



CRC Counsellor Recruitment & Training Pack for Applicants

(England and Wales Applicants)

April 2024

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Introduction

Dear Applicant,

This pack has been compiled to help you navigate the process for applying for a place on the Certificate in Relationship Counselling (CRC) course and to understand the training on offer.

The CRC is planned to start in April 2024 with the first training weekend held on the weekend of 19th & 21st April in Crossgar, Downpatrick. We will be selecting applicants from both Northern Ireland and England and Wales.

The deadline for applications is Wednesday 20th December. If shortlisted, you will be invited to attend an initial interview via webcam or in person conducted by volunteer members of your nearest Marriage Care Centre.

The national Selection Day for England and Wales applicants will take place on Saturday 17th February 2024 (venue TBC). The Selection Day process is an essential part of the recruitment process.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

With best wishes,

Michelle Hayes
Head of Relationship Counselling

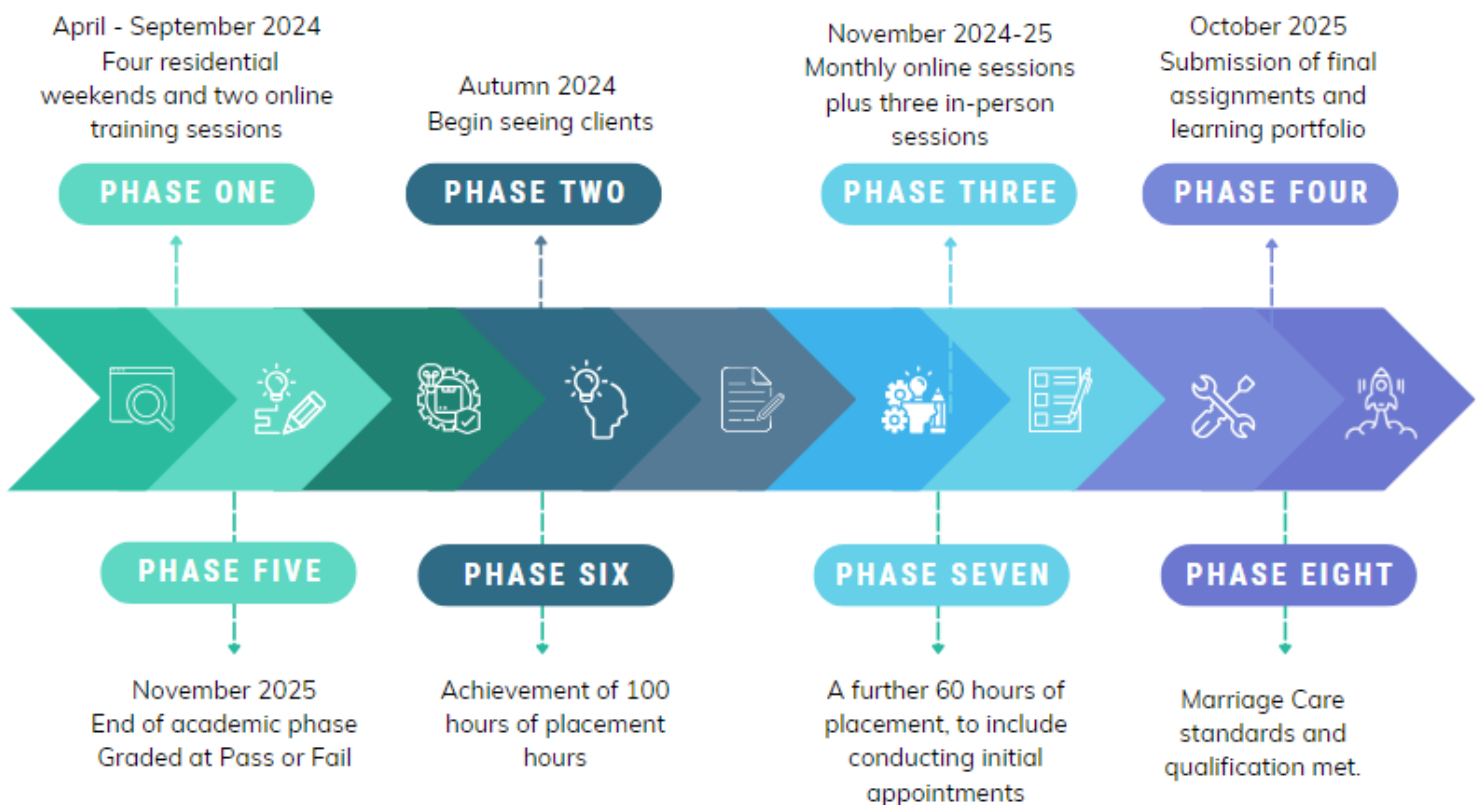
Certificate in Relationship Counselling

ACCORD NI, in partnership with Marriage Care, is offering a Certificate in Relationship Counselling (CRC). This initial training course offers an opportunity to train to become a counsellor with us, without having any prior training or experience.

