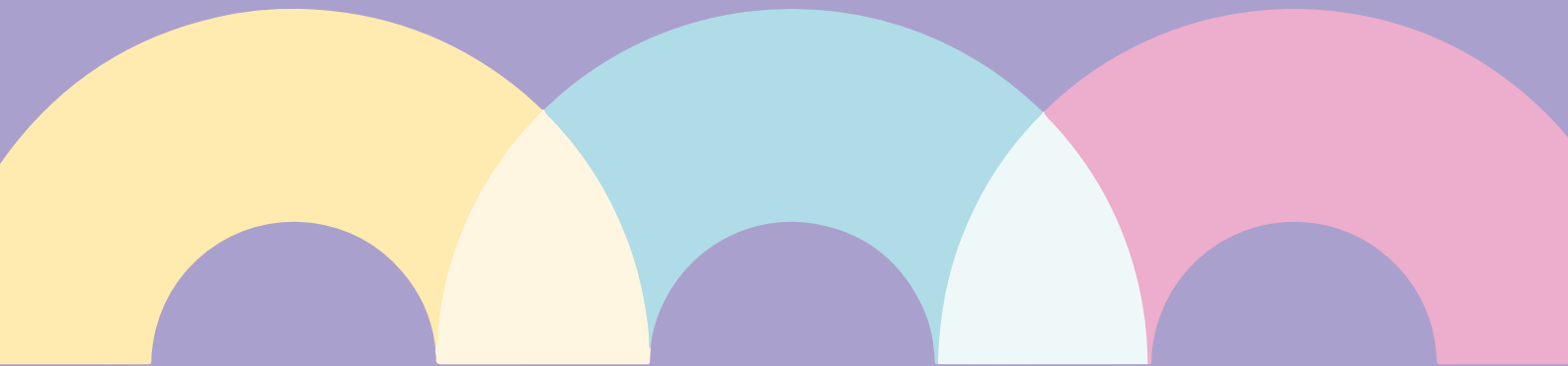


# Programme Guide

## MSc in Developmental Psychology and Clinical Practice (DPCP)



# Overview

The MSc in Developmental Psychology and Clinical Practice is a two-year full-time programme offered by UCL, based at Anna Freud. The aim of the programme is to provide a framework for developing an integrated understanding of child development and childhood difficulties, and to give you an opportunity to develop practical skills for working with children and families in a child mental health service. This programme draws together theory, research and therapeutic thinking from a range of perspectives, including cognitive psychology, CBT, systemic theory, community psychology, psychoanalysis and neuroscience.

## Structure of the Programme



This first year is based primarily at Anna Freud, Kings Cross, with some teaching held at UCL you will develop your core knowledge of child development, disorders and research methods, while beginning to gain practical experience of using clinical skills. In the second year, you will undertake a clinical placement within a child and adolescent mental health setting, supervised by an experienced mental health clinician. Lectures and seminars continue during the second year, whilst you also work on completing your research project.

## Career Prospects

Graduates from this programme have gone on to work with children and families in various therapeutic settings, or to undertake further doctoral-level clinical training. Some of our graduates may also pursue research careers, including PhD study.

Completing this MSc does not result in an accredited qualification as a therapist. However, the core clinical skills and direct supervised experience of working in a child and adolescent mental health service have helped graduates secure posts within the children's workforce, for example as Assistant Psychologists and gain places on doctoral-level professional training courses, including Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology. Career prospect opportunities will vary depending on funding opportunities and eligibility criteria.

## Distinctive Features Include:

- The opportunity to develop a conceptual framework which draws together developmental research, neuroscience, psychoanalysis, systemic thinking, and cognitive behavioural perspectives.
- An overview of child developmental psychopathology including a focus on key childhood disorders and difficulties, taught by leading academics and clinicians in the field of child mental health.
- A unique clinical placement in a child and adolescent mental health team where you will have the opportunity to gain experience of work with children, adolescents and families, under the supervision of an experienced clinician.
- Practical training in research methods, and in developing skills to carry out child mental health research, including ways to explore and evaluate therapeutic interventions.
- A solid foundation for those wishing to go on to further clinical training or research, or for students interested in applying for employment within the children's workforce.

## Clinical Placement

During the second year of the programme, all students will have the unique opportunity to undertake a placement in a child and adolescent mental health service for 2-3 days a week. Clinical placements include a range of services such as community-based CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and specialist settings such as Paediatric CAMHS, school-based CAMHS, Social Care CAMHS, CAMHS or Neurodevelopmental CAMHS teams. Whilst on placement students will be working as part of a multidisciplinary team and will be supervised by experienced clinicians and gain exposure to a range of assessments and interventions with children and families. Placement selection and allocation is arranged by the programme team for all home and overseas students. Students are therefore not required to source their own clinical placements.



Module 'family'	Year 1	Year 2
Child Development, Disorders and the Developing Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple Perspectives on Developmental Psychopathology I and II</li> <li>• Psychoanalytic Theories of Caregiver-Child Relationship</li> <li>• Parenting: Theory, Research &amp; Clinical Intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Practice in Context</li> </ul>
Clinical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building and Maintaining Therapeutic Relationships</li> <li>• Assessment and Formulation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Placement</li> <li>• Clinical Skills I and II</li> </ul>
Research Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Research Methods</li> <li>• Quantitative Data Analysis (SPSS)</li> <li>• Evaluating Clinical Interventions</li> <li>• Qualitative Research Methods</li> <li>• Supervised Research Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervised Research Project</li> </ul>

## Child Development, Childhood Difficulties and the Developing Mind

In this family of modules, you will gain an overview of development and psychopathology, as well as a conceptual framework for thinking about the developing mind. Mental health and developmental difficulties which emerge during childhood (e.g. anxiety, neurodiverse conditions such as Autism, conduct disorder) are explored from multiple perspectives – psychodynamic, clinical, cognitive behavioural and neurobiological.

## Clinical Skills

During the first year you will attend lectures and workshops in which you will develop the skills necessary to engage young people and their families in a clinical setting, through role play, feedback on video performance and specialised teaching. As the year progresses you will begin to integrate understanding from a range of therapeutic modalities to introduce you to ways of undertaking assessments with children and families and to link assessments to case formulation and treatment planning. During the second year you will continue to have seminars in clinical skills to support your placement experience, as well as professional skills workshops.

## Research Skills



Across the two years you will be working on a research portfolio, with opportunities to work within some of the Centre's own research projects, or work with external partners. All students will be allocated a research supervisor who will guide them and oversee the research project across the two years. During the first year, classes will help you to learn research methods, including practical skills for analysing quantitative and qualitative data. You will also have an opportunity to learn skills for evaluating clinical practice.

*The DPCP course has provided me with a well-rounded education in Psychology, with an outlook that is forward-thinking and requires critical thought. More importantly, it has taught me to value difference and diversity and its impact on one's experiences - all this in a nurturing, friendly and positive environment. It has been my luck to have received this education from some fantastic lecturers and tutors who have always sought to aid my development, both as a student and as a person.*

**Krish, Former DPCP Student**



## UCL



UCL is one of the foremost teaching and research institutions in the United Kingdom. It was founded in 1826 to provide higher education for all who could benefit from it, regardless of religion, race or class, and is both the oldest and the largest of the various colleges and institutes that make up the University of London. Psychology at UCL has an outstanding track record of innovative research.

## Anna Freud



Anna Freud is the leading UK children's mental health charity with 70 years' experience of caring for young minds through direct clinical services, research and teaching. The vision of Anna Freud is a world in which children and their families are effectively supported to build on their own strengths to achieve their goals in life.

## Applying for the MSc



The programme is highly selective and takes a maximum of approximately 20 students per year. The MSc is offered as a two-year full-time programme only - there are no part-time or flexible study options. Overseas students would be expected to demonstrate a high level of written and spoken English.

## Fees

2025 – 2026

UK: £16,800 (year one only)

Overseas: £39,200 (according to the UCL website <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/taught-degrees/developmental-psychology-and-clinical-practice-msc>)

**Please note:** UCL fees are payable per year and fees may vary in the 2nd year.

We hold open events for prospective students across the academic year. Please refer to our website for details and booking: <https://www.annafreud.org/training/postgraduate-study/upcoming-events/>

## Application Process

Applications can be made at:

[www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/apply](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/apply)

## Further Information

Full details of the course can be found on the UCL website. **Specific enquiries may be sent to:** [dpcp@annafreud.org](mailto:dpcp@annafreud.org)

## Application Deadline

1 June 2026

**The programme description is correct at time of going to print but is subject to change without notice.**

