

**The British
Psychological Society**
Promoting excellence in psychology

Supplementary guidance for providers of accredited programmes on the roles and contributions of professional administrative staff

April 2017



**The British
Psychological Society**
Partnership & Accreditation

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Contents

- 4 Purpose of this document**
- 5 What do Psychology administrators do?**
- 6 What activities and processes do Psychology administrators typically support?**
- 8 What different organisational arrangements may apply?**
- 11 How will this document be used in the accreditation process?**
- 12 Examples of different approaches to administrative support on accredited programmes**

Purpose of this document

The Society's accreditation standards specify that sufficient administrative support is in place to support the effective delivery of all accredited programmes.

- For undergraduate, conversion and integrated Masters programmes, this administrative and secretarial staffing should comprise at least 2 full-time equivalents (FTE), at least 1 FTE of which should be dedicated to psychology. For larger provisions (greater than around 400 FTE students), additional resources are expected. Overall, the education provider must be able to demonstrate that the support in place is sufficient to meet the needs of the provision in question. As long as at least 1FTE is dedicated to psychology, shared or distributed arrangements are acceptable for the remaining 1FTE, provided that the education provider is able to demonstrate their overall equivalence to the minimum required standard, as evidenced by the standard of the student learning experience and the scholarship attained.
- The standards for Masters and Doctoral level programmes do not require a specified minimum FTE for administrative staffing, but instead specify that programmes must have access to sufficient administrative support staff to support their effective delivery. All staff are entitled to expect an institutional culture which values and rewards professionalism and scholarship, and which provides access to development opportunities which assist them in their support for student learning. Institutions should support initial and continuing professional development for all staff, and encourage self-evaluation as an essential element of reflective professional practice.

The Society recognises that the deployment of administrative staff may be demonstrated by departments in different ways. Institutions may need to consider centralising, restructuring or even outsourcing their administrative support, and there is clearly a need to balance the centre's priorities with the specific priorities for psychology and any external stakeholders. There will also be differences between the type of support that undergraduate programmes need, and the additional support needed for postgraduate programmes (for example in Doctoral professional practice programmes where there is a need to develop and maintain relationships with multiple external partners and stakeholders).

This document provides supplementary guidance to education providers concerning the range of approaches that are in use and the different contributions that administrative and secretarial staff may make to the overall work of a psychology department. It invites institutions to consider the range of activities and processes undertaken by accredited programmes, and the advantages and challenges associated with different staffing models as part of their efforts to ensure accessible, timely, and appropriate administrative and secretarial support for students and staff. It is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive.

What do Psychology administrators do?

Psychology administrators are responsible for managing, co-ordinating and delivering a wide portfolio of administrative and professional services to students, staff and other key stakeholders in accordance with University governance and quality assurance requirements. They are expected to have a full understanding of the student life cycle, and its underpinning policy, procedures and record-keeping. They also need to apply appropriate professional or specialist knowledge. Administrators are commonly the first point of contact for supporting student experience, providing administrative advice and support to academic staff, and liaising with psychology technicians, colleagues working in the University's quality management team, and other internal and external staff. This requires a sound knowledge of local departmental needs and professional body requirements and how these can be met within the approved University frameworks and timescales.

For some programmes (e.g. Doctoral professional practice programmes), additional administrative support is required to provide effective and consistent liaison and communication with external programme partners and stakeholders. Such programmes require administrative support to co-ordinate, allocate and monitor work placements, and to maintain associated records. This often requires administrators to build up personal working relationships with key people, and to work within external stakeholder standards, frameworks and timescales in addition to those specified by the University.

Administrators are typically required to be flexible, creative and adaptable in their approach, and work collaboratively with department members as well as other staff, to achieve departmental and central objectives. They are also expected to have a comprehensive knowledge of the processes and IT systems that support student, module and programme records. Psychology administrators also play an important role in working collaboratively with other departmental staff to reach decisions, and develop and implement new processes to achieve improvements in services for students and staff.

