MASTER OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY
(COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY)

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What is Counselling Psychology?

• Psychological assessment and therapy for individuals, couples, families, and groups
• Wide range of evidence-based therapeutic tools
• Treatment for mental health disorders and other lifestyle concerns, e.g.
  • depression, anxiety, stress, substance abuse, PTSD, chronic pain, relationship issues, trauma, sexual or physical abuse, career development...
How is it different to other areas of psychology?

• The focus of therapy is on treating the whole person within their context, not just treating the diagnosis

• Flexibility in therapeutic tools = versatility in working with clients

• Clients can be individuals, couples, families, groups, children, youth, adults, elderly...

• May have DSM-IV diagnoses, or may have other concerns with stress, grief, relationships, health...
How do I become a Counselling Psychologist?

- Completion of a Masters in Counselling Psychology
- Register with the Psychology Board of Australia (PBA)
- Two years of supervised practice (supervised by a Counselling Psychologist)
- Apply for endorsement with the PBA
What are the perks?

• Recognition of advanced learning beyond general psychologist registration – endorsement with the PBA

• Eligibility for membership of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and the APS College of Counselling Psychologists
What about employment?

• Advantages in having endorsement in a specialty over having general registration

• Employers seek psychologists endorsed in a specialty such as counselling psychology

• Shows clients your specialty in service provision
Master of Applied Psychology Program:

- Program recognised by PBA & APS
- Coursework, placements and thesis
- 1600 hours practice
  - 1000 supervised practice (including supervision)
  - 600 research based activities (thesis)
Master of Applied Psychology
Coursework:

- Some coursework is shared with Master of Counselling
- Courses include:
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Assessment and Evaluation
  - Theories of Counselling
  - Counselling with diverse groups
  - Counselling and Mental Health
Placements structure:

- 4 externship placements
- Approx 250 hours (including 33 hours supervision) per placement course = 2 days/wk for 20 weeks
- Can extend placements over uni semester breaks with approval
- Placements can be in paid or voluntary roles – must be psychological practice
Examples of placement clientele:

- **Client groups:** refugees, ATSI, people with a disability, elderly, children, teens, adults, unemployed...
- **Diagnoses:** depression, anxiety, PTSD, autism, bulimia, adjustment disorder, dementia...
- **Issues:** grief & loss, trauma, substance abuse, domestic violence, family relationship breakdown, behaviour management, comorbidity...
Examples of placement settings:

- Education – primary, high and tertiary
- Hospitals – physical or psychological health
- Government, e.g. Dept of Communities
- Employee Assistance Providers (EAP)
- Employment services (JNA)
- Community services
- Private practice
Websites to explore:

- PBA  www.psychologyboard.gov.au
- APS  www.psychology.org.au
- APS (counselling psychology)  www.groups.psychology.org.au/ccoun/