



Joining BACP: **working together to make a difference**



bacp

British Association for
Counselling & Psychotherapy

Together we can make a difference

If you're reading this leaflet you're clearly exploring whether, as an organisation, we share the same values and goals for yourself, the counselling professions, and ultimately your clients. Well, we do!

At BACP we believe in high standards of training, robust ethics, and quality continuing professional development.

We understand that practising as a counsellor or psychotherapist is not always easy. Whilst our members tell us that their role is rewarding, it can also involve juggling a portfolio of jobs that require careful management, with paid employment being supplemented with voluntary positions.

Should you be at the start of your career you may even find that you are undertaking work outside of the psychological therapies until you've built further on your experience, knowledge and skills. Don't worry; we'll be here to guide you throughout your journey.

As well as external concerns there are also the day to day practicalities around areas such as contracting, ethics, maintaining supervision and finding quality continuing professional development.

**We believe in
high standards
of training, robust
ethics, and
quality CPD**





We provide an
extensive range
of **member
benefits**

BACP will become your first port of call to guide you through the complexities of being a practitioner. In our commitment to supporting your professional journey, we provide members with a range of extensive benefits by:

- Setting standards
- Representing your interests
- Providing support
- Expanding your knowledge and skills
- Reducing isolation.

Please take some time to read through this leaflet and discover just how BACP membership can be advantageous to you during your counselling and psychotherapy practice.

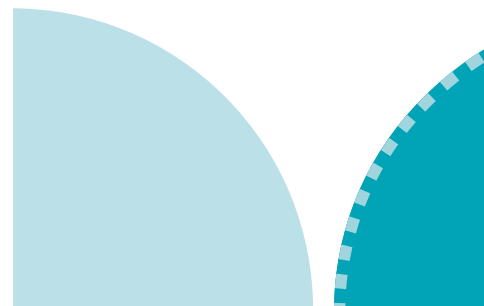


Supporting your professional journey

Our membership grades give you an enhanced pathway which reflects the journey you take as a practitioner. Joining us as an Individual Member you progress to a Registered Member (MBACP) within 24 months. From here, with time and experience you can apply for Registered Member MBACP (Accred) status.

Individual Member

Open to practitioners who have completed and graduated from a minimum of a one year full time or two year part time counselling/ psychotherapy course that contained an integral placement of a minimum of 100 client hours.



Accreditation demonstrates your capacity for independent, competent, ethical practice, signifying that your practice is not just of the minimum standards but that it has been assessed by BACP as exceeding them.

Registered Member MBACP*

Within 24 months you will progress by either having graduated from a BACP Accredited course or by taking and successfully passing the BACP Certificate of Proficiency.

* Further information on the current routes to registration, and the Certificate of Proficiency, can be found on the BACP Register website: www.bacpregister.org.uk

Accredited Member - Registered Member MBACP (Accred)+

When you are confident and ready to demonstrate your own practice methods you can work towards meeting the criteria for a Registered Accredited member. Accreditation symbolises your maturity and integrity, and gives assurance of the quality in your practice.

+ The accreditation criteria can be found on the BACP website: www.bacp.co.uk/accreditation

Setting standards

As a qualified practitioner, you'll understand the importance of standards within the profession. Through areas such as our *Ethical Framework* and the *BACP Register* we demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding clients and making sure that they have access to competent, ethical practitioners.

Many within the profession see our *Ethical Framework* as essential to attaining this goal. It's an industry benchmark for robust ethical guidance and has become an indispensable resource to counsellors, psychotherapists, employers, and clients worldwide. Clients and employers can choose a BACP member knowing that you are accountable for your practice.

You'll want clients to be confident in choosing a practitioner that has met minimum standards, which is why we ask all our practising members to either be working towards or be a Registered Member.

Clients deserve the best therefore BACP promotes our Registered Members as the minimum recommended level of membership that they should be looking for when seeking a practitioner.

Membership of BACP will give credibility to your practice by demonstrating your commitment to ethics and high standards.

The BACP Register **demonstrates our commitment** to safeguarding clients





The **BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy** is vital for the protection of the public, the reputation of the profession and in upholding the standards of good practice within the profession; providing a protective yet flexible core frame of reference for BACP members.

