

Counselling and Psychotherapy

What are Counselling and Psychotherapy?

Counselling is “the skilled and principled use of relationship to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources” (Canadian Counselling & Psychotherapy Association). In contrast, “the practice of psychotherapy is the assessment and treatment of serious cognitive, emotional, or behavioural disturbances by psychotherapeutic means, delivered through a therapeutic relationship based primarily on verbal or non-verbal communication” (College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario - CRPO). Other regulated healthcare professionals like registered social workers and occupational therapists may also practice psychotherapy. Un-registered counsellors may not practice psychotherapy in Ontario.

	Psychotherapists	Psychologists	Psychiatrists
Regulated by:	CRPO	College of Psychologists of Ontario	College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
<i>Educational Path</i>	Appropriate training in psychotherapy	Master and PhD in Clinical Psychology	Medicine (MD)
<i>Scope of Practice</i>	Psychotherapy Assessment, not diagnosis	Psychotherapy Diagnosis	Psychotherapy Diagnosis Medication

What are the common requirements to become a Registered Psychotherapist?

All applicants must complete the following:

- A recognized education and training program in psychotherapy
- 30 hours of competency development in safe and effective use of self (SEUS), normally part of the educational program
- 450 direct client hours, can be part of the educational program
- 100 hours of clinical supervision
- The Professional Practice & Jurisprudence e-Learning Module
- The registration exam

Recognized Educational Programs

The CRPO pre-approves training programs. A few of these include:

- University of Toronto/OISE, Master of Education in Counselling & Psychotherapy
- University of Guelph, Master of Science in Family and Couple Therapy
- Yorkville University, Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology

Start Early!

Graduate programs in psychotherapy/counselling require a minimum B average. Many look for demonstrated interest in psychotherapy on your application.

Improve your GPA:

Visit the AA&CC and the Centre for Teaching & Learning to improve your academic skills.

Cultivate References:

Get to know your professors. Their research is interesting! Professors who know you fairly well are able to write strong reference letters for you.

Get Involved:

Join volunteer and co-curricular activities that demonstrate your skills and ongoing interest in a career in psychotherapy.

Looking for Related Experience? Review the *Volunteering and Internships* tip sheets, attend a *Work Search Strategies* workshop, or speak with a Career Counsellor or Career Strategist.

What are the common academic requirements for Master's programs in counselling/psychotherapy?

- 4-year bachelor's degree from a recognized university; some programs may require a major in psychology and an undergraduate honours thesis (senior research project)
- Mid-B (3.0 GPA) average or better in your last 5-10 credits/last 1-2 years of study
- Training in statistics/research methods is recommended
- At least 1 year of relevant experience (voluntary and/or paid)

Note: admission to programs leading to a PhD (Psychologist licensing) requires a higher GPA

What supporting documents may be required?

- Official transcripts from all previous post-secondary education
- Letters of reference (up to three) from professors and/or work/volunteer supervisors
- Statement of Intent/Personal Statement
- Resume or CV

What should I include in my personal statement?

- Your interest in counselling and psychotherapy
- Your future goals and career path, as well as why their school in particular fits your goals
- What you will contribute to the program
- Related knowledge, experience and skills, including community involvement
- Research interests (where applicable)

Where can I find more information and resources?

College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario

www.crpo.ca

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association

www.ccpa-accp.ca

Ontario Association of Mental Health Professionals

www.oamhp.ca

Application & Personal Statement Resources

- Effective Admission Letters (U of T Writing Centre): www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/specific-types-of-writing/admission-letters
- Purdue University Online Writing Lab: owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/642/01/
- CTL's Graduate School Application and Personal Statement Assignment Calculator: ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/assignmentcal

Paying for a Counselling and/or Psychotherapy Program

Annual tuition for Ontario students ranges \$4,600-15,000. Remember to ask about scholarships and bursaries! You might also find financial support via tools like www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/student-aid.html

Other programs and paths to consider

Watch for an additional CRPO category upcoming, called Mental Health Therapists. The training for these professionals should be similar to the following college programs:

- Addiction and Mental Health Worker
- Assaulted Women's and Children's Counsellor/Advocate
- Social Service Worker
- Child and Youth Worker



The AA&CC can help!
Attend the Graduate & Professional Schools Fair (late September), go to a *Preparing for Professional & Graduate School* workshop, meet professionals in the field through Extern, or speak with a Career Counsellor/Strategist to learn how to get relevant experience!

Please note: While this tip sheet aims to ensure accuracy, requirements do change. Consider it a starting point for your further research. Visit individual regulatory bodies and program websites for detailed, up-to-date information about admission requirements and application procedures.