have to hot desk and accessing a computer / phone at times can be difficult but this is the current context of the NHS. I have also had to hot desk in areas away from where my team are based which can make it difficult to integrate with them.
- I have fantastic supervision on placement (2.75 hours per week). I feel really well supported. My caseload is manageable and I am building up CBT skills working with a range of different presentations of distress. However, one limitation is a lack of cultural diversity where I am working in Surrey.
- My placement supervisor and the MDT have been very supportive and flexible. The only downside is hot desking (but this happens everywhere in the NHS now).
- My supervisor has been really flexible in terms of our supervision, to add discussions more around my areas of interest and allowing that to integrate that in my practice.
- I have personally been lucky with placement however I am aware of some having to commute a lot. You are warned about this prior to getting on the course though.
- Placements were allocated based on learning needs. My commute time of 1hr seems about average. Hot desking can be an issue on placement but I've never been without a desk or computer.
- Good broad choice of placements. Geographical location covers a wide area so travel is likely (Brighton to Chichester and then up to central Surrey and South west London)
- My supervisors have been excellent. Always providing the required level of supervision and the opportunity for informal supervision outside of the formal hours.
- There is some flexibility within placements to identify opportunities that interest you, if you are pro-active.
- My supervisor is great however with the usual NHS difficulties finding regular clinic rooms is difficult. Also hot desking between different sites is tricky when the trust won't provide laptops to placement students. There are not many desktops available so this can be a challenge. Also no work mobiles makes lone working and relying on personal mobiles a bit of an annoyance.
- We haven't had any input into our first-year placements, though understand that we'll have a bit more for 2nd/3rd year placements. I've found the course team helpful and supportive in the difficulties I've had on placement.

## Transport needs

### Does the course require you to have access to a car?

Answer	Response
Yes	97%
No	0%
Don't know	3%

### Is public transport adequate in the region?

Answer	Response
Yes	30%
No	57%
Don't know	13%

## Living as a trainee

### Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Surrey and London.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	17%
No	67%
Don't know	17%

### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	7%
Good	60%
Fair	33%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

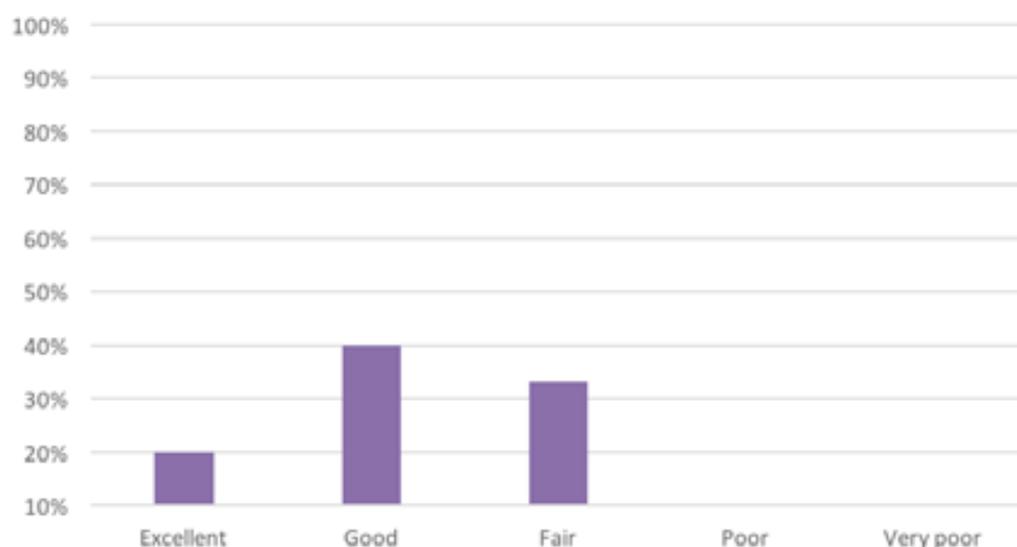
### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- It is what you make it, sometimes you will need to be working a lot harder and sacrifice some of your life but others it's not bad at all.
- It's our responsibility as trainees to put in boundaries that ensure our work life balance is maintained. At times due to the work load it is impossible to maintain but the majority of the time it is fine if you are careful about making time for yourself.
- The study days help to make things manageable, but you have to be strict with your time. There is always more that you could do.
- So far I have had no problems with work life balance (and I'm currently planning a wedding.) The amount of study days you have on the Surrey course is a real advantage of it and I would say I have rarely had to stretch to working in my personal time. Surrey do not have exams which is also a real benefit as this means lower stress for me. Deadlines seem to be spread apart well enough; an improvement compared to last year when they were closer together.
- There have been some periods when I have had to work in evenings and on weekends, but I am able to fit most of my study into the scheduled study days.
- The course spread out some deadlines for us this year after feedback from last year they're really responsive to feedback. I have worked outside of working hours on the run up to a deadline but mainly because I was really enjoying the subject. We have plenty of study days, enough to do all the work.
- Be boundaried. The course work will take up as much time as you give it. Keep time set aside for life outside of training. This is very important.
- Mostly manageable but around deadlines this can be tricky.
- The course very much encourages the 'good is good enough' philosophy- we are encouraged to have lives! We also benefit from a good number of study days (0.5 days per week once we have started placement is usually taken as 1 study day every fortnight) and many more study days as the year progresses.
- Many of the trainees have got involved with university life as well. The university has excellent gym facilities e.g. climbing wall.
- On occasion, several assignments have been due at similar times and therefore the work life balance becomes difficult to manage. As a cohort, we are very good at keeping each other balanced as much as possible.
- Usually this is good, but occasionally some overtime is required around deadlines/finishing placement. Being very organised and boundaried with your time is extremely helpful for this.
- Honestly, it is quite difficult to maintain a good work-life balance. However, with sufficient organisation and thoughtful friends and family it is possible! I live on my own so I am able to be quite flexible. I think it would be more difficult if I had a partner or children to have to factor in on a daily basis.
- You have to work hard to achieve it. It is encouraged by the course.
- Work life balance has been ok so far we do have study days which means that I have not worked on weekends (yet).
- Having the right balance is more down to you as an individual. I think you have to be disciplined in setting good boundaries for yourself as the work can easily take over your life it's definitely been a learning process for me. I think my cohort were particularly good at having a work-life balance (LOTS of weddings during training which the course team were really understanding and encouraging about); this definitely helped me to stay (slightly more) balanced.
- Around assignment deadline time, more time needs to be dedicated to work but outside of this I have been able to maintain a balance.
- Difficult to achieve a good work life balance if you have a long commute or if you are staying away

from home for placement. Otherwise I think it is manageable to achieve a good balance. It also gets harder around deadlines but tends to be better in the summer.

- It's very important to practice self-care but I feel the course could do more to encourage cohesion among the course group.
- I feel I have found my "tribe" on this course, a group of likeminded people who are interesting and able to engage in debates and intellectual conversation whilst having a drink in the local pub. These developing friendships have been an unexpected perk of training and greatly assisted with the work-life balance. It has been hard moving to Surrey for the course and being further from friends but not impossible to manage.
- Fine if you are organised.
- Once you get your head around how best to manage your time, it's definitely manageable so far (though I'm only in my first year). You need to be very organised and proactive though.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- I am super grateful that our course is salaried. We are incredibly lucky. Particularly in light of the difficulties other allied health professional's face.
- We do receive the 'fringe' London weighting. But considering that placements can be in London and that people live in London it would be helpful to be paid a wage to reflect this. Having access to the Widening Access for Training Scheme helps, but this is an uncertain time in that regards. If this money were to be taken away my financial quality of life would significantly reduce.
- Studying at Surrey you receive London fringe allowance in your paycheque.
- Surrey trainees get 5% High-Cost Area Supplement to their salary as it is an expensive area to live in.
- This is a hot topic currently. With widening access I'd have said excellent but we were just paid without it and I'm not really earning more than my previous wage due to the change in London to fringe weighting. I'm working harder than I used to for no more money. However, we are being paid to train which is pretty rare so I have put 'fair'.
- Surrey is an expensive area to live and although the salary is good it can be difficult to have savings.

- In addition to the many financial issues that are up in the air across the whole of the UK at the moment (widening access scheme and more importantly salaries expected to be cut), Guildford and Surrey is generally an expensive area to live and we don't get the full living allowance that trainees closer into London receive (although we do currently get some additional allowance).
- Travelling long distances to university from my current home is expensive but manageable at present.
- There has been a significant amount of confusion about taxation and the widening access scheme which has caused some financial anxieties
- Surrey is a very expensive area to live and HMRC have recently re-evaluated our trainee status such that we are now taxed. This has added a financial burden to some trainees. There is some subsidy for Inner London, Outer London and Fringe (HCAS-High Cost Area Supplements), but it's not huge. But as this is the only route into becoming a qualified Clinical Psychologist, it's your only option.
- Surrey is an expensive place to live. But that said the raise in pay having been an Assistant Psychologist has been warmly welcomed! I also make the most of student discount as and when it is possible.
- Good, on the Surrey course you get high cost payments. Financial quality of life might be different for singles as London/Surrey are expensive places to live however.
- I think it's a good salary for a training role and we are band 6 in the NHS (often a higher band than some team members on placement). Although uncertainty at the moment regarding tax payments.
- The course reimburse expenses and cover mileage to and from placement which is helpful especially when placed far away. There have been difficulties with HMRC and whether we qualify for tax deductions which has changed our salary somewhat. Despite this the training fee is a substantial improvement from band 4 posts and I live comfortably.
- Guildford is very expensive to live in and now that have to pay income tax finding it a big struggle.
- The changes regarding the tax have been stressful and it's still uncertain as to whether we'll have to repay tax that we've been given.

### **What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?**

- Lectures are so interesting and we have amazing discussions in our cohort on the content.
- Learning new things, learning from my colleagues and patients, working within several models but most of all working with a wide variety of patients and seeing their progress.
- Surrey foster a supportive environment. There is an emphasis on supporting fellow trainees and not being in competition with them, which is very refreshing. Due to this our cohort get on very well.
- I'm really enjoying learning more about psychodynamic approaches through supervision on placement. I've also enjoyed getting to know all my colleagues in my cohort.
- The variety between placement days, teaching days, and study days you don't have a chance to get bored. I think Surrey places more emphasis on reflective practice than some other courses, for example in Personal and Professional Development groups, which is really interesting and helpful for my learning.
- The great mix of teaching, research and placements. The course is really supportive and the team always ask for feedback on how they could improve. They respond to the feedback and I have seen immediate changes from it.
- The quality of the placements is incredible, being able to experience working with a variety of client groups under some highly inspiring and influential clinical psychologists. The level of trust and autonomy given on the placements is high meaning that we are able to build our confidence in the skills we have. Also feedback from placements is a constant part of the process and really supports continued development.

- I've really enjoyed the vigorous application of theory and evidence to clinical work. The teaching invites all sorts of interesting thinking which I feel has enlivened my brain from an increasingly dormant state. Also, there are no exams.
- Currently my research project.
- The placements and the overall support from the course team regarding the various aspects of the training
- The learning opportunities, relationships with other trainees and the opportunities to work with and support various people
- The focus reflective practice and the focus on attachment
- The relationships developed within the cohort. We are all very supportive of each other and keep each other going during the tougher deadline periods.
- Clinical work and teaching.
- Excellent teaching and systemic focus.
- Definitely my cohort. I am very happy with the colleagues I have, we all seem to blend in quite nicely together and it creates a very supportive environment. I think when you are training, friends and family are really important, but no one can really understand you better than your own cohort. I really enjoy how the course has tried to foster that even more, by adding in a lot of group work in the first year to allow us to blend with each other and get to know each other better.
- Having spent many years working towards this goal, I feel that I have found the right course and location for me! Although anxiety-provoking and very challenging at times I enjoy working and meeting with some really interesting people and taking the step up to the trainee position. Despite the level of responsibility and work required, even the small positive moments during a therapy session or after a really useful and insightful supervision or reflective practice session can feel great.
- The supportive and approachable course team helps.
- In addition to starting the course, I also moved down to Surrey on my own. It has therefore been good to get to know some of the members of my cohort better and have made some good friends. At a wider cohort level we also arrange nights out and have a Facebook group where we share ideas, questions or just a rant here and there which is also a useful outlet.
- Putting in to place.
- I have felt so supported throughout, with a great cohort, excellent supervision and support from the course team.
- The reflexivity and the fact that they don't have exams or different levels of pass. We're very much encouraged to become "good enough".
- Feeling that we are constantly learning and challenging ourselves - whilst at University and on placement. The cohort is fantastic and we all pull together to help and support each other. Excellent supervision on placement.
- The emphasis on integration of systemic, psychodynamic, CBT, and attachment based schools of thought across the lifespan.
- The learning that takes place over the three years and my specialist placement - I loved it.
- Working with a major research project supervisor who is an expert in her field, of which I have been interested in for many years, who understands the demands of the clinical side of the course too. Feeling well-supported to do research alongside the clinical work is brilliant.
- I really enjoy placements. That is where you get to put knowledge into practice and do some clinical work. The clinical work on placements has been very varied so there is always something new to learn.
- The teaching and clinical work

- The clinical placements are both challenging and rewarding. I also feel I have learnt a great deal so far about myself due to the reflective component of the course which has helped me transition to the new role and grow in confidence. The course are overall really supportive and hold our personal and professional development at the core of what they teach. The foundation of attachment theory that runs throughout the course is also really interesting and a perspective I have not considered before. Also the cohort themselves.
- People in the cohort.
- University very good at offering study days so can maintain a good work life balance
- Some of the teaching has been so good.
- The variety getting to do both academic and clinical learning at the same time is great.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- I would definitely recommend Surrey's course. The organisation of it is excellent. Surrey also have an ethos which is focussed more on our learning than on academia which I believe will make us all better clinical psychologists. Furthermore, we have preparation workshops for each of our assignments, and most of our first year assignments are formative which is helpful.
- The Surrey course has a fairly high reflective component so if you have an interview keep a reflective diary and think about how you came to be you and how that impacts on your work. They have really thought about what we need to know to be able to be competent clinicians and have designed the teaching and assignments around this. So if you value self-reflection and practical application of skills then apply to Surrey.
- Sometimes it feels as though the course could be more transparent about decision making that they do but overall it is a great course and the team are always responsive to feedback they receive and make changes where possible.
- I think it is important to stress that Surrey is a very reflective course and the interview is very personal in nature. This won't be for everyone.
- Don't rush to move close to the university as your placements (yearlong in the first year) may be further away and you will be there for 3/5 days a week.
- Overall I am happy with the Surrey course, although it has its pros and cons like any other.
- It's a great course with excellent support in place for trainees. A good size cohort (currently 31).
- Surrey definitely has a reputation for being reflective. However, I didn't always find that it stimulated significant reflection.
- If you want to be on a course where you will feel well supported and part of a larger cohort with people with such a range of different experiences and strengths from which to draw upon, Surrey is the course for you.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Interviews assessing academic, clinical, professional, personal and learning skills and capacity.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.

Teaching	15 hours
Placement	22.5 hours
Personal Study	Allocated within
Research	Allocated within

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	100%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Teesside University

10 responses (24% of 42 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	40%
Year 2	30%
Year 3	30%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	50%
30 – 34 years	30%
35 – 39 years	10%
40 – 44 years	10%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	10%
Twice	10%
3 times	40%
4 times	40%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	10%
MA	10%
MSc	40%
MRes	10%
Diploma	10%
Post Graduate Certificate	10%
Conversion course	0%
None	40%
Other	10%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	0%
3 years	20%
4 years	20%
5 years	20%
6+ years	40%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	90%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	20%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	40%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Research Assistant	10%
Voluntary Research Assistant	30%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	70%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	10%
Other	0%

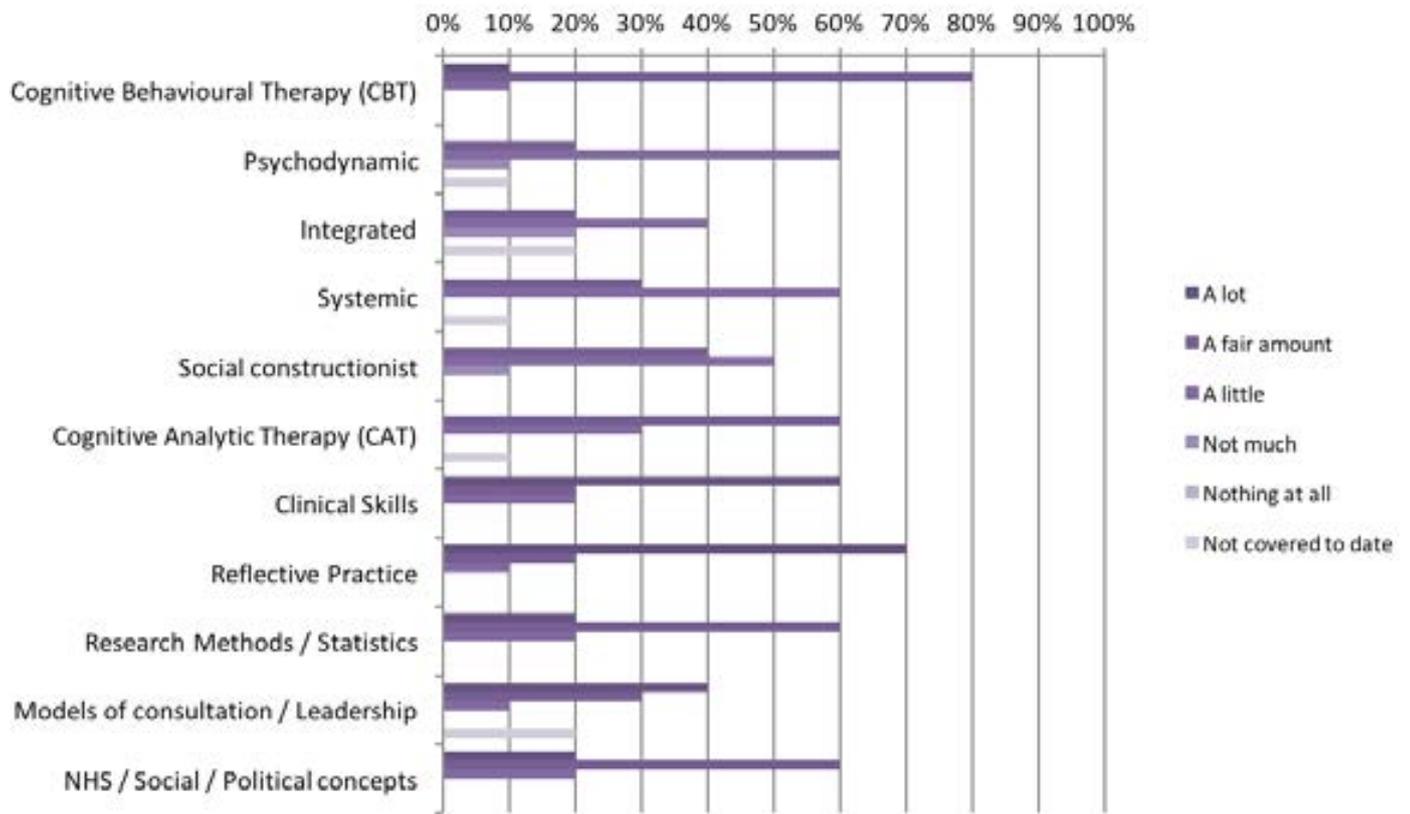
## The selection process

### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- A good interview experience at Teesside. Two interview panels, one research/academic and one clinical panel with a service user. Seemed a fair process. Course team and current trainees who were there to help out on the day were warm and friendly.
- Very friendly staff. Met current trainees who did a great job at making me feel relaxed.
- I thought that the course team were very friendly and welcoming, especially in the clinical panel. The research component of the interview was tougher but I liked that I was able to do a presentation about research I had done to show my skills, understanding and reflection.
- The interview process was quite slick and professional. There was little time in-between the research and the clinical panels. Having an 'assigned trainee' to escort between interviews was useful and helped alleviate anxiety and stress from panels. Course staff came across as friendly, supportive and welcoming for the most part.
- The most friendly interview process of the four courses I interviewed for. Trainees were extremely helpful to talk to on the day about the course and the interview process.
- It was helpful to have a research presentation to aid initial interview anxiety. The clinical panel were incredibly warm and friendly, and it was apparent they really wanted to get the best out of you. There was a good opportunity to meet the course staff and current trainees in informal environment.
- The interview process was challenging but to an appropriate level required for entry to the course. The interview panels were warm and friendly; putting you at ease throughout the process. It was also extremely helpful to talk to current trainees about their experiences of the course/university.
- I felt relaxed and contained during the interview process. Current trainees were available for support and offered a debrief following the interview which was invaluable, allowing me to gather my thoughts at the end of the process. I felt that the interviewers wanted to see me at my best, allowing time to reflect on my experiences and to consider my answers fully.
- One panel was fine, the other panel felt rather uninviting.
- Quick process with approachable staff who wanted to get the best from you.

## Course content and teaching

How much teaching is there on different models?



