



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

DClInPsych Research

Prof. Ross G. White

Research Director

Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Programme

Research Teaching

There are 3 modules across the three years of training:

- ***Applied Research 1*** (1st Year): Comprehensive overview of the main research approaches.
- ***Applied Research 2*** (2nd Year): Focus on practical steps for performing specific research methods.
- ***Applied Research 3*** (3rd Year): Emphasis on preparing and defending a doctoral dissertation.

Teaching is generally led by:

- DClinPsych programme staff
- School of Psychology staff
- Guest lecturers



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

What research do trainees complete?

Trainees conduct 3 pieces of research across the 3 years of the course:

1. **A Service-Related Project (SRP):** Generally, an audit or service evaluation that focuses on a topic that has been identified as important by a service where the trainee is on placement.
 - This is submitted in November of 2nd year.
2. **An Extended Literature Review (ELR):** Critically evaluates and synthesises research findings relating to a topic relevant to the LSRP.
 - The ELR forms part of the thesis submitted in 3rd year.
3. **A Large-Scale Research Project (LSRP):** This can be a qualitative or quantitative study conducted on a topic relevant to mental health & wellbeing and/or clinical psychology:
 - A proposal for the LSRP is submitted in 1st year.
 - The completed LSRP forms part of the thesis submitted in 3rd year.



Who supervises DClinPsych Projects?

All trainees are supervised by two QUB staff members.

Supervisors can be based in:

- Course staff team
- School of Psychology
- Other departments at QUB

Non-QUB staff (E.g., Clinical Psychology colleagues working in local trusts) can also contribute to supervision in addition to the two QUB staff.

Trainees meet with their supervisors regularly to receive support and advice for the completion of the project.

Thesis and Viva

A thesis (no more than 40,000 words) is submitted in May of the final year of training.

It consists of the following three sections:

1. The Extended Literature Review prepared as a manuscript for submission to a named journal
2. The Large-Scale Research Project prepared as a manuscript for submission to a named journal
3. Appendices

Final year trainees complete an oral examination of the doctoral thesis (the viva), which usually takes place in June.

The viva provides an opportunity for the trainee to respond to questions from one external examiner and one internal examiner about the work that they had conducted.



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

Examples of DClinPsych Projects

- Exploring Psychological Flexibility, Self-Compassion and Team Climate in Predicting Work Stress in Palliative Care Staff
- Post Traumatic Growth Inventory: Psychometric Assessment and Path Analysis.
- Children's Hospices: Exploring the Well-being and Experiences of Staff and Parents
- Understanding the Comorbidity of Military Veteran PTSD Symptomatology and Sleep Disturbances: A Network Analysis Approach.
- Attitudes about legitimacy and referral decisions in Functional Neurological Disorder
- Experiences of mothering across contexts; a qualitative approach.



Summary



- Research teaching happens across the three years, within teaching days.
- Three pieces of research (SRP, ELR and LSRP) are conducted over the three years of training.
- The LSRP is supervised by at least two QUB staff members.
- The LSRPs can focus on a range of different topics and can utilise a variety of research methods.
- In final year, trainees submit a thesis that is examined during a viva.
- Trainees are strongly encouraged to publish their research in peer reviewed academic journals.

Examples of Recent Publications

- Johnston, J., Moore, J., Hanna, D., Curran, D., Jordan, J. A., Shannon, C., & Dyer, K. F. (2025). Evaluation of the psychometric properties of trauma history measures: Assessment of reliability and validity. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*.
- Craig, S. N., Dempster, M., Curran, D., Cuddihy, A. M., & Lyttle, N. (2025). A systematic review of the effectiveness of digital cognitive assessments of cognitive impairment in Parkinson's disease. *Applied Neuropsychology: Adult*, 1-13.
- Cleary, E., Curran, D., Dyer, K., Simms, J., & Hanna, D. (2024). Contributing factors to secondary traumatic stress and vicarious posttraumatic growth in therapists. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 37(1), 103-112.
- Maguire, D., May, K., McCormack, D., & Fosker, T. (2024). A systematic review of the impact of placement instability on emotional and behavioural outcomes among children in foster care. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, 17(2), 641-655.
- McGhee, W. R., Doherty, C. J., Graham-Wisener, L., Fallis, R., Stone, C., Axiaq, A., & Dempster, M. (2024). Immersive virtual reality and psychological well-being in adult chronic physical illness: systematic review. *BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care*, 14(1), 14-24.





QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

Questions about DClinPsy research?