What activities and processes do Psychology administrators typically support?

Psychology administrators develop and provide a broad range of knowledge and skills required to effectively support the work of students and staff engaged in accredited programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate taught and professional practice). Discipline-relevant skills include expertise and experience of accredited provision and scientist-practitioner training, along with enhanced psychological literacy. Specialist psychological knowledge facilitates effective and consistent administrative support of required meetings, activities and processes. This knowledge may include up-to-date understanding of the standards and ethics requirements of the British Psychological Society (BPS), Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), the National Health Service (NHS), local education authorities, as well as international and other partnerships. The following examples are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive; however, support may typically include the following activities and processes:

- **Student Research** – such as the allocation of research project supervisors and resources, liaison with other support staff to arrange technical support and room bookings, management of research participation schemes, organising and providing support for research training, ethics panel meetings and research governance, and liaison and communication with external organisations. In the case of some postgraduate and Doctoral professional practice programmes this may include liaison with organisations such as schools, NHS trusts, and the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- **Professional Standards and Conduct** – such as supporting and monitoring the completion of documents for programme accreditation, approval and ongoing monitoring required by the BPS and HCPC and other external bodies, as well as the maintenance of activities and processes set out by these bodies in relation to programme delivery, ethical conduct and data retention and storage requirements.
- **Student Experience** – such as providing support with recruitment and admissions processes including visit days and open days for prospective students. Once students have enrolled support may include the organisation of activities to support welcome week and induction activities, student societies, departmental social events, and student and staff timetables. Administrative assistance may then include support and signposting for student funding and housing queries, personal development opportunities, liaison with student support services and IT services, the organisation and support of special considerations applications and meetings, and standard and special arrangements for exams and assessments (e.g. liaise with room booking and technical staff for students with additional requirements during exams).
- **Social Justice and Inclusion** – such as the maintenance and continued development of equality and diversity, the widening participation agenda, the integration of international students, and student wellbeing. This may include the provision of support for schemes such as the Athena Swan Charter.
- **Work Placements and Employability** – such as co-ordinating, allocating, monitoring and maintaining associated records for placement planning, placement monitoring, employment support, and work based learning, internships, and volunteering. In the case of Doctoral level professional practice programmes, this also includes the maintenance of multiple external relationships and external monitoring systems (such as the NHS Electronic Staff Record).

- **Data Management** – such as the organisation and provision of support for internal departmental meetings, committees and working groups. It also includes maintaining up to date student records across multiple systems for quality assurance processes, and the management and monitoring of student enrolment and module/programme changes. Assessment submission processes and systems also require management and monitoring. This can include academic integrity issues, progress monitoring, progression, supervision, organisation of work for external examiners, and the organisation of awards and graduation processes and events.
- **Local, National and International Partnerships** – such as the provision of support for outreach activities and partnerships with local, national and international schools, colleges, the local community, and international franchise and campus course provision. For Doctoral level professional practice programmes this may also include the organisation of curriculum delivery (including effective and consistent liaison with multiple external experts to teach specialist topics), the regular provision of detailed monitoring information for funders (such as quarterly contract monitoring), partner employers (such as the NHS or local education authorities), and professional bodies (such as the HCPC).
- **Future Requirements and Innovation** – such as the identification of opportunities for innovation to improve student and/or staff experience, as well as provision of support for new and pilot projects, and the implementation of enhancements to student related services.

It should be acknowledged that the range of administrative support that will need to be provided will vary depending on the teaching and research specialism(s) within the department in question.

What different organisational arrangements may apply?

A survey of Administrative, Secretarial and Technical Support undertaken by the Association of Heads of Psychology Departments (AHPD; 2013) together with experience gained through the Society's accreditation processes indicate that departments across the UK have a variety of different organisational arrangements in relation to their administrative and secretarial staff. These arrangements range from a model of localised support, based within and managed by departments, to more generic provision that is drawn from central faculty or wider University resources. Whilst a localised model is widely preferred, because it is better suited to the student and staff experience, typically a blend of these two ends of the spectrum is used.