Course Overview

The Certificate in Relationship Counselling (CRC) training commencing in 2024 consists of 19 months of academic content delivery and assignments, and 160 hours of counselling delivered face-to-face via webcam and in-person. The aim is for trainee counsellors to start their 160 hours of working with clients in Autumn 2024, after the fourth residential weekend. This is subject to progress, and the final sign-off to begin seeing clients is decided by trainers and supervisors. Trainees will be required to offer webcam and in-person sessions. At least 51% of the first 100 placement hours will need to be in-person sessions. Trainees will work with individuals and couples, but at least 60% of counselling hours should be with couples.

Training Journey Process



Likely profile

The likely candidate profile will be someone who can subscribe to and share in Marriage Care's ethos and values and who wants to commit to volunteering some of their time each week. Initially, this would be for their training and thereafter working with our clients, including attending mandatory supervision sessions, their continued development through CPD, and attending virtual and in-person events. They will have an interest in people and be curious about what helps to make a relationship work. We are looking for those who demonstrate empathy and who are non-judgemental. They may well be the sort of person their friends go to with a problem. They will enjoy helping others to help themselves and will possibly work in a caring profession already. They will be looking to develop their skills to make a real difference and be prepared to make the commitment required (see details below). They may have completed some basic counselling or listening skills training although this is not essential.

Counselling Commitment

We ask volunteer counsellors to commit to delivering a minimum of 84 hours of counselling per annum, the equivalent of two hours per week over 42 weeks, of which at least 50% (42 hours) should be delivered via webcam. The CRC trainees will have to complete a placement of 160 hours in order to qualify. They will also be asked to commit to a minimum of 5 years of voluntary service with Marriage Care which will include their time as trainees.

Cost

The training is being offered **free of charge** thanks to the contribution of Marriage Care's volunteer training body, funding from ACCORD NI and the Northern Bishops Diocesan funding and a contribution from couples who attend Marriage Care's marriage preparation programme. CRC candidates will also be asked to support the costs associated with selection and the residential element of the training as follows:

- A non-refundable deposit of £200 will be payable within 14 days of selection in order to secure the place;
- Selected candidates will also be invited to set up a monthly standing order donation to go towards the cost of their accommodation and meals at the residential elements of the course. We are suggesting £40 per month (plus gift aid) for the duration of the training course. This is a donation, **not a fee**, and as such is at the discretion of the individual. We do not want anyone to be excluded based on their ability to pay and equally, if someone feels they can donate more, that would be very welcome.
- Attendance at the residential element of the training is not optional.
- Trainees will be required to pay their own travel expenses in phase 1 (with the exception of flights from England or Wales to Belfast).
- In phase two candidates will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses incurred as a result of attending in-person training days.

Overview of the selection process

Prospective candidates from England and Wales should apply via the online application form which can be found by clicking the 'Apply Now' button on our CRC information page <https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/crc/>. Once the application has been received and initially assessed, it will be forwarded to the Marriage Care National Support Team for consideration. The next step is for the candidate to be interviewed locally (via Zoom or in person), by your local Marriage Care Centre Coordinator. You can find your nearest centre upon application. If, following that interview, they are considered suitable, a centre recommendation will be made, and they will then go forward for national selection.

National Selection Day (England and Wales)

This will take place on Saturday 17th February 2024 (venue TBC).

Please note: We cannot accept applicants on the CRC course if the applicant will be involved in another counselling or therapeutic course elsewhere during the training.

On the selection day applicants will go through a series of interviews with selectors to explore their experience of relationships, their values and their personal growth and development. They will also spend part of the day in a group, where they will be observed doing some basic roleplay and taking part in topical discussions. They are scored from A – D across the different elements of the day, with only those scoring B and above are sure of a place. The number of places available to candidates from England and Wales is limited this year, and so the threshold for success may be higher, depending on the number and calibre of applications. If selected, they will then be offered a place and asked to pay the £200 non-refundable deposit to secure it for them. A continued place on the course is dependent on a DBS check which will be requested ahead of the first training weekend

Starting counselling

The trainees will be able to start counselling after the fourth weekend, providing their trainers and supervisor think they are ready. Once they have successfully completed all the elements of the course including the 160-hour placement, they will be signed off as having completed the training and will have their trainee status removed. We would expect most of the trainees to complete the course by early 2026.