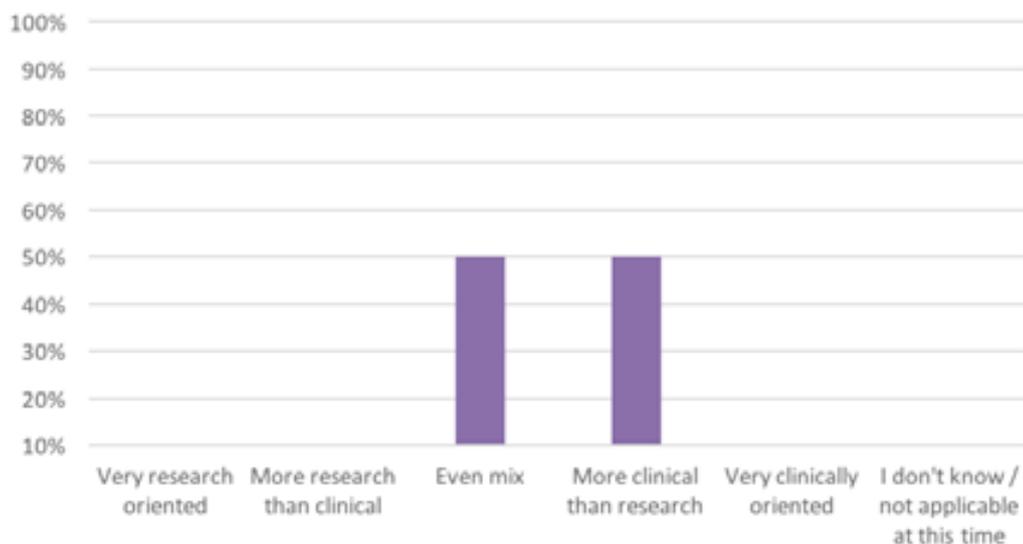
What other topics are covered by your course?

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	67%
Mindfulness	89%
Schema Therapy	0%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	78%
Solution Focused Therapy	67%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	56%
Other	11%

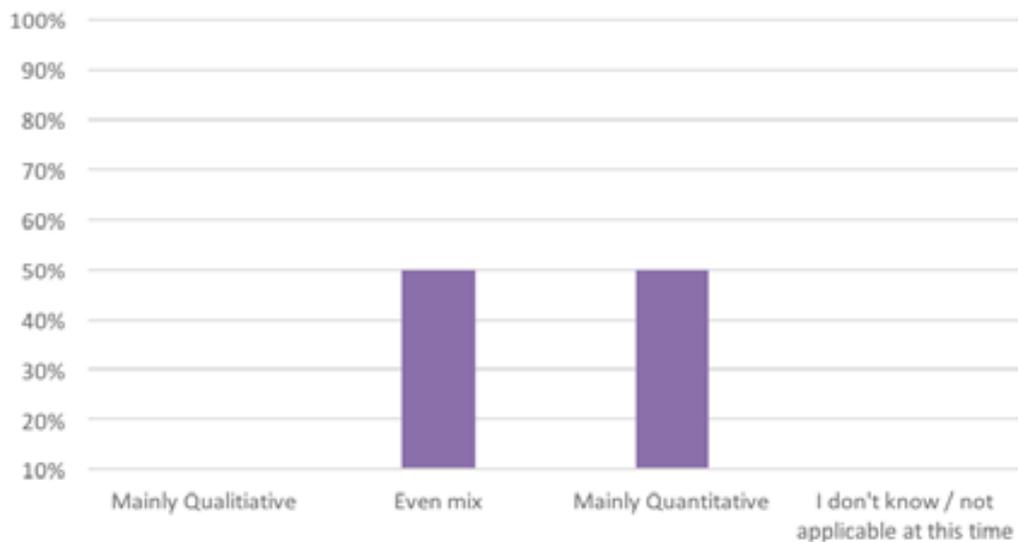
### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

- I really value the eclectic approach of Teesside and have benefited from the variation of different models and theory across the teaching.
- I feel the course equally covers a variety of areas which allows us to guide our own learning and map out the type of clinical psychologist we want to be throughout the course of training.
- With regards to first year teaching a large majority of lifespan teaching has been dedicated to 'older adults' services and issues when working with older adults. At times this has seemed slightly imbalanced with less teaching on other lifespan brackets and considerations for working with other age groups.
- There is a lot of research methods teaching in the first year, but with a wide variety and range of other teaching, with a real focus on personal and professional development.
- A good broad overview of the different models of therapy - providing trainees with a wide knowledge of therapeutic approaches.
- It would have been helpful to have more of a focus on approaches such as Compassion Focused Therapy.
- A bit too much on CBT but it is watered down and theoretical. There could be more on the intervention and practical skills for all therapies.

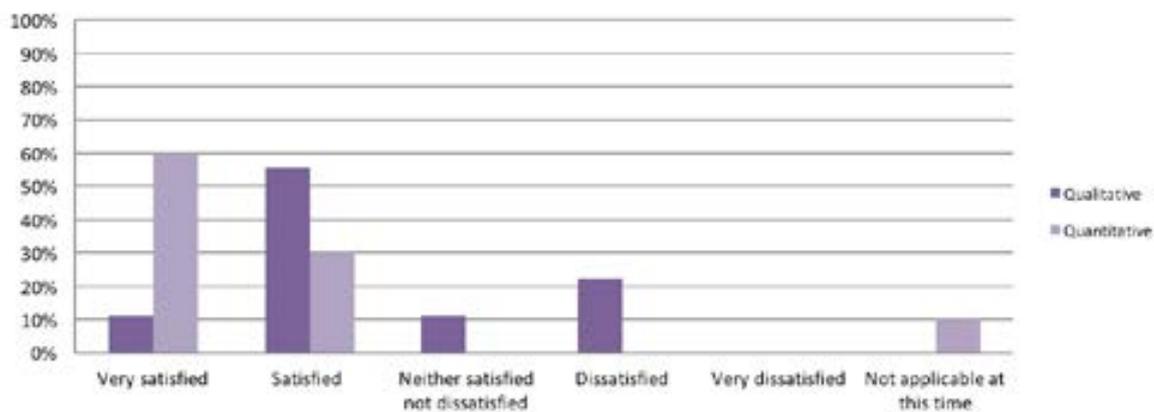
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



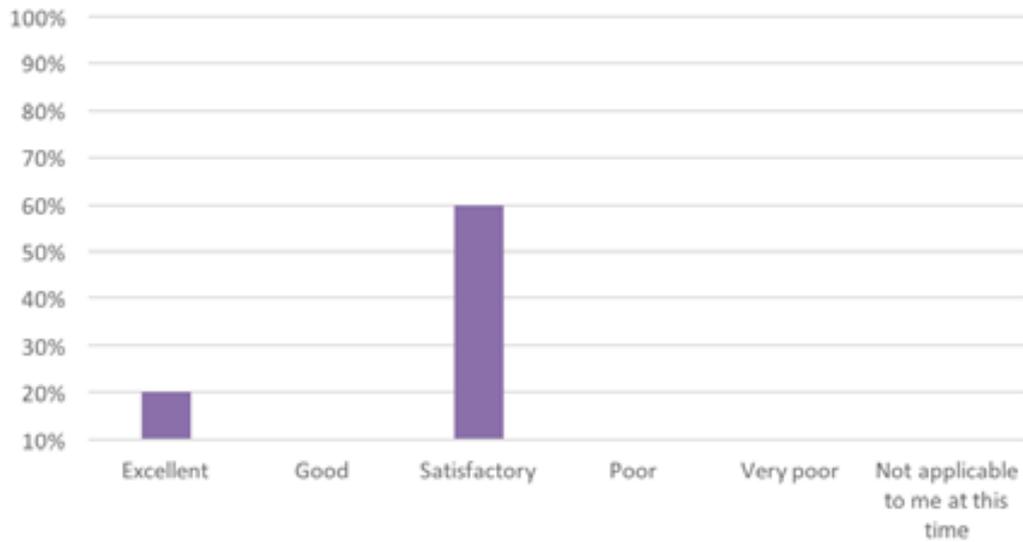
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



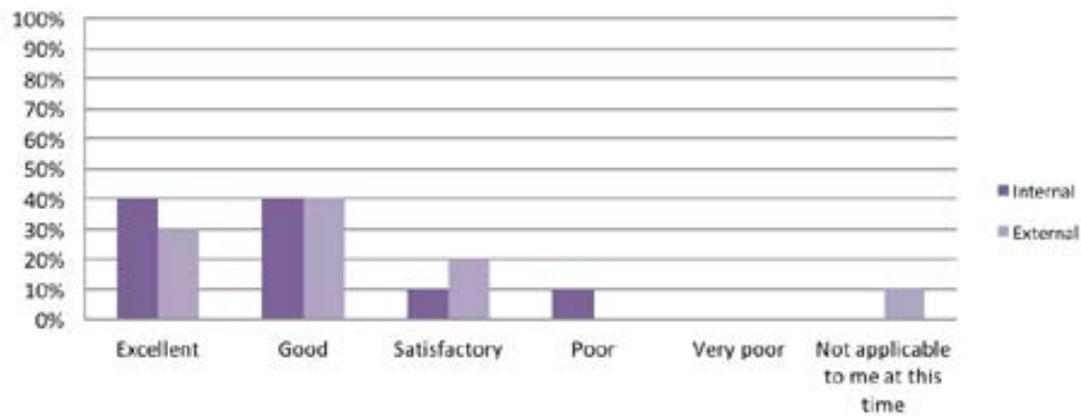
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Really great research tutors. All the research training is in first year. Could perhaps benefit from 'top up' sessions across the three years.
- Much more emphasis on quantitative approaches to research. The teaching on SPSS and running statistical tests has been useful. However at times it has felt like Qualitative methods have been pushed behind Quantitative methodology in terms of importance.
- Very thoroughly taught using practical examples worked through on own personal laptops as a teaching group.
- Lecturers very knowledgeable

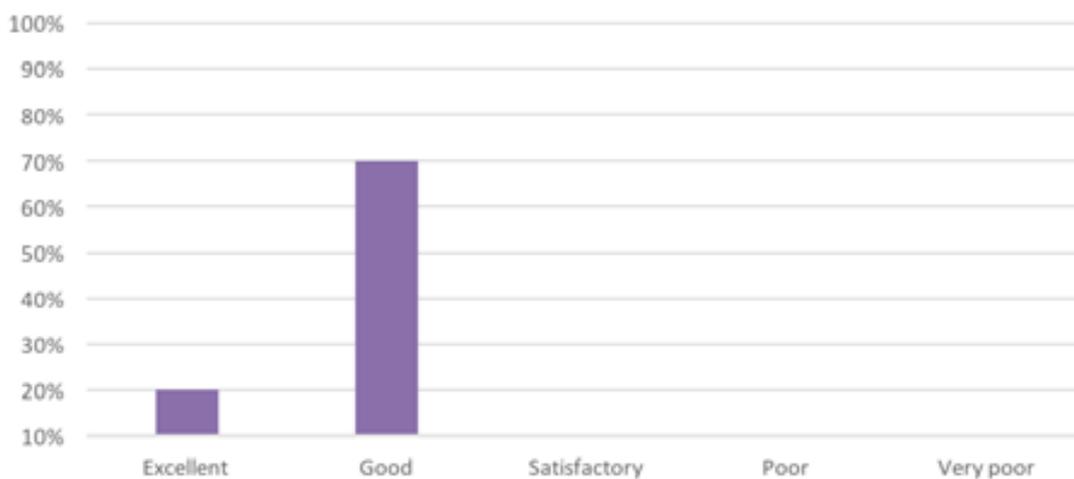
**How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?**



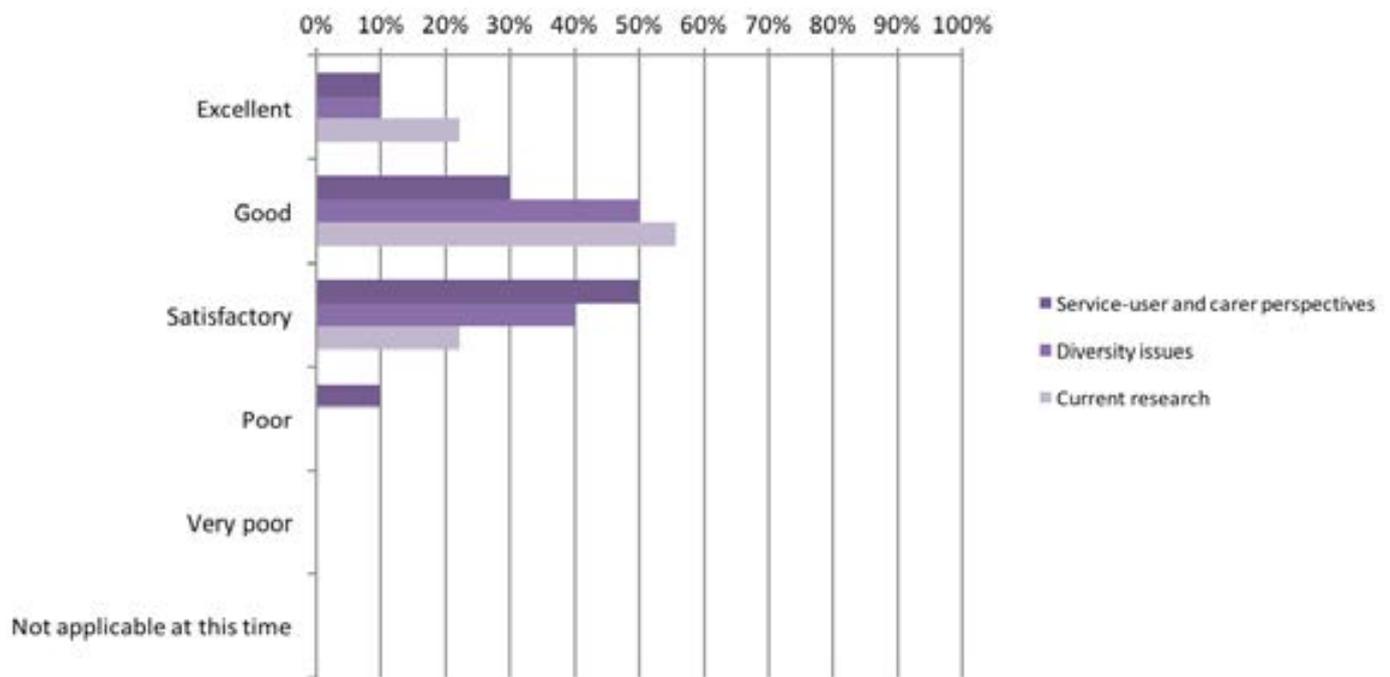
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



## How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

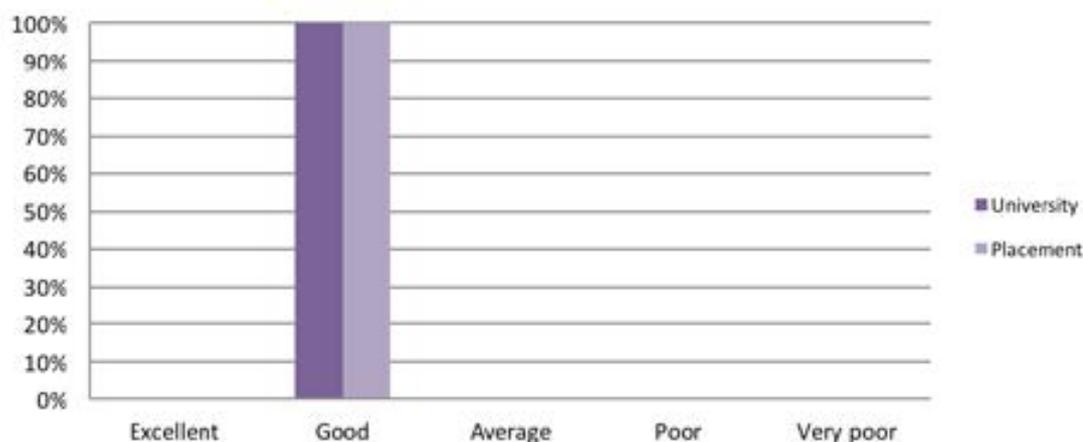
- First year felt a little repetitive/basic level with regards to CBT, however the second and third year teaching has been excellent.
- Some of the teaching has been very effective, well delivered and engaging. The teaching and focus on reflection has been particularly interesting. However some teaching has felt slightly reliant on didactic delivery and a focus on communicating content present in PowerPoint presentations.
- Enjoyable and varied teaching that is not limited to one particular model. Great teaching on leadership. A range of teaching methods used making the teaching interesting and involving.
- A good range of teaching by a whole raft on experienced professionals.
- However, further understanding of working with issues of diversity (in particular race and religion) would further enhance this.
- Statistics teaching is hard to follow
- Some teaching is good quality, some isn't as good.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

10% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- I find the course very supportive. Whilst it is demanding with regards to balancing placements with academic work, this is no more than I would expect for doctorate level training.
- Balancing thesis running throughout alongside other deadlines. Multiple deadlines close together.
- Travel has been demanding at times - however I was aware of this prior to accepting the place.
- First year teaching has at times seemed very 'front-loaded'. At times it has felt that one or two more study days would have been useful post January to ease the pressure on completing university assignments.
- The online portfolio system for submitting placement documentation is overly complex and not very user friendly. It has often caused confusion and anxiety amongst the cohort.
- There are some busy periods around deadlines for assignments and around thesis hand-in date. Generally deadlines are spread across the academic year and a range of systems always make you feel supported.
- Difficulty allocating study time on certain placements, and a lack of study time generally in the first year to consolidate all the new learning.
- The obvious answer is that of the doctoral thesis. This has placed a large demand on me; especially within the third year of training.
- Balancing University assignments as little study time given meaning it has to be done on weekends which is hard with a young family. Also placement study time varies between placements on whether it can or cannot be taken off site.
- Deadlines tend to all occur together i.e. march with essays, ethics applications and end of placement documentation due within the same week and could be spread out a little.

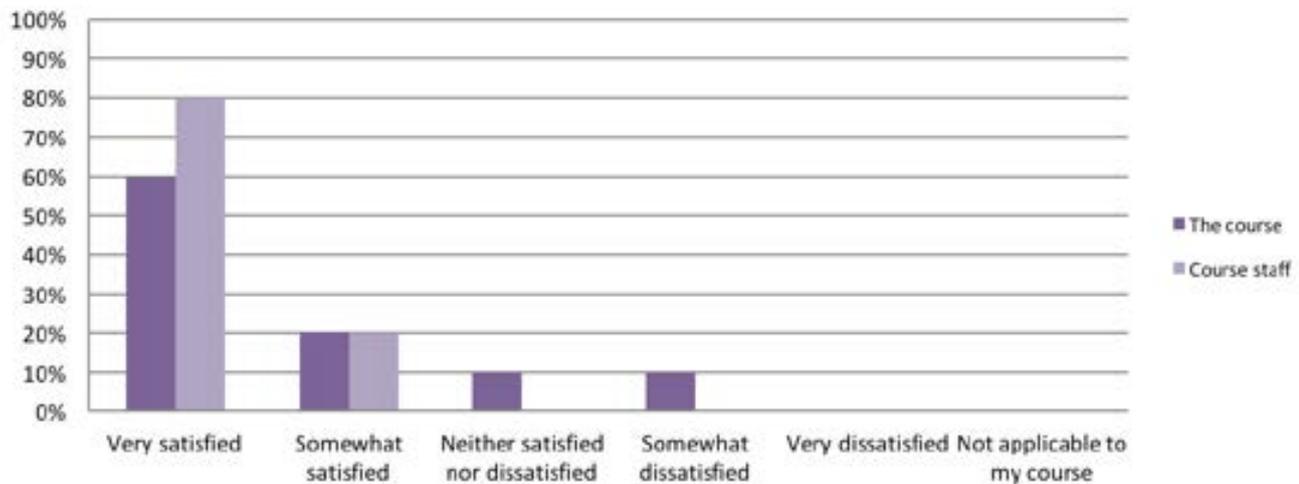
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	60%
“Buddy”	90%
Manager	20%
Placement Supervisor	100%
Librarian	20%
Professional Mentor	70%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	90%
Independent personal advisor	20%
Other	20%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- Supportive course director
- Peers.

