

**Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) Practitioner Training**

**Commissioned and Funded by NHS England for NHS secondary care staff working with people with Complex Relational Problems**

**Key Differences for CAT Practitioner commissioned courses for NHS England funded trainees**

CAT Practitioner training is funded by NHS England to support the expansion of psychological therapies for severe mental health problems in adult community services and is specific for staff in community services working with adults (including older people) with people with complex relational problems and adverse childhood experience, who would be likely to meet criteria for a diagnosis of “Borderline Personality Disorder” or “Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder (EUPD)”. Three courses have been commissioned, starting in 2023:

* Catalyse to cover North West, Midlands, and towards Yorkshire and the Humber;
* Cumbria, Newcastle, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust for the North East;
* Sussex Partnership who will host a course in the South East covering Sussex, London, Suffolk and Norfolk.
* There will another commissioning round for gaps to ensure trainees can access training across the whole of England.

Cohorts for NHS England funded trainees may be standalone or trainees will be part of an open cohort with other trainees but have specific components. Although trainees work with clients with complex needs for which CAT is particularly helpful, the training and the award is generic and is designed in such a way to equip trainees with the ability to flexibly use CAT with clients with a range of presenting difficulties, and in the wider context within which they are seen. This paper describes the key differences for the CAT Practitioner award for NHS England funded trainees

##### Entry Requirements

In addition to the usual entry requirements for CAT Practitioner training trainees will already have (and will be asked to demonstrate)

* Relevant experience of working with people in a mental health setting within psychotherapeutic boundaries and a qualification in an NHS recognised mental health core profession (mental health nursing, clinical psychology, counselling psychology, forensic psychology, psychiatry, occupational therapy, social work, psychological therapy, art / drama / music therapy, or counselling - [ScoPEd](https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/advancing-the-profession/scoped/scoped-framework/) B Practitioner).
* A minimum of twelve months experience of working with clients who meet criteria for a diagnosis of ‘personality disorder’, including the difficulties described by ‘borderline' or emotionally unstable' personality disorder’. Through this experience applicants will be expected to have acquired the "core competences for work with individuals with personality disorder" outlined in column one of the Roth and Pilling Competence framework (UCL Centre for Outcomes Research and Effectiveness); <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/clinical-psychology/competency-maps/pd-map.html>. N.B. CAT training will not focus on these competences.
* Experience of a minimum of one year of practice of psychological therapy/interventions, or counselling (at least half a day per week), plus a minimum of one year of recognised training in psychological therapy/interventions or counselling. The experience would ideally have been gained in the NHS and as this training is funded by the NHS, there needs to be a commitment for graduates of this training to continue to apply their skills in the NHS.
* Through this experience all applicants would be expected to demonstrate that they have acquired or are working towards the core generic therapeutic competences <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/clinical-psychology/competency-maps/cat-map.html>.

CAT training will focus on these competences from a CAT model perspective and applicants would need to ensure that they gain competence at the completion of CAT training, as this will be assessed.

#### **Course components**

### Training days

### There are no fundamental differences as teaching overs the skills and competences particularly applicable for this work.

### Seminar groups

The NHS England trainees may form seminar groups together but the reading material is already designed to adequately cover their area of work.

*Personal ‘Training’ Therapy*

NHS England trainees have allocated funding for the personal therapy up to £80 per session. Any shortfall between the funding provided by the training programme and the total cost of therapy would be the trainee’s responsibility.

### Clinical practice

For CAT Practitioner training trainees are usually expected to complete eight CAT therapies under the supervision of an ACAT accredited supervisor. The work should include a range of problems and clients/service users, including working in the latter part of the training with clients with more complex difficulties. Although trainees need to develop the skill to confidently practice 16 session CAT they should (where possible) also gain experience in variations of the time limit of 8 sessions and 24 sessions. The recommendation for accreditation is six 16 session cases, one 24 session case and one 8 session CAT. ACAT accreditation guidance is as follows: For submission for accreditation the following applies: A minimum 8 cases; minimum 128 hours (excluding follow-up sessions); with a minimum of 6 cases which have 16 or more sessions. All 3 key tools (RL, SDR, GL) must be used in each of the submitted cases, other than 8 session CATs when a SDR and ‘hybrid’ (reformulation /goodbye) letter shared at the end of therapy is a recommended alternative.

For NHS England funded trainees on an approved CAT Practitioner course where the course is specifically for trainees working with clients with severe and complex mental health problems associated with a diagnosis of 'personality disorder' an alternative case mix is accepted for accreditation. For this client group 24 session CAT is the recommended and evidence-based intervention, so a higher number of your training cases are likely to be 24 sessions in length (rather than the 16 session model for other difficulties). Trainees can therefore meet the accepted minimum clinical hours by seeing six 24 session cases.

