Oxford School of Hypnotherapy

Advanced Diploma in Hypnotherapy

Course Prospectus

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The Advanced Diploma in Hypnotherapy offered by the Oxford School of Hypnosis has been Assessed and Validated at Advanced Practitioner Level by the General Hypnotherapy Standards Council (UK). Graduates from this course (already qualified at Practitioner status via a course either validated by the GHSC at Practitioner Level or its equivalent) are eligible for professional registration with the General Hypnotherapy Register (the GHSC’s Registering Agency) at Advanced Practitioner status.

**Introduction:**

The aim of the Advanced Diploma in Hypnotherapy is to:

* Provide a clear advancement on initial training
* Encourage academic, critical and reflective thinking on clinical practice, learning and ethics
* Provide new knowledge, skills and techniques
* Encourage a considered, respectful, yet critical approach to hypnotherapy research
* Develop the practitioner’s extra-clinical abilities e.g. setting up a peer group and getting the best from supervision
* Set engaging and challenging homework that has practical utility in encouraging use of the skills learnt as well as testing a student’s understanding

**The Modules - summary**

**1. Introduction**

**Hypnosis and Neuroscience**

**Models of hypnosis**

**2. Factors that facilitate or impede change**

**Advanced questioning**

**Handling awkward situations and questions**

**3. Advanced approaches: advanced techniques (3 out of 5)**

**4. Advanced approaches: advanced applications (3 out of 5)**

**5. Academic skills and critical thinking**

**Social science research methods**

**Advanced ethical considerations and debates in clinical practice**

**6. Growing as a hypnotherapist**

**Additional content**

**The Modules - details**

**Hypnosis and Neuroscience**

Hypnosis is increasingly being utilised as a method for examining and influencing subjects' mental states, both cognitive and affective, to provide information about the neural substrates of experience, thought, and action. This section looks at the recently emerging research evidence of the correlation between hypnosis and neuroscience.

**Models of hypnosis**

A. **State Model: Special State or Special Process Models:**

* Theory of Dissociated Control
* Neo-dissociation theory

B. **Social & Cognitive Models** (non-state theories)

C. **Altered consciousness model**

D. **Ericksonian/utilisation model**

E. **Psychoanalytic model**

The models are discussed with examples and the module includes a comprehensive reference section.

**Factors that facilitate or impede change:**

This is a substantial section, with discussion of the following factors. Others are likely to be included as the course material is developed. In addition, students will be invited to draw upon their clinical experience and add to the list.

* Expectations, including unrealistic expectations
* Power of suggestion
* Cognitive component - relaxation, imagery, trance logic
* Rapport
* Motivation
* The therapeutic relationship
* Procrastination
* Primary, secondary and tertiary gain
* Malingering – the ‘benefits’ of illness
* Attitude to change
* Changing beliefs, strategy, values and criteria
* Extratherapeutic factors including:
* Client history
* Client psychology
* Client identity
* Social and environmental factors

**Advanced questioning**

The aim of the questions should be to elicit information that will play a role in the resolution of the client’s issue through the hypnotherapeutic intervention. Questions are asked at various stages of the therapeutic relationship along the following lines:

**A.** Essential questions to ask at the initial/intake session:

* Questions about the client – age, socio-economic background, educational level, family situation, occupation
* Questions designed to assess the needs of the client, and establish suitability for hypnotherapy
* Questions to ascertain that consequent action is agreed upon with client
* Questions relating to contraindications, e.g. medication, history of mental illness in client and his/her family, *without asking loaded questions*
* Questions relating to presenting problem, planned framework of therapy and further sessions

**B.** Questions based on the primary or core objectives of hypnotherapy:

* Removing current negative labels (de-labelling) through suggestion and imagery
* Discovering cause
* Release
* Subconscious re-learning
* Ego-strengthening

**C.** Questions based on:

* Establishing client’s objective
* Determining action/s necessary to attain that objective
* Developing detailed steps necessary for the action/s required

**D.**  Questions based on the psychodynamics of the symptom in order to uncover the subconscious cause/s of a problem

**E.** Questions to identify the personal benefit/s of change to the client

**F.** Tag questionsadded to the end of a statement, e.g. “don’t you think?”, “aren’t you?”, “didn’t I?” in order to communicate directly with the subconscious

**G.** Questions based on the GROW model (addressed in detail in the section Hypno-coaching in Advanced Approaches below)

**H.** Addressing problems with double-barrelled questions, double-negatives, loaded and leading questions

**Handling awkward situations**

The therapist may be faced with a number of awkward situations during his/her career, and must be prepared to handle them in a professional manner. Some of these are:

* **Dependency on therapy/therapist:** self-care procedure is a requirement stated within the National Occupational Standards for Hypnotherapy. The therapist must make it clear at the outset of the therapeutic relationship that the ultimate responsibility for the resolution of the issue lies with the client and that the therapist is a guide/facilitator. To this end, the client must be taught self-hypnosis.
* **Handling difficult questions:** Clients may ask awkward questions e.g. “Do you think I’m ugly?”, “I think I might have been raped as a child. Can we find out if this is true, under hypnosis?”