### How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

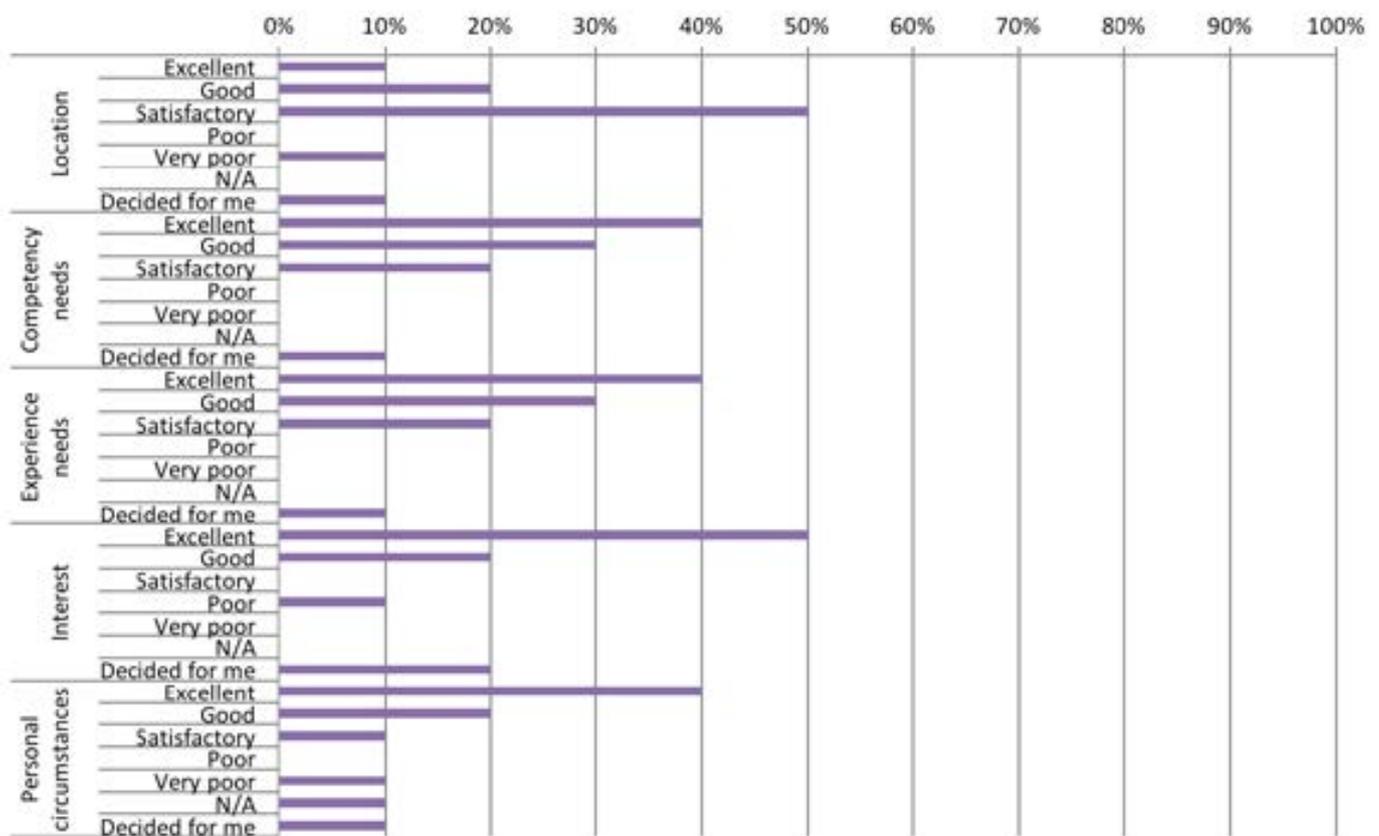


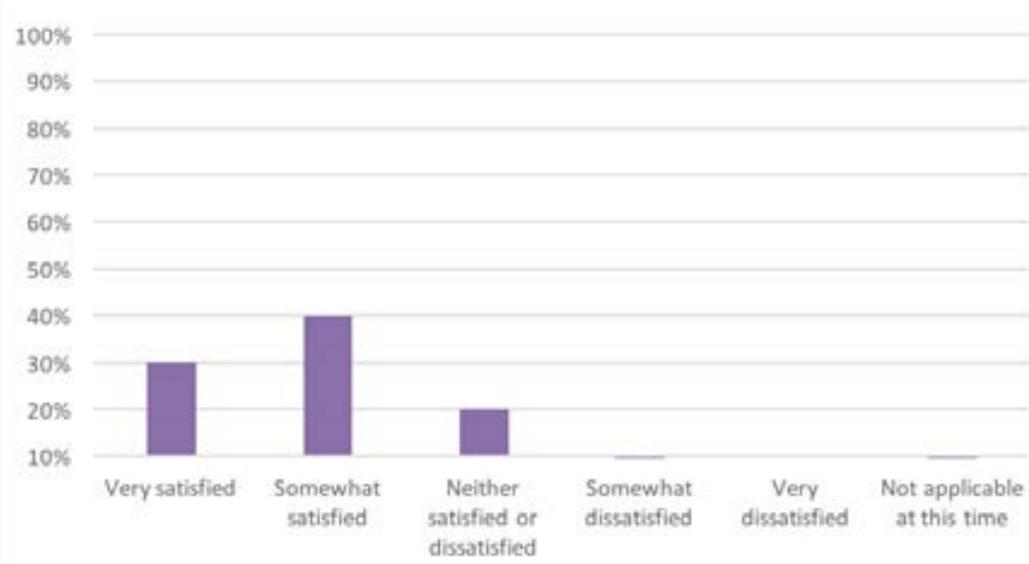
### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

- We have frequent individual and group PPD sessions and course tutors are always accommodating for tutorials if needed.
- The course staff are very supportive and all, including the program director, are very approachable if you have a difficulty you need to talk through.
- Support has seemed accessible any time I have asked to meet with course staff I have been able to almost immediately.
- Always felt that the course staff are available for support when needed. Excellent support with regard to academic and field supervisors for thesis. Overall a very friendly and supportive course.
- Very approachable for support.
- Staff are available at all times and extremely supportive.
- Support relating to academic issues is excellent, very supportive and flexible. A lack of support is very apparent for trainees who are pregnant or have childcare and this varies depending on the tutor.

## Placements

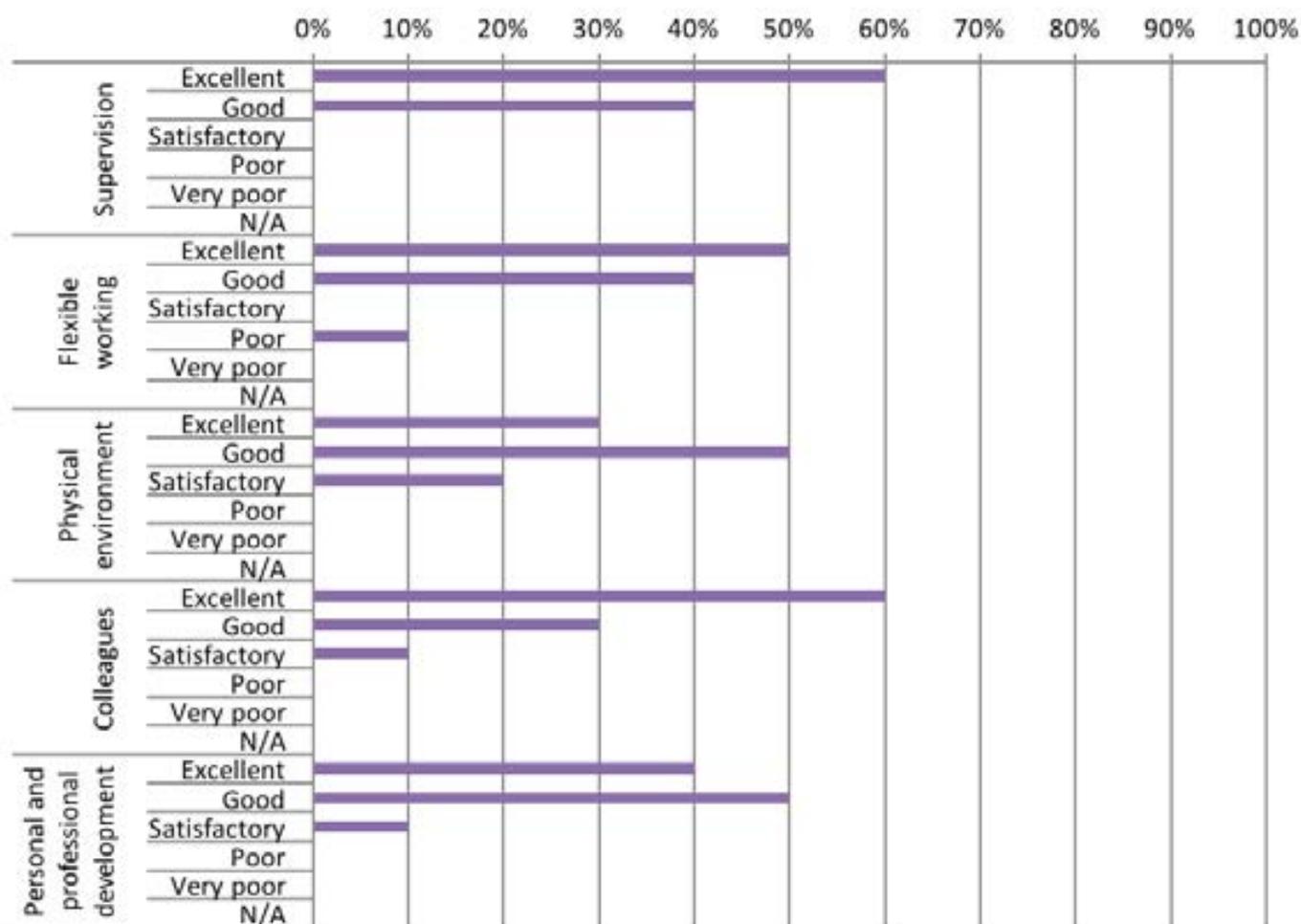
Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



**With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?****Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- Preparation seemed fine - however this may have been influenced by the majority of my experience being in a clinical environments.
- The teaching could be delivered alongside particular placements however as trainees are on different placements as at any one time this would not be logistically possible. You find out fairly late about where your next placement will be. Placements have been very varied with a wide variety of experience gained.
- Needs and personal circumstances are not considered.
- It is your responsibility to prepare for placement unless you request support with any issues.

In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- Although this is a very large trust, where possible tutors aim to place students closer to home if appropriate placements are available. Wide selection of high quality core and specialist placements in this trust.
- After completing one placement so far I have found placement to be one of the best parts of the course. I have found my supervisor and the placement to be extremely supportive and effective in helping me to develop and grow as a psychologist.
- Placements have been very flexible and supportive. Supervisors have taken into account my interests and identified needs to ensure I have got the most out of each placement.
- Placements and supervisors have been extremely supportive and understanding. They have all demonstrated an excellent balance between my current limits and my potential.
- Variety of work with flexibility to suit trainee demands and development needs. This can vary depending on the service you work in.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	70%
No	10%
Don't know	20%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	70%
Don't know	30%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Teesside and Newcastle.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	90%
Don't know	10%

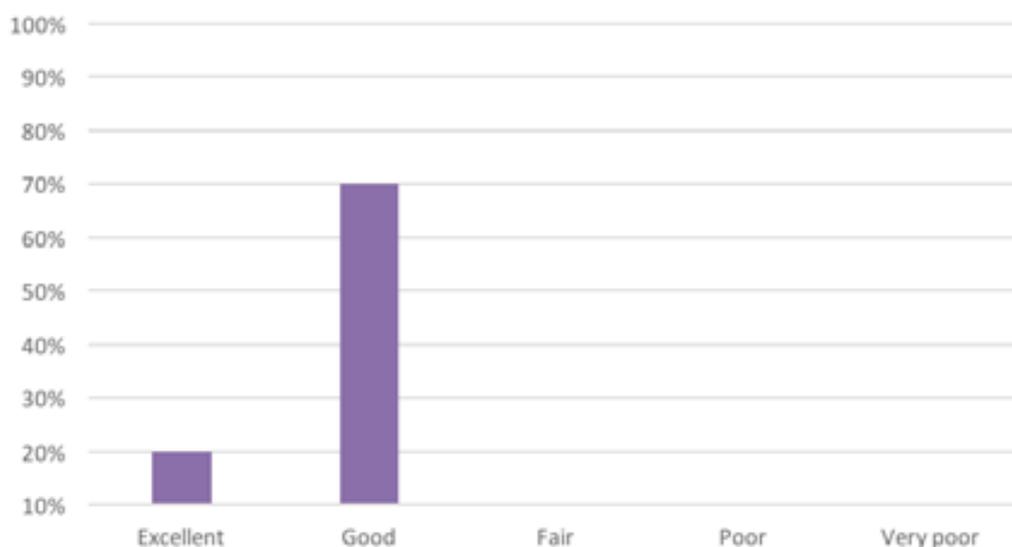
**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	10%
Good	50%
Fair	20%
Poor	10%
Very poor	10%

### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- It can be hard to achieve at times but the course encourages us to think about this a lot and are supportive if demands can't be met due to life challenges.
- I have put a lot of pressure on myself to work constantly this pressure has not come from the course. Deadlines do seem to be clustered around particular dates so quality of life can take 'a hit' at these times.
- Excellent work life balance, I have been able to continue playing professional sports alongside the course thanks to the course being very flexible and accommodating where possible.
- At times difficult to ensure a good work life balance with pressures of placement and assignments, but to be expected at this level.
- The work-life balance is what you make it. It is obviously easier in the first two years of training, but proves more difficult within the final year (Christmas onwards).
- Unlike other courses that have a day a week study time, our 1st year does not have this which makes the coursework having to be done in your own leisure time. Travelling to placements adds 3 hours onto the working day leaving no time for anything else through the week.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- Very good at the current time.
- Remunerated well for training.
- Given the qualifications and experience that it takes to get onto the course, it should attract Band 7 salary.

**What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?**

- High quality and variation (with regards to different models and theories) of teaching
- Fellow trainees. A very supportive cohort.
- The variety of the approaches taught allowing us to carve of path to the type of psychologist we want to be upon qualifying.
- Placement and some of the teaching have been my favourite aspects of the course.
- The course is very varied with regard to teaching and available placements and does not try to push any particular model.
- The cohort, very friendly and warm bunch, the quality of the teaching, the focus on professional and personal development, and the approachable nature of all the course staff.
- The experience of different placements.
- The opportunity to consistently reflect on your own personal and professional development.
- I feel very well supported by my cohort and by the staff at University.
- Good teaching that you can relate to practice.
- The way it is structured in terms of weekly teaching and placement. It means you meet regularly with your cohort which is a great source of support during training.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- For teaching to be aligned, where possible, with the placements that trainees are on.
- Study time should be factored into the course so people do not have to use their leisure time to complete assignments.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- We have two interviews: an academic/research panel and a clinical panel. The clinical panel involves a service user/carer representative.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Teaching	2	2	1
Placement	3 days each week		
Personal Study	10% of the programme		
Research	Research module each year		

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	0%
Viva	100%
Thesis	0%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

# Trent University

25 responses (52% of 48 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	44%
Year 2	36%
Year 3	20%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	88%
30 – 34 years	4%
35 – 39 years	8%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	32%
Twice	48%
3 times	16%
4 times	4%
5 times	0%
6 times	0%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	0%
MA	4%
MSc	52%
MRes	8%
Diploma	12%
Post Graduate Certificate	8%
Conversion course	0%
None	24%
Other	4%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	20%
3 years	20%
4 years	32%
5 years	12%
6+ years	16%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	76%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	44%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	24%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	12%
Research Assistant	36%
Voluntary Research Assistant	12%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	64%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	4%
Other	20%

## The selection process

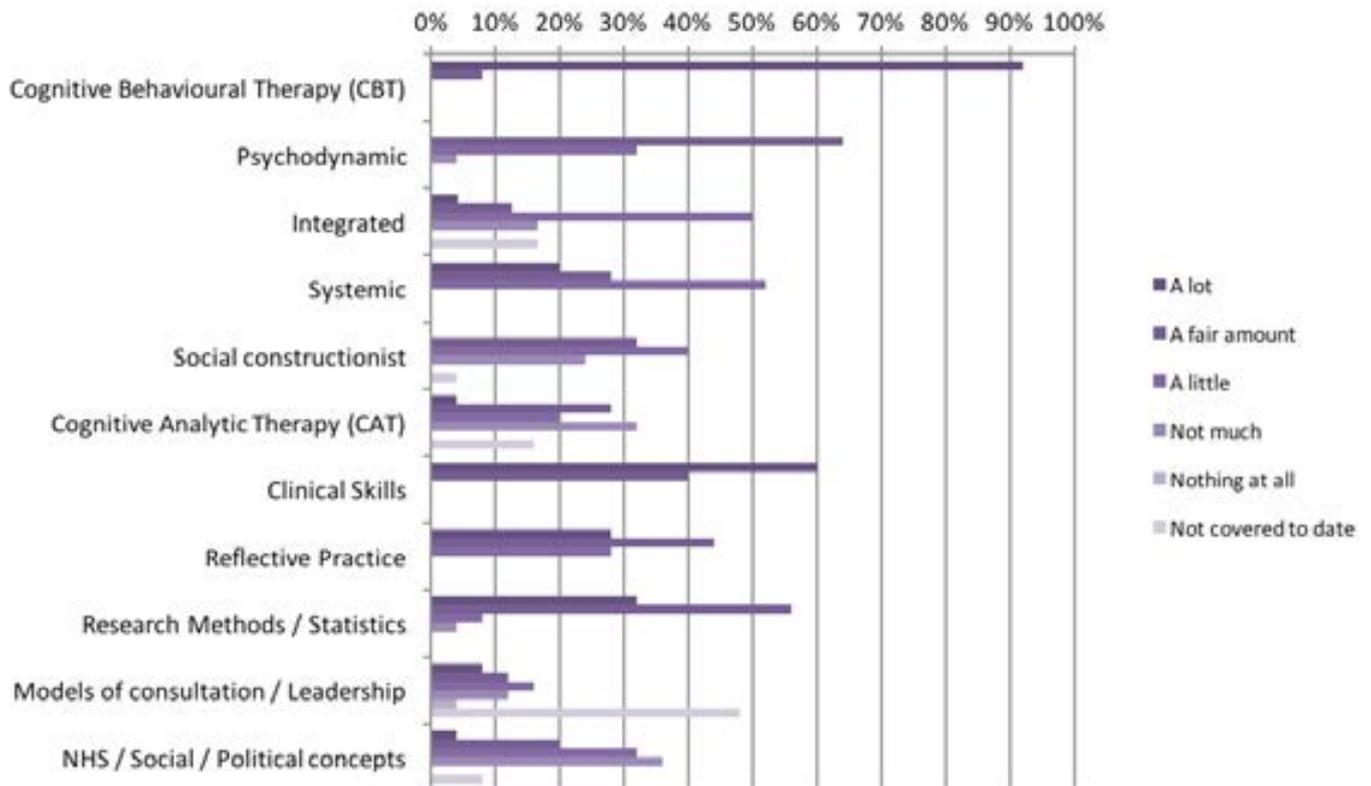
### What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- A long day with a group task and a range of interview panels. The tasks ask a lot from candidates but this allows you to demonstrate strengths in more than one area. I felt that interview panels gave you a fair chance to answer questions and be supportive, despite it being daunting at times. I found the supporting trainees and admin staff to be helpful. There were breaks in between panels and most people had finished by around 3.30pm.
- I found the interview process gave me lots of opportunity to sell myself and my skills.
- The different panels let me tailor my responses and gave me time to reflect between panels. The long day was tiring but helpful.
- Fair chance to demonstrate different skills across a number of interview panels
- Good, the day involved different tasks and interviews so you were able to have numerous chances to impress the panels.
- The interview process was the best that I had attended. The course staff were very welcoming and provided clear instruction of what was expected throughout the day. Plenty of space was given to allow for reflection, preparation and support. Having three panels and the group exercise did not feel overwhelming, it felt fair. It allowed me many opportunities to show why I felt I was a suitable candidate and to demonstrate my skills and abilities, the course make available current trainees to share their personal experiences of the course and answer any questions related to the course. This was extremely helpful and all contacts with staff and trainees were welcoming, polite and supportive.
- It was intense but well-structured. I felt supported throughout the day.
- The interview process for the Trent course is very thorough, and with that comes a certain degree of intensity. As you have to pass through two stages before getting to interview (application form and the pre selection test) there is already a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of appropriateness on the actual interview day. The day itself is very well structured, though there can be some long breaks between various interview panels where anxiety management becomes the main focus. I felt the Trent interview gave me a great opportunity to not only demonstrate my academic and professional proficiency, but also gave me the space to be myself
- I thought the different tasks involved in the interview process were very fair and gave you a number of different opportunities to demonstrate your knowledge and abilities. It was a tiring day but everyone was very friendly and welcoming.
- As with any selection day the interview day was challenging but reflected the focus and expectations of the course.
- An intense day and very challenging.
- The day was very well organised.
- Staff were very professional.
- As there were three interviews and a group task it was very tiring and intensive
- Some members of interview panels were challenging and dismissive which I found intimidating.
- Whilst the interview process at Trent felt daunting as there are a number of processes to go through, I found it was very warm and welcoming. The admin staff are brill and really make you feel at ease. I also found previous trainees there on the interview day reduced anxiety. In terms of the interview itself. I felt they adequately reflected the ethos and demands of the Trent course. I was also really thankful for different panels where I could show some of my skills and competencies. Whilst I felt some of the interviews were tough, I also found it to be a really supportive experience, albeit exhausting at the end of it. Overall, it was a very supportive and welcoming environment.
- You sit a brief written test looking at your research knowledge, and your ability to critique a research

article. Then, if successful, you attend a day of interviews. This day includes two group tasks, and then three individual interviews: academic, research, and personal. I found the day of interviews really great as you get multiple opportunities to show your strengths in different areas. The admin staff were really nice and made you feel at ease. You also get to meet current trainees who give you an idea of what to expect the course to be like. Whilst interviews are naturally scary, I found that the interviewers were attentive, listened, and let you have time to explain and explore your answers.

