



Information for Applicants:

For entry to the

BA (Hons) Degree in Integrative Counselling 2026-27

**Recognition of Prior Learning
For qualified counsellors, (level 5) without a
foundation degree**



Information for Applicants

Thank you for your interest in the Level 6 BA (Hons) Degree Top-Up in Integrative Counselling at Iron Mill College.

We recognise that many counsellors trained on programmes that were not validated at Level 5 and therefore are not able to meet the usual entry criteria for a BA (Hons) programme. This assessment process is intended to provide an opportunity for qualified counsellors, who wish to apply for a place on the BA (Hons) Top-up programme, but do not hold a university validated counselling qualification at levels 4 & 5 (Foundation Degree).

Eligibility

You may apply to this programme if you meet the following requirements:

- a) You hold full membership of the BACP (i.e. MBACP status) or equivalent (e.g. NCPS accreditation)

and

- b) You can document that your previous learning and experience cover the learning outcomes as set out in the mapping document below.

Overview of the application process

Following your application to the BA (Hons) Integrative Counselling Programme, you will be required to submit a portfolio of evidence demonstrating your counselling experience, your active engagement in CPD activity, and your ability with reference to Level 5 FdA Integrative Counselling Learning Outcomes and the FHEQ Level 5 descriptor.

This portfolio will be assessed by the Higher Educational Lead Tutor, moderated by both the University of Worcester Link Tutor and the External Examiner for this level 6 qualification. The outcome of this assessment, together with your interview, will determine whether you will be offered a place for your chosen year of entry.

Due to the rigorous process of assessment and moderation, please note that it will take approximately four weeks from submission to receive notification of the outcome.

Admission Criteria for BA (Hons) Top-up Integrative Counselling

Requirements	Evidence	☐ ☐
1. Current Professional Practice		
1.1 Evidence of MBACP registration (full membership of the BACP or equivalent).	Scan of current membership card*	
1.2 Evidence of professional indemnity insurance (personal)	Scan of current certificate	
1.3 Evidence that you are currently practicing counselling or psychotherapy	Supervisor signed statement	
2. Training - evidence that you have successfully completed and received an award for counselling practitioner training which:		
2.1 included at least 400 hours of tutor contact hours	Certificate or signed letter from college*, and details of qualifications (this may be a copy of the syllabus, list of course content and assessments or similar)	
2.2 was carried out over at least two years	Certificate or signed letter from college*	
2.3 had a supervised placement of 100 hours or more, as an integral part of the training	Certificate or signed letter from college*	
2.4 covered theory, skills, professional issues and personal development	Certificate or signed letter from college*	
3. Counselling Experience & Additional Informal Learning / CPD		
3.1 you have been in practice as a counsellor for at least one year (this includes placement hours)	Supervisor signed statement	

3.2 you have at least 100 hours of supervised counselling practice (this includes placement hours)	Supervisor signed statements covering the 100-hour period	
3.3 you have been supervised for at least 1.5 hours per month throughout the period of practice submitted	Supervisor signed statement	
3.4 Evidence of all CPD activities attended in the past three years	Scan of certificates*	
4. Evidence of ability to engage in study at Level 6		
Write a case study to demonstrate your level of professional experience and learning. How has your training and CPD has influenced your practice? We will assess your work using the Case Study criteria (page 6). Also check your work using: - the FdA Level 5 Learning Outcomes (page 7) and - the FHEQ Level 5 descriptor (page 8).	Case Study: 2000 words max.	
5. Reflective Statement of Learning		
Write a reflective personal statement evaluating your accumulated learning and experience, and its impact upon your current practice and level of professional development. We will assess your statement with reference to the Level 5 Learning Outcomes listed on page7 of this document.	Reflective Statement: 1000 words max.	

How to submit your portfolio

Before submitting, please check that:

- your portfolio of evidence is complete – we cannot accept pieces of evidence submitted separately
- the completed checklist (on page 3 and 4 of this document) is included in your submission.

Please send your portfolio to:

admissions@ironmill.co.uk

Questions?

