
COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY PRACTITIONER TRAINING COURSE YEAR ONE

COURSE OUTLINE



ABOUT COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY

Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) is an integrative, relational model that is collaborative and flexible and seeks to understand links between the way we learned to relate in the past and patterns in the present that make life more difficult than it needs to be.

CAT can be used as an individual therapy as well as a relational framework. In individual therapy, the therapist and client work together, using non-blaming language, to make sense of the client's patterns of relating, and how these are enacted through thinking, feeling, behaving in order to facilitate change. The therapist invites exploration of the way the person has experienced relationships since childhood, postulating that these are replicated with others and in the person's internal conversations in the present. As such it is a helpful model for understanding the interactions between the client and therapist as well as wider social processes that can be maintaining the person's difficulties, and how clinicians can avoid colluding with unhelpful patterns in ways that might make things worse.

Individual CAT interventions are time-limited (usually 16 sessions) and include letters and diagrams, which facilitate the joint development of a shared understanding of the client's patterns of difficulties and the origins of these patterns. The process of reflecting together allows the client to begin to develop and practise alternative and more adaptive relational patterns. CAT is a flexible model that allows for integration of different techniques, with the aim of helping clients to find better ways of being with other people and of taking care of themselves. CAT has a transdiagnostic approach, so it can be used to treat a wide range of difficulties including depression, anxiety, personality disorder, eating disorders, substance abuse, psychosis and self-harm.

ORYGEN CAT PRACTITIONER TRAINING COURSE

This is the first part of a two-year CAT practitioner training course that is accredited by the Australian and New Zealand Association of Cognitive Analytic Therapy ([ANZACAT](#)) and is based on standards set by the International Cognitive Analytic Therapy Association ([ICATA](#)).

The two-year CAT practitioner training course has been designed for mental health clinicians working across a range of public or private counselling and mental health settings who aim to become an accredited CAT practitioner.

The CAT practitioner training course aims to teach skills and knowledge and provide supervised practice to increase competence. Trainees will learn how to formulate the presenting problems in relational terms through recognition of familiar reciprocal roles and procedures, collaboratively identifying target problems and target problem procedures whilst assisting clients to recognise these and identify exits/ways to revise these patterns.

This course will also help trainees reflect on their own ways of relating to each other and to themselves, provide tools that allow them to be more self-aware when working with a range of clients and presenting problems, and to appreciate how a person's reciprocal roles and procedural patterns will shape the sometimes contradictory ways they relate to others, including other professionals and agencies.

REVOLUTION IN MIND

COURSE OVERVIEW

PRE-REQUISITES

This course is intended for mental health clinicians with a core degree in a mental health area (such as psychology, social work, occupational therapy, psychiatric nursing or psychiatry). Trainees are also expected to have at least two years of post-qualification experience of working in counselling or psychiatric settings and delivering psychotherapy. Those unsure whether their experience or qualifications are appropriate should contact training@orygen.org.au.

Trainees must complete a year one application form* and submit the completed form to training@orygen.org.au.

Satisfactory completion of year one is required to apply for [year two](#) of the CAT practitioner training course. Please note the CAT practitioner training year one and year two courses may not run consecutively each year, depending on trainee numbers.

Trainees must also have appropriate access to clients to provide CAT interventions as well as permission from their workplace to offer CAT interventions under supervision. Clinical responsibility will remain with their workplace.

It is expected that all trainees will be trainee members of ANZACAT during their CAT practitioner training. Trainees must apply for membership of ANZACAT once accepted into the course.

To be eligible for CAT practitioner status, trainees are expected to have developed the competencies required for accreditation as a CAT practitioner by ANZACAT. All clinical work must be completed and assessed work submitted no later than two years after the taught component of the second year of the training course has been completed. Once trainees successfully complete both years of the CAT practitioner training course, they are eligible to apply to ANZACAT for accreditation as CAT practitioners. This is a separate process and expected to be done shortly after completing the course.

