

# PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

M.Sc. in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy,  
Department of Psychiatry,  
School of Medicine,  
Trinity College Dublin,  
2025-2027

Strand I: Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy

Strand II: Adult Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy

Strand III: M.Sc. in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document contains questions that we are frequently asked about the MSc and the wider trainings in psychoanalytic psychotherapy offered in the Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine. We hope you find this useful in answering some of the questions you may have about this trainings, their structure and purpose. Please note that some details included here are subject to change with the development of the course and with changing requirements and regulations.

## COURSE ORIENTATION AND CONTENT

**Q.** What is psychoanalytic psychotherapy and how does it differ from other kinds of psychotherapy?

**A.** Psychoanalytic psychotherapy aims to help the person in therapy to develop a broader and fuller experience. For many people - children, adolescents, or adults - who feel stuck in their lives or who struggle with despair or with overwhelming anxiety, the work is often about helping to find a way of handling their lives. This work is centred on the relationship between therapist and client and on the experiences of relating, holding and containment. We are concerned with what is taking place in the 'here and now' and the fuller picture of the person's life as they have grown up, as they live their lives outside of sessions and as they move to a different experience in their lives. We are concerned with what is unconscious - what is split off from our immediate experience - and we find that by helping to make such processes more conscious, we reveal their place in the here and now of the person's life. In comparison to other kinds of psychotherapy, psychoanalytic psychotherapy tends to be long-term and to involve a thorough exploration of the person's experience and what lies underneath this.

The field of psychoanalytic psychotherapy is an ever-evolving, ever-expanding one. While it draws strongly on the ideas of certain theorists, including Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Wilfred Bion and Donald Winnicott, alongside contemporary developments in psychoanalysis such as Neuropsychoanalysis, it also draws on the collective experience of practitioners in the discipline and elsewhere. Psychoanalytic approaches emphasise that alongside our conscious lives, we also have unconscious motivation and that it is important to explore the relationship between these two levels of psychological life to address the situation of the person. Our experience emerges from our earliest experiences and the relationships of our childhood are key to our development of a secure sense of self and the world.

As a course, we welcome the tightening of regulations for psychotherapy training in recent years as it means that there are now better safeguards for people seeking out psychotherapy in Ireland. The regulations now in position mean that everyone entering the profession engages in at least four years of formal postgraduate study on a recognised programme to meet the academic and training requirements for entry into the discipline, with a minimum of at least seven years formal study. For further information, please consult the website of the Irish Council for Psychotherapy (<http://www.psychotherapy-ireland.com>) and of the European Association for Psychotherapy (<http://www.europsyche.org>). The Course also welcomes the imminent statutory regulation of the profession of psychotherapy, and protection of the title 'psychotherapist', and Course management are actively involved in the ongoing development and implementation of the CORU statutory regulation process.

## Q. What is the overall focus of the MSc in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy at Trinity College?

**A.** The MSc in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy brings together two previously separate programmes - one in child and adolescent psychotherapy, the other in adult psychoanalytic psychotherapy, which have run in Trinity College and elsewhere for approximately 35 years. As a course, we look to the development of students toward work in psychoanalytic psychotherapy. The MSc was designed to provide the first two years of a four-year professional training in psychoanalytic psychotherapy for two training institutes - IIPP and IICAPP. This course is designed for applicants who are interested in working using a psychoanalytic framework. However, we also recognise that not everyone who does the course will continue into years three and four of the clinical training programme following completion of the MSc and that some may enter the programme with the intention of not pursuing later clinical training and practice. The course balances theoretical with clinical input and encourages a high level of exploration and discussion of ideas and the process of clinical work.

The course is particularly oriented toward those psychoanalytic approaches that have defined this field and with a particular emphasis on the theoretical and clinical contributions of Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Wilfred Bion and Donald Winnicott. The course combines academic and clinical components, with a great deal of attention given to the development of a reflective position. We particularly emphasise self-awareness and the development of oneself along the process of training. The experiential components of the course - personal therapy and infant observation - run alongside the academic inputs and, taken together and in light of one another, give students the stimulus and the space to develop themselves, their understanding, and their ability to engage in clinical practice.