We hope this document contains all the information you will need, but if you have any further queries, you are welcome to contact us:

Head of HE: Karen Minikin, karen.minikin@ironmill.co.uk

Academic Administration Manager: Amanda Murrell, amanda.murrell@ironmill.co.uk

Tel: 01392 219200

Email: admissions@ironmill.co.uk

Website: www.ironmill.co.uk

Non-HE Applicant Assessment: guidance documents

This section is for your information and guidance, and contains

Case Study Criteria	page 6
FdA Level 5 Learning Outcomes	page 7
FHEQ Level 5 Descriptor	page 8

Case Study Criteria

These criteria are in line with the FdA Level 5 Learning Outcomes and the FHEQ Level 5 Descriptor. Within the case study, you should demonstrate your knowledge, experience and competence in:

- a. the establishment and ongoing management of an effective therapeutic relationship with a client, in which you demonstrate the personal moral qualities listed within the BACP Ethical Framework
- b. the use of a clearly identified (integrative or single) relational approach, and use of a range of therapeutic responses, strategies and interventions compatible with that approach
- c. working with awareness of current legal and ethical requirements, and management of ethical complexities
- d. the acknowledgement and management of the impact of diversity and difference in the therapeutic relationship
- e. the management of difficulties and ruptures in the therapeutic alliance
- f. effective use of professional supervision, and the ability to engage in self-reflective practice.

FdA Level 5 Learning Outcomes

On completing Level 5, students will be able to:

1. identify the philosophical assumptions underpinning the theory and practice of counselling and psychotherapy
2. evaluate and make use of a range of well-established therapeutic approaches appropriate to the needs of the client
3. describe and critically analyse a personal philosophy of counselling and integrative approach, and provide evidence of this approach in practice
4. recognise ways in which the relationship is conceptualised in a range of different theoretical models, and evidence the ability to form and maintain a meaningful therapeutic relationship
5. demonstrate confidence and competence in the use of therapeutic skills
6. maintain the ethical principles that underpin counselling and psychotherapy
7. integrate into practice legal, professional and organisational requirements pertaining to equal opportunities, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice
8. develop knowledge about research and apply a comprehensive, in-depth and research-informed body of knowledge in practice, developing skills in the retrieval, evaluation and communication of information
9. develop professional knowledge of mental health and psychopharmacology
10. gain work-based understanding (ethical, contractual, professional, legal, social and organisational)
11. recognise their own professional strengths and limitations that may affect therapeutic practice, and develop appropriate self-support and self-care strategies
12. demonstrate use of reflective practice in developing an understanding of the self in relationship
13. demonstrate the ability to reflect upon your own practice and explicitly define areas for professional development
14. demonstrate in-depth understanding of the purpose, theory and practice of supervision
15. recognise and make appropriate decisions in response to ethical dilemmas and legal responsibilities when assessing potential risk to the client or others
16. professional presentation of work in a clear, well-structured

BA (Hons) Application Process via Recognition of Prior Learning 2026-27
and well-informed manner, with the ability to critically evaluate
material.

**FHEQ Level 5 Descriptor for higher education qualification at level 5:
Foundation Degree**

The descriptor provided for this level of the FHEQ is for any Foundation Degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other level 5 qualifications.

Foundation Degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- I. knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- II. ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- III. knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- IV. an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and leads to interpretations based on that knowledge.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- I. use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- II. effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- III. undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

And holders will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

BA (Hons) Application Process via Recognition of Prior Learning 2026-27

- I. Holders of qualifications at this level will have developed a sound understanding of the principles in their field of study
- II. and will have learned to apply those principles more widely. Through this, they will have learned to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems.
- III. Their studies may well have had a vocational orientation, for example HNDs, enabling them to perform effectively in their chosen field. Holders of qualifications at this level will have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, August 2008

Appendix One: Assessment Summary, (for Office Use)
Updated mapping Document for the BA Honours in Integrative Counselling (IMC)

Requirements for admission

450 hours certificated training over two years	Insert applicant qualification here
Professional membership	Insert applicant membership here
Minimum 100 hours supervised placement	Yes/No
Evidence of minimum 1-year supervised practice (inc. placement)	Supervisor's signed statement.

Module mapping.

Module code	Title	Credit	Evidence
IMIC1001	The Art of Relationship	15	Insert applicant qualification here Case Study- academic challenge
IMIC1002	Professional Competence	30	Insert applicant qualification here
IMIC1003	The Neuroscience of Relationship	15	Insert applicant qualification here
IMIC1004	A Sense of Self	30	Insert applicant qualification here Reflective Account
IMIC1005	Professional Development 1	30	Professional Practice CPD evidence
IMIC 2001	Here and Now Encounter	30	Insert applicant qualification here Case Study- Academic Challenge
IMIC2002	Creative Arts Therapies	15	Insert applicant qualification here
IMIC2003	Counselling in context	30	Insert applicant qualification here
IMIC2005	Professional Development 2	30	Professional

BA (Hons) Application Process via Recognition of Prior Learning 2026-27

			Practice, CPD evidence
IMIC2004	The Process of Change	15	Reflective account Interview
IMIC2006	Professional Practice	0	100/150 hours counselling placement + 40 hours personal counselling.

Professional Practice	Credits claimed: 60
Recognition of Prior Learning /Certificated Learning	Credits claimed: 180