Trainees are required to submit: [\(ANZACAT\)](#)

- an ANZACAT CAT practitioner membership application form with the relevant supporting documentation; and
- evidence of recency of supervised CAT practice.

CONTENT

Year one has been designed to introduce trainees to the theory and the core concepts of CAT, provide trainees with opportunities to practise the tools used in CAT, and deliver up to four CAT interventions under supervision.

The aim of year one is to help trainees learn how to collaboratively work with people through the three phases of CAT: reformulation, recognition and revision. Trainees will be helped to operationalise these phases of therapy through becoming familiar with the CAT tools such as the psychotherapy file, drawing diagrams, identifying target problems and writing reformulation and goodbye letters, as well as using themselves in therapy.

The course curriculum can vary from year-to-year depending on the learning needs of the group, but there are four themes that are fundamental to the course and are discussed in each block over the year.

* The year one course application form can be accessed from the [year one](#) web page.

Required reading for the year one course is: Ryle, A. & Kerr, I. B. (2020). *Introducing cognitive analytic therapy: Principles and practice of a relational approach to mental health*. UK: John Wiley & Sons.

THEME 1: INTRODUCTION TO CORE PRINCIPLES OF CAT

- Fundamentals of CAT 1: integration – the development of CAT as an integrative approach based on personal construct theory, object relations theory and cognitive theory.
- Fundamentals of CAT 2: collaboration – CAT is based on an explicit proactive and collaborative therapeutic style that stresses the active participation of both the client and the therapist.
- Fundamentals of CAT 3: reflexivity – CAT is a reflexive model that requires the therapist to develop self-reflective capacity in relation to the therapeutic relationship.
- Fundamentals of CAT 4: time-limited – the shape of a time-limited therapy based on CAT principles.

THEME 2: THE PRACTICE OF CAT THROUGH CAT TOOLS

- Reformulation – identifying reciprocal roles and reciprocal role procedures, target problems, target problem procedures and formulating aims.
- Diagrams – to help with the recognition of painful states and harmful patterns and to aid the development of alternative relational patterns and procedures.
- Use of CAT specific assessment instruments to guide intervention (e.g. the psychotherapy file, states description procedure and homework rating sheets).
- Skill-building – pattern recognition, mapping, letter writing and verbally formulating.

THEME 3: THE STRUCTURE OF CAT

- Reformulation – identifying patterns and anticipating ruptures.
- Recognition and the middle of therapy – moving between task and process and managing ruptures.
- Revision and endings – formulating exits and managing separation.
- Skill-building – use of collaboration and the therapeutic relationship to facilitate change.

THEME 4: THE MODEL OF 'SELF' IN CAT

- The CAT model of transference and countertransference and use of the therapeutic relationship.
- Introduction to the concepts of the socially formed self and damage to the self.
- Introduction to Vygotskian activity theory and Bakhtinian concepts of the dialogically-constituted self.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of year one, trainees are expected to:

- identify the key principles of CAT;
- explain and understand the development of the CAT model;
- understand how a range of theories and models have been integrated into the CAT model;
- understand the CAT model of normal and abnormal personality development;
- identify the reciprocal role procedures when presented with a client's history or story;

- develop CAT formulation skills to assist in the understanding of a client's target problem/s and target problem procedures;
- develop skills in using CAT tools to assist the client to meet therapeutic goals;
- develop skills in describing orally, mapping and writing letters to reformulate a client's problems;
- develop some skills in setting homework for clients to identify/recognise their common reciprocal role procedures;
- plan and progress a CAT intervention whilst considering a client's capacity (zone of proximal development) to engage and work therapeutically;
- have an awareness of the CAT competency domains; and
- complete at least two cases where all the phases of CAT are undertaken.