- A full assessment day, which gave me multiple opportunities to demonstrate/show my abilities and reflect on my experience. I thought it was a thorough approach that did not put too much pressure on each bit.
- It was an intense day, but the staff explained the process to us and advised each panel had a different stance and would challenge us differently, so I felt prepared. Even though it was long and tiring, I appreciated the different opportunities to represent myself and it meant I could make up for any nervous mistakes I had made, which I appreciated. The panels were of good variety and I felt they tried to get the best out of me.
- It was a daunting and challenging process but gives you ample opportunity to demonstrate your skills in different areas.
- It was a long and tiring day, but challenging in all the right ways. I liked that we had several tasks/interviews because it gives you a chance to really show yourself and your skills. All of the staff were welcoming and made efforts to put you at ease. I found the interviews thought-provoking and difficult at times, but I feel they are a fair reflection of the course itself. Admin staff are fab and help the day run smoothly.
- A number of different panels allows for a 'fair' assessment where your strengths can be shown. Personally this was welcome rather than having a single 'all or nothing' panel interview.
- Although the interview day was very long, I felt that having 3 separate panels, a group interview and a written task was a fair reflection of my ability. Although I found the academic panel harder, I was able to show my strengths in the clinical and personal panels.
- Really thorough it is a long day but you have plenty of opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills, which I thought was much better than other courses.
- It was a very intense day and I did feel drained afterwards. However, I felt the variety of interviews provided an opportunity to fully show my skills. Due to the various interviews, it allowed me to feel that not all my hard work was all down to one single interview.
- It was an intensive day, but I had a really good feel about the course throughout. The 3 interviews meant that you could demonstrate different experience and skills and overall I found the day enjoyable.
- Long and intense day, though on reflection it was a good chance to compensate for areas I might not have done so well in.
- I was very stressed at the beginning but my overall experience was very positive. Supporting staff members were really lovely and helpful all the way throughout the day. The interview day was very long, with 3 interview panels and group task but I felt like I was able to really show my skills.
- Course content and teaching

### How much teaching is there on different models?



### What other topics are covered by your course?

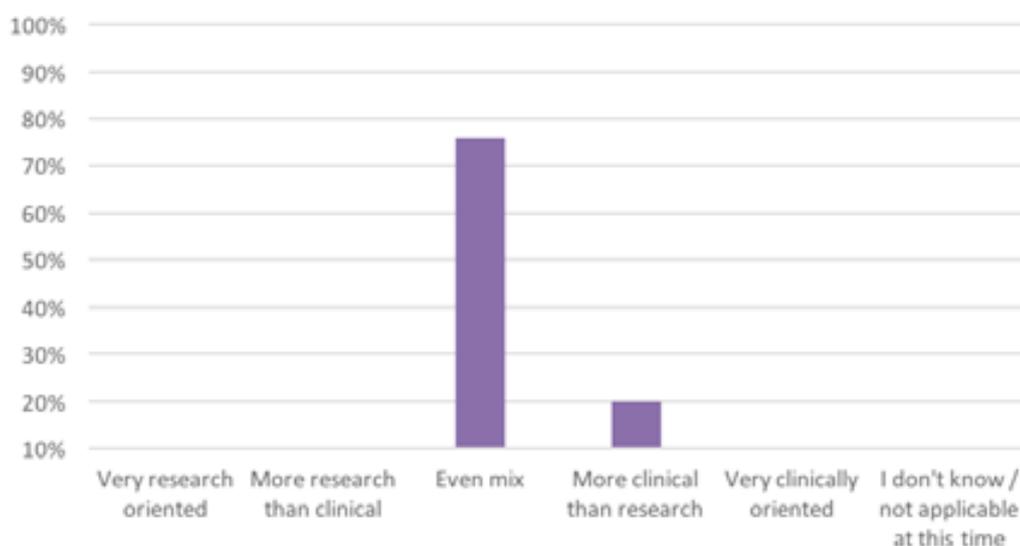
Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	100%
Mindfulness	100%
Schema Therapy	56%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	100%
Solution Focused Therapy	0%
Neuropsychology	61%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	44%
Other	0%

### Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?

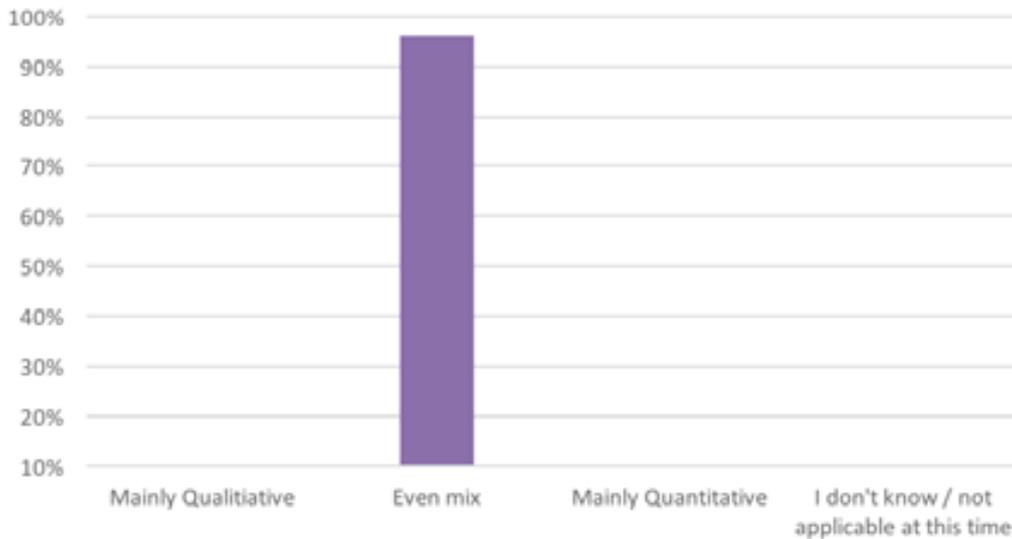
- Trent offer a comprehensive teaching programme and this is a real strength of the course. I enjoy our teaching days. The majority of teaching is provided by course staff because a lot of them specialise in particular models (e.g. ACT, Systemic, Psychodynamic etc.). In second year, you can pick your “plus one” model. We had four days of teaching on Systemic which was brilliant, I feel lucky to have had this. Further, the course has also secured the “introduction to CFT” training with Paul Gilbert which was free for Trainees and Supervisors to attend.
- I’ve selected “a little” for NHS issues and leadership as I’m in my second year and I believe this specific teaching is held in year three.
- Trent ask for feedback on every teaching session and at the end of every module. Service User & Carer Advisory Panel also contribute to, and attend, teaching days.
- For the first year of training the areas covered have been helpful to give me a broad understanding and the competency to start the first placement, which is CBT focused. The quality of teaching is brilliant.
- The course give you the opportunity as a group to select topics/modules from a list, this year systemic and CAT were chosen but other options such as ACT, psychodynamic, CFT were options.
- The initial 3 month teaching block covers professional/clinical skills, awareness of NHS/social/ political concepts, CBT and research skills. This block of teaching truly allows you to prepare and develop your skills and confidence prior to commencing placement. It made the transition into placement easier and I personally felt more confident and competent.
- Other than CBT which is extensively covered in the first year, the course gives trainees the option to choose which second model to develop competencies in during the second and third year of training. This flexibility is appreciated.
- There are a lot of topics covered in the first year, and many of these are designed as a ‘taster’ introduction to the particular area, either to be covered in more depth in 2nd/3rd year, or for the student to engage in their own independent learning where they feel there is a particular interest or usefulness. The main focus of first year is CBT, formulation & intervention, and research.
- The first year feels very heavy on CBT but also with psychodynamic as a contrasting model for some of the early teaching. After that you are able to choose a second option and have taster days of various different models which are really interesting.
- I have selected systemic and CAT to have a lot of teaching, this reflects the chosen modules for my cohort year as specialist teaching. However, in second year the cohort has the opportunity to choose any two modules to be covered in depth (other than CBT as this is covered in depth in first year).
- It’s a very flexible course where you will receive a lot of teaching on CBT, but other than that you can choose to have intensive teaching on another model from a broad range. The course will try to increase or decrease teaching on certain models in response to cohort needs and preferences.
- The first year of Trent is very CBT heavy, although we have had decent amounts of teaching on other approaches i.e. psychodynamic, systemic. I felt whilst the first year tends to be dedicated to developing CBT competencies, there are a number of opportunities to develop your interests in other approaches.
- In first year it is all really focused on CBT and building your overarching clinical skills. In second year, the cohort get to vote on what type of therapy they want to cover in more detail. In our year we voted for systemic and CAT. One half of the cohort attended systemic teaching, the other CAT. This was good because we had more control over what type of therapy we wanted to learn more about. Other options include ACT, ISTPD, and CFT. Even though we only specialise in two models over the course, we still have plenty of teaching on formulation and intervention in the other models.
- CBT is far out in front. There were taster days for the other areas, and we got to choose to do more on one model in the second year, although I understand that systemic is now the preferred other model of therapy.

- There is an emphasis on CBT in the first year, as expected, but the course does well in introducing different approaches and encouraging us to compare and contrast these.
- First year is CBT heavy with 'tasters' of other approaches. Second year involves picking a specialist option for more focused teaching, plus more tasters. So you get in-depth CBT plus one other, and bits and pieces of other approaches.
- The mix of therapeutic models can feel on the random side not necessarily relating to placement needs, often more related to who the course can get to teach. Almost no consideration of running groups from a therapeutic model in the teaching, despite a module titled Families and Groups. Teaching is often delivered by non-Trent DClinPsy staff and whilst this can give a variety of perspectives there is limited to no quality control of material prior to the teaching day. This can result in some days that appear to lack topic focus and the 'doctoral standard' we are expected to reflect in our own academic and clinical assessments.
- There is an emphasis on CBT during the first year in teaching and placement. I have found it useful as I have never used CBT before and I appreciate that it is widely recommended by NICE and therefore it is a useful skill to have.
- CBT takes up a lot of the first year teaching, as it is necessary to get up to speed in CBT competencies for this year; we have still been given a flavour of the differing approaches. In second and third year, I understand that the priority moves away from CBT and onto other areas.
- I received a fair amount of psychodynamic teaching as I chose this for my specialist option. This will be different for other people.

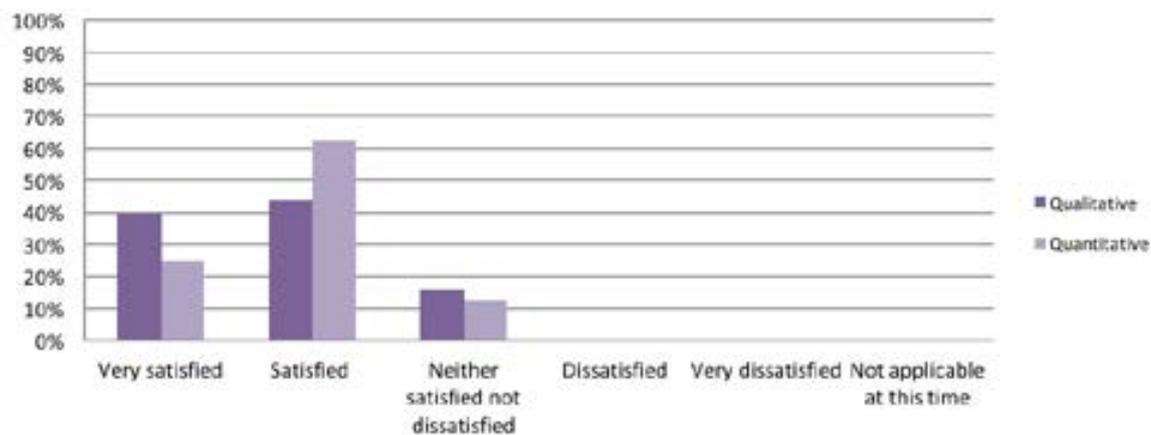
### How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?



### How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?



### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



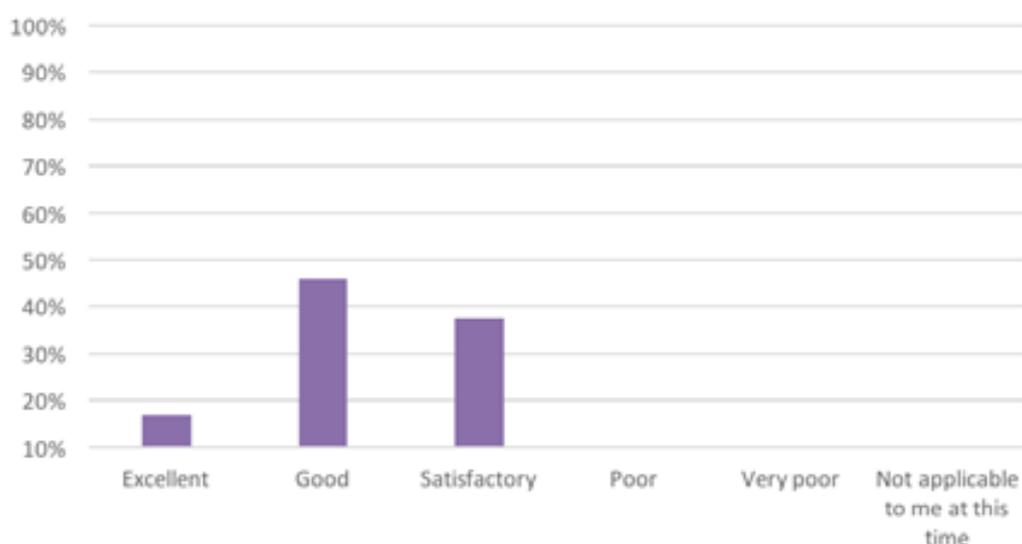
#### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- There is a good balance of Tutors who specialise in quant, qualitative and mixed methods.
- The staff all have varied and passionate stances and viewpoints. However sometimes a little confusing to start with when they don't explicitly state the criticism of an approach is their "opinion".
- You are given a baseline knowledge of research methods but you are expected to develop further knowledge beyond the teaching in the development of the research thesis.
- Very well structured, allowing opportunity to explore all methods prior to deciding on thesis topic. The research protocol is completed early in the first year which allows opportunity to well establish your thesis. The research tutors are extremely knowledgeable and very approachable.
- There is a high expectation for independent learning with regards research. The course allows for a great deal of flexibility when it comes to research topic ideas, and the staff are very supportive and knowledgeable.
- Although it is a very research orientated course this is in respect of expectations of high quality and

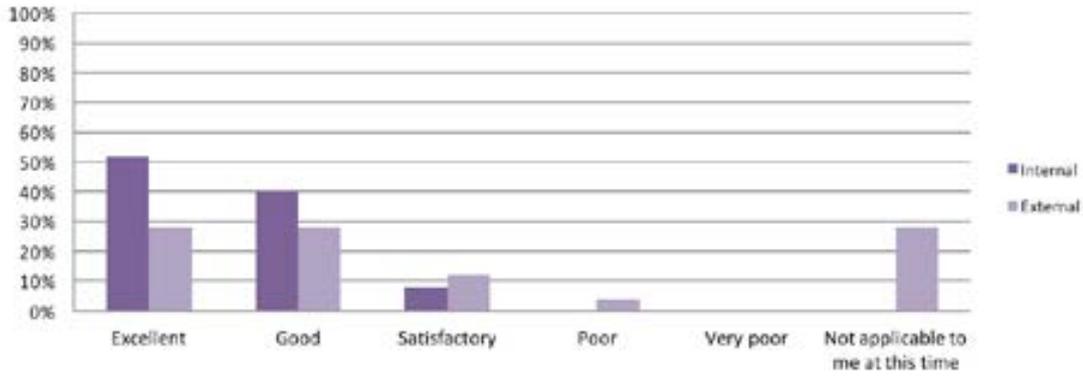
publishable systematic literature reviews and journal papers but the focus on research does not detract from the clinical training.

- I have personally really enjoyed the research component of the course. I have found some aspects to the research quite daunting but have found it to be highly rewarding in terms of learning and development of skills.
- The research tutors are always ready to support you through your research. There is research teaching throughout the years, but as each person's research is different that tend to focus more on giving individual drop in clinics to support you.
- Most of the research is picked up through the project work. I found this helpful as it meant that you did not spend a lot of time with different approaches that were not necessarily relevant to the work that you were doing.
- There's not tonnes of research-specific teaching, but then it is probably better to seek your own learning and support in regards to your research project, as all approaches won't be relevant for everybody.
- The teaching about research methods is more consistent than clinical skills. The experience of conducting the research project is heavily dependent upon the supervisor(s), with some people experiencing a lack of availability and support, with others feeling that supervisors are available and helpful.
- The research tutors on the course are really supportive. When I started the course, I was fairly anxious about the research aspect of training, however, I have been well supported on the course and because of this, I have performed better on research assignments than I expected.
- The research module has been tailored to accommodate the variety in people's research skills and abilities. Having not done certain topics for many years, I valued that all of the topics started with covering the basics.
- You are required to have your research thesis idea ready fairly early in first year and protocols have already been submitted. However, this means that this is already done and we can focus on other assessments.

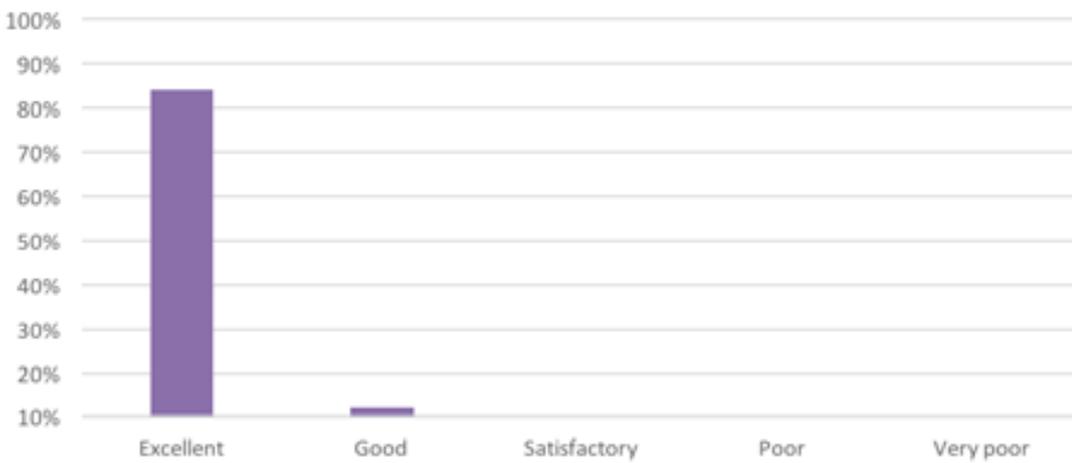
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



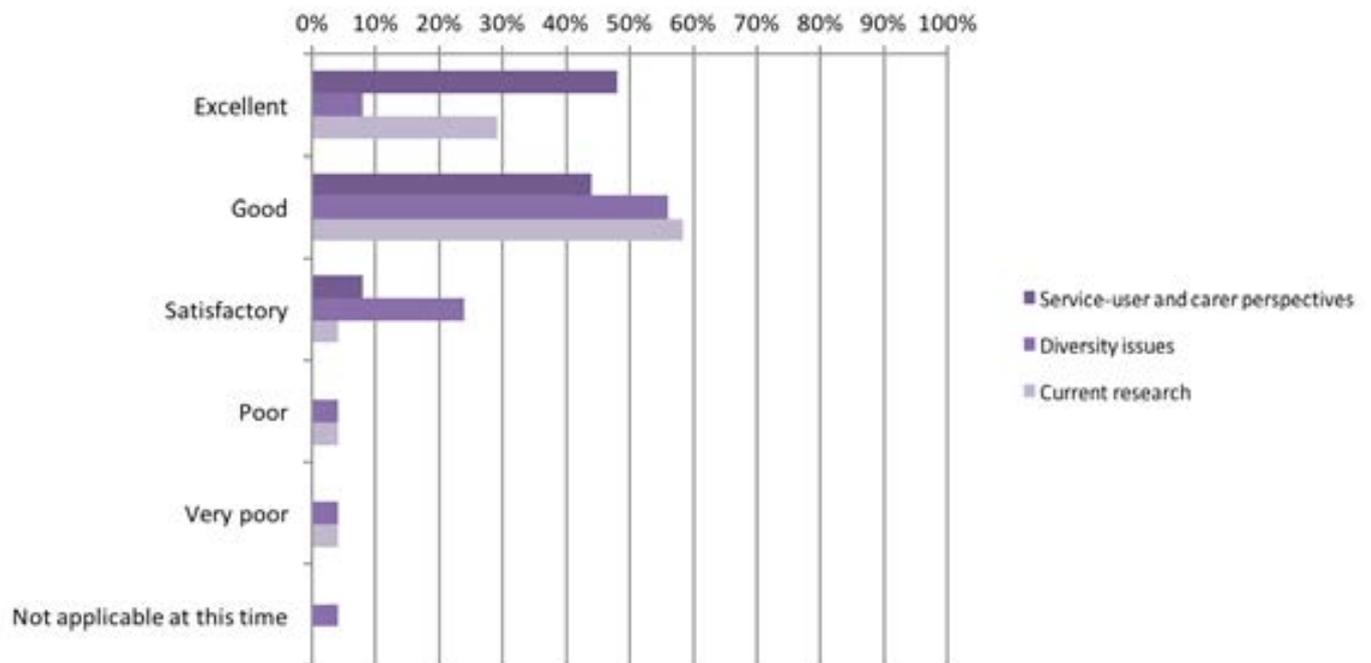
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



### Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?