* Trainees are required to see clients with a range of difficulties and demographic characteristics. At least two cases should be of a different diagnosis than “personality disorder” in order to demonstrate the accreditation requirement to be able to use CAT with a variety of clinical presentations.
* Trainees would usually be seeing clients from their own service for CAT training cases and would be encouraged to identify clients who may be suitable for a 16 session CAT for their first training cases.
* Trainees will routinely bring session recordings to supervision to allow feedback, with a minimum of one full length formative assessment of a whole session being conducted in supervision each year. This may, for example be conducted through a cycle in which one trainee brings a full session recording every 3-4 month (see below)
* The cost of supervision is included in the course fees and can be with an internal or external supervisor. Supervision fees are provided for two years but an extension to this can be made if trainees need to extend training for a justifiable reason.

#### NB Additional clinical practice for NHS England funded trainees

The course requirement is to be seeing two clients as CAT Training cases at any one time, and this allows you to see 8 clients over two years. Trainees will be attending supervision weekly, seminars (approximately 8 a year) and training days (approximately 10 days a year). NHS England funded trainees may be released from their main role for this training for up to two days a week. Trainees may see more than two clients for CAT in this time but they may not be supervised by an accredited supervisor and so these are likely to be in addition to the training cases needed to meet the course requirements.

## Course assessment and completion

###### *Assessment*

Although this is encouraged in all CAT Practitioner training, it is a requirement for NHS England trainees to bring real material to supervision as listening to and rating recorded therapy sessions is an intrinsic element of assessment of a trainee's competence.  This is part of ongoing supervision and is part of both a formative and summative assessment process as follows:

* 1. Formative assessment: Trainees will routinely bring session recordings to supervision to allow feedback, with a minimum of one full length formative assessment of a whole session being conducted in supervision. This may, for example be conducted through a cycle in which one trainee brings a full session recording every 3-4 months.
  2. Summative assessment: There will be a minimum of two summative assessments, one in year 1 and one in year 2 in which a session recording will be formally assessed using the Competence in CAT (CCAT) measure. This will be submitted as part of the end of year case study.
  3. The course will monitor progression on the assessment of actual practice through the supervisor appraisals and reports on the session recordings. As part of the formative process they will identify trainees who may need more support.

Consequently, for NHS England funded trainees, both the first year and second year case studies require submission of an audio recording of one session with accompanying analysis and reflection as part of the assessment. Trainees will receive feedback and although trainees need to pass each case study, the aim is that trainees will experience the feedback as part of a developmental process rather than just an evaluative one.

*Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)*

Unlike traditional CAT training this NHS CAT curriculum does not recognise prior cases where you may have completed a CAT therapy with a client and been supervised by an ACAT accredited supervisor as contributing to the qualification.

*Completion*

Trainees may transfer between courses/ education providers with the agreement of the Course Director but NHS funded trainees need the agreement of their respective NHS England regional leads.

*Timescale*

CAT Practitioner Training is a formal two-year course in which the academic training days, seminars and clinical supervision groups run over a 2 calendar year period. For many trainees the supervised clinical practice requirements can take more than two years. NHS England provide supervision fees for two years and trainees may need to consider the cost of additional supervision if there is a need to extend this.

## What Managerial Support is needed?

All applicants require full support for the course from their current manager and NHS Regional Lead. Trainees should be aware of and confirm, along with their sponsoring manager, that they and their service are able to commit to all components of the training, including up to two days per week to deliver CAT therapy during and after completion of training.

Trainees mare encouraged to have a working agreement with their manager on undertaking the course, to ensure all parties are clear about the requirements to complete the course.  This also applies if they move posts while training.  The agreement relates in particular to the time available to attend training days and supervision; and support to access appropriate training cases in a timely way.  We supply a suggested working agreement for managers and you will be required to supply a signed copy before starting the course.

1. **Course contact details and core training teams**

The courses are principally located within NHS regions. Trainees apply to the course within their region. There may be situations when trainees on the borders between two courses, for example in the North East of England may be offered a place on a course outside their region (e.g. Catalyse course) due to ease of travel and capacity in any given year. The partnership board will work collaboratively to manage these situations to ensure that there is access to CAT training in a timely way. Map of NHS regions: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/HEE%20REGIONAL%20Map.pdf>

Areas 1-4: North -East site (please note areas 2-4 may also be covered by the North-West site)

Areas 5-18: North-West site

Areas 19-35: South-East site

###### North West and Midlands: The Catalyse CAT Practitioner Course

Contact: Frances Free Email [admin@catalyse.uk.com](mailto:admin@catalyse.uk.com)

Website: [www.catalyse.uk.com/training/practitioner-training/2024-2026-practitioner-training/](http://www.catalyse.uk.com/training/practitioner-training/2024-2026-practitioner-training/)

## North East site: Hosted by Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Contact: [cspttraining@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:cspttraining@cntw.nhs.uk)

## South-East site: Hosted by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Contact: Niki Larsen-Johnson: [PP@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:PP@spft.nhs.uk)

## South West site: not currently available