If the therapist is asked difficult or awkward questions, the client should be asked what the purpose was in asking such a question. The therapist must be careful not to ask closed questions as they may be leading, and focus instead, on open-ended questions with a view to eliciting information that will help the client.

The therapist must also be able to deal effectively with a number of other difficult and awkward situations including the following scenarios when the client:

* tries to dominate the therapy session by talking too much
* appears reluctant to leave when the session is over
* thinks of something just when the session closes
* claims therapy is not working and tries to blame the therapist
* is excessively demanding and/or intolerant
* tries to undermine the therapist by comparing them to someone else who has helped someone known to the client
* tries to challenge the therapist’s knowledge and/or experience (or lack thereof)
* tries to incorporate other therapeutic techniques, religious beliefs etc into the therapy sessions

Some of these difficult situations arise in the early stages of the therapist’s career and are handled better with experience. At all times, the therapist must remain calm and professional and not take it as a personal attack. Consulting with peers, a support group or a mentor can also provide valuable insight into ways of dealing with such situations.

**Advanced approaches**

**A.** Understanding the importance of hypnotherapy as a client-centred therapy and not a therapist-directed intervention and the danger of self-aggrandisement.

**B.** Working without scripts (and generic scripts in particular) – its many advantages

**C. Advanced techniques/models: students required to select 3 out of 5**

* Advanced abreactive techniques
* Parts Therapy/Intervention
* Timeline therapy
* Hypno-coaching (combination of coaching and hypnosis)
* Past life regression

**D. Advanced applications: students required to select 3 out of 5**

* Hypnotherapy for children (for anxiety, nocturnal enuresis, skin conditions, asthma)
* Sports hypnosis
* Hypnotherapy for psychosexual disorders
* Workplace hypnosis
* Hypnotherapy for Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

**Academic skills and critical thinking**

In this section, the school’s approach would be to provide information and definitions of certain terms and invite the student to express their informed opinion, having conducted the relevant research, on others.

* Meaning of academic abbreviations and symbols, including the ones listed: student provided with definitions
* Being a sophisticated listener and reader – how to critique claims made in hypnotherapy circles, especially on training and by peers: combination of student’s views and information provided by the school
* Logical and academic argumentation – students provided with information on concepts such as descriptive and prescriptive language, presuppositions, tautology, syllogism etc. In addition, students are required to provide logical and academic argumentation on some of the concepts/ideas in the form of homework requirement
* Academic referencing: student provided training in **Harvard, Footnote** and **APA** (American Psychological Association) style, with explanation and examples. Students will be asked to use one of the three styles of referencing in their homework assignments
* Levels of analysis and levels of abstraction: The approach would be to provide the student with information and to ask them to express their informed opinion relating to the various levels hypnotherapists work at, including the individual, the family, behaviour, language, emotion, neurology, biology, energy, spirit, gender, religion, ethnicity etc
* Challenging received wisdom: The approach in this section would be to express the school’s opinion on some ideas that are taken for granted (e.g. ‘you will always be in control’, ‘rapport is essential for effective therapy’); and to invite the student’s views on others. The aim is to encourage the student to develop their critical thinking

**Social science research methods**

**Core concepts of hypnosis research – types of research (intrinsic and instrumental) on topics including:**

* Fundamental design issues
* Hypnotisability – measuring and understanding individual differences
* Nature of hypnosis
* Differences in suggestions
* Experiential responses

**Quantitative and qualitative methods:** these will be discussed in general and with relevance to hypnosis where applicable.

* Controlled experiments and randomised controlled trials;
* Observational methods
* asking questions: interviews, case studies, surveys, questionnaires & psychometric tests
* Comparison studies
* Systematic review and meta analysis
* Grounded theory (qualitative)
* Discourse analysis (qualitative)
* Feminist research

**General research themes:**

Commonsense versus scientific enquiry; testing theories: hypothetico-deductive method; variables; falsifiability; objectivity; bias; sampling; validity; reliability; replication; placebo and nocebo; efficacy, effectiveness and efficiency; Empirically Supported Treatments (EST)

* **A critical analysis of scientific method:** this will be addressed to each of the sections listed and in general. In addition, the student will be asked to express their informed opinion in their homework assignment. It will also be emphasised that practitioners should work within the guidelines set out within the National Occupational Standards of Hypnotherapy.
* **Statistics:** this section will include an explanation of the following:

1. Measurement: nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio level data

2. Descriptive statistics: mean, median, mode, range, bar chart, histogram,

Pie, distribution curves

3. Inferential statistics: probability, levels of significance, error, very brief

Mention of tests for significance, types of correlation

* **The layout of research reports:** detailed information provided by school
* **Methods of locating research articles** (with some examples)
* **Critical evaluation of biases likely to occur during dissemination,** e.g. the review process, journal interests, market dynamics. In addition to information provided by the school, the student will be encouraged to do some research and present their findings
* **Research ethics**, including informed consent, and debriefing; confidentiality, right to withdraw; usefulness to the client; humane treatment, political and moral responsibilities; power; types of ethics (including the ones listed in the guidelines); example of ethical controversy.