As a BACP member you'll be agreeing to abide by the *BACP Ethical Framework* which gives you guidance in your practice. From 1 July 2016 all our members will need to work to the *BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions*. This is our new *Ethical Framework* which has been revised to ensure that it remains relevant and effective for the profession.

The **BACP Register for Counsellors and Psychotherapists** is the minimum standard for all our practising members. We promote the Register to employers and client groups as the entry level to practice.

Being a BACP Registered Member validates your commitment to high standards and gives the public confidence that the practitioner they choose is trained and qualified, and maintains their standards of practice through continuing professional development.

Once listed on the Register you will have the use of designatory letters and a unique logo to clearly demonstrate your status to clients, colleagues and employers.

Accreditation is the hallmark of the experienced practitioner, enabling clients, employers and colleagues to distinguish between our members who have met the minimum standards and those who have been assessed by BACP as demonstrating the capacity for independent, competent, ethical practice.

So that we can advance the standards of practice within the profession we continue to build on our **Competency Frameworks** and evidence based **Curriculums** for specific sectors.

Currently, these identify the competencies required for the effective delivery of humanistic counselling for young people, or offer training providers a framework for delivering training for counselling supervision, consistent with the QAA National Framework for Qualifications.

Accreditation is the hallmark of the experienced practitioner





Counselling
changes
lives



Representing your interests

As an individual you may feel that you alone don't have the power to make headway with Government departments or opinion formers, to promote the advantages of your chosen profession.

BACP does, therefore we work to support the interests of the profession, members and service users through raising awareness and understanding of psychological therapies to politicians, civil servants and significant connections; seeking to influence decision making and legislation across all four Parliaments and Assemblies. Ultimately, we look to improve access to counselling, and educate about the importance of counselling and psychotherapy for the nation's emotional wellbeing.

Ensuring your clients and the general public are aware of the benefits of counselling and psychotherapy is also part of our remit.

We aim to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health by changing perceptions and providing support mechanisms.

We aim to reduce stigma **by changing perceptions** surrounding mental health



BACP provides expert advice to parliamentarians through meetings, briefings, responses on legislation and communications with parliamentary groups. To enhance our influence and bring about national policy change, in collaboration with members, we respond to a variety of **consultations** from Government bodies and other organisations.

We've also strengthened our ongoing relationships with a number of **stakeholder coalitions** such as the National Suicide Prevention Alliance and other Third Sector voluntary agencies.

Our Media team **promotes the work that you do** and **increases public awareness** of the benefits of therapy by generating positive media coverage across a range of media outlets. Our valued network of Registered Member spokespeople and specialist contributors continues to support us in raising BACP's profile to a wide audience. The advice we have offered our members who are involved in the media has led to some high-profile and varied collaborations.

Itsgoodtotalk.org.uk, is BACP's public facing website which provides information for members of the public when seeking guidance around the therapeutic process.

There are sections aimed at answering common questions such as 'what is therapy?' and 'how to find the right therapist?', video clips of why they might consider therapy, as well as key fact sheets describing what happens in the first session and how they can get the best out of their therapist.

@BACP our BACP Twitter account has a following of over 15,000 people. Here we bring daily news about counselling and psychotherapy and mental health to a range of followers. This ensures we can bring relevant feeds instantly to a varied audience.

We are one of a number of professional bodies for the psychological therapies, each with unique qualities, and different identities, as well as common themes and goals.

We've made a formal commitment to work collaboratively, with the British Psychoanalytic Council and the UK Council for Psychotherapy, to further the vital role our profession plays in the mental health of the nation.

Moving forward together we can **work collaboratively** to address: accessibility, safeguarding the public, promoting the highest standards of training, and engaging Government and Health Commissioners.

Working collaboratively to further the vital role of our profession



Providing support

We're aware of the day to day challenges being a practitioner brings; often our members face these challenges alone. We therefore want you to think of us when you need support and guidance.

Whether you are recently qualified or have been practising for a number of years we'll provide you with access to expertise and resources to not only guide you on a daily basis but to help you look to the future.

Through our *Ethics helpdesk* we can listen to the issues you're facing and support you in finding the right information and guidance to enable you to find a suitable resolution; talking to BACP can reduce the worry your problem may be causing.