It is not for the Society to be prescriptive about how universities might wish to organise and deploy their staff, but there is an expectation that the benefits and challenges associated with different models are considered, and that departments identify ways of overcoming those challenges that are most applicable to their provision. In particular, whether centralised or localised, there is a need to identify key principles of good practice around administrative work. This will ensure that whatever support arrangements are in place, that in addition to meeting the central requirements of the University, support is readily accessible and meets the needs of students, external partners and stakeholders, as well as administrative, technical, academic and other staff who contribute to programme delivery.

Advantages of localised support

- Survey results identified several advantages to having locally-based administrative support:
 - The student experience is enhanced by local support.
 - Locally-based administrative staff develop better familiarity with the department, courses and students.
 - Support is often more readily accessible to students and academic staff with queries, with this access being prioritised more highly when the physical location of administrative staff is locally-based.
 - Better relationship-building between departmental and administrative staff is facilitated when support is locally-based.
 - Locally-based administrators have a better understanding of psychology-specific needs.
 - Locally-based support enables better development of local expertise and better specialisation of skills to meet departmental needs, resulting in less explanation of tasks being required.
- Local support is more likely to ensure effective and smooth programme delivery especially when programmes involve multiple and various contacts with a wide range of partners and stakeholders.
- Staff and students benefit from administrators' good knowledge of the students, the department, and the GBC curriculum, and their ability to be responsive to specific needs and problems as a result of their locality and psychology specific knowledge.

- Where administrative staff are effectively integrated into the overall academic and support staff team and are involved in the work of the department on an ongoing basis, there is often greater opportunity for distributing workload in a way that enables academic staff to be relieved of tasks that centralised support staff may not be able to take on.
- More integrated, localised staffing models provide greater opportunities for Psychology administrators to be involved in developmental rather than solely functional support work. These opportunities can be used to improve administrative promotion prospects to higher grade and pay structures without the loss of accrued expertise to the department.
- Personal relationships with external partners and stakeholders can be achieved more easily through dedicated staff located in the programme team in a way that is harder to achieve in a centralised team.

Advantages of centralised support

- Advantages to centrally-based administrative support identified in survey results include:
 - Some non-student facing functions (e.g. quality assurance) can be better delivered centrally.
 - Central provision can be a more efficient and cost-effective use of resources (but it is important that quality is maintained).
- The availability of a larger pool of centralised support staff can offer access to a broader range of experience and knowledge (although providers will need to ensure that the means of access to such support meets the psychology department's local needs in addition to central requirements).
- Whilst larger departments operating a localised support model would typically have more than one member of administrative staff to call upon, for smaller departments centralised staffing models can provide greater scope for cover when staff are absent (e.g. in the case of leave or sickness).

Key principles of good practice for consideration

- Administrative staff feel less isolated and better supported when working as part of a team, whether this is as part of the wider psychology team (if localised) or part of a wider experienced team (if centralised) – or both.
- In the case of centrally-allocated or blended task-focused administrative provision flexible mechanisms should be in place to enable good working relationships and regular communication between local and central staff and teams, to facilitate:
 - Understanding of the specific local departmental needs by central staff.
 - Allocation of administrative support for new and ad-hoc tasks required locally by programmes.
 - Consideration as to whether local priority access to support when needed might be better enabled by some local line management (or input to line management) by named people with responsibility for oversight and coordination of local needs.
 - Involvement of administrative staff at relevant local meetings as contributing members of the programme team.
 - Consideration of ways to reduce academic staff needing to spend more of their time explaining particular tasks to ensure that the support they need is in place.