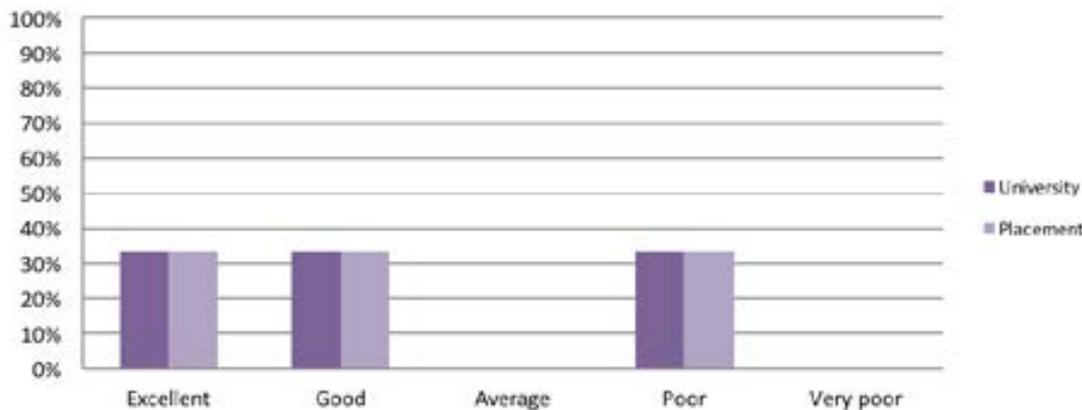
- There is a large service user involvement. It's so helpful hearing first hand accounts.
- There are well established connections with the SUCAP and therefore service users and carers are involved in a lot of teaching and some reflective practice sessions. This adds an element of perspective which we would not otherwise be able to easily access. The contributions from them have been incredibly valuable, particularly when considering my approach to clinical work. Service users were also involved in the research proposal panels, which was extremely helpful.
- Staff on the course are fantastic. I truly believe they are well chosen and they provide trainees with a first-class teaching experience. They are also very approachable and keen to meet trainees and discuss any issues relevant to their training needs or psychology in general.
- Very high quality -all lecturers and tutors are/have been practicing therapists and/or heavily involved in academic research and so there is a real 'applied' facet to the teaching. There is also a good mix of guest lectures and 'in house' tutors providing a wide breadth of knowledge and experience
- The teaching is always delivered by very experienced and knowledgeable clinicians, many of whom practice in the local NHS trusts. The teaching has always felt to be a very high standard.
- I have found service-user and carer perspectives very present on the course and have found this to be really useful and enjoyable. I also think whilst we tend to have a lot of teaching in the first year, it has been excellent and very engaging.
- The course is closely linked with the Service User and Carer Advisory Panel (SUCAP) which is a group of individuals with lived experience. They attend some of our teaching and talk to us about their experiences. This has been great to provide real life context to what we are learning.
- Overall I think the teaching has been good, and the course is responsive to feedback on modules. The quality of teaching from the course staff is high, and guest speakers are also generally good too. Some of the modules in the 3rd year have not had the earlier module's coherence as the course moves to more leadership and systems approaches, which is partially due to the subject.
- There is a specialist panel made up of service users and carers, who regularly contribute by attending lectures and giving their views, attending role plays and other assessments, and also by leading sessions specifically on their experiences, which has been invaluable.
- Teaching is fantastic. We frequently have local clinicians and ex-trainees in to deliver teaching about their areas of interest. There's lots of variety, and the course ask for regular feedback to shape the teaching if required.
- Modules can lack coherence in their focus, with some feeling more like a random collection of topics. Heavy use of external speakers results in variety in teaching skills of the speaker. This can be helpful, but there has been limited oversight of quality of speakers and the content of teaching. Where external speakers are used the content can be specific to their employing trust and can be hard to translate into your own trust.
- There can be a lack of clear values based teaching and critical reflection on the role psychologist hold in the modern NHS.
- We have had excellent teaching on the course. In second year you are able to choose a specialist therapy model to receive teaching on and you also have reflective practice sessions which encourage you to clinically apply the model. Service users are involved in the teaching regularly and also we often have external lecturers come in to teach us on specialist topics.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

### Do you have any disabilities?

12% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.

### Please describe how well your needs are met at:



If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- Managing work/life balance is a challenge, sometimes It can feel like there is never a 'good' time to take annual leave. However, others may feel differently.
- Recently lots of assessments came at once, however this was due to external reasons beyond the courses control (an external person required for assessment went on paternity leave).
- Balancing overlapping deadlines.
- The most demanding aspect is the ethics process as part of the research thesis- this is partly due to recent changes in the NHS ethics process. But again, quite a demanding process of you have limited research experience.
- In the first few months there are a limited number of study days which can make it difficult to complete some written work. Before starting the course, the expectations of travel are made very clear, however this is definitely something to consider as it is very tiring commuting to/from university campus' and commuting to/from placement.
- This is a demanding course. But all the necessary supports are there to help trainees make it through the end.
- Time management is very challenging when balancing placement days with lecture days and study time. To make sure you have enough time to produce the desired quality of work, you really have to manage your time and workload efficiently.
- The most demanding aspect of the course is juggling the many different demands and deadlines, particularly when they all seem to come at once.

- There was a very high academic and research workload in the first year. However this has meant that in second year there are far less academic assignments allowing for thesis research to be the priority of study time.
- Minimal time to amalgamate different ideas due to very few study days up to New Year
- Research assignments- the systematic literature review in the first year was incredibly demanding given that it was a substantial project alongside placement, academic assignments, and planning the thesis.
- Managing academic assignments with research and clinical components of the course have been a bit of a challenge. However I think managing demands is definitely do-able with a prepared plan, some good organisation and a laid back attitude. I have found the course to be excellent for accessing support with assignments if you find yourself struggling.
- There are no exams, but there are a lot of assignments. You often have to juggle multiple assignments at a time. Particularly in first year. However, if you are struggling the course are willing to help and will give extensions if appropriate. The course will give feedback on all assignments which can sometimes be brutally honest, however, you get used to this and it is often actually really helpful to not have feedback “sugar coated”.
- There is also a lot of driving as the course is split between both Universities. However, you do get mileage.
- Sustaining the general workload becomes more challenging over time working to meet deadlines for thesis submission and then making the changes has been demanding.
- Juggling the demands of placement, research and other assignments which are ongoing has been difficult. The deadlines often seem to clash which at times feels near impossible.
- Managing workload of all competing demands of the course.
- Continuous deadlines have been demanding, but this varies throughout the course. For example, second year has fewer academic assignments so we can focus on our research. Balancing demands can be tricky, but this will be a challenge in all courses I expect.
- Extensive travel to placements has been the most demanding. Limited flexibility from the course to apply ‘geographical logic’ and place people in available local placements. However, this does appear different depending upon the home trust and clinical tutor that you are allocated.
- Teaching days are often very long with the combination of teaching and reflective practice groups.
- First year was challenging, particularly due to the high number of academic submissions. However, this has now eased off in second year and the main focus is on our research. I have been very well supported by the course throughout these demands.
- There is a heavy emphasis on deadlines throughout the first year, which has been extra difficult to manage with the limited study days we have had. It has felt at times that we are being constantly assessed and that we don’t have the opportunity to read on topics that we find interesting and are curious about, as we have to dedicate all of our time to marked assessments.
- Having to have a research idea defined so early on felt difficult at the time. However, the course provides different research panels and clinics in order to help refine this.
- The course is very demanding, and sometimes overwhelming. There are many competing demands that we have to meet but objectively speaking, the assessments are well spaced in time and we have many opportunities to ‘try things out’, e.g. .formative role plays etc.

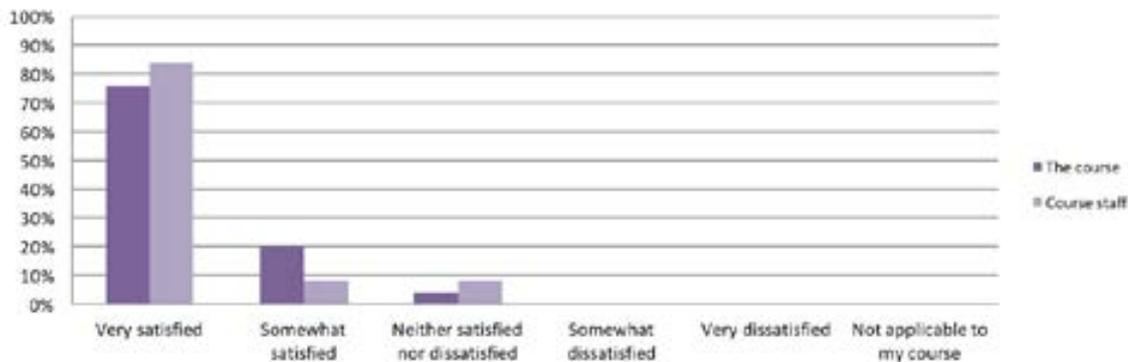
### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	80%
“Buddy”	88%
Manager	72%
Placement Supervisor	88%
Librarian	40%
Professional Mentor	60%
Personal Tutor	96%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	92%
Independent personal advisor	8%
Other	8%

### Under “Other”, responses included:

- I think if you emailed any course tutor, and they felt they could (and would be best placed to) offer appropriate support, they would.
- Mentor of a clinical psychologist impartial to the course

### How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

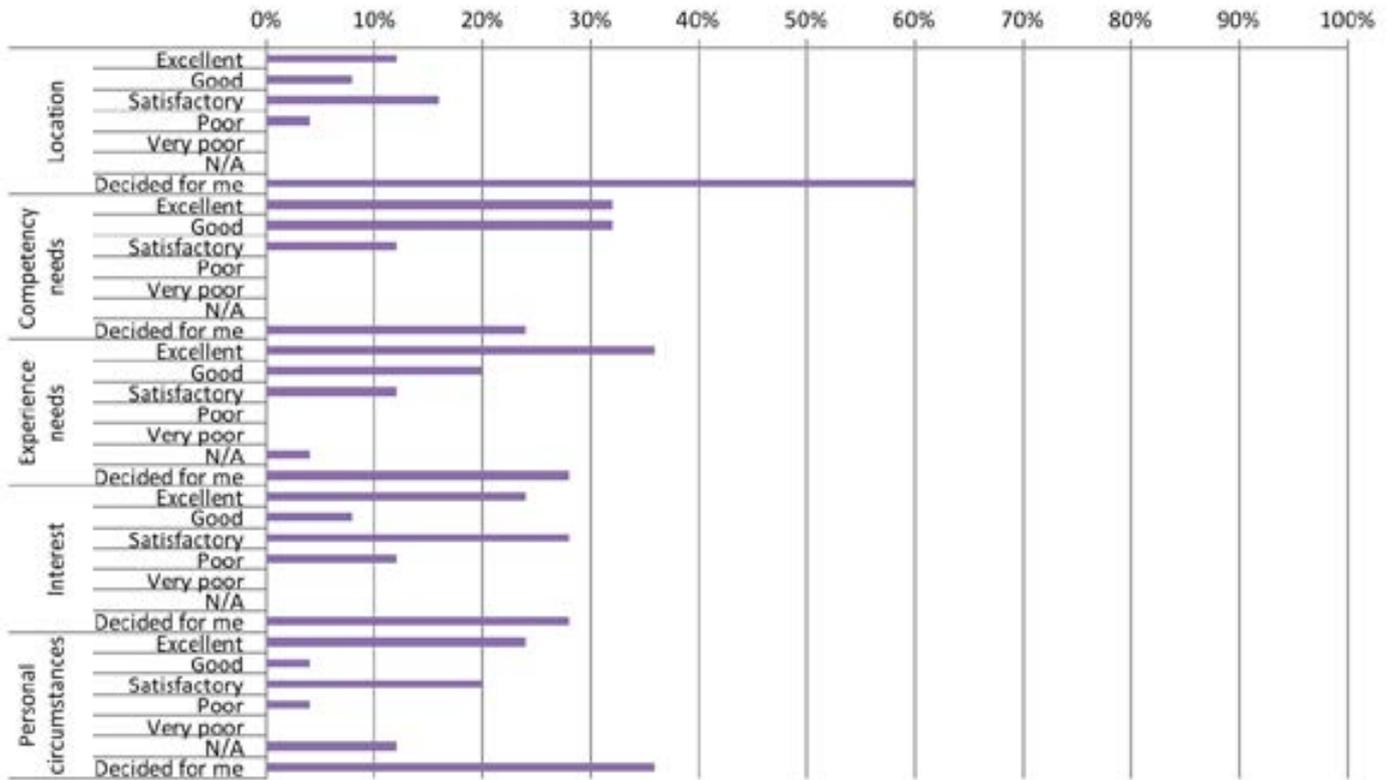


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

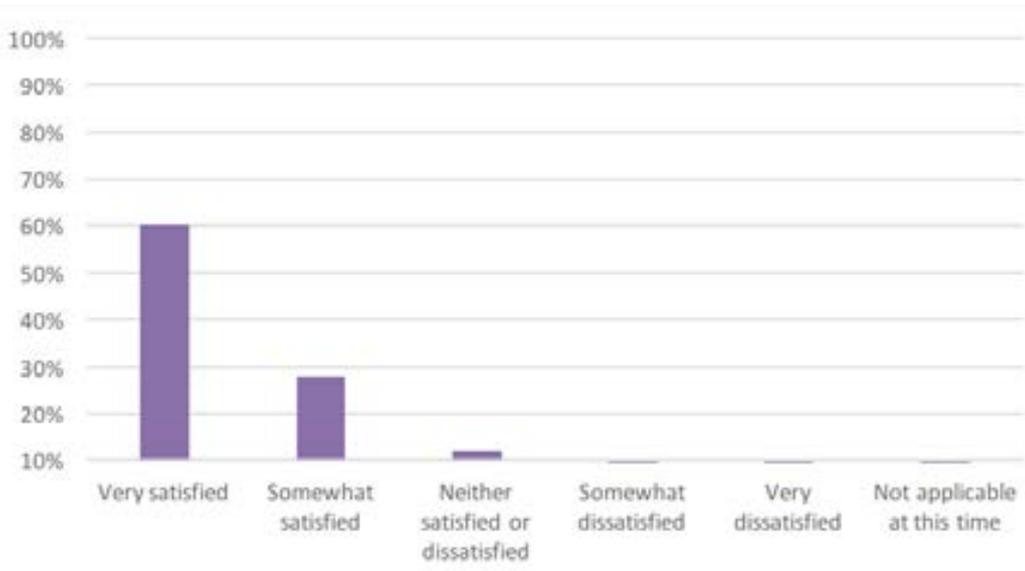
- The support systems are a helpful resource. There is plenty of opportunity to utilise a multitude of personnel.
- The support has been incredible. I started the course after I had been on maternity leave, during that time the course directors and staff were very supportive and understanding. All staff went above and beyond to accommodate me returning to work from maternity. They are extremely supportive as long as you approach and use them. I have approached numerous members of the support network and received very quick responses from them and met with nothing but compassion, support and guidance.
- There is always someone at the end of the phone or available via email if you need assistance.
- When you ask for support, staff are very responsive and supportive. They are all very approachable and accessible.
- I have received excellent support from my research supervisors, not only in relation to my thesis but other areas of the course as well. Members of staff are very approachable and willing to assist with queries or difficulties.
- Support at Trent is very accessible if you need it.
- I was briefly in hospital and the course were so supportive in making sure I returned to work gradually and safely. They are really good at providing support if you are struggling and will actively come and talk to you if you appear distressed. They won't judge you and are readily available if you need a quick chat. Trent has a reputation for being really unsupportive, but my experience is that that couldn't be further from the truth.
- The staff are open and approachable and are interested in what you have to say, and I have always had felt that they are trying to be helpful.
- I feel I have support coming out of my ears. But this is really appreciated and I feel I have numerous sources of support.
- Staff have been great in terms of support. They make it clear that it is down to you to ask for it though but when you do ask, they are very helpful and receptive.
- Support is there if you seek it but it can feel as though you are fighting the system to be able to manage any health/childcare/other dependents needs.
- All of the course staff are very supportive and willing to talk to you when you need it. I have had some difficult personal circumstances at home during my training and the course staff and placement supervisors have been very understanding and amenable.
- The course is really supportive, if you ask. I didn't want to ask for support at first, but when I did ask for it, the course staff were as supportive as they could be. I think they went above and beyond my expectations to ensure I felt supported.
- There are various options for support which the course encourage you to facilitate. The course arranges regular support meetings such as reviews with your personal tutor and they also make it very easy for you to approach them if you require any extra support.
- I have also felt that staff have noticed when I have appeared anxious and upset and made the time to contact me to check that I am doing ok.
- There are a variety of different ways to access support on this course if you seek it. I have felt well-supported so far.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



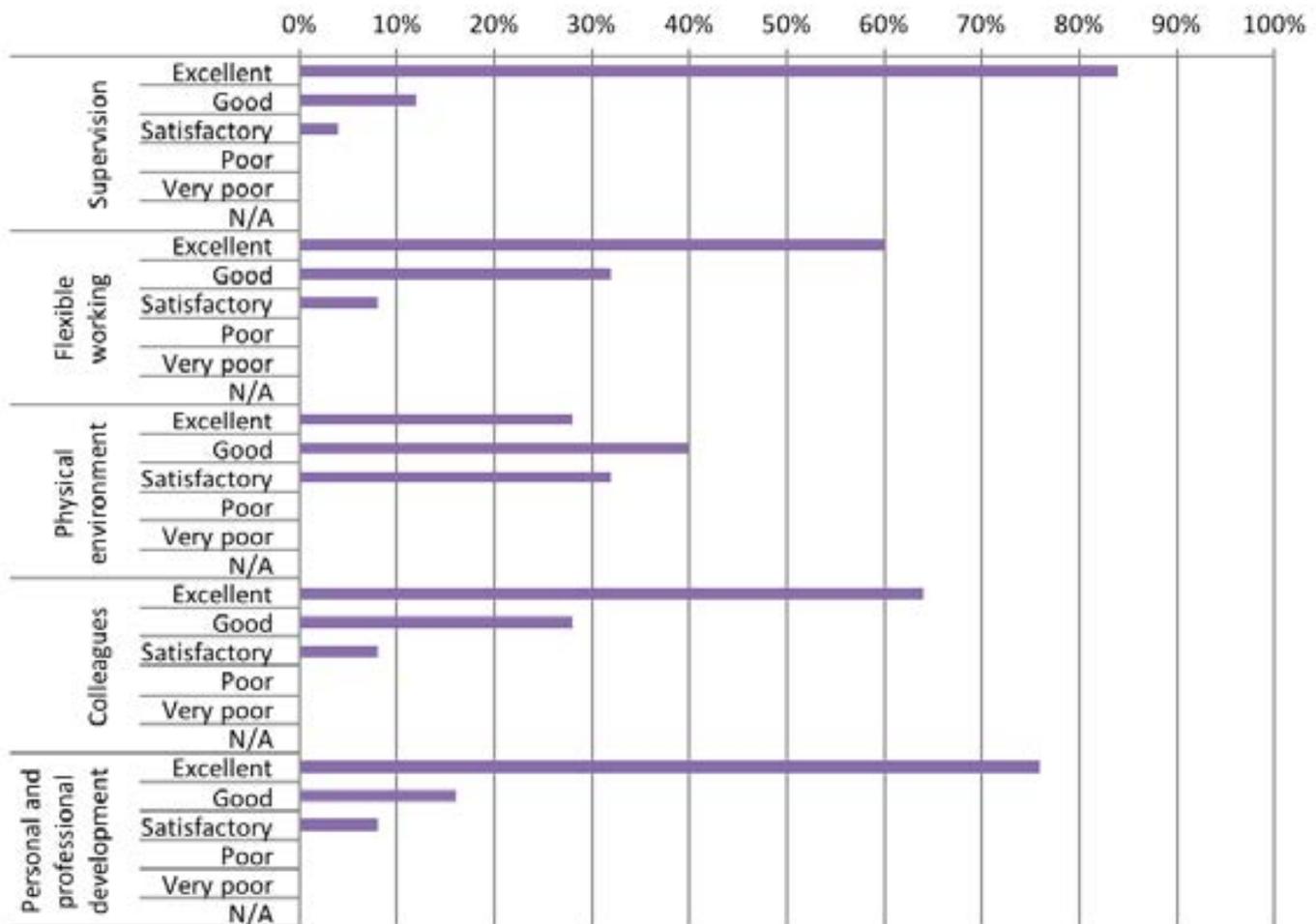
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



### Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?

