



CRC Counsellor Recruitment & Training Pack for Applicants

February 2023

Contents

Introduction	2
Relationship Counsellor Role Description	7
Planning for Recruitment:	8
Interview Template	9
Course Structure	12

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 March 2023 with the first training weekend held on the weekend of 31st March – 2nd April. There are two national selection events scheduled to take place at Kent's Hill Park, in Milton Keynes: Saturday 4th and Saturday 25th February.

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

With best wishes,

Rachael O'Brien
Counselling Training Coordinator
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The Certificate in Relationship Counselling

Marriage Care's Certificate in Relationship Counselling (CRC) initial training course, offers an opportunity to train to become a counsellor with us, without having any prior training or experience.

Course Overview

The CRC is a two-year course, with year one being the 'core' training where selected candidates will learn the skills required to help couples to explore their issues, via webcam and in-person. They will start working with clients after weekend three, providing both their tutors and supervisor believe they are ready to do so, and will be required to offer webcam and in-person sessions. Year two is about skill development and will be comprised of a selection of continuous professional development (CPD) events which they will need to complete. They will also need to complete a placement of 160 hours.

Likely profile

The likely candidate profile will be someone who can subscribe to and share in Marriage Care's Catholic 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 Marriage Care virtual and in-person events both regionally and nationally when required. 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 done some basic counselling or listening skills training although this is not essential.

Counselling Commitment

As a guide, we ask Marriage Care volunteer counsellors to commit to delivering a minimum of 84 hours of counselling per annum, the equivalent of two hours per week, of which at least 50% (42 hours) would 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 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 our volunteer training body, funding from national and local charitable Trusts, and a contribution from couples who attend Marriage Care's marriage preparation service. However, CRC candidates will be asked to support the costs associated with selection and the residential element of the training as follows:

- A non-refundable deposit of £150 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.
- The residential element of the training is not optional, and trainees will be required to pay their own travel expenses in year 1;
- In year 2 candidates will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses incurred as a result of training;

Overview of the selection process

Prospective candidates should apply via the online application form which can be found by clicking the 'Apply Now' button on our CRC information page www.marriagecare.org.uk/crc/ . Once the application has been received and initially assessed, it will be forwarded to the relevant Centre Coordinator for consideration. The next step is for the candidate to be interviewed locally (via Zoom or in-person), by the Centre Coordinator and a counsellor. 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 Days

National selection days will be held in Milton Keynes on 4th February 2023 and 25th February 2023.

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 sure of a place (there are only 24 places available). If selected, they will then be offered a place and asked to pay the £150 non-refundable deposit to secure it for them. A continued place on the course is dependent on an enhanced DBS check which will be requested prior to starting work with clients.

The dates for the training in year 1 are:

Friday 31st March – Sunday 2nd April (residential)

Friday 12th May – Sunday 14th May (residential)

Friday 9th June – Sunday 12th June (residential, including Domestic Abuse training all day on Friday)

Friday 8th – Sunday 10th September (residential)

Saturday 30th September (online)

Saturday 28th October (online, morning only)

For full course structure please see appendix.

Starting counselling

The trainees will be able to start counselling after the third weekend, providing their tutors 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 2025.

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 or the Chief Executive.

Relationship Counsellor Role Description

1. Responsible to

Locally they are responsible to the Centre Coordinator. The Head of Relationship Counselling or the Chief Executive has clinical responsibility for all counselling practitioners.

2. Purpose of Role

To offer Marriage Care relationship counselling to couples or individuals.

3. Key tasks and responsibilities

To offer a minimum of two hours voluntary counselling each week 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 abide by Marriage Care policy for client contributions.

To attend regular supervision and CPD as provided by Marriage Care

To attend planning meetings and centre meetings as appropriate.

To maintain up to date records by regularly updating the counsellor portal.

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 Catholic 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:

CRC training course: **Attendance at all residential weekends and online training is mandatory.**

Completion of all course work and 160 hours practice.

Willingness to offer a minimum of 84 hours counselling per annum (2 hours per week, which can be on the same evening).

Regular supervision and follow the BACP guidelines of 30 CPD hours a year which can be accrued both within Marriage Care and other similar work.

Attendance at centre meetings

Attendance at virtual and in-person regional and national events is strongly encouraged.