As a practitioner you'll be on a professional journey which BACP is fully supportive of. Our membership grades recognise and acknowledge your experience, with the use of designatory letters and unique logos, which in turn demonstrates to employers and clients your competency and professionalism.

On a work front, as you progress and aim for more responsibility, or even a change of direction, our *JobsOnline* recruitment facility can help you find that elusive goal. Should you diverge in to private practice then we can support you with the promotion of your practice to ensure that your details are easily accessible to anyone searching the internet; a vital medium in the modern world.

We want **you**
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guidance





The **BACP Ethics helpdesk** provides an objective sounding board should you have concerns around ethical practice and the interpretation of the **Ethical Framework**. Questions could range from difficulties about confidentiality or sharing of information, to practical issues about appropriate conditions in which to counsel.

The Ethics Officers cannot offer advice; however they can offer some useful perspectives or guidance on the issue you present, for discussion with your supervisor prior to taking any course of action. They can also signpost you to other helpful and appropriate organisations, publications or good practice guidance.

JobsOnline is our online recruitment facility to assist you in searching for your next job. The number of opportunities for paid employment in the counselling and psychotherapy field by no means meets the demand from those who are professionally qualified; with many of these positions part time.

JobsOnline provides access to the latest counselling and psychotherapy vacancies for anyone in search of employment within the field. Available through the members' section of our website, you can register for details of new local jobs to be sent to you directly, at no extra cost, as soon as they are advertised.

Increasingly, potential clients are searching for a practitioner through the internet, with our **Find a Therapist Directory** receiving tens of thousands of hits each month. Imagine the impact this could have on your client base if you were to advertise your private practice on our Find a Therapist Directory.

New interactive **Accreditation Resources** are available to help you to understand the requirements and assist you through our accreditation process. These resources are free to access, and return to, once you're ready to work towards accreditation, helping you to reach that ultimate goal.

JobsOnline
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A photograph of three people in a meeting. On the left, a man with white hair in a purple checkered shirt is seen in profile, looking towards the center. In the center, a woman with long brown hair and bangs, wearing a white blouse and a watch, is looking at the man and smiling. On the right, a person with dark skin and curly hair is partially visible, gesturing with their hand. The background shows a simple room with white walls and black chairs.

Be part of a
**likeminded
community**
forming networks
and alliances



Expanding your knowledge and skills

As a committed practitioner you'll appreciate the responsibility to your clients and/or employers of keeping your knowledge and skills up to date.

We are also committed to sustaining and advancing good practice, making it a requirement for both registration and accreditation. This ensures that employers and clients can be confident of the quality of our members.

Knowing where to look for good CPD can be difficult and expensive. Often finding your own CPD comes with no guarantees that what you're paying for will be of any value or substance. Our online learning and Professional Development Days offer content that has been validated by BACP and assurances that it will meet the necessary standards for your growing CPD portfolio. They also give you convenience, by allowing you to choose between learning opportunities from the comfort of your own home or in a group environment.

Keeping up to date with current practice methods can be time consuming; however reading our professional journal *Therapy Today* will introduce you to cutting edge articles along with news items to ensure you can research the latest trends. We're also developing a new suite of resources and free documents to provide you with that all important guidance, and equip you with the knowledge and skills to work safely with your clients.

Knowing where to look for good CPD **can be difficult and expensive –** but we can help!



Written by expert practitioners, our developing range of **Good Practice in Action** resources help you engage with the new *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions*, and will educate and equip you in your practice. Included are a number of legal resources in respect of safeguarding, supervision, confidentiality, and counselling in schools. Also available are fact sheets and commonly asked questions about supervision, working online, and social media, with many more planned for the future.

To help you with good quality CPD opportunities at a reasonable cost BACP has developed its own range of **Professional Development Days**. With clearly defined outcomes our PDDs deliver valuable CPD to help you grow your practitioner skills in specified areas. The days are interactive, enabling delegates to gain maximum benefit, and are delivered by expert tutors, selected by BACP.

As well as informing your practice these PDDs can form part of your required portfolio of CPD for BACP registration and accreditation.

We are aware of a growing demand for **online learning** and have responded to this need with a series of online learning modules. Each module comprises a single theme and you are able to dip in and out of the learning, saving work as you go along. To complement our Professional Development Days we are developing a range of practice based e-learning modules.