- Whether localised or centralised, consideration should be given to how the provision of support is maintained during periods of peak workload levels and restricted timescales, to ensure appropriate support is available in sufficient quantity, flexibility and expertise.
- The provision of contact details for a named administrator rather than the use of impersonal generic email addresses is more valued by students, academic and other staff, and external partners and stakeholders, and results in better quality personal working relationships being developed.
- Having a single point of contact for knowledgeable and flexible administrative support and knowing who to contact and how to contact them is particularly important for Doctoral professional practice programmes. This is because these programmes need to maintain good working relationships with multiple external experts who are not familiar with nor employed by the University but provide specialist lectures, tutoring, and placement opportunities for students.
- If localised resources need to be restructured and relocated to central services, steps should be taken to prevent the risks to programme quality and student experience associated with loss of programme-specific expertise and knowledge.
- The Society encourages psychology departments to nominate their valued administrative staff for recognition awards, rewards and bonus schemes available for staff within their own Universities.

How will this document be used in the accreditation process?

This document is intended to sit alongside the Society's accreditation handbook, and to provide universities with an overview of the various factors they should consider when making decisions regarding the nature and structure of administrative and secretarial support they provide to their psychology departments. It would assist accreditation reviewers if departments could consider the following questions when completing self-evaluation questionnaires for both partnership reviews and visits, and resource reviews. It would also be useful to include examples of how the factors outlined in this document are effectively addressed. Reviewers will be encouraged to consider these when evaluating the adequacy of administrative support staffing that is described in such submissions.

- How many administrative staff are employed?
- In what context are they employed (e.g. locally, centrally)?
- What are their roles and responsibilities?
- How many are dedicated to supporting psychology staff and students? (by dedicated we mean that supporting psychology staff and students is their only role, i.e. they are not responsible for providing administrative support to staff or students outside of psychology)
- To whom do these staff report?
- Where are administrative staff physically based (i.e. within the department or elsewhere)?
- What additional central resources can be called upon (for example at times of peak demand), and how is this organised?
- How are the introduction of non-routine or ad hoc administrative tasks managed or allocated?
- How many external stakeholders contribute to the programme?
- What proportion of administrative time is spent liaising with external stakeholders?
- How do you determine which tasks should be completed by academic or administrative (or other) staff?

Examples of different approaches to administrative support on accredited programmes

The following are offered as examples of the different arrangements in which administrative provision successfully supports the effective delivery of accredited programmes as outlined in these guidelines. We would welcome the inclusion of further examples of good practice: if you wish to submit a brief outline of and reflections on your provision, please contact

Lucy.Horder@bps.org.uk

- a) Administrative Support for the MSc Health Psychology at the University of Stirling – Summary of our approach.
- b) Administrative Support for the School of Psychology at the University of Kent – Summary of our approach.
- c) Administrative Support for the D Clin Psy at the University of Leicester – An Example of how a localised model with some central functions works in practice.

Administrative Support for the MSc Health Psychology at the University of Stirling – Summary of our approach

The MSc Health Psychology

Ours is a well-established, research-led health psychology course, delivered by a team of psychologists. We take the fact that this is the first stage of professional training for our students very seriously. The course has a strong applied focus. We foster links with local health care services and external course contributors, which is extremely helpful in supporting health care based experiential placements and dissertations. We could not do this without very high quality, approachable and accessible administrative support.

What model of administrative support?

We use a model of flexible local administrative support for most functions of the MSc Health Psychology, with centralised functions for recruitment and admissions, some timetabling and graduation procedures. We have a dedicated 0.5FTE administrator with overall responsibility for the Health Psychology MSc, who works as part of a psychology-based administrative team who provide additional support and back-up as required.

Recruitment and induction

Although recruitment procedures are centralised, it is crucial that this feels personalised for applicants. Our administrative support keep in touch with prospective students from first contact – responding to queries, tracking students' progress through recruitment and admissions and maintaining contact to create a sense of being welcomed by the wider University community and the Psychology Division. There is a varied and comprehensive induction programme in the first 2 weeks organised by administrative staff.