- In year one, there is a 13 week teaching block to prepare you for your first placement. In year two, there is a teaching block of a few weeks relevant to lifespan and particular client groups.
- The teaching is tailored to equip you with the basic skills set and lots of explanation in terms of what is expected of you. There's opportunity to raise if you haven't met targets and put things in place early on to rectify.
- The initial 3 month teaching block on the course is designed to prepare you for placement. By the end of it, I was much more confident in my ability and felt ready to start placement. The role-plays, although initially they feel exposing, they provided me with invaluable experience which developed me personally and professionally.
- In the first year placements are, on the whole, decided for you. However, if you have a particular interest in relation to your area of research (and you know this early on) then adjustments can be made. In terms of skills, there is a focus on client assessments prior to starting placement so even if it has been a while since you've sat in front of a client for assessment, you will be well prepared.
- The lengthy teaching block at the start of the course prepares you well for working with clients and helps everyone to feel on an even keel going into their first placement.
- Lengthy teaching block in the first year before placements equipped us with skills and knowledge needed for varied placements. It was intensive but definitely necessary in order to meet the demands and standards on placement.
- In the second year, the course carries out teaching on specific models/client groups so that you have had some teaching before starting second year placements. This works well. Specialist therapy teaching occurs alongside second year placement which is helpful to enable application of the skills with clients on placement and reflection/development/supervision with other peers who have chosen the same specialist model.
- I have found the teaching prior to beginning the placement very informative and useful. I found it helped me a lot with competencies I needed to demonstrate on my first year placement.
- You have a big block of teaching in first year that teaches you basic clinical skills and allows you to practice your skills through role plays and presentations. They also have a session where you can read through, and adjust, the competencies that you will be expected to meet on your placement. You get the contact details of your supervisor early on so you can contact them and arrange a visit if you wish.
- We get a choice for one of the placements, the other placements are decided for us.
- Even though the teaching block (end of September - mid December) feels like it goes on forever, it really prepared me for placement as much as I could possibly be. When comparing myself to friends on other courses, I felt this was a great advantage and I was excited for placement due to both 'getting back out there' after full time teaching, but also because I was prepared.
- We have lots of clinical teaching and role play practise etc. to prepare us for placement. We also have reflective groups to discuss placement cases in regards to psychological theory which I've found very beneficial. I think we are well prepared for placements. Teaching does not always perfectly align to the placement you are on (e.g. CAMHS teaching when you are not on CAMHS) but this cannot be helped as we all rotate on placements, and isn't a big issue.
- Except for one of the final year placements, they are all decided on your behalf with very limited options for negotiation. Often the teaching is not directly applicable to specific models used in placements, however time can often be negotiated within placements to include reading time if needed.

## In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- All placements on Trent are decided for you, other than the Specialist placement option. My first year placement was fantastic, I felt that I was exposed to a broad range of opportunities and this meant that I learned a lot. First year placements are 9 months long, all others are 6 months in duration. I have felt well supported on placement.
- I have had training opportunities on placement which has been fantastic. They have been extremely welcoming and accommodating. I've felt a valued member of the team at all times.
- Steep learning curve as a complete change to what I've been used to. But very supportive environment and a wealth of opportunities and experience to be had. I am finding my clinical skills are developing quite rapidly.
- My placements so far have been excellent. The course has a good relationship with many local clinicians who are experienced in supervising trainees. I have experienced very good support and supervision, and varied experiences.
- My first year placement has been excellent. I have found I have access to a number of opportunities, working with a fab team and supervisor and the location is ideal for me. I have found the placement to be very welcoming in making you feel part of the team.

- I have had two great placements so far. My supervisors have been great at allowing me autonomy but also being available for any questions or concerns as they arise. You get a minimum of 1.5 hours clinical supervision per week, and your caseload is around 4-6. This gives you lots of time to reflect on your work, do formulations, plan sessions, and work on completing your portfolio of proficiencies and your case study.
- My placements have generally been good, with interested supervisors who are supportive and I have felt prepared well for future roles. I have had a negative experience on placement, where I feel that the course tried to manage as best as possible in a difficult situation.
- My placement supervisor is fantastic and also an ex-Trent trainee which means he really understands the demands of the course and has facilitated this accordingly. He asked me what my specific interests were in the first week and has accommodated this as much as possible. It has also really helped that the first placement is 10 months long as it has given me chance to try out different skills and get into the swing of clinical practice.
- My placement experiences have mainly been good. There have been a few minor issues in relation to accessing facilities such as computers when hot desking. But on the whole I have felt welcomed into teams and enjoyed placements. Locations have been fine, considering Lincolnshire is such a large county. I so far have not had to commute further than one hour. We have regular placement review meetings to ensure we are on track to meeting all our competencies.
- Most of the individual supervisors have an open and flexible approach to balancing the needs of the placement with your learning and personal needs. Within some employing trusts there can be a sense of limited placements and therefore having to put up with lower quality supervision/ placement experiences. Should problems be encountered such as bullying or safety concerns within placement, there can be a slow response from the course and the responsibility can feel as though it is left with the trainee to resolve.
- I am a Lincolnshire trainee and I have found the travel quite difficult whilst on the course. Lincolnshire is a very large county and placements are spread across the entirety of it. However, placements have been very good and placement supervisors have been understanding of the demands of commuting.
- I have really enjoyed my placement so far as I feel to be gaining varied experience. I have felt very supported within the team I am working with and that my supervisor is very supportive of making sure that to provide the opportunities I need to pass the placement.
- The placement experience has been really good. I have a great supervisor and am working on complex cases with his support.
- Access to computers has sometimes been difficult due to NHS buildings converting to a more hot desk environment. iPads were provided in an attempt to compensate for this, though not always fit for purpose.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	84%
No	12%
Don't know	4%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	28%
No	56%
Don't know	16%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in Nottingham and Lincoln.

**Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.**

Answer	Response
Yes	8%
No	92%
Don't know	0%

**How do you find the work life balance on your course?**

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	24%
Fair	64%
Poor	12%
Very poor	0%

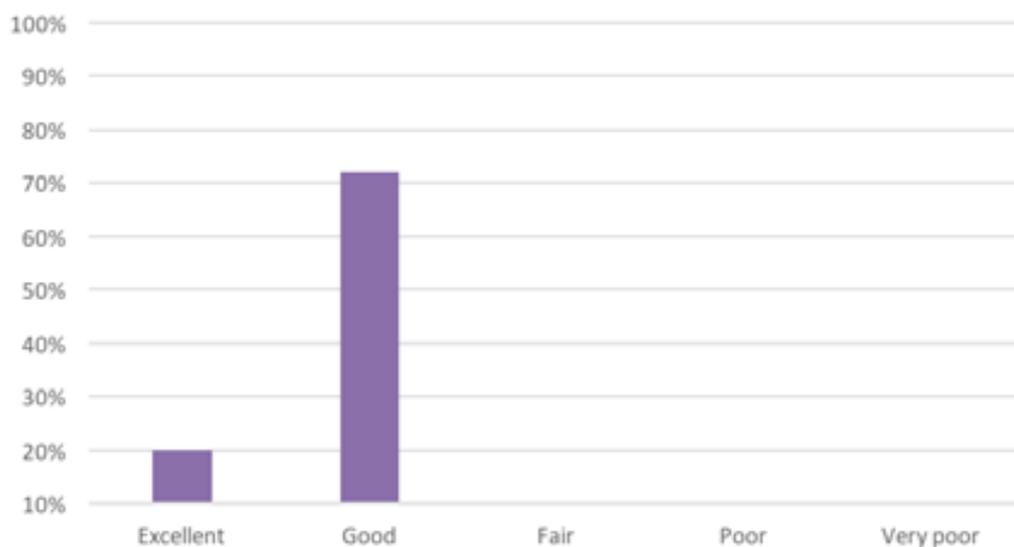
### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- It can be difficult to take a full week of leave, due to having teaching 1 day per week throughout the year (other than July and August), meaning that more than 6 days off has to be well timed. Aside from the teaching day, I have found that my requests have been authorised, but due to the amount of assessments, the course definitely requires you to plan in advance and think about upcoming assignments etc.
- The balance has been really good including me having over an hour as a commute. This drops during deadline time.
- There are periods of rest, however this is more the calm before the storm! Effective time management during these periods would offer a little homeostasis and prevent future flurries however this isn't always possible.
- Any course will have its demands and therefore being able to maintain a work/life balance will be difficult at times. Personally I have felt that the course have been accommodating to ensure that you are supported. Having a young child has meant that I have needed to take special leave when they have been unwell, the course were extremely supportive and rearranged deadlines due to days being lost when caring for my baby. They are extremely supportive, and on the whole work can be completed on the allocated study days.
- Don't kid yourself into thinking that you'll have the same amount of 'free' time that you had as an assistant or in previous degrees, you won't. The course has to take a priority role as it is such a huge investment of your time and energy - but ultimately with pay-offs to match
- For the most part, you can maintain a balance if you stay organised and use your time productively. There are certain times in training around different deadlines where you have to be more flexible with using weekends and evenings to get the work done, but at other times the work can be done within study days. It largely depends how boundaried and organised you are with your time.
- More work than life, but this is to be expected on a doctoral level course. The course do timetable more study days in the second year which, if utilised properly can help with work-life balance.
- I think it can be tricky to maintain a good work life balance the doctorate is hard but I have managed my work life balance by being strict and organising when and for how long I do assignments/clinical work for so that I feel less pressure and avoid working on days which are not study days. So far I have found this has worked well and have not felt my personal life outside of the course have been affected by the course at all.
- It is very assignment heavy. Each week is usually one day of teaching, three days of placement, and one study day. When teaching isn't on you get two study days. Unfortunately this isn't always enough and you do go outside of working hours to get things completed. This isn't all the time though.
- Variable throughout the years - there is rarely a significant amount of down-time to catch your breath between the differing assignments and thesis work.
- I find that generally it is fair, but deadlines often clash so I have felt like I have had no home life for a few weeks at a time.
- It was hard in first year (and anticipating difficulties once my thesis gets going) but things are relatively quiet right now and I am managing it OK. Increased workload comes in waves. The course will take up as much time in your life as you allow it to so it's really down to the individual to make sure they are managing work/life balance. It can definitely be a struggle at times though.
- Trent appears to be fairly assignment heavy and expects a lot of travel for teaching and placement. There is an unspoken acknowledgement that many trainees use A/L to complete assignments. In first year it was almost impossible to book in all annual leave due to rules about when and when not this could be taken. There is no/limited option to carry over leave.
- I think if you manage your time well and you are prepared to work in the evenings, you generally

manage to keep your weekends free. I have found that close to deadlines I have had to work over my weekends, but I guess this is understandable for this level of training.

- Some points in the year are very high output and perhaps not organised as well by the course as they could be. It means there are times where I am looking and seeking out more work, and times when I'm completely snowed under, which could be organised more evenly.
- This completely depends on the assessments due. For example, there was a period where we had two major assignments due within a week, which meant working weeknights and weekends to be able to hand them in on time. I have at times found it difficult to find the work life balance as there is always some work to do, however this is another learning aspect of the course.
- I find that the course gives you ample study days, I have only had to work over weekends/evenings if a large assignment has been due.
- Particularly around deadlines it is difficult to maintain a good work life balance.
- Sometimes I need to work on Saturday and Sunday, and I do some work in the evenings occasionally, it is hard to keep a healthy work/life balance at times, but if you are disciplined and focused it is possible.

### How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- A band 6 salary is more than fair. When the WATs is applied, the 'take home pay' more than makes up for the times where you may have stayed at placement late or worked on a day of leave to get something done. I feel very fortunate, particularly so when other Practitioner Psychologist routes do not get the same wage.
- The pay is excellent.
- Mileage accumulated to placement/university base from home does have implications on finances.
- The payment of fuel is below the governments recommended amount and at times does not completely cover the cost of my fuel.
- Not impressed by the Widening Access scheme being revoked for trainees
- You get paid mileage so that isn't a problem. You also get a research budget of £500. As the course is still funded, we get paid a Band 6 Wage. So financially there are no issues.

- I have really noticed the change from being an assistant psychologist and really enjoying this.
- It's really helpful we can claim petrol expenses.
- The extent of travel can be a significant cost
- It's good right now because of Widening Access Training Scheme, without this it would be worse.
- What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

**Trent have an established range of placements with supportive teams/services, going to placement is my favourite. I also think that the quality of the teaching and research is a strength of the course.**

- The cohort have been amazing. Everybody is like minded with a supportive and caring attitude.
- Stimulating teaching.
- The course staff.
- Staff's willingness to share their knowledge and expertise. They are all approachable and they give a lot of time to trainees.
- I love a good discussion or debate during seminars on teaching days. I find they really make you think about things in different ways which is crucial for your own personal and professional development. The placement opportunities are also fantastic and really enable you to sample lots of different domains within clinical working
- The high quality teaching and placements.
- Different perspectives brought by the cohort.
- Colleagues- built close relationships with many in my cohort.
- Staff on the course.
- While the high academic and clinical standards set by course has been challenging to meet, it has prepared me well for placement, where I have received much positive feedback.
- I have been given excellent opportunities to pursue my research interests and I am very thankful for this. I also have been given an excellent placement and am very grateful for the opportunities presented to me in this too.
- The placements. It is the job I want to do and the supervisors are great. You get to work in lots of different areas: adult, child, learning disability, older adult. You then get to specialise in an area of your choice. This gives you so much experience and I have really enjoyed it.
- Placements.
- Being on placement and the sense of camaraderie amongst the cohort.
- A very stimulating environment for learning
- The strong bonds and friendships with other members of the cohort - we are all in this together and their support and humour carries me through!
- More specifically to the course probably being on placement due to the variety and learning opportunity it brings.
- In second year the course timetabled in a study block of a few weeks to enable a focus on thesis. This was really appreciated.
- The encouragement of the course and course staff to attend CPDs, attendance and presenting at conferences. I think the course are excellent at getting the best out of their trainees and it is nice that they are willing to give extra supervision if you want to excel at something.
- My favourite aspect of the course is the supportive nature that is encouraged. All of the internal and external staff have been approachable and actively encourage student to seek support.

- The even mix of clinical and research modules and the teaching has been excellent.
- In first and second year my favourite aspects were teaching and placement days. In third year, my favourite has been specialist placement and carrying out research.
- I really like that it constantly challenges me in many areas and encourages me to be critical. I like my colleagues and lectures.

**Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?**

- Trent is all about learning and making the most of your training. I think you would like this course if you are keen on improving your practice, your thinking, and your research. I also think Trent promotes autonomy, but support is always there if you want/need it. The course asks a lot of the trainees, but in return, we are supported by a great team of tutors and placement supervisors. The Research Tutors D&N in particular are fantastic. There are particular areas of interest in: ACT, Psychodynamic & ISDTP, Systemic and Behavioural approaches. Placements can be very varied but areas of interest seem to be forensic, management, physical health and Trauma.
- I really like the course and would recommend people to apply.
- They have a very honest ethos which allows you to acknowledge both your strengths and weaknesses in addition to identifying areas to improve.
- I knew this course was hard and that I would learn a lot of things. Now that I am approaching the end, I can wholeheartedly say that the course was harder than I thought it would be and I learnt more than I was hoping I would learn.
- If you are fortunate enough to be offered a place of the course, it is not because the University made a mistake, you are not out of your depth, you will be able to cope, and you will not be the only one having these thoughts.
- Staffing levels were low a few months ago which was noticed by the cohort (i.e. reduced support and organisation) perhaps the course could manage this better in future (i.e. faster recruiting).
- The course are constantly listening to trainee feedback and making improvements. I think this gives it a really strong advantage as it is tailored specifically to what the trainees want and need. Whilst Trent has a reputation for being harsh, I don't think that is true. So my advice would be to ignore the rumours.
- The impression is that the workload is relatively higher than other courses, but it is hard to know whether this is the case or not.
- Deadlines in quick succession mean that you can't only use study days to complete the work, despite your best efforts, so working evenings and weekends has resulted in people getting run down and exhausted. However, after this initial batch of deadlines (in first year) has now finished and the work-life balance has restored significantly which apparently continues in second and third year, so it feels worth it for the relative short-term stress.
- I think the course is quite assignment-heavy in comparison with others. However, I feel that this has really improved my writing and critical thinking. You are definitely challenged but will (hopefully) be a better clinician for it. It is worth noting that there is a fair amount of commuting involved wherever you live, as we regularly travel to both Lincoln and Nottingham universities.
- The course can be very rigid and inflexible. It can also appear to lack reflective capacity about its values and approach. There also appears to be a strong influence from local forensic services, which may affect the course's approach. Trent can sometimes make you feel a problem or hassle if you have personal/health/family needs that may require a more flexible approach. This can require the trainee to draw on other resources to navigate until a solution is found.
- The course can feel intimidating because of the amount of research/assignments so early on. However, the justification is solid and it really prepares you for presenting at conferences and assertiveness on placement.
- This course has really suited me. The mix of clinical and research teaching has been good and I have felt well-supported so far.

## Courses Survey Results

### Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

### What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?

- Observed group task, academic, clinical, and personal & professional suitability panels.

### For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time by stating the average number of hours per week allocated to each of the following areas?

Teaching	11 days
Placement	19 days
Personal Study	4 days
Research	3.5 days

### What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	0%
Practical Reports	100%
Essays	100%
Small Scale research projects	100%
Role Play	100%
Viva	100%
Thesis	100%
Presentations	100%
Other	0%

### Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

11 responses (9% of 126 trainees)

## About the trainee

### What is your current year of training?

Current Year	Percent
Year 1	45%
Year 2	36%
Year 3	18%

### What was your age when you started training?

Age	Percent
20 – 24 years	0%
25 – 29 years	64%
30 – 34 years	18%
35 – 39 years	18%
40 – 44 years	0%
45 – 49 years	0%
50+ years	0%

## Experiences prior to training

### How many times did you apply to get on to the course (including the successful year)?

Attempts	Percent
Once	27%
Twice	55%
3 times	9%
4 times	0%
5 times	0%
6 times	9%
I don't know	0%

**Other than your undergraduate degree, what additional academic qualifications did you have?**

Qualification	Respondents
PhD	9%
MA	0%
MSc	64%
MRes	0%
Diploma	9%
Post Graduate Certificate	27%
Conversion course	0%
None	18%
Other	9%

**How many years relevant work experience did you have prior to training?**

Years	Respondents
None	0%
Less than 1	0%
1 year	0%
2 years	36%
3 years	18%
4 years	18%
5 years	9%
6+ years	18%
I don't know	0%

**Which of the following have you been employed as?**

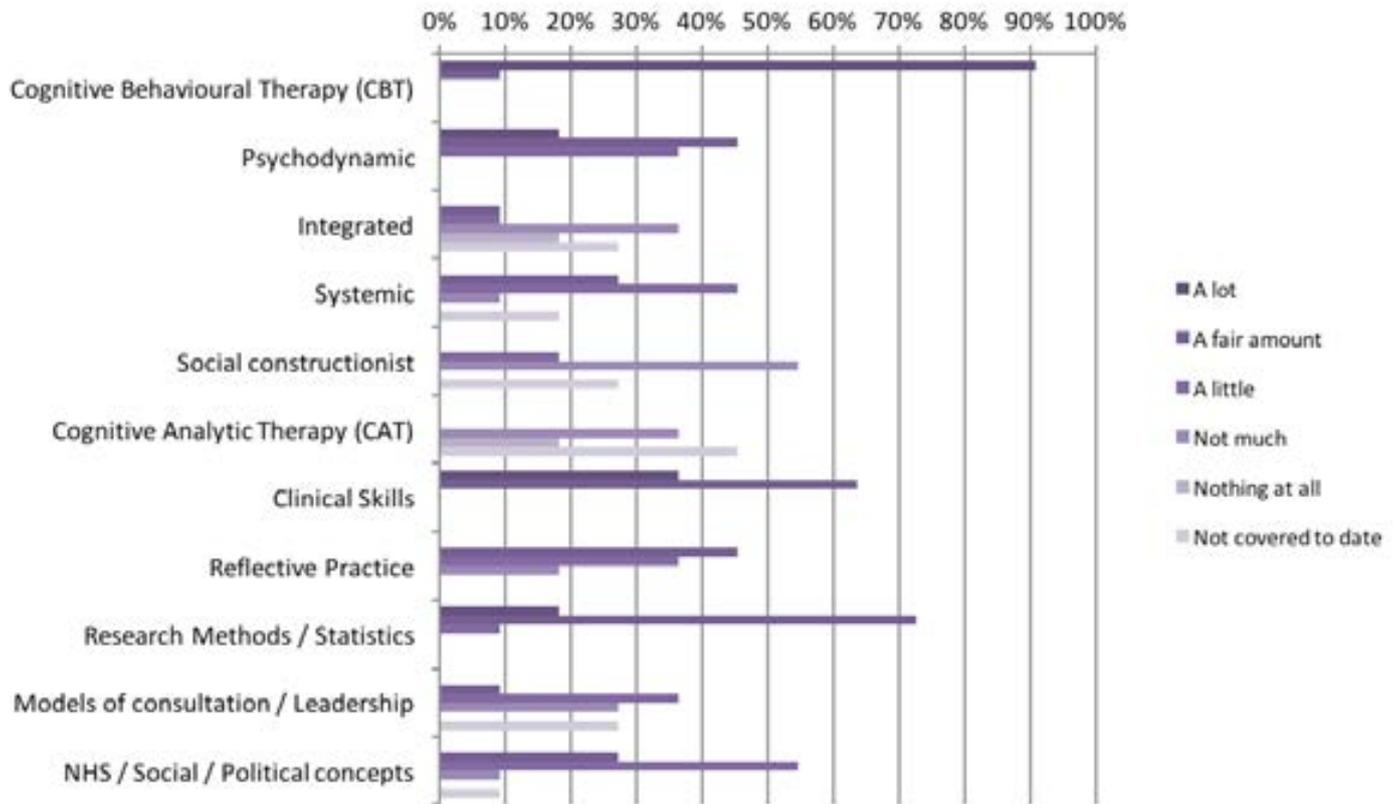
Position of employment	Respondents
Assistant Psychologist in NHS	45%
Assistant Psychologist non NHS	0%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist in NHS	27%
Voluntary Assistant Psychologist non NHS	36%
Research Assistant	64%
Voluntary Research Assistant	36%
Healthcare Assistant/Support Worker	45%
Low Intensity Worker/Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Worker	27%
Other	36%

