

## **Fitness to Practise Statement**

### **1. Programme Name(s): Doctoral Programme in Clinical Psychology**

### **2. Professional Fitness to Practise Requirements**

The Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the University of Limerick is a practitioner doctorate that equips the graduate to work as a staff grade clinical psychologist. The programme receives its accreditation from the Psychological Society of Ireland every five years.

The primary aim of the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology is to provide postgraduate training that ensures that the clinical psychologist can provide psychology services in a competent and professional manner to those seeking them and to enable the clinical psychologist to become professionally qualified to work in the Health Service Executive (HSE) and related services.

The aims of the programme are several-fold. All trainee clinical psychologists enrolled in the programme will acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies required to graduate at doctoral level and gain entry into the profession of clinical psychology at the post of Basic Grade Clinical Psychologist. All trainees will:

- Acquire appropriate theoretical and academic knowledge of clinical psychology across a range of core and specialist areas
- Acquire the appropriate core clinical and practical skills to enable them, once qualified, to work as a practitioner in the HSE and its partner organisations
- Acquire an understanding of appropriate ethical and professional conduct in the HSE and its partner organisations
- Acquire knowledge of the appropriate professional and service structures and standards as applied in the HSE and its partner organisations
- Acquire the appropriate research and evaluation skills to enable them to practise in the evidence-led culture of the HSE and its partner organisations
- Acquire knowledge of the implications of research and practice in a diverse society
- Acquire personal and professional awareness skills to develop and maintain standards of excellence in practice

### **3. Professional Competencies**

The code from the Psychological Society of Ireland below outlines the standards of ethical behaviour and conduct that are expected of students enrolled on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

*<http://www.psychologicalsociety.ie/find-a-psychologist/code-of-ethics.html>*

The code comprises four overall ethical principles, which subsume a large number of specific ethical standards.

**Principle 1: Respect for the rights and dignity of the person**

This principle requires of psychologists that they treat their clients as persons of intrinsic worth with a right to determine their own priorities, that they respect clients' dignity and give due regard to their moral and cultural values. Psychologists shall take care not to intrude inappropriately on clients' privacy. They shall treat as confidential all information (including oral, verbal, written and electronic) obtained in the course of their work, except where the law requires disclosure. As far as possible, they shall ensure that clients understand and consent to whatever professional action they propose.

**Principle 2: Competence**

Psychologists must constantly maintain and update their professional skills and ethical awareness. They shall recognise that psychological knowledge and their own expertise and capacity for work are limited, and take care not to exceed the limits.

**Principle 3: Responsibility**

In their professional and scientific activities, psychologists are required to act in a trustworthy, reputable and accountable manner towards clients and the community. They shall avoid doing harm to clients and research participants, and act to prevent harm caused by others. They shall co-operate with colleagues and other professionals to ensure the best service to clients, and act positively to resolve ethical dilemmas. They shall ensure that those whom they supervise act ethically. In research with animals, they shall take care to treat the animals humanely.

**Principle 4: Integrity**

Psychologists are obliged to be honest and accurate about their qualifications, the effectiveness of the services which they offer, and their research findings. They shall take steps to manage personal stress and maintain their own mental health. They shall treat others in a fair, open and straightforward manner, honour professional commitments, and act to clarify any confusion about their role or responsibilities. Where possible, they shall avoid the use of deception with research participants. They shall not use the professional relationship to exploit clients, sexually or otherwise, and they shall deal actively with conflicts of interest. They shall take action against harmful or unethical behaviour in colleagues or members of other professions.