## Q. How is the course structured?

**A.** The course is made up of three strands:-

**Strand I:** Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (leads to accredited status with IFPP - initial entry through Irish Institute of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy IIPP)

**Strand II:** Adult Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (leads to accredited status with IFCAPP - initial entry through Irish Institute of Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy)

**Strand III:** M.Sc. in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Only (stand-alone qualification for applicants who are already qualified to practice clinically, first preference for spaces on course will go to applicants wishing to pursue accredited status)

At the point of application for the course, you choose which of these three strands you wish to pursue. While some of the teaching will be specific to Strand I or Strand II, most of the teaching will be shared due to fact that the same theoretical basis exists for both programmes, with divergences taking place around issues of psychotherapeutic technique with children, adolescents, and adults. When a choice is available within a module Strand III students may opt for a module strand of their choosing. Please note due to accreditation requirements of professional bodies and the Irish Council for Psychotherapy it is not possible to switch strands.

The course's modules are as follows:

- Module 1:** Theoretical Frameworks I (10 ECTS);
- Module 2:** Infant Observation I (10 ECTS);
- Module 3:** Infant, Child & Adolescent Development (10 ECTS);
- Module 4:** Clinical Concepts (5 ECTS);
- Module 5:** Infant Observation II (10 ECTS);
- Module 6:** Theoretical Framework II (10 ECTS);
- Module 7:** Clinical Practice (5 ECTS);
- Module 8:** Research/Dissertation (30 ECTS).

Modules 1 to 4 are completed in the first year of the course, with modules 5 to 8 being completed in the second year of the course.

Classes involve some level of direct teaching (particularly those concerned with the main theoretical frameworks), in addition to discussion within the training group. All teachers on the course have trained in psychoanalytic psychotherapy and are experienced practitioners and there is a continued linking between theory and practice on the course.

The course is situated in the Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, in Trinity College Dublin. The course executive committee is as follows:

M.Sc. Course Director:

Prof. Paul Moore,  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Psychiatry

Course Administrator:

Ms. Beth Whitney,  
Senior Executive Officer,  
Department of Psychiatry

Child and Adolescent Strand Lead:

Ms. Noreen Bracken

Adult Strand Lead:

Mr. Declan Brady

M.Sc. Executive Committee members and Module Co-ordinators: Ms. Noreen Bracken, Ms. Jennifer Griffin, Mr. Declan Brady, Ms. Julie-Ann Lyons, Paul Moore.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q.:** Is it possible to commence in one Strand and to move to the other Strand during the course?

**A.** Students apply for entry onto one of the three Strands of the programme, for ICP and EAP accreditation reasons it is not possible to move strands during the course.

**Q.** What is the purpose of the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy?

**A.** Should a student not meet all the requirements of the MSc, an option is available under certain circumstances (related to the extent of modules that have been completed) to exit with a Postgraduate Diploma (P-Grad.Dip) in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy in Strand I or Strand II. Students who pass each of the taught modules and the dissertation are eligible for the award of M.Sc. in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy. Students who pass each of the modules but do not complete the dissertation will be awarded the Post-Graduate Diploma in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy.

## PRACTICAL DETAILS

### Q. What are the time commitments on the course?

A. The following are the formal teaching times for the MSc for the 2021-2023 intake:-

#### 1. One Week Blocks

On both years of the MSc, we will have two one-week teaching blocks. The first of these will be in early September, the second in the second week of January. The dates will be as follows:-

1. Monday September 1st, 2025 - Friday September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
2. Monday January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026 - Friday January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
3. Monday September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026- Friday 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
4. Monday January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2027 - Friday January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

\*Dates correct at time of publication but may be subject to change

#### 2. Term Teaching

Teaching in terms (22 weeks per year) will be on Tuesday evenings in the Trinity Centre for Health Sciences, St. James' Hospital between 5.30p.m. and 9.30 p.m. These times remain the same for both years and for both College terms (Michaelmas and Hilary).