Student support

The key facet of the administrator role is providing an important 'first source of contact' for students at all stages of the programme, and beyond, and a liaison between students and the course team. Administrative support can often effectively 'troubleshoot' potential problems and signpost students to relevant support services within the University if required.

Course information for students and staff

Our administrative support is a central source of information for staff and students alike, managing timetables and the course handbook, regularly coordinating and updating course information online, and coordinating assessment and examination procedures. They also organise, participate in, and record (minute) all formal and informal team meetings, including exam boards and staff-student liaison committees, and maintain records of students' work, and appropriate files. They provide procedural expertise around functions such as attendance, leave of absence, and other university regulations, and support students' placement and dissertation processes.

External, local and national liaison

The administrator is also external-facing, liaising with external contributors to the course, the NHS and other employers in relation to placements, funded bursaries, and helping

students to navigate the increasingly complex landscape of ethical and legal requirements for placements and research projects. They also keep a record of past students' career destinations.

Reflections

What qualities do effective administrative staff need? We would include excellent interpersonal skills and organisational ability at the top of the list, however a good memory and tolerance are also helpful. Our model of support has continued evolving since the course started in 2002, and has remained robust throughout departmental and organisational restructuring. Informed and flexible administrative support is an invaluable resource for staff and students alike, and our feedback from students suggests this is one of the key elements of a 'good' Master's experience.

Dr Vivien Swanson CPsychol and the Health team, University of Stirling, June 2016

Administrative Support for the School of Psychology at the University of Kent – Summary of our approach

Thanks to a strategy of continual monitoring of staff and student needs, the School of Psychology at the University of Kent has created a vibrant, positive and supportive environment where everyone can develop and reach their full potential.

The School is led by the Head of School, who works very closely with the School Administration Manager. They share the services of a Personal Assistant, who is in attendance at regular catch-up meetings, thus ensuring excellent communication and liaison between academic colleagues and professional services staff.

The School is considered to be a 'trendsetter' at Kent, having been one of the first academic schools to appoint administrative staff to relieve the burden on academic staff, allowing them to prioritise teaching, research and enterprise activities.

Recruitment

Our outreach and recruitment is undertaken centrally as well as within the School, thus ensuring that Kent provides a fast as well as a personalised service to applicants. We have an administrative member of staff who leads a team of academics and encourages involvement on Open Days and Applicant Days. We also have a dedicated Employability and Placements Officer, who attends recruitment events, in order to be able to advise applicants who are interested in our applied placement programmes. We welcome visits from prospective students and parents, who may not be able to attend on the set days and provide them with past newsletters, as well as giving them a tour of the facilities.

Registration

The School has developed an excellent welcome programme for students, including the opportunity to meet the professional services staff, as well as academic colleagues and members of staff from the Library, Student Learning Advisory Service and Student Support and Wellbeing. The Welcome Week ends with the very popular treasure hunt around campus and barbeque, which helps students to familiarise themselves with their surroundings and enables them to meet their peers. They are provided with photographs of key locations and are then asked to take photos of themselves in these settings. Our Recruitment, Admissions and Marketing Officer then puts the photos on a dedicated Facebook page. The barbeque is attended by all academic and professional services staff, as well as new students and is one of many staff/student events during the academic year.

Support

The School of Psychology sees student support as a vital part of a student's personal and academic development whilst at Kent. We provide the support and guidance needed when students are finding their ability to study has been affected by family or personal problems, health problems or financial concerns. We have a dedicated Student Advisor, who is supported by a Student Support Co-ordinator. The role of the Student Advisor is to provide

advice and assistance, as well as directing them to the excellent services outside of the School, such as Student Support and Wellbeing.

On arrival, each student is also allocated to an Academic Adviser who can support their personal development during their studies. There is a tremendous amount of liaison therefore between the Student Advisor who is one of the professional service staff and the Academic Advisers. This is reinforced by the fact that the Student Support Co-ordinator also works with the Senior Tutor and Academic Advisers.

