SCPTI Admissions Policy

Oct 4, 2026

Policy statement

The Scarborough Counselling and Psychotherapy Training Institute (SCPTI) wants its courses to be open to as diverse a cross-section of the community as possible. Our entry requirements are designed with that in mind. Where there is doubt about whether an applicant would benefit from a course, we offer other ways for them to show they are ready, including evidence of learning that has not been formally certified.

SCPTI is accredited by the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). This policy applies to all of our professional diplomas.

	Relational Psychotherapeutic Counselling Diploma	Diploma in Relational Integrative Psychotherapy	Diploma in Relational Gestalt Psychotherapy
Leads to UKCP registration as	Psychotherapeutic Counsellor (through PCIPC)	Psychotherapist (through HIPC)	Psychotherapist (through HIPC)
Length	At least 3 years, part-time	At least 4 years, part-time	At least 4 years, part-time
Time limit to complete	5 years from first enrolment	6 years from first registration	6 years from first registration
Teaching	Monthly three-day workshops in Scarborough	26 training days a year in Scarborough	26 training days a year in Scarborough
Clinical hours for UKCP registration	450 (250 for the Diploma)	450	450

Entry requirements

Academic and professional background

Relational Psychotherapeutic Counselling Diploma	Diploma in Relational Integrative Psychotherapy	Diploma in Relational Gestalt Psychotherapy
Evidence that you can produce written work at postgraduate diploma level	A degree, a professional qualification of equivalent standing, or a postgraduate diploma	A degree, a professional qualification of equivalent standing, or a postgraduate diploma

Relational Psychotherapeutic Counselling Diploma	Diploma in Relational Integrative Psychotherapy	Diploma in Relational Gestalt Psychotherapy
Relevant experience of counselling	Relevant experience of counselling or psychotherapy	Relevant experience of counselling or psychotherapy

For all three diplomas, we look for applicants who show:

- relevant experience of working with people in a responsible role;
- personal insight and an understanding of the nature of the therapeutic process;
- the personal stability to sustain a therapeutic relationship;
- a lively and enquiring mind, and a capacity for critical reflection and self-directed learning;
- the ability to listen and respond with compassion and respect;
- awareness of prejudice, and openness to difference in race, gender, age, sexuality, class, disability, ethnicity, culture, and spiritual or religious belief;
- a capacity for self-reflection and a commitment to their own development;
- the emotional resources to meet the demands of training and of therapeutic work;
- willingness to abide by the SCPTI Code of Ethics.

If you do not have formal qualifications

If you have no formal qualifications from further or higher education, you can still show you are ready for the Relational Psychotherapeutic Counselling Diploma. If you have relevant prior learning, you may be considered for the APEL route on the Relational Psychotherapy Diplomas. Up to 50% of the course can be credited, so you complete fewer years of training (see below). Please provide:

- your CV;
- a portfolio covering your formal and informal education, any counselling or helping experience, relevant independent study (such as reading in psychotherapy), other relevant experience including your own therapy, and references from someone who has seen you work with people in a responsible role;
- an essay or written project on a therapy-related topic. This is 2,000 words for the psychotherapy diplomas and is assessed against our criteria for written work.

If your portfolio and essay are satisfactory, you would normally be admitted to the first year.

How to apply

1. **Application form.** Complete the SCPTI application form with details of your education, professional training, work experience and voluntary activity. It includes a written personal statement and a declaration of any previous criminal convictions.
2. **References.** Provide two references, including one from someone who has seen you work with people in a responsible role.
3. **Interview.** Attend an interview of at least 60 minutes with senior members of the course team. You may be asked to attend a second interview.
4. **Written work, if needed.** Applicants without formal qualifications also submit a portfolio and an essay, as described above or may be asked for written work if wishing to apply for the APEL route.

5. **Decision.** We tell you the outcome in writing, and the Head of Course can also discuss it with you.

If your application is not successful, the Head of Course will advise you on study or experience that could help a future application. Completing that study or experience does not guarantee a place on a later application. We may also recommend you apply in a future year if we suggest that a period of attending personal therapy is needed.

Enrolment. Enrolment is part-time and normally runs one year at a time. When you enrol, you confirm in writing that you will abide by the SCPTI Code of Ethics.

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

If you have relevant prior training or experience, you may apply for APEL. Up to 50% of a course may be credited through prior learning.

- **Psychotherapeutic counselling:** APEL may be agreed if you can show that your prior learning is relevant to the course's modality and curriculum.
- **Psychotherapy (Integrative and Gestalt):** if you can show one or two years of equivalent training, normally completed at an organisation that meets UKCP requirements, you may enter the second or third year. Applicants with substantial mental health experience may also claim APEL against the mental health familiarisation requirement.

APEL is assessed at interview and under SCPTI's APL/APEL Policy.

What training involves

Please consider these commitments before applying. They are in addition to course fees.

- **Personal therapy** throughout training: 40 sessions a year, with a therapist of a compatible modality.
- **Clinical supervision** once you begin seeing clients: at least 1 hour for every 6 client hours. You may attend or formulate a supervision group of no more than 4 people.
- **Client work:** a placement, then supervised clinical practice, building to 450 client hours for UKCP registration.
- **Full attendance:** any workshop you miss must be made up of the equivalent of missed hours, in CPD.
- **Psychotherapy diplomas only:** a mental health familiarisation workshop and placement.

Appeals

You can appeal against a decision not to offer you a place, or against an APEL decision. The same procedure applies to all three diplomas. We encourage you to talk to the Head of Course first, as many concerns can be resolved through feedback.

How to appeal. Write to the Administrator within 15 working days of the decision, setting out your grounds. The Administrator logs every appeal.

Grounds for appeal. You may appeal on one or more of these grounds:

- the admissions or APL/APEL procedure was not followed;
- the evidence you provided was not properly considered;
- there was bias, discrimination or a conflict of interest in the decision.

Disagreement with the academic or professional judgement of the interviewers is not in itself a ground for appeal.

Who decides. An Executive Director who was not involved in the original decision considers your appeal. If every Executive Director was involved, the External Moderator or their nominee considers it instead. They review your application, the interview notes and any APEL claim, and may speak to you and to the interviewers.

Outcome. You receive a written decision within 20 working days of your appeal. The decision may be to uphold the original decision, to offer a further interview with different interviewers, or to offer a place or credit. This decision is final within SCPTI.

Complaints. If you are unhappy with how you were treated during the application process, you can also use the SCPTI Complaints Procedure, which covers admissions.

Records. Each appeal, its evidence and the outcome are kept on file. Heads of Course report admissions and APEL appeals to the Quality Assurance and Quality Control Committee in their annual report.

Equality and access

SCPTI values diversity and works to ensure no applicant is treated less favourably on grounds that cannot be justified. If you have a disability or a specific learning difference, such as dyslexia, please tell us so we can discuss reasonable adjustments to the application process and to assessment. Course fees can be paid in monthly instalments.

Contact

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