The following will continue over the 44 weeks of Tuesday (across two academic years) evening inputs:-

1. Infant Observation Seminar (Small Groups): 1.5 hours: 5.30 pm to 6.50 pm
2. Tutorial (Processing Psychoanalytic Concepts): 1 hour: 7.05 pm to 7.50 pm
3. Process Group: 1.5 hours: 8.05 pm to 9.30 pm

Tuesday evening seminars run from the start of the academic year in September until the end of Michaelmas Term in December, with the seventh week as reading week, when there are no classes (Michaelmas Term). Tuesday evenings run from the beginning of Hilary Term in January until the end of the Term, with the seventh week as reading week, when there are no classes (Hilary Term).

**3. Monthly Saturdays, Eight Months of the Year- Provisional Schedule:**

| <b>YEAR ONE*</b>   | <b>YEAR TWO*</b>   |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| September 20, 2025 | September 19, 2026 |
| October 18, 2025   | October 17, 2026   |
| November 22, 2025  | November 14, 2026  |
| December 13, 2025  | December 12, 2026  |
| January 24, 2026   | January 23, 2027   |
| February 21, 2026  | February 20, 2027  |
| March 21, 2026     | March 20, 2025     |
| April 25, 2026     | April 24, 2025     |

\* Ordinarily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with occasional changes of dates. Saturday teaching usually takes place on Main Campus.



Q. What are the fees and other expenses involved in doing the course?

A. Please refer to Trinity College Webpage for postgraduate study fees <https://www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/fees-and-payments/>. Fees are subject to change and are determined by College. Personal therapy sessions are set by the a training rate of €65 per hour for twice weekly therapy (total weekly fee of €130) and €70 for once weekly psychotherapy. Students attend personal therapy throughout the four years of training (40-45 weeks of the year).

Q. Can I work while doing the course?

A. Yes. Most of the students on the course have maintained employment while doing the course. We have designed the course in a way that meets professional accreditation criteria while minimising the impact on work for our students, many of whom have full-time professional/work commitments. If you are working full time, it is usually necessary to engage with employers to negotiate time off in respect of the two one-week teaching blocks for each academic year. Tuesday evenings in term time begin at 5.30pm and this may require planning with respect to your working hours on these days. We also advise that you allow for setting time aside for reading (approx. 10 hours per week), attending twice-weekly personal therapy appointments, and for infant observation visits.

Q. How do I go about organising personal therapy?

A. All students on the course are required to attend twice-weekly personal therapy from the beginning of the course. Students are encouraged, though not required, to commence personal therapy from the time they are offered a place on the programme to provide support for the commencement of the course. A list of approved Training Analysts (experienced psychoanalytic psychotherapists who have undertaken recognised additional IIPP certified intensive training to work psychoanalytically with psychoanalytic psychotherapy candidates) with contact details, will be provided to students. The list will become available at the time when an applicant formally accepts a place on the course. All queries relating to training analysis should be directed to the Irish Institute for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (IIPP) [iiptraining@outlook.ie](mailto:iiptraining@outlook.ie).The IIPP maintain and update the panel of qualified Training Analysts for both strands of training and the M.Sc. only students. for Applicants should note that the requirements around hours of personal therapy during training commences from the time of the commencement of the training (early

September 2023). Strand III candidates are required to attend personal therapy at a minimum frequency of once weekly, but strongly encouraged to engage in twice weekly therapy.

**Q. If I am currently seeing a therapist, do I need to end this and move to a therapist from the course's list of approved analysts?**

**A.** Yes. We recognise that this can be a difficult decision for a student. This is however necessary as a part of the course's overall model of training. The course provides a list of approved Training Analysts. Should a student need to change therapists, we encourage students to make this transition carefully and to give this time. We encourage students to discuss this with the relevant strand lead contact person and to find an arrangement that fits the circumstances.

