



Persona

2026

Certificate in Couples Counselling and Relationship Work

Course Outline

This six-day, professional CPD programme is designed for those who are interested in developing their skills and experience to enable them to begin working with couples in relationship therapy. The programme is ideally suited for those who are already experienced counsellors working with individuals and who are interested in taking their practice towards relationship counselling.

The programme will be based upon the principles and philosophical concepts which underpin person centred theory and will incorporate experiential activities and group discussions as well as providing opportunities to practice in small groups. Trainers will use examples from their experience to facilitate the learning.

The course will be delivered FULLY ONLINE over six days.

Day 1 Sunday January 25th 2026 9.30 – 4.30

Theme: Introduction & Beginnings

- Course Outline
- Introductions to each other
- Understanding the differences and similarities between working with couples and individuals.
- Initial contact with couples, assessment and contracting
- Theory Input: Why do couples come and what do they want
- Group Reflection

Day 2 Sunday February 15th 2026 9.30 – 4.30

Theme: Six Conditions and Boundaries

- Boundaries specific to couple working
- Therapeutic Conditions for couples working and the purpose of the relationship
- Skills Practice
- Group Reflection

Day 3 Sunday March 15th 2026 9.30 – 4.30

Theme: Personality Theory and Couples working

- Structuring, reviewing and tracking sessions
- PC Theory – Personality Theory for Couples working and the actualising tendency
- Therapists' role as a 'translator'
- Use of supervision
- Skills Practice
- Group Reflection

Day 4 Sunday April 19th 2026 9.30 – 4.30

Theme: Working with difference

- Working with Difference
- Working online/telephone
- Safeguarding
- Supervision
- Group Reflection

Day 5 Sunday May 24th 2026 9.30 – 4.30

Theme: Intimacy, Sex and Sexuality

- Sex / Sexuality / intimacy /maturity
- Supervision
- Transcript and reflective Preparation
- Group Reflection

Day 6 Sunday July 19th 2026 9.30 – 4.30

Theme: Endings

- Ethical Decision Making, Dilemmas, Safeguarding
- Endings
- Statement of Learning
- Group Reflection

Course Assignments and Course Requirements

1. A 15-minute transcript of a couple's session
2. A 2000-word essay accompanying the transcript:
 - Relate this to your understanding of the theory as taught in this training
 - A consideration of and comment around the dynamics in the session
 - Reflections on your process
3. A 2000-word Statement of Learning and Development which will be informed by:
 - your experiences on the course
 - your on-going practice and supervision
 - Your further reading
4. Completion of 12 hours of supervised Couples Work

Timeframe for completion of course requirements: Before October 31st 2026

Course Facilitators:

Ross Cairns is an experienced counsellor/psychotherapist/supervisor/trainer/tutor and group facilitator who has been involved in developing and delivering training in a variety of settings and sectors over the last 20 years. He has created and delivered bespoke training packages for the Scottish Construction Sector as well as working with some smaller organisations to assist with staff training and implementation of key initiatives. Ross is the lead tutor/trainer with Persona and has played a key role in the delivery of the Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy over the last 10 years. Ross is an MSc qualified Psychotherapist and an accredited member of BACP and he currently runs a private therapy and supervision practice as part of his portfolio of interests. Ross became interested in working with Couples and Families when he was completing his MSc programme, and since then has built up a wealth of experience in this area. He currently sees couples and families regularly as part of his private practice.

Clair Higgon is a person centred counsellor, supervisor and trainer living and working mainly in Dumfries and Galloway. She gained her person centred diploma with PCT Britain in 1997 and supervision certificate with the same organisation in 2008. With a background in nursing and mental health she has worked in the NHS, Social work and third sector settings. In the past Clair has worked in both further and higher education settings. Now she has a portfolio of work that encompasses private practice, offering counselling to individuals and couples and supervision in person and online in Dumfries. In her supervision practice she works with trained and training counsellors and third sector support staff. She also delivers a variety of training to local and national organisations. Clair works with the Persona diploma and supervision programme.

Application Process

The course expects participants to be able to draw on their own experience of supervised clinical practice and therefore it is important that individuals feel sufficiently competent and grounded in their orientation as a practitioner in order to gain maximum learning and development from the programme. With this in mind, applicants will have a minimum 3 years of practice. This can include the clinical practice gained during your training to become a practitioner in a helping profession with at least an additional 200 hours of supervised practice gained post qualification. Applicants will also be members of a Professional Association, with relevant indemnity insurance.

If you are interested in the programme, please complete the **Application Form** and forward it to the Persona office, admin@personacounselling.com along with the name of someone who knows you in a professional capacity (ideally your supervisor) and is willing to provide a reference. There is no formal interview process, however, the course tutors may contact applicants if any questions arise from the application form.

Course Fees: £850.00

This includes a deposit of £100 to secure a place on the programme. The remaining course fees can be made as one instalment or as 6 separate instalments of £125 due monthly from January 5th 2026.

Closing date for applications is Monday December 22nd 2025.

Please note there will be a minimum number of participants for the programme to commence. The course will be limited to a maximum of 15 participants

For all enquires please contact:

admin@personacounseling.com

Tel: 0330 202 0283