



In-person training and reasonable adjustments: PCPB statement

This statement is intended to clarify the Partnership of Counselling and Psychotherapy Bodies' (PCPB) position on in-person training in counselling and psychotherapy and how reasonable adjustments may apply. It follows feedback from those seeking clarity on the role of online training in relation to the SCoPEd framework.

The competencies within the SCoPEd framework were developed through a systematic review and thematic analysis of a wide range of sources, including published research and existing competence frameworks. At the time this work was undertaken, before the pandemic, training and supervised placement hours were delivered in-person and the framework therefore reflects those standards.

There is a consensus across the partnership, as reflected in the SCoPEd framework, that in-person training and supervised placements are the foundation for developing the core competencies required for safe, ethical and effective counselling and psychotherapy practice. These include relational skills, embodied awareness, emotional attunement and the ability to interpret non-verbal cues - all of which are central to building therapeutic relationships and managing client risk.

Supervised in-person placements also provide trainees with essential opportunities to gain experience with real clients, receive immediate support and feedback and develop professional judgement in complex, real-world scenarios.

While online learning can have a role in CPD and certain skills development, current research does not yet provide evidence that online training alone can reliably deliver or assess many of these core competencies. For this reason, in-person training and practice remain essential to ensuring public safety, professional integrity and the effective development of counselling and psychotherapy professionals.

The partnership also recognises the importance of equitable access to training. Reasonable adjustments, particularly for disabled trainees, are an essential part of this. Where adjustments include online elements, training providers must ensure that all core competencies are still fully met.

This statement reflects and reaffirms the standards already embedded within the SCoPEd framework and applied consistently across partner organisations. For fuller guidance on how this applies in practice, trainees and training providers should speak directly to their own professional body.