**Q. Do I see training clients as a part of the MSc in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy?**

**A.** No. The course provides the academic and experiential foundation necessary for commencing clinical work within a psychoanalytic framework. We believe that it is especially important for students to develop a solid foundation prior to starting this work to develop a strong and assured framework in meeting the complexities of this work. It is also an ICP/EAP accreditation requirement that students only commence clinical work in year 3 of the training. Students commence seeing training clients at the beginning of year 3 of training with their respective training institute.

**Q. Could you recommend reading to help me to decide if this is the kind of course that I would enjoy and learn from?**

**A.** We recommend the following as good introductions to psychoanalytic thinking and practice:

***Mainly Adult Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy:-***

Bateman, A. & Holmes, J. (2002). *Introduction to psychoanalysis: Contemporary theory and practice*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Casement, P. (2001). *On learning from the patient*. London: Brunner-Routledge.

Sandler, J. Dare, C. & Holder, A. (Eds.) (1992). *The patient and the analyst: The basis of the psychoanalytic process*. London: Karnac.

**Mainly Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy:-**

Blake, P., 2018. *Child and adolescent psychotherapy*. Routledge.

Gerhardt, S. (2004). *Why love matters: How affection shapes a baby's brain*. London: Routledge.

Waddell, M. (1998). *Inside Lives: Psychoanalysis and the growth of the personality*. London: Tavistock.

**Q. What supports are available on the course?**

**A.** We appreciate that training in psychotherapy is demanding at several levels. In addition to personal therapy (from the beginning of first year), further supports are also available on the programme. Strand leads, Module Coordinators, and M.Sc. Committee members are available to meet with students to discuss issues that are emerging for them in relation to the process of training. In addition to this there are College wide supports available to students through Student Support Services.

## YEARS THREE AND FOUR

**Q. How do you assess students on the training?**

**A.**

As these are professional psychotherapy programmes, students are assessed in line with requirements for training programmes as set out by the European Association for Psychotherapy, we conduct appraisals at the end of each of the years of the M.Sc. there are continuous appraisal meetings throughout the four years of training, for continuity in year 1 and 2 (M.Sc.) these appraisals are conducted jointly with a representative from the M.Sc. and a representative from the student's respective training institute. Progression through the training is contingent upon the outcome of this appraisal meeting. It is not possible for Strand III candidates to progress to year 3 and 4 with a training institute.

Academic modules on the M.Sc. are assessed in line with Trinity College academic requirements regarding the meeting of learning outcomes for each module. Assessments are a combination of various forms of written assignments relating to the module content.

**Q. What are the expenses associated with years three and four of training?**

**A.** Fees for years 3 and 4 of the professional psychotherapy training are set by the training institute who can be contacted to provide further information. In addition to this, students attend personal therapy twice weekly and clinical supervision once weekly, a training rate of €70 is set for supervision. As students are usually embarking on this course as a part of the fuller four year training, you may need also to consider the expenses in the years following the MSc. As students engaged in psychotherapy training are now required to complete four years of continuous training, it is important to bear in mind the costs of the subsequent two years should you apply and be accepted for this. It is important to note that the completion of the academic components of years 3 and 4 do not always coincide with achieving the required clinical training hours - current training criteria require students to remain in personal therapy while completing their clinical training case hours.

**Q. Is it possible to take a break after the MSc for a number of years and then return to complete the training?**

**A.** Currently this is not possible due to national and international accreditation requirements. According to the current accreditation regulations as set out by the European Association for Psychotherapy, a student must complete these four years consecutively. Extenuating circumstances and adverse life events are considered on a case-by-case basis by the relevant training institute in conjunction with the relevant professional body, and the ICP, and are not within the remit of the Trinity College Dublin, M.Sc. procedures.

**Q. Does completion of the four-year professional training coincide with receipt of the Clinical Diploma?**

**A.** No. receipt of clinical diploma (issued by respective training institutes) does not coincide with the completion of the overall four-year academic requirement, as laid out in

the EAP and ICP current accreditation criteria. Completion of clinical training hours under supervision may vary due to a host of different factors and are rarely contiguous with the academic components. Please contact the respective training institute for further information on this.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### Q. How do I apply for one of the training programmes?