COURSE STRUCTURE

WORKSHOPS

The year one workshops provide an overview of the central concepts of CAT. The training course is taught in five blocks over nine days. Each workshop block includes theory, practical and experiential components. Trainees are expected to attend the workshops in person. Prior to each workshop, trainees will be provided with reading and asked to do an activity in preparation for the workshop.

STUDENT STUDY SESSIONS

The year one student study sessions aim to promote trainees' learning of CAT theory and CAT concepts and consider how this knowledge can be applied to their own settings and practice. This involves trainees participating in three 2.5-hour trainee-led study sessions over the course of the year and completing a group reflective journal for each session.

SUPERVISION

The practical component of the CAT training involves delivering up to four individual CAT interventions under the supervision of a qualified CAT supervisor. Supervision is usually offered in small groups of two or three trainees with a supervisor. Occasionally when a small group is not available, individual supervision will be arranged.

It is expected that trainees will offer weekly CAT sessions, and complete at least two 16-session CAT interventions each year. Completed cases must have been discussed in supervision regularly, including in each of the three phases, reformulation (early), recognition (middle) and revision (goodbye), and all tools must have been presented and discussed. Trainees are required to maintain a clinical logbook to record their completed cases that will be signed by their supervisor.

The CAT practitioner training course aims to teach skills and knowledge and provide supervised practice to increase competence. However, competence in delivering CAT is not always achieved by the end of training. Note: for a variety of reasons, it may not always be possible for trainees to complete four CAT interventions during each year of the course, and therefore trainees might not have completed the required minimum of eight cases and/or achieved the expected level of competency in delivering CAT by the end of two years of training. In such cases, the trainee will need to continue with CAT supervision with an accredited CAT supervisor to complete the course. Following completion of year two, some trainees might need to complete further cases under supervision or additional assignments to reach the standard required for accreditation as a CAT practitioner by ANZACAT.

CAT supervision in most cases is offered face-to-face, in small groups on a weekly basis. If trainees have suitable existing CAT supervision arrangements, they may request to continue these as part of the course. If trainees are not able to attend supervision face-to-face, they may request to participate online (on a videoconferencing platform). Trainees will need a computer, laptop or tablet with internet access and a working camera and microphone.

Trainees are required to complete an evaluation of their CAT competencies with their supervisor every six months throughout their training. An annual supervision evaluation form and clinical logbook (for completed cases) need to be submitted if trainees take longer than the training year to complete the required cases.

COURSEWORK

Three assignments will be set during year one; a reflective essay, a written case study, and a case presentation delivered to the year one training group. In addition, a group reflective journal is to be submitted after each of the three student study sessions over the course of the year. These assignments and the group reflective journal will be discussed early in the course, and guidelines that detail the requirements and marking criteria (for marked assignments) and due dates for each assignment will be provided.

PERSONAL THERAPY EXPERIENCE

To become an accredited ANZACAT practitioner, trainees need to be able to demonstrate capacity for self-reflection and an understanding of how one's own roles and procedures can be enacted in therapy and with others. Therefore, trainees are required to undergo their own personal CAT experience at some point during CAT practitioner training. This must be conducted by an experienced, accredited CAT practitioner and although 16-session CAT therapy is preferred, a shorter contract that includes a reformulation experience will be accepted. (A list of experienced CAT therapists is available from the course director, or course coordinator.) Trainees must discuss exceptional needs and any exemptions to these arrangements with the course coordinator before embarking on training. It is ultimately a trainee's responsibility to set up arrangements for their personal therapy.

The confidentiality of the trainee's personal relationship with their personal therapist will be always respected and no formal or informal communication about the trainee will take place between the course staff and the trainee's personal therapist. The trainee will only be required to confirm the completion of the personal CAT therapy experience.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is conducted in four ways. Formal assessment includes the successful completion of the course and requires passing all four components. It is expected that trainees will retain a copy of their assignments and feedback forms, supervision evaluations and clinical logbook for their own records.