# The selection process

## What was your personal experience of the interview process for your current course?

- Interview was about thinking on your feet rather than knowledge or personal questions. Interviewers were encouraging and I felt as if they were trying to get the best from me.
- Really thoughtful and quite relaxed, they were trying to get the best out of me rather than trip me up in anyway. The questions made me think on my feet, but seemed to be designed to assess ability to think and reflect rather than test my memory.
- My interview at UCL was good, I felt that I was given an opportunity to show my strengths. I had a less positive experience at other courses.
- Very positive. You could tell the interviewers were trying to get the best out of you, and to see what you were like as a person. Although there were some unexpected questions, this was designed to see how you thought on your feet, and you were not expected to have a ready-prepared answer.
- I found the interview very conversational. It was good for putting me at ease and making me comfortable with the interviewers. I never felt like they were trying to catch me out and it seemed they were exploring my thought processes.
- Very supportive. The interviewers were friendly and you felt that although the questions were tough, they were on your side and wanted to help you to give the best possible answer.
- The interview process was thought-provoking, but the panel were very warm and welcoming and really seemed to want to hear what I had to say. The questions made use of different ways of presenting information which helped me to formulate my answers.
- I enjoyed the UCL interview process the most out of different courses (same experience last year even when I did not get a place). I felt that the questions were designed to make you think on your feet which levels the field for the candidates because it is not something you can prepare or rehearse beforehand. The staff were warm and friendly, not trying to catch you out, on the contrary trying to get the best out of you. The day is well organised.
- Obviously it was nerve-wracking but they made it as welcoming and positive as they could. You could tell they wanted you to do well and were trying to get the best out of you.
- Overall a really positive one. All the staff I met were very friendly and supportive, and the interview panel were very encouraging and seemed to want to get the best out of me. The day was very well organised.
- Course content and teaching

**How much teaching is there on different models?**



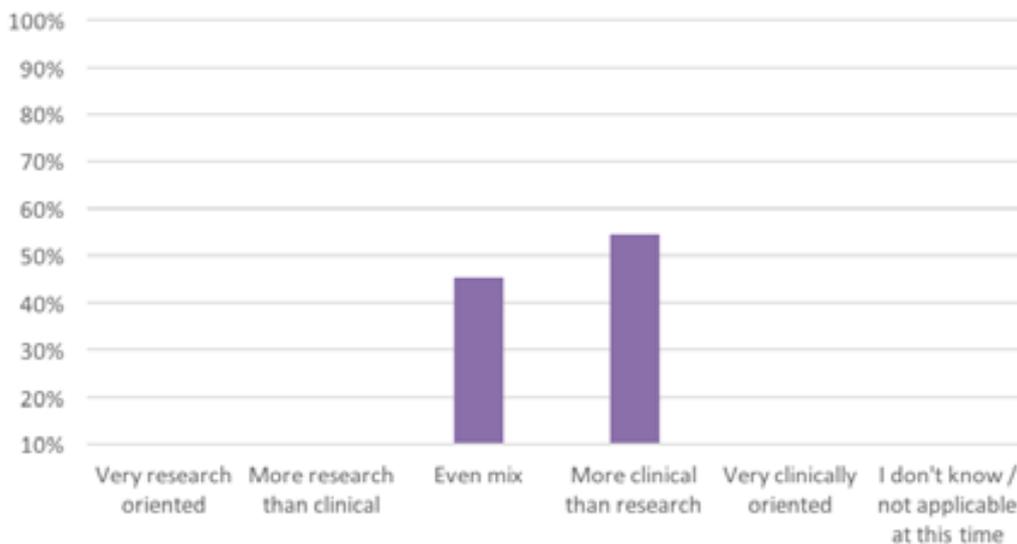
**What other topics are covered by your course?**

Topic	Respondents
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)	100%
Mindfulness	91%
Schema Therapy	9%
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	55%
Solution Focused Therapy	55%
Neuropsychology	100%
Compassionate Focused Therapy (CFT)	91%
Other	9%

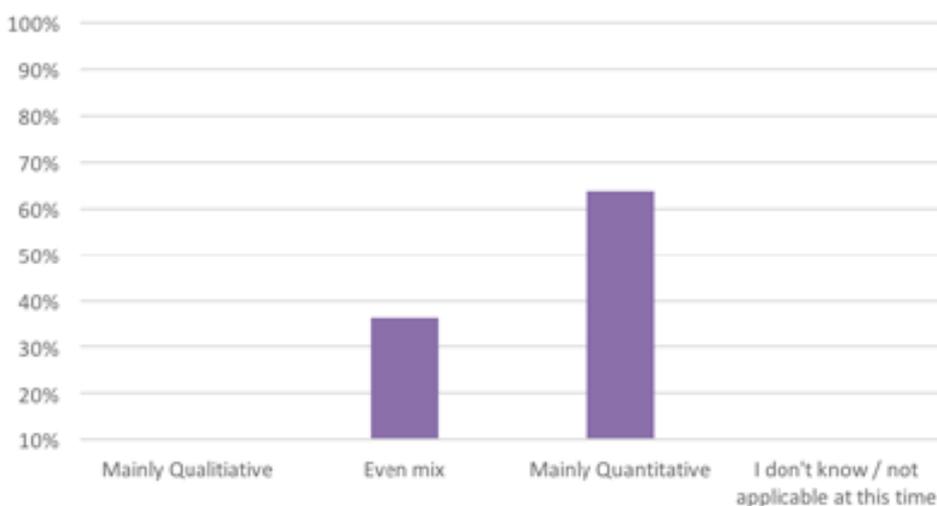
**Do you have any comments in relation to the time devoted to the different areas covered by your courses?**

- First year is CBT and third wave and psychodynamic. Second year more systemic. This reflects placements. UCL promotes a different models without being biased towards one.
- Focus is primarily on CBT, systemic/narrative and psychodynamic.
- 1st year psychodynamic teaching is more theoretical than practical. The teaching block before you start placement is very helpful for learning clinical skills and basics of CBT.
- It feels like a fair balance is struck by the course. I imagine it is a challenge for the course to prioritise what to deliver when, however I felt that the teaching we received helped me to develop the skills I needed at an appropriate time in training: starting with more individual therapy models in the first year when the cohort was working with working age adults, to a broader focus on working with groups of people and thinking about the impact of societal issues on psychological distress. There is, however, only a small amount of time dedicated to reflective practice in smaller groups, which feels a shame as we are a large cohort and this space can be very much needed on training.
- The first year is heavily weighted towards CBT teaching and some 3rd wave lectures. This is helpful as most of the first year placements are CBT ones. The 3rd wave lectures are really helpful and useful as well.

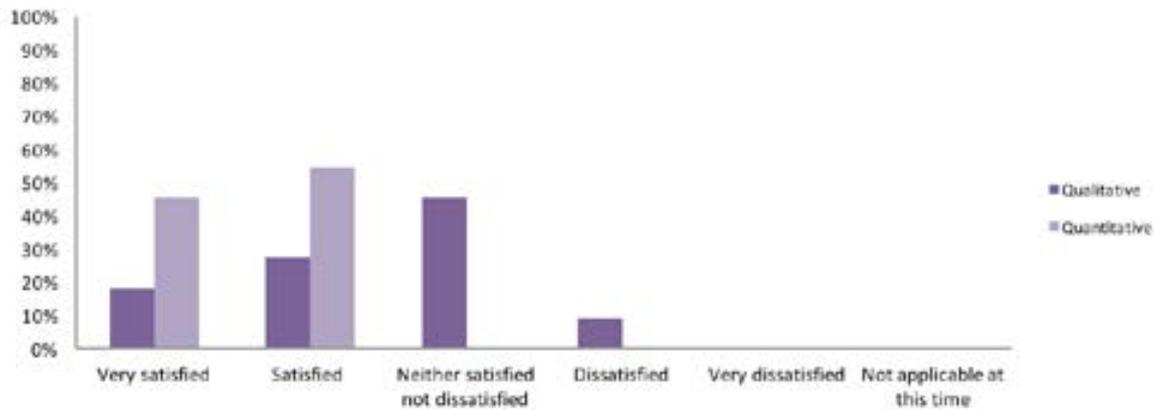
**How balanced is the course in terms of research and clinical training?**



**How balanced is the course towards qualitative and quantitative research?**



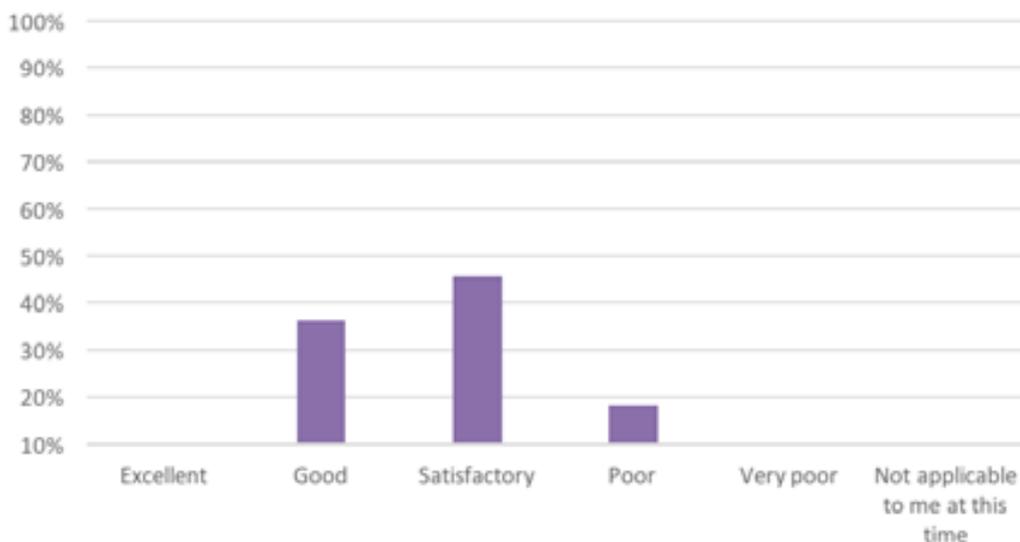
### Thinking about these research areas, how satisfied are you with the teaching in both?



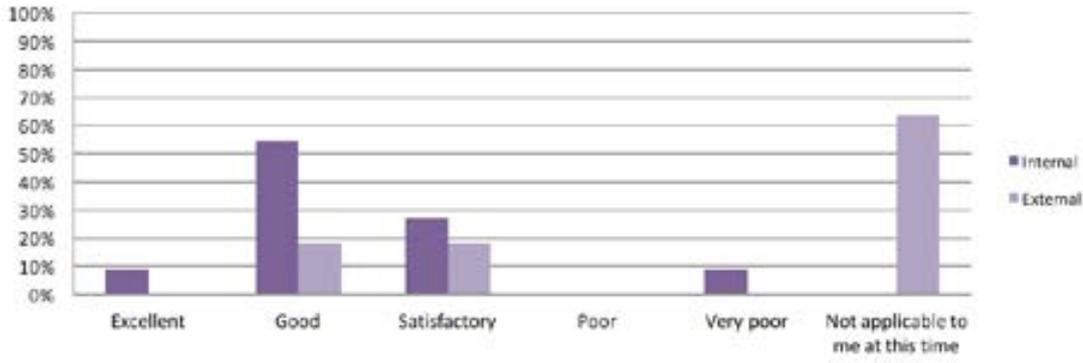
### Do you have comments in relation to the research element of your course?

- Could do more to treat qualitative methods with more equality in relation to quantitative. There's a lot on the different quantitative tests, but very little on a detailed qualitative analysis
- I feel equipped to both undertake and consume research as a Clinical Psychologist, and I think the approach the course takes to research teaching is very fair.
- Starts from a very basic starting point, which is great as a recap and to ensure all trainees are at the same point. However, there's not much scope for practical experience. It's a lot more theoretical

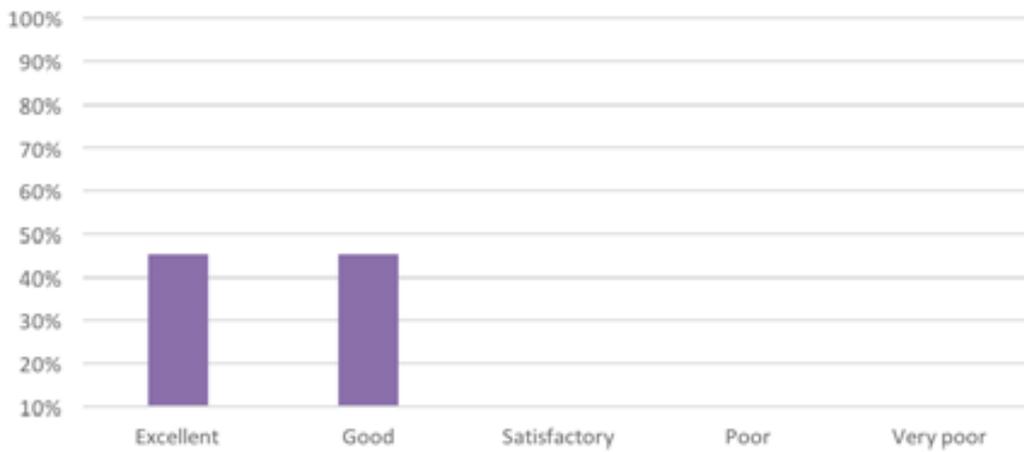
### How did you find the experience of thinking about / selecting a thesis idea?



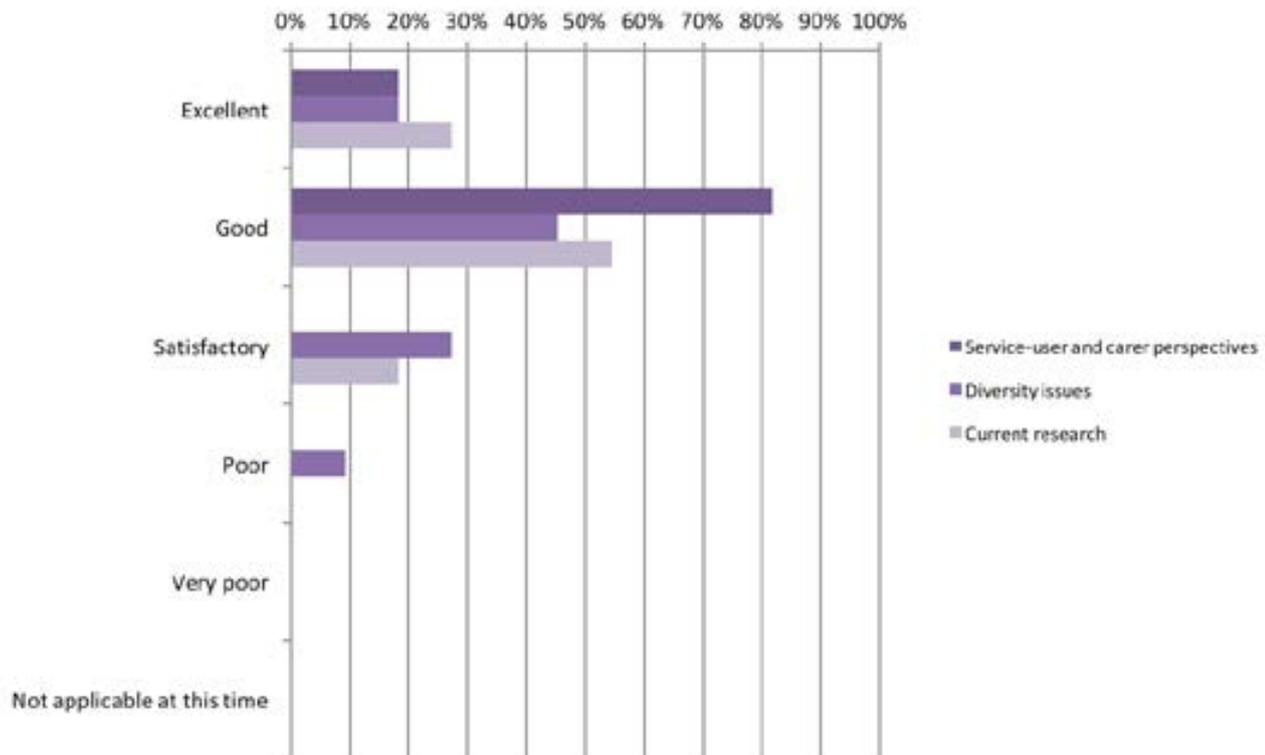
**What was your experience of accessing / finding internal and external supervisors for your thesis?**



**How would you rate the overall quality of teaching on your course?**



**How would you rate the quality of teaching on the following subjects?**



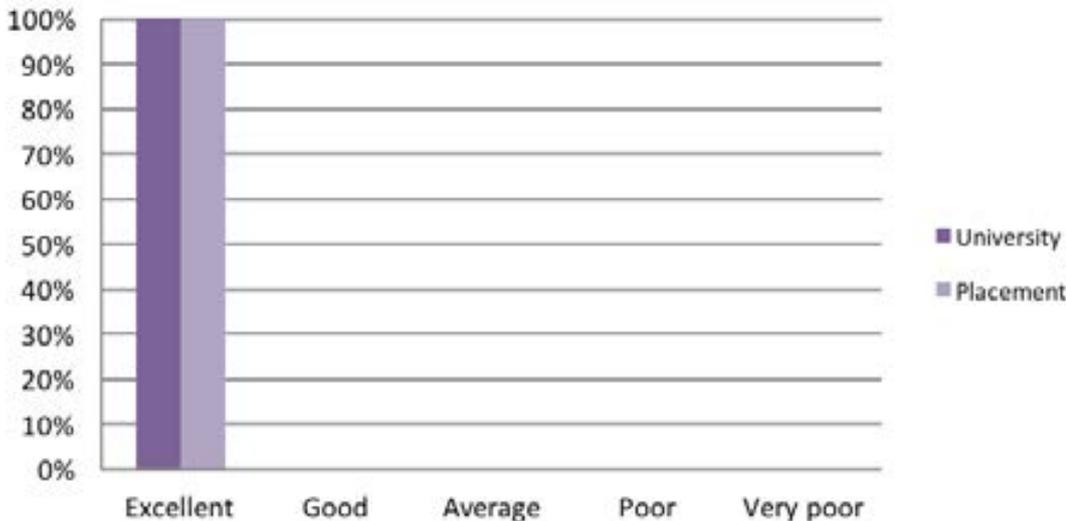
**Please provide any further comments about teaching on your course?**

- Course responded to feedback on the cultural competence teaching.
- I think the teaching / syllabus has been really carefully structured / organised, and left me feeling well prepared for clinical work on placement.
- Teaching lacks critical appraisal and is often repetitive as similar topics are covered by different guest lecturers (to the extent you sometimes get the same videos in different lectures). Generally not that engaging after the first 9 months of training.
- I have been impressed by how passionate many of the lecturers are about their area
- The majority of teaching has been great, especially when delivered by members of the clinical tutor team. We have been very lucky to then have external lecturers deliver sessions providing some very strong teaching; from all modalities.
- Really enjoyed the teaching, high quality in-house and guest lecturers. I think we cover a lot of areas in a balanced way, getting different perspectives.