Each module can add to your **CPD portfolio** and is accessible, for a small fee, through the BACP website, with members gaining access at a reduced fee.

BACP's professional journal **Therapy Today** will enable you to stay informed on current practice methods and issues within the profession. Articles cover a broad range of therapy related subjects, up to date thinking in the field, current research development, and topical and national news.

Therapy Today expands the information available to you on: other practice methods; policy and public affairs issues, consultations and papers that BACP are responding to; book reviews by peers on newly available titles; and much more.



Developing
new **good
practice
resources** to
educate and
equip members



Reducing isolation

Many of our members tell us that when they become qualified practitioners they often feel isolated and alone. When you become a member of BACP you will join part of a likeminded community, which will help to break down the barriers of isolation, both personally and professionally.

Knowing where to start to overcome these feelings can be a minefield but by embracing your BACP membership we can work together to create opportunities to resolve this dilemma. As your chosen professional body we're only a phone call or an email away from being able to support, listen, and guide you.

Our nationwide Making Connections events offer you the chance to air your views and frustrations around the psychological therapies field, even around BACP membership, and make sure that you are heard by key members of staff. At the same time the intimate nature of these events allows you to form networks and alliances with other BACP members in the same region, affording you peer support to reduce the seclusion.

There are numerous opportunities to create or join networks and communities to assist you in meeting other members within the same sector to share best practice. These networks and communities are often face to face however, if accessibility is an issue then several are online where you can email groups for advice, information or guidance.



Share best practice and support by joining networks and communities

Listening to our members is an important aspect of our work. We regularly undertake research, meet you at events and gain feedback from our seven sector Divisions.

It's vital to BACP to hear first-hand the concerns of our members and understand how they feel BACP should be working for them. You can influence the direction of BACP.

Network groups run by our seven sector specific Divisions, facilitated by members for members, meet across the UK. Growing and developing as they respond to the needs of the participants these are ideal opportunities for you to form a local community in your home area.

Our free **Making Connections** events offer you the opportunity to discuss directly with BACP the issues that you're facing or concerns that you may have about the profession. They also allow you to connect with other members and form your own networks and relationships for the future.

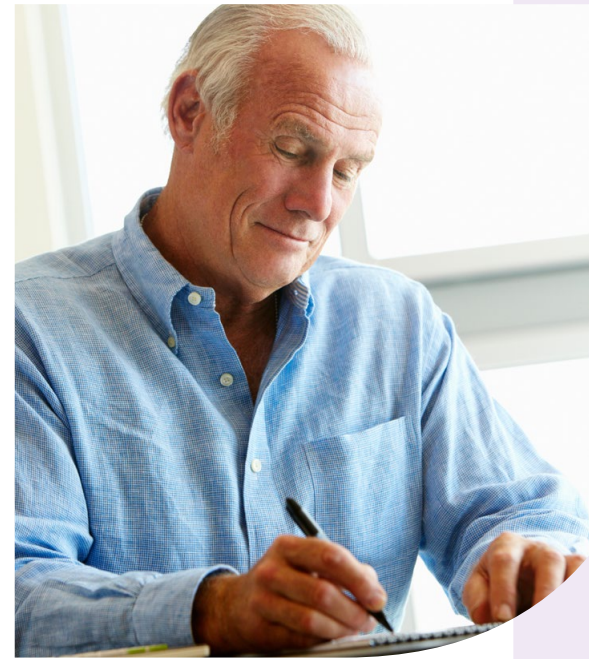
Many of our staff members and volunteers are **easily contactable**; offering guidance and support. Our BACP Lead Advisors and Divisional Executive Committee members are all experienced practitioners who can use their knowledge and access to BACP resources to respond to your query.

We regularly undertake **member research**, either as a whole or as sub groups with special interests, to ascertain their needs and get a greater understanding of the challenges they face.

The results often shape the actions of BACP and can result in reports being disseminated highlighting a particular sector's unique strengths or offering practical actions for both organisations and commissioners.

Discuss
professional
issues or concerns
directly with BACP

We regularly
undertake
**member
research**



So join BACP
**and together we can
make a difference**



Counselling changes lives

bacp

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