Is there any chance I might not pass the CRC?

As the candidates have to pass all elements of the course to achieve the certificate, there is potential for some to fail to meet the set standard. Those who do struggle to pass usually have problems with the marked assignment. If this is the case, there is the potential for them to be awarded a certificate of attendance instead. Each case will be considered on an individual basis and will be awarded at the discretion of the Head of Relationship Counselling.

Relationship Counsellor Role Description

1. Responsible to

Head of Relationship Counselling

2. Purpose of Role

To offer relationship counselling to couples or individuals.

3. Key tasks and responsibilities

To offer a minimum of 84 voluntary counselling hours annually at a time when clients are available (usually in the evening). A minimum of 50% of sessions should be offered via webcam.

To be familiar with and abide by the BACP Ethical Framework and Marriage Care's policy and good practice guidelines.

To attend regular supervision and CPD

To attend planning meetings and centre meetings as appropriate.

To maintain up-to-date records by regularly updating the counsellor portal (Salesforce)

4. Person Specification

An enthusiasm for supporting adult relationships.

Experience of a long-term committed relationship – whether things worked out or not.

Able to subscribe to and share in the ethos and values of Marriage Care and work within its policies.

Empathic understanding and ability to hold couples.

Ability to work as part of the centre team.

5. Commitment involved:

Attendance at all residential weekends and online training is mandatory. We do however understand that sometimes things come up that are unavoidable. If your attendance falls below 90% in either year, then you will not be able to proceed with the course. Acceptable reasons for missing sessions will be outlined in the course handbook. Permission to miss a session, or reasons for having missed one, must be sought or given from the Head of Relationship Counselling. Responsibility for catching up on any work missed rests with you, but please be aware that not all input lends itself well to catch up. The residential weekends are an example. In such cases the missed session would mean that you could not proceed further.

Supervision: a minimum of 1.5 hours per month.

6. Other details:

- The continued place on the course is dependent on a DBS check which will be requested prior to the first training weekend.
- To be able to take part in the online elements of the course and to deliver online counselling sessions, a degree of computer literacy is required, including an ability to use and connect to Zoom. For this purpose, a laptop or computer (rather than phone or tablet) is considered **essential**, as is stable internet connection and a quiet, private place to work.
- Reasonable travel expenses can be claimed from phase two onwards.

7. Course Structure

Outline for Phase One (2024)

Dates	Event	Duration	In Person/ Online	Location	Academic Work Due
17:00 Friday 19 th – 13.00 Sunday 21 st April 2024	Residential Weekend One	Min. of 14 teaching hours	In Person	Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre	Sunday 5th May
17.00 Friday 17 th – 13.00 Sunday 19 th May	Residential Weekend Two	Min. of 14 teaching hours	In Person	Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre	Sunday 2nd June
17.00 Friday 21 st – 13.00 Sunday 23 rd June	Residential Weekend Three	Min. of 14 teaching hours	In Person	Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre	Sunday 7th July
Saturday 20th July 9:30 – 12:30am	“Getting Started with Clients” CPD	3 hours	Online	N/A	N/A
10.00 Friday 13 th – 13.00 Sunday 15 th September	Residential Weekend Four (3 full days including Domestic Abuse Training Day)	Min. of 21 teaching hours	In Person	Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre	Sunday 29 th September
Saturday 12 th October 09.30-12.30	Review and Progress	2 hours	Online	N/A	N/A
Saturday 16 th November 09.30—17.00	“Working with a Sexual Focus” CPD	6 hours	Online	N/A	N/A

Continued on next page.

Outline for Phase Two (2025) – Dates are provisional

Title	Date	Where	Duration	Trainers
Self-care of the therapist	11 January 2025	Online	9 – 5pm	
Know Your Limits	15 February 2025	Online	9 – 5pm	
Mental Health Awareness	15 March 2025	In-person	9 – 5pm	
Progress Review Two	26 April 2025	Online	9 – 11.30	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	23 May 2025	In-person	9 – 5pm	
Endings in counselling	28 June 2025	Online	9:30 – 5pm	
Progress Review Three	6 September 2025	Online	9 – 11.30	
Domestic Abuse, initial assessment and revisiting contracting	11 October 2025	In-person	Weekend 5	Tom Andrew and Helen McMullan
Review & Ending	22 November 2025	In-person	9 – 5:30pm	
Introduction & Familiarisation with FOCCUS & REFOCCUS	2024/25	-	3hrs	-
Observation of PTA or MP	2024/25	-	6hrs	-