Student experience

As well as the pastoral and personal development support, the School's Employability and Placements Co-ordinator runs the very successful Research Experience Scheme for Stage 2 and Work Experience Scheme for Stage 3 students. This member of the team also organises talks from alumni students and works closely with the Careers and Employability Service within the University, providing students with guidance for their future careers. In fact, the School of Psychology was the first academic school at Kent to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the centrally-run Careers and Employability Service, due to its excellent destination statistics and working relationship.

The Professional Services Staff provide support with timetabling; handbooks; web; quality assurance; staff recruitment; advice on University procedures; committee servicing etc.

We have a dedicated Reception and Clerical Assistant who is the first point of call for students, staff and visitors. This is where students submit work; collect marked work; can arrange for a DBS with the support of the assistant and ask any questions.

The Administrative team recently took part in a University-wide project entitled 'Service Excellence' and the poster was commended by the judges. Our theme was one of listening, as we believe clear communication is the key to a successful service. We regularly hold focus groups involving administrative and academic colleagues and run internal surveys. As a result of listening to our students, we have been able to implement some significant changes in our School.

Following on from the Service Excellence initiative, we took on a further project entitled 'Enhancing partnerships through better communication'. Our aim was to build on the initial project involving communication and sign-posting. We produced a handy reference guide for staff and students. During a recent academic survey of admin staff, psychology achieved one of the highest response rates with some extremely positive comments. Our working groups always include academic and administrative staff and we have an enviable atmosphere in the School of Psychology – one of teamwork and support for each other and a brilliant understanding of the roles we each play.

Dr Georgina Randsley de Moura AFBPsS, University of Kent, October 2016

Administrative Support for the D Clin Psy at the University of Leicester – An Example of how a localised model with some central functions works in practice

The D Clin Psy is a three year, full time degree, where trainee clinical psychologists undertake a programme of academic study, with a taught curriculum, alongside a series of clinical practice placements which constitute at least 50 per cent of their time on the course. They also undertake clinically relevant research at doctoral level. Successful completion leads to eligibility to apply through the Health and Care Professions Council for registration and use of the protected title 'clinical psychologist'. For many years, Trainees have been employed within the NHS to undertake this three year training. There is a team of administrators who are depended on by staff and trainees alike for the effective delivery of this course. They are able to navigate through the complex matrix of University and NHS procedures and policies, which are not always tailored to suit the hybrid position of being both a student and an employee across two institutions.

What model of administrative support?

We have a local dedicated team of administrators, and have certain functions administered centrally though usually in liaison with the local team. Admissions, Graduate Office, Quality Office, Finance and Room Booking are the key central admin systems with which we liaise.

Recruitment and induction

All candidates for the D Clin Psy apply through the Clearing House for Postgraduate Courses in Clinical Psychology, an external central function operated on behalf of the majority of D Clin Psy courses in the UK. The admin team are responsible for ensuring the smooth processing of applications through shortlisting, invitations to the assessment centre, reception and support of candidates during assessment week, communicating with preferred candidates post selection. They then ensure that both the university and the employing trust issue tailored and consistent communications regarding fulfilling conditions, acceptance of a place, and registration on the course only after the contract of employment is signed.

There are two parallel induction processes: the admin team are involved in arranging a two day induction to the university and to the training course, and also liaise with the NHS Trust to ensure trainees attend the necessary induction sessions to enable them to work clinically during the course.

Student support

Most trainees look first to our admin team if they have any questions or queries about their course as they can effectively trouble shoot and signpost as relevant. They were recently awarded a 'super star' prize in recognition of the job they do for the trainees (super star nominations were open to all students in the university to recognise staff who were doing a brilliant job). Their contribution to the quality of the student experience during training is usually acknowledged, for example in the 'Alternative Handbook', and in the annual feedback forms collected for our funding body.