## Support for trainees with disabilities

**Do you have any disabilities?**

0% of the individuals surveyed confirmed they considered themselves to have a disability.



**Please describe how well your needs are met**

If you would like more information on support for individuals with disabilities, please contact the course directly.

## Demands of the course and support systems

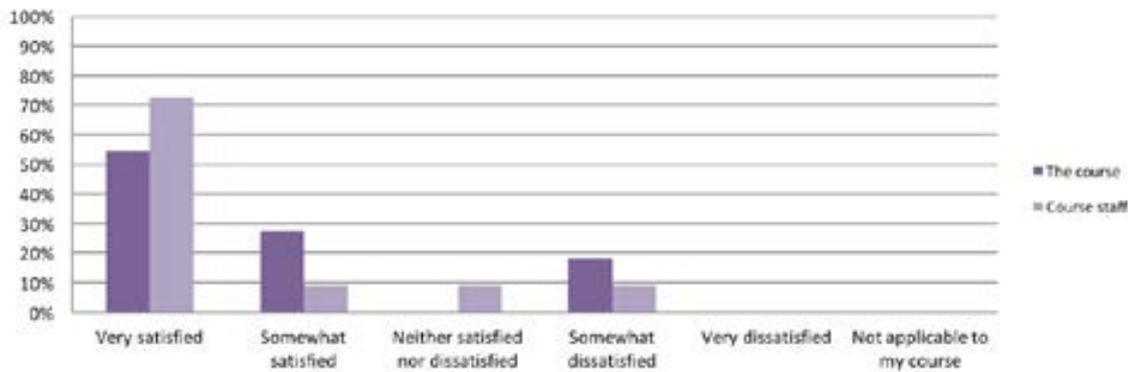
### Have you found any aspects of the course particularly demanding?

- The hardest parts are navigating supervision relationships on placement and also balancing meeting demands of course and placement.
- It can be very demanding around certain times of the year as deadlines for reports/research/ placement tend to clump together.
- Balancing different demands in parallel, i.e. case reports, exams, placement, thesis, literature review, was challenging but I think partly inevitable given the demands of training / what has to be taught / covered in the 3 years.
- Coming from a non-CBT background having to apply it on placement at a relatively high level very quickly was quite challenging.
- There is a big expectation placed on trainees, which I think is true of any DClin training course. The research process seems to exacerbate challenges in the second year, as there isn't much reprieve from any other aspect of training.
- I think most aspects are quite manageable in first year, although it takes some time to get used to the continuous mental shift between clinical work and university teaching.

### In relation to the last question, what support systems exist?

Support system	Respondents
Reflective Group	90%
“Buddy”	80%
Manager	10%
Placement Supervisor	90%
Librarian	40%
Professional Mentor	0%
Personal Tutor	100%
Research / Thesis Supervisor	90%
Independent personal advisor	40%
Other	0%

## How satisfied are you with the level of support you receive?

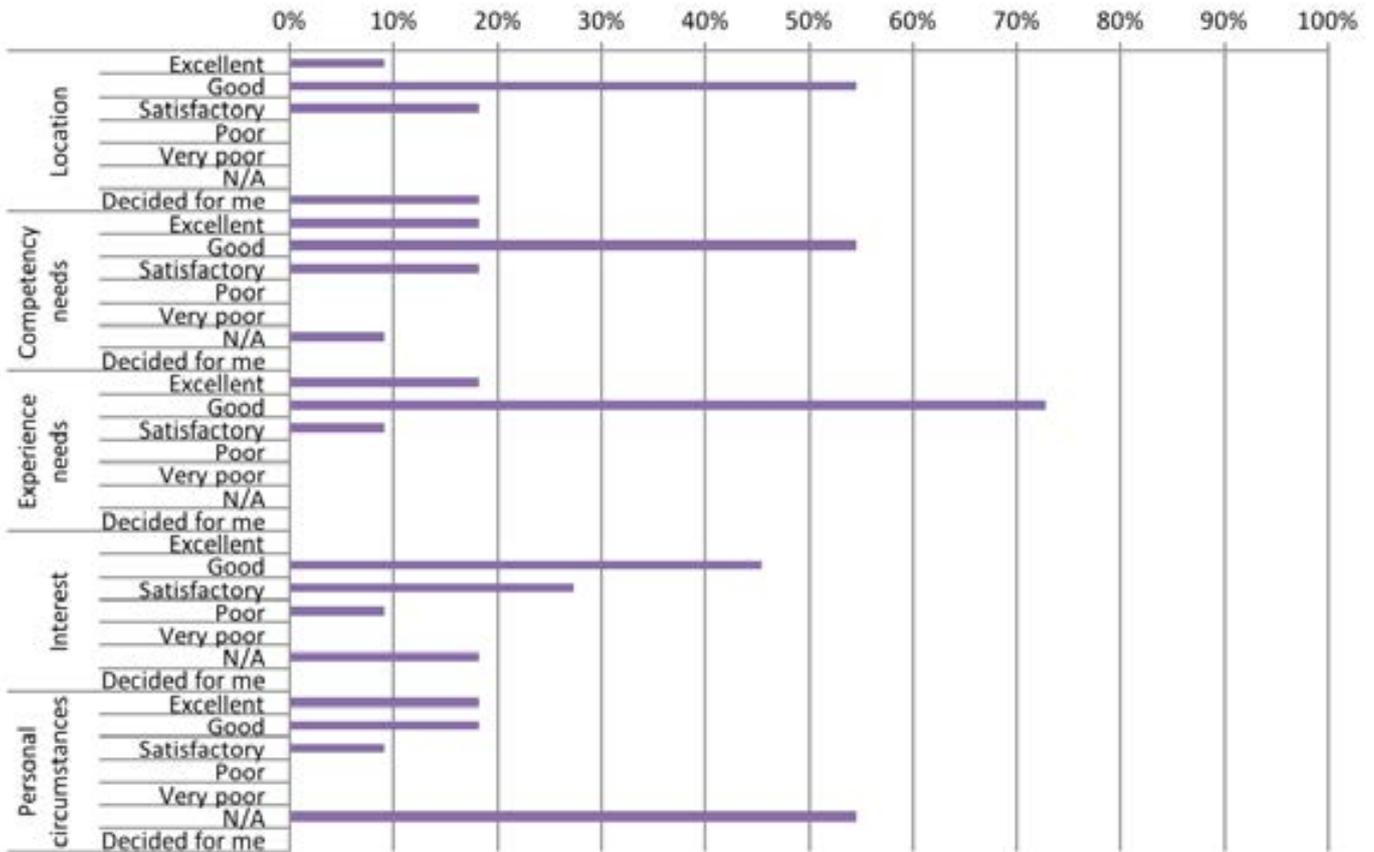


### Do you have any comments on the support that you have received?

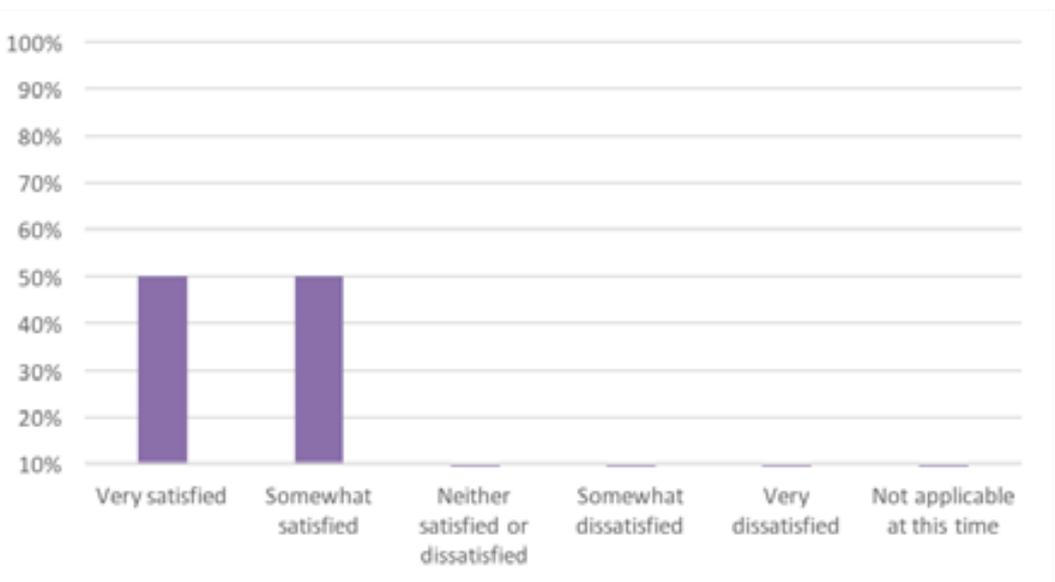
- Course tutors can be really valuable and nurturing. Especially when things are stressful on placement.
- The staff on the course really try and respond to feedback from the year.
- My tutor has been very available whenever I wanted a meeting. All the other core staff of the course have been very approachable as well.
- There is a real ethos of staff wanting to support trainees. It's really reassuring to know it will be there if I need it.
- I feel that the staff are approachable and very supportive.
- I think the support given by UCL is one of the huge strengths of the course. The staff are all very supportive and approachable.

# Placements

Regarding the following aspects, please describe the level of input you have had in relation to your placements:



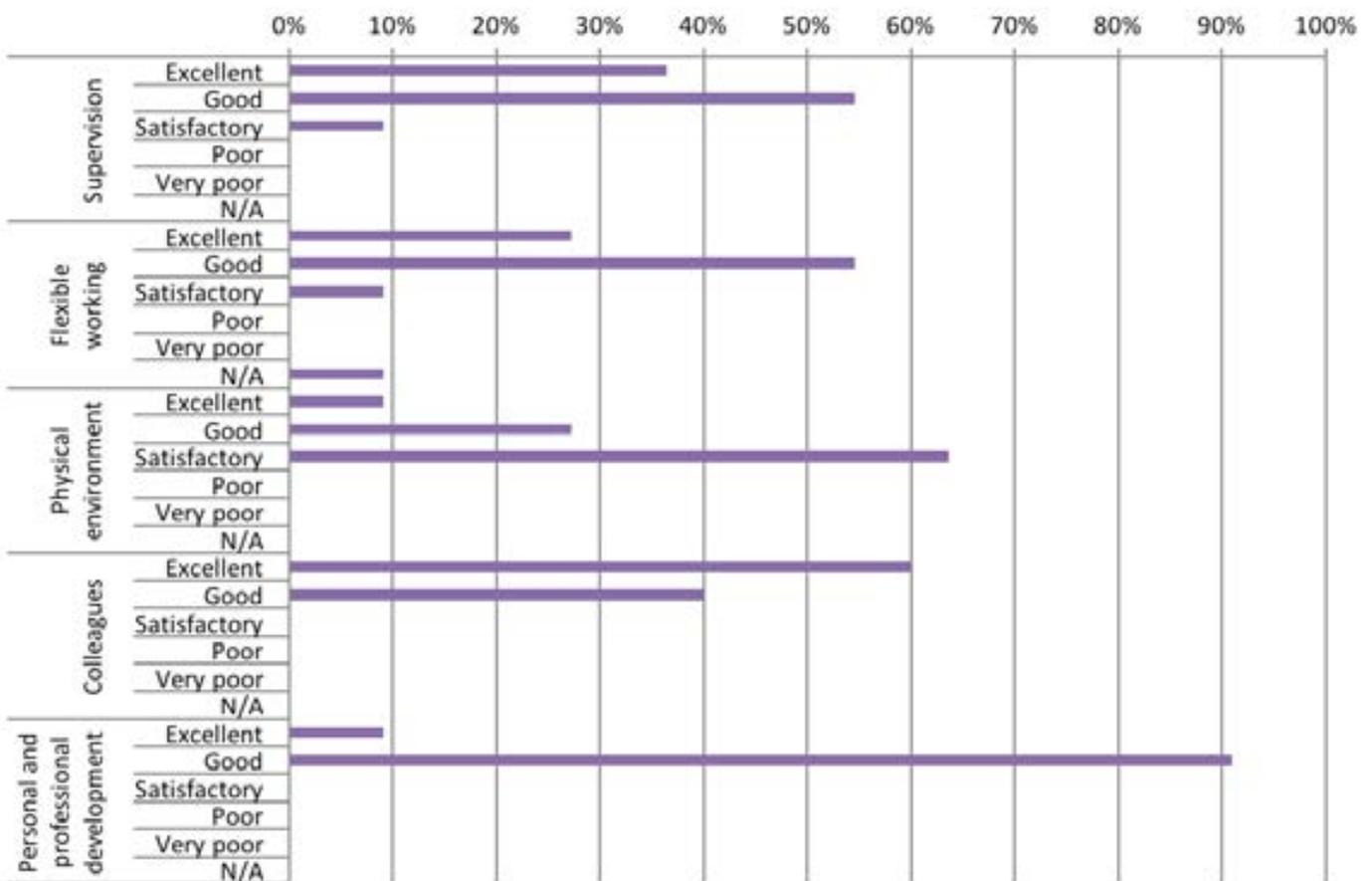
With regards to placements, how satisfied are you with the way your course prepares you?



**Do you have comments in relation to the way in which your course prepares for you placements?**

- The course mainly prepares you for general CBT/systemic placements. It can be quite hard if you're in a more specialist service. You'll have to pick up skills and theory without the support of course teaching.
- Good training (theoretical and applied). Course structure is carefully designed and planned so that topics are introduced as they become more relevant on placement.
- I have felt very prepared for placements with the teaching we have had from the course; although I have been lucky circumstantially that my teaching has aligned very well with my placements, which is challenging to do for everyone as placements vary significantly.
- The preparation felt like it was mainly aimed towards trainees going into IAPT and primary care placements, so those who ended up in secondary care or on wards had a very steep learning curve.

**In relation to the below, how would you describe the quality of your placements?**



**Please detail any comments in relation to your experience on placement (Please include comments relating to placements abroad if applicable).**

- I felt very lucky with the placements that I was given. They were of a high quality, and where possible, accommodated my requests with respect to interests and needs.
- Supervisors on placement are excellent, with rare exceptions. Generally knowledgeable and supportive.
- I have been very fortunate to have had three supervisors out of four who have been very keen to attend to my learning needs as well as my personal and professional development on training. When this is lacking, however, training can be a lot more difficult. My MPR visitor has been helpful supporting me with this.
- Very happy with my placement, lots of things to get to know and understand initially, felt overwhelming at the beginning, but you do get into the swings of things eventually.

## Transport needs

**Does the course require you to have access to a car?**

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

**Is public transport adequate in the region?**

Answer	Response
Yes	100%
No	0%
Don't know	0%

## Living as a trainee

**Where the main areas that trainees tend to live?**

Responses indicated that trainees live mostly in London.

### Have you had to stay away from home due to placements? For example, in a hotel, B&B, etc.

Answer	Response
Yes	0%
No	100%
Don't know	0%

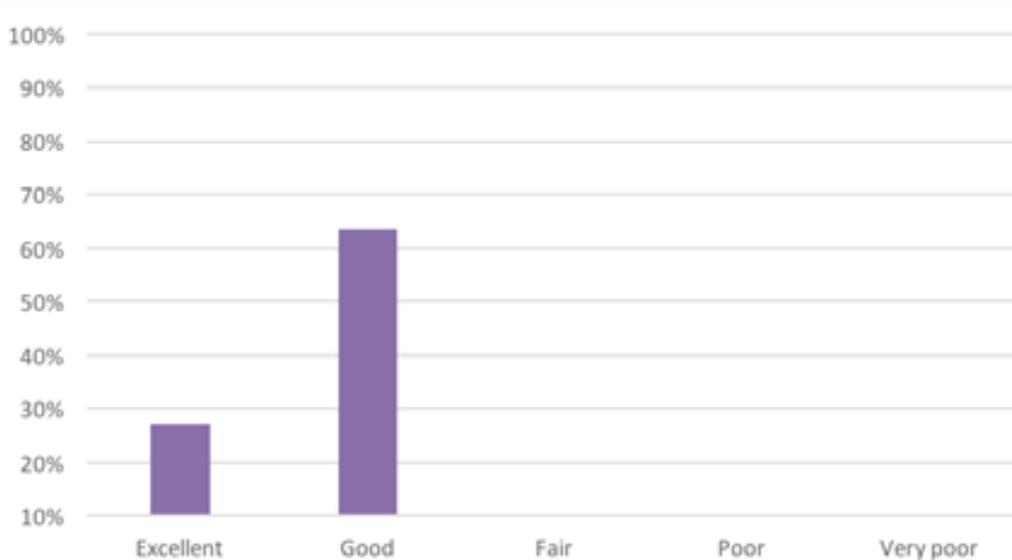
### How do you find the work life balance on your course?

Work life balance	Percent
Excellent	0%
Good	55%
Fair	45%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

#### Do you have any comments about your work life balance?

- Generally it's pretty good, however you may have to give up some evenings and weekends around deadlines.
- I have had to work at weekends to get the research thesis completed on time.
- Living south of the river, I have had varying journey times into placement, which unfortunately eats into my evenings sometimes. I choose to spend some weekend time working as otherwise there is not a lot of time to do all the course work I need to get done. This has been something I have tried to work on during training, and deserves to be prioritised.
- My commute has been long, so that has been a challenge. On placement days the work life balance tended to suffer because of that, but I have not used my weekends to do course work apart from a one or two times when writing the case report/revising for the exams, so I would say the work-life balance in first year is good.
- It's going to be difficult on any course. I don't think it is any worse at UCL.
- At times the workload has felt like a lot, but not for long periods. It is important to develop your boundaries as to how much time you are willing to give up for work, as with placement and course related work you could spend your entire life working.

## How do you rate your financial quality of life?



### Do you have any comments about your financial quality of life?

- You get the high cost area pay, which is very helpful as everything is incredibly expensive in London.
- Definitely paid enough for London. Could have done with more clarity on the 'widening access' scheme situation as that was very confusing for everyone.
- This has been my best paid role within any service so far. Even though London is expensive, I am able to live and indulge a little. Student discounts help though!
- It is expensive living in London, and being able to afford renting in an area which is commutable to the variety of placements.
- I think it's a very lucky position to be in to be paid for the training and the salary is decent.

### What would you say is your favourite aspect of your course?

- The course is big (52 in total) but it's a great opportunity to meet other trainees and find good friends.
- I have really enjoyed most aspects of the course: the placement, the teaching, the opportunity for continual learning and personal growth, the theoretical and practical skills I have developed, the social aspect too (we are a large group, approximately 50 per year).
- Seeing and treating a range of clients.
- Quality of teaching, location, lots of great people.
- The variety. I feel like training at UCL has really broadened out my thinking and approach to working as a Clinical Psychologist. Having access to different approaches really strengthens my reasoning for applying certain ideas with certain people at different times. We're encouraged to be autonomous in our thinking, but to always have a reason for what we do, which I think is really empowering for working as independent clinicians.
- The teaching has been absolutely excellent and well-balanced in terms of what is covered, different models/perspectives etc. Also, the amazing, supportive staff who have been really good, feels like they are invested in our learning and success. I also like that the course, in contrast to what one may expect, does not place such any emphasis on academic grades/results (exams are pass/fail only), and more on the actual learning, which takes the pressure off massively.

- Being back in an educational environment and learning from some excellent lecturers.
- Do you have any other thoughts about the course you wish to share with potential applicants, for example suggestions or improvements?
- I think this is a fantastic course that genuinely tries to nurture your development. There is a strong sense that the course is behind you and wants to get the best out of you.
- Be prepared to fill in lots of feedback forms and a diverse range of admin. A move to consolidate and simplify the hundreds (yes, \*hundreds\*) of pieces of paper would save everyone a lot of (slightly frustrating) work.
- If you live in South London, check your likely travel times before applying, as all placements are north of the river, and can be quite far out. However, the course will try to minimise your personal travel time, and takes things like childcare needs into account.
- The course is very big and with that comes quite a 'lecture' teaching vibe. If you're looking for more intimate discussion based teaching you will get less of that at UCL than you might on a smaller course.
- It's hard work, but so worth it.
- Something to be aware of is the size of the cohort, we are a large group, this can make it a bit more difficult to participate in discussions etc. On the other hand this is also positive because of the large amount of varied experience in the room and lots of perspectives.

**Do candidates sit any tests prior to interview?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**What is involved in the interview and selection day (e.g., tests, interviews, exams)?**

- Interviews

**For the current year please indicate below how the course is organised during term time.**

Teaching	15 hours
Placement	22.5 hours
Personal Study	Within teaching slots
Research	Within teaching slots

**What methods are used to assess trainee's learning on the course? (Please tick all that apply)**

Qualification	Respondents
Exams	100.0%
Practical Reports	100.0%
Essays	0.0%
Small Scale research projects	100.0%
Role Play	0.0%
Viva	100.0%
Thesis	100.0%
Presentations	100.0%
Other	0.0%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course have a requirement for trainees to undertake CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for the personal therapy?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%

**Does your course provide funds for CPD?**

Answer	Respondents
Yes	0%
No	100%