- Attendance in all components of the course must be at least 85%.
 - Attendance at workshops (85% = 8 of 9 days).
 - Attendance at supervision groups (85% = 34 of 40 sessions).
 - Participation in all three 2.5-hour student study sessions.
- Trainees will need to have completed up to four CAT cases, of which ideally at least two will be 16-session CAT interventions. Completion of a minimum of two CAT cases will be required to progress to year two. Trainees are required to maintain a clinical logbook to record their completed cases which will be signed by the supervisor.
- Satisfactory supervision evaluation of trainee competence in using the CAT model.

- Supervisors will provide regular, informal feedback to trainees in their supervision groups, on their progress in learning CAT.
- In addition, a more formal evaluation of competence is conducted every six-months, mid and end of the year. Progress is recorded on the Orygen Supervision Evaluation form.
- All assignments must be successfully passed.
 - Reflective essay.
 - Case presentation to the year one training group.
 - Case study.
 - In addition, a group reflective journal must be submitted after each student study session.

Information about the workshop dates and assessment due dates are detailed in the year one course schedule*. Extensions to deadlines must be requested in writing at least one-week prior to the existing deadline.

All assignments and evaluations are expected to be completed and submitted prior to the agreed course deadline. Any concerns or circumstances that will interfere with this must be discussed with the course coordinator. Specific arrangements and extensions to deadlines for assignments that will result in the trainee submitting their assignment and/or evaluation after the course has finished, will incur a late fee (see section on fees below). This is charged to cover the additional costs associated with these requests.

Assignments are usually marked by one member of the teaching staff; however, a second marker can be allocated at the discretion of the course coordinator. Feedback will be provided within three months of submission deadline or actual submission date (whichever is later). If the marker allocates a borderline or fail mark, then the assignment will be marked by a second, independent marker. Trainees will be notified if feedback will be delayed and provided with a new deadline. The deadline for a resubmission (in the case of a borderline or fail mark) will be three months from when the feedback is provided to the trainee.

WITHDRAWAL

After reading through the year one course outline and the year one course schedule (both available on the website), trainees with any questions about the course or their capacity to complete the requirements of the course, are advised to contact the course coordinator or training@orygen.org.au.

All withdrawals must be discussed with the course coordinator (or director) and submitted in writing to training@orygen.org.au

COURSE FEES AND REFUND POLICY

The course fees are paid in four (4) instalments. Dates and cost of these instalments are outlined in the year one course schedule*.

* The year one course schedule can be accessed from the [year one](#) web page.

REFUND POLICY

- Prior to paying instalment one (1) – there will be no financial penalty for withdrawal.

- After enrolment and payment of the first instalment, 70% will be refunded if withdrawal is more than 21 days before the course starts (day 1).
- Trainees that withdraw after the course has started may be eligible for a partial refund of monies paid, depending on how much of their training they have attended. This will be determined by the course coordinator once written withdrawal is received.

LATE SUBMISSION FEE

- A late fee will be charged for any assignments and evaluations submitted after the agreed course deadline.
- This applies whatever the circumstances are for late submission and is to cover the additional costs associated with responding flexibly to trainees' requests.
- The amount of the late fee is documented in the year one course schedule*.

TRAINEE PROGRESS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Trainees in this course have both rights and responsibilities.

Trainee rights:

- timely feedback on assessment tasks and overall progress;
- access to an appeals process which covers assessment and course progress (see flow chart); and
- access to special consideration provisions in the case of illness or other significant event.

Trainee responsibilities:

- adhering to assessment task formats and timelines;
- working collaboratively with others throughout the course; and
- notifying the course coordinator of any issues that may impact on trainees' ability to keep up with course requirements as soon as possible.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS

Training staff aim to resolve any problems as soon as possible, to the satisfaction of both parties, and feedback is welcomed. Complaints or problems with any component of the course should be discussed as soon as possible with either the supervisor or the course coordinator, Jennifer O'Brien (jennifer.obrien@pymhws.org.au).

Complