

Statement from PPAG working group

PPAG has been addressing the structure of HPC Register in relation to psychotherapy and counselling for some time. The main sticking point was always the issue of differentiation between psychotherapy and counselling.

A breakthrough of sorts was achieved when there emerged a degree of consensus around the adoption of a three-title model (with two threshold entry training levels) which held the prospect of a more nuanced approach than the straightforward binary opposition between counselling and psychotherapy.

The three titles are:

- counsellor (with a threshold entry training level at NQF Level 5)
- (adjectival title – still to be determined) counsellor (with a threshold entry training level at NQF Level 7)
- psychotherapist (with a threshold entry training level at NQF Level 7).

However, PPAG was unable to agree at that stage as to whether the two level 7 titles were interchangeable or differential. All parties considered that we should attempt to progress an approach that would attempt to delineate demonstrable similarities and differences if and where they existed.

Sue Gardner, President of BPS, agreed to convene a working group to progress this work, which has now met once (on 15 October).

It has begun by mapping out the issues and identifying areas of agreement and disagreement. There was a good atmosphere and we found more that joins us than divides us. The group believes that the three title model holds the best prospects of a solution that can win the broad assent of the professions.

We hope with greater clarity that we will be able to pick apart the issues we began with and the organisations involved are committed to working together in taking this work further.