6. Other details:

- The continued place on the course is dependent on an enhanced DBS check which will be requested prior to starting work with clients.
- 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 year 2 onwards.
- Most volunteers stay with the organisation for many years due to the relationships they build and the personal benefits of being involved in the work of Marriage Care.
- A minimum 5-year commitment to the charity.

Interview Template

Please see the interview questions we ask centres to cover at centre interview.

What do you know about Marriage Care?
Why are you interested in training and volunteering as a relationship counsellor?
Can you tell me about any experience/training you have that would support you in this role/training?
Due to the nature of the counselling (working with couples) experience of a long term committed relationship – whether things worked out or not - is essential. Is this something you feel you can draw on and are in a good place to do so?
What can you tell me about our vision, mission and values and what they would mean to you in this role?
Can you tell us about any other voluntary activities that you have undertaken.
What do you think you have gained from volunteering in the past?
What is your experience of working within a team?
What personal qualities can you bring to the role and to the centre team?
How much time will you be able to commit to Marriage Care if you are selected?

The counsellor role requires a commitment to the CRC training course and an ongoing commitment to provide a minimum of 2 (1 hr) counselling sessions per week – usually on the same evening each week.

As part of counsellors ongoing commitment to training and CPD we ask that counsellor's commit to 30 hours CPD annually (in line with BACP guidelines) - much of this is provided by Marriage Care, regular supervision and attendance at quarterly centre meetings.

How do you see this voluntary role fitting in with other things you do and your long term goals?

Check candidates distance from counselling venues and how far they would be willing to travel.

Give the candidate details of the centre premises, how the team works (virtual etc) and any other necessary information to help them understand what the volunteering experience would actually be like.

Give the candidate details of the training course:

Explain that all training days/weekends are mandatory

Explain that we cannot take on applicants who are undertaking any other training courses.

A non-refundable deposit of £150 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 training. We are suggesting £40 per month (plus gift aid) for the duration of the training. 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.

The residential element of the training is not optional, and trainees will be required to pay their own travel expenses in year 1;

From year 2 they will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses incurred as a result of training;

Explain that the training is based on adult attachment theory and can be quite emotionally demanding - will bring up issues from their own relationships (past and present).

Do you have any questions for us?

7. Course Structure

Outline for Year One (2023)

Date	Duration	Event	Academic Work Due
Friday 31 st March – Sunday 2 nd April 2023	Min. of 14 teaching hours	Residential Weekend One	Sunday 16 th April
Friday 12 th – Sunday 14 th May 2023	Min. of 14 teaching hours	Residential Weekend Two	Sunday 28 th May
Friday 9 th – Saturday 11 th June 2023	Min. of 21 teaching hours	Residential Weekend Three (3 full days including Domestic Abuse training)	Sunday 25 th June
Saturday 24 th June 9:30 – 11:30am	3 hours	Online CPD Day: “Getting Started with Clients”	N/A
Friday 8 th – Sunday 10 th September 2023	Min. of 14 teaching hours	Residential Weekend Four	Sunday 24 th September
Saturday 30 th September	6 hours	Online CPD Day: “Working with a Sexual Focus”	N/A
Saturday 28 th October 9:30 – 11:30am	3 hours	Online Review and Progress	N/A

Outline for Year Two (2024)

Date	Duration	Online/ In-Person	Event
TBC	1 day	In-person	Endings
TBC	1 day	In-person	Developing Awareness of Domestic Abuse
TBC	1 day	Online	Developing your Skills - Working with a Sexual Focus
TBC	1 day	Online	Self-Care of the Therapist
TBC	Half day	Online	Know Your Limits
TBC	1 day	In-person	Mental Health Awareness
TBC	1 day	In-person	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
TBC	1 day	Online	Introduction and familiarisation with FOCCUS and REFOCCUS
TBC (can be done in year 1 or 2)	1 day	TBC	Attend, observe & help out at if required at a Marriage Preparation Day

Cost

The training is being offered free of charge thanks to the contribution of our volunteer training body, funding from national and local charitable Trusts, and a contribution from couples who attend Marriage Care's marriage preparation service. There is no charge for the training, apart from a **non-refundable deposit of £150 payable in advance to secure your place**. Selected trainees will be required to cover their own travelling expenses (in the first year only) and invited to **set-up a regular donation each month for the duration of the training to help cover the costs of food and accommodation for the residential components of the course. £40 is a suggested amount, however it is at the discretion of the individual who may, depending on their circumstances, chose to gift more, or less. No one will be turned away based on their ability to pay.**