Course information for students and staff

Our admin team is a central source of information for both staff and students, as well as the several visiting speakers we invite for delivery of the taught curriculum. They maintain and regularly update the course handbooks, ensure online resources are current, coordinate receipt of coursework, allocation to markers, and communicate marks and feedback to the students. They organise, participate in where appropriate and take minutes of all formal team meetings, including the board of examiners.

Liaison with other stakeholders

The significant part of the admin team workload is taken up with managing and maintaining relationships with a wide range of external stakeholders, without whose inputs the course could not be delivered: The majority of the taught curriculum is delivered by visiting speakers, and the admin team ensure these people are invited and received with courtesy, get their expenses paid, and if they are eligible, organise for their registration with 'Unitemps' to receive payment for their input. Several of our external contributors are recognised as honorary lecturers by the University, and again the admin team administer this list. We have a Service User Reference Group all of whom contribute to both committee work and teaching. We have annual monitoring to complete for the HCPC and also liaison with the BPS Partnership and Accreditation Committee. In addition there is the quarterly Contract Monitoring Review meetings, which involve inviting a range of stakeholders external to the university (Health Education East Midlands, local Workforce Planners, representatives of local services and employers).

NHS liaison

As our students are employees of the NHS, there is regular administration of annual leave, sickness absence, and other employment matters. This involves completing weekly returns to an external agency 'Shared Business Services' as well as other communications with the local Trust. Clinical tutors on the staff team are also employed by the NHS and their leave is also administered through this system.

Clinical Practice Placements

This is one of the most time intensive aspects of the admin load. The Clinical Practice Placement Administrator lists the following duties: regular coordination with a neighbouring course, annual placement availability survey, spreadsheet of placements, placement planning meetings, communications with heads of service, with individual supervisors and with individual trainees regarding who is going where and when. Altogether approximately forty two placements are sought for each of six placement periods across the three years of training.

Thesis

The admin team liaise with external examiners and ensure that they complete the nomination forms and send these to the graduate office, via the head of department, for approval. Once approved, we then arrange a schedule of oral exams, within a two-week time frame for all theses that year. Trainees submit a softbound thesis locally, which is forwarded to the Graduate office once we have checked all the necessary accompanying forms are completed. The admin team is able to sign for all trainees that they have paid the fees.

Reception and courtesy during vivas: we consistently get feedback from external examiners who appreciate the way they are supported during their visit for the viva.

Post viva: all the necessary paperwork is collated locally, and forwarded to the graduate office, who have given positive feedback about how thorough this process is for our trainees: they do not have to spend their time following up on missing forms or getting pre viva reports signed, as this has been done.

Again, most trainees submit their hardbound thesis to the course secretary, who then forwards it to the Library after ensuring all the necessary paperwork for submission of the thesis is there.

Monitoring progress

We need to demonstrate to the university that all of the trainees are actively engaged with the course once each month. This is achieved by providing a photocopy of their sign in sheets when they attend for teaching, however during the holiday, each trainee is asked to log in to Blackboard at least once in August and September to satisfy this central requirement.

Finance

There has been a recent move to centralised financial control and the adoption of a 'smarter purchasing' system which has brought frustrations for the local team, who were accustomed to a high level of independence in managing regular as well as ad hoc supplies.

We have retained a separate budget for the delivery of the D Clin Psy, against which all speaker fees, expenses and a trainee research budget are charged.

Are the needs of a Clinical Doctoral Programme unique?

Through the revision of the programme specification, the College PGR Director took an interest in the ways in which our programme varied from the standard expectations of a doctoral degree course within the university.

Reflections

We are fortunate in having a comparatively well-resourced local admin team. Through attendance at the annual conference organised by and for administrators of the D Clin Psy courses, our team have become aware of the range, variety and depth of work they undertake. Often they are doing tasks, which in less well-resourced staff teams would be done by a member of the academic staff.

Mary O'Reilly CPsychol AFBPsS, University of Leicester, January 2017

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