**4. Programme Specific Competencies**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Description/justification of how the competency applies to the programme(s) listed above (add bullets as required)</b>
a) Psychological Assessment	Ability to develop and maintain an effective working alliance with clients Ability to choose, use and interpret a broad range of assessment methods appropriate to: The client and service delivery system in which the assessment takes place The type of intervention that is likely to be required Assessment procedures in which competence is demonstrated will include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Formal procedures (use of standardised instruments)</li> <li>❑ Structured interviewing procedures</li> <li>❑ Other structured methods of assessment (e.g. observation or gathering information from others)</li> </ul>
b) Psychological Formulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Ability to derive a formulation of presenting problems or situations that integrates information from assessments within a coherent framework that draws upon psychological theory and evidence and that incorporates interpersonal, societal, cultural and biological factors</li> <li>❑ Ability to utilise this formulation to plan an appropriate intervention</li> <li>❑ Ability to revise formulations in the light of ongoing intervention and, if necessary, to reformulate the problem</li> </ul>
c) Psychological Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ On the basis of a formulation, the ability to implement psychological therapy techniques appropriate to the presenting problem and to the psychological and social circumstances of the client(s), and to do this with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Individuals</li> <li>– Couples, families or groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>❑ Ability to implement interventions (based on psychological theory and evidence) with clients for whom formal psychological therapies are inappropriate or whose problem is not suited to such an approach</li> <li>❑ Ability to implement an intervention through and with other professionals and/or with individuals who are formal (professional) carers for a client or who care for a client by virtue of family or partnership arrangements</li> </ul>
d) Professional & Personal Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Awareness of ethical issues and ability to apply them in complex clinical contexts</li> <li>❑ Ability to work effectively at an appropriate level of autonomy, with awareness of limits of own competence</li> <li>❑ Ability to use supervision to reflect on practice and to make appropriate use of any feedback received</li> <li>❑ Ability to work collaboratively and constructively with fellow psychologists and other professionals, respecting professional diversity</li> </ul>
e) Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Ability to adapt practice to a range of professional contexts on the basis of an understanding of pertinent organisational and cultural issues</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Awareness of the legislative context and the views of users</li> <li>□ Ability to conduct appropriate risk assessment and use this to guide practices</li> </ul>
f) Working with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Awareness of social, cultural, historic, economic, ethnic and belief contexts from which the client comes</li> <li>□ Ability to identify and collaborate effectively in partnership with a range of relevant community and other agencies and groups to enable users and their families to maintain an optimal quality of life</li> <li>□ Ability to develop effective working relationships with users, carers and colleagues within the organisation</li> <li>□ Ability to work collaboratively with others while maintaining appropriate autonomy and independence and to balance this with independent working as indicated by the needs of the user</li> <li>□ Ability to negotiate realistic objectives within a multidisciplinary team setting and ability to work effectively within the psychological community</li> <li>□ Ability to identify and deal constructively with work place conflict</li> <li>□ Ability to promote psychological principles and practices, to provide consultancy and supervision and to give advice on psychological matters to other professionals</li> </ul>
g) Communication & Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ability to communicate effectively clinical and non-clinical information from a psychological perspective in a style appropriate to a variety of different audiences (e.g. to professional colleagues and to users and their carers)</li> <li>□ Ability to adapt style of communication to people with a wide range of levels of cognitive ability, sensory acuity and modes of communication</li> <li>□ Ability to prepare and deliver teaching that takes into account the needs and goals of the audience (e.g. by appropriate adaptations to methods and content)</li> <li>□ Ability to understand the supervision process for both supervisee and supervisor roles</li> </ul>
h) Meta competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ability to generalise and synthesise prior knowledge and experience in order to apply them in different settings and novel situations</li> <li>□ Ability to think critically, reflectively and evaluatively</li> </ul>

## 5. Health Requirements

*Professional settings and practice will generally require the student to maintain a level of good health to ensure the student and service users are not adversely affected by any health condition that may arise. As part of a general health protection, the University and/or the external placement provider may require students to undergo health screening or other forms of health assessment.*

*All students on the Doctoral programme in Clinical Psychology undergo occupational health screening through the programme partner – the HSE.*

*Students undertaking programmes with a vaccine and/or health requirement will be required to comply with the vaccination and/or health requirements of the University, as may be updated from time to time.*

*In addition, students undertaking programmes with an external placement will be required to comply with the vaccination and/or health requirements of the external placement provider, as may be updated from time to time.*

*All requirements are listed in the Table below.*

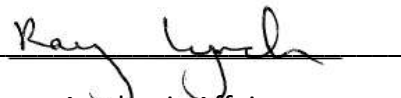
*Any restriction and supporting justification on students with disabilities enrolling on this programme and seeking to avail of accommodations provide by Disability Support Services should also be listed below in the table below.*

<i>Vaccination and/or health requirements of the University in relation to this programme of study</i>	<i>Vaccination and/or health requirements of the external placement provider in relation to this programme of study</i>	<i>Restriction and supporting justification on students with disabilities enrolling on this programme</i>

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



or \_\_\_\_\_



Course Director(s)

Associate Dean Academic Affairs