**Advanced ethical considerations and debates in clinical practice**

The following topics will be considered in detail, with a view to enabling the student to apply their knowledge in practice

* Power dynamics in the therapeutic relationship: address the issues listed in the Guidelines. Encourage students to express their opinion
* Effectively screening prospective clients upon initial contact
* Our duties regarding breaking confidentiality
* Concept of a ‘working model’ of hypnosis
* Ethical matters including use of the word “hypnosis”
* Presence of a chaperone
* Working with presenting issues for which the practitioner has inadequate training
* Working with, and respecting other health professionals.

**Growing as a hypnotherapist**

* Being a reflective practitioner – asking reflective questions
* Getting the best from supervision
* How to set up and run a peer group
* The importance of continuing professional development in order to be able to work with some presenting issues not covered on initial training
* Self-care for the practitioner – using self-hypnosis on oneself
* Joining professional organisations
* Learning to use inductions that will benefit the client rather than use the same inductions repeatedly, out of habit.

**Additional content**

* Clean language in hypnosis
* Unusual inductions, e.g. induction for ‘waking/alert hypnosis’; brief and rapid inductions
* Working with demotivated clients: discover the cause of the lack/absence of motivation and address that before continuing with presenting issue. For some clients, motivation (or lack thereof) may itself be the initial issue to work on
* Advanced marketing strategies: the importance of the pre-talk and actively maintaining the client’s interest and motivation; the importance of a genuine desire to help the client at the initial call/interview; networking; promoting one’s practice professionally and ethically; importance of social media marketing
* Mindfulness for the therapist: practising the principle of mindfulness on a daily basis in order to remain ‘fully present’ at each consultation
* An extensive glossary at the end of the final module.

**Additional information**

**Style of teaching and manual presentation**

* The course will be provided in an **online learning format**, composed of **six modules**
* Statements presented as fact will be supported by evidence from research, theory, quotes etc, and appropriately referenced. At the end of each module there will be a Reference section, pertaining to that module. Personal opinion and views will be identified as such
* Diversity in prospective students’ training background will be respected at all times and students will be invited to provided feedback in a professional manner

**Homework requirements**

At the end of each module there will be an assignment composed of a minimum of 5 questions requiring written answers.

The homework assignments will be designed in a manner that will meet the learning outcomes listed below.

**The structure**

**1. Questions:** an average of 5 questions at the end of each assignment. Of the 30 questions, a minimum of 15 questions will require ‘short answers’ of 1-3 paragraphs. Other questions will consist of multiple choice and those requiring a short essay-type answer of 750-1000 words.

**2. Vignettes:** students will be presented with a three complex and challenging fictional client cases. A paragraph on each client will provide the client’s presenting issue and other relevant details. These vignettes will be challenging, requiring the student to draw upon the study material and other research material, which they will be required to reference in one of the three styles

**3. Reflective journal of practice:** students required to reflect briefly on what happened as they implemented advanced knowledge and techniques learned on the course. The requirement will be to document a minimum of a single session with each of the three different clients, using a different technique with each.

**4. Reflection on course learning:** students required to document their views on how their learning has developed over the duration of the course.

**5. Personal development:** students asked to create a plan of action for an area of their practice they wish to improve.

**Learning outcomes:**

Students will be provided with the Learning Outcomes listed in the Guidelines provided by the GHSC. They will be required to state the learning outcome/s each question or task on the homework assignments substantiates.

As suggested in the Guidelines, students will be provided with a worked example

**Layout:** The layout will be in the style provided in the Guidelines, as per the worked example

**Course delivery:**

* The course will be delivered in an online learning format, consisting of 6 modules
* The techniques taught on the course do not require direct supervision as there are clear instructions for each.
* A single module will be sent at a time, by email
* Time allowed for completion of course: **eighteen months**

**Eligibility:**

The eligibility criteria for this course is a qualification in hypnotherapy or NLP to Practitioner level. Those registered with the GHR at Practitioner level will be eligible to upgrade their registration to Advanced Practitioner status after completing the course.

**Support structure**

Ongoing one-to-one email support will be available to each student for the entire duration of the course and for a period of three months after completion**.**

**Reading List:** The course is comprehensive and there is no mandatory reading list. Students may wish to read some of the books listed in the reference section of the modules and/or undertake online research.

**Start Date:** students can commence studies at any time as the course is offered online

**Course Fee: £850**

**Payment options**

**1. Full payment upon enrolment: £850**

**2. Two instalments of £425, the first paid upon enrolment and the second before module four**

**3. Five monthly instalments of £170 payable by standing order**