A. All applications for the training programmes are now submitted online through Trinity College's Graduate Studies Office. You can apply for this course through the following url:

<https://www.tcd.ie/medicine/psychiatry/postgraduate/msc-psychoanalytic-psychotherapy/>

The application process through Graduate Studies is straightforward and instructions are clear. Once the initial TCD application is complete applicants are invited to interview by their respective training institutes. Upon successful completion of this interview applicants are then recommended by their training institute for a place on the M.Sc. as a part of their four-year training. Please note: Successful applicants to the clinical strand are simultaneously Trinity College postgraduate students and training candidates of their respective training institutes.

### Q. What do I need to apply successfully for this course?

A. We encourage you to apply if you have an interest in this field and have considered the practicalities of engaging in this four year process (See FAQ: Practicalities). The following are required: -

*Academically:* An upper second class honours primary degree or higher is required. For those who are in professions that now require a primary degree but that did not require this at the time the person entered this profession (including nursing), an exception can be made. Decisions around such exceptions are made with Trinity's Graduate Studies Office.

*Work Experience:* For the Adult Strand, work in a related field is desirable. For the Child and Adolescent Strand, applicants will usually work in a variety of settings with children and adolescents.

*Personal Factors:* You are not required to have a strong knowledge of psychoanalysis, though some sense of its basic tenets is certainly desirable. Engagement in personal therapy also demonstrates a recognition of the nature of this field, and is strongly desirable.

*Readiness:* This relates to the timing of the application in relation to your life circumstances. In going through the process of application, there will be an opportunity to appraise whether

you are in a position to embark on this course at this time. This appraisal is usually conducted at the Strand Institute intake and interview stage before commencing the M.Sc.

**Please note:** as this is a psychotherapy training that leads to accreditation and registration with the ICP and EAP, and to comply with current training requirements, entry to Strand I and Strand II is contingent upon successful interview with the respective Training Institutes. Once your academic qualifications and references meet entry requirements within the Trinity College applications process - prospective Strand I and Strand II candidates are then invited to attend for interview. Upon successful completion of the interview applicants are then referred back into the Trinity College applications system for further processing.

**Q. Is there a minimum age requirement for entry onto the training programmes?**

**A.** No, we do not have a minimum age requirement for this course. However, we encourage applicants to carefully consider the time of application to the course due to the nature of the commitment involved and to develop a body of experience prior to commencing with us. Strand I and Strand II will be assessed for readiness at the interview stage of the applications process.

**Q.:** I do not have a primary degree but have a professional qualification. Could my professional qualification be taken as a basis for entering the training programme?

**A.** Yes, in some instances. College is clear that students of professions which now require degrees at point of entry - including nursing - but who completed training at a time when this was not a prerequisite have a strong case for entry to these courses. Also, credit is given when students have completed other professional qualifications and have worked at a high level within their field of work. If, for instance, you have trained as a counsellor or psychotherapist along a formal channel, this may be used as the basis for an appeal to College.

## IF YOU NEED ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ...

Q. Who can I contact if I have more questions?

A. If you have any other questions about either of the training programmes, please contact us by email initially. If it would be useful, we can speak with you by telephone or zoom to clarify details and to discuss any concerns you have about whether this kind of training would fit with your interests.

1. Professional Training in Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy  
Child & Adolescent Strand Lead: Ms. Noreen Bracken

If you are interested in applying for this training and have questions in relation to it, please contact Noreen [nbracken@tcd.ie](mailto:nbracken@tcd.ie)

2. Professional Training in Adult Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy  
Adult Strand Lead: Mr. Declan Brady

If you are interested in applying for this training, please contact Declan at [Dbrady8@tcd.ie](mailto:Dbrady8@tcd.ie)

3. M.Sc. only: Course Administrator Ms. Beth Whitney, Senior Executive Officer

If you are interested in applying for the M.Sc. as a stand-alone Masters programme please contact Beth at [whitneyb@tcd.ie](mailto:whitneyb@tcd.ie)

Please note that while every effort has been made to ensure the information in this document is correct at date of publication, January 2025, however, some information may be subject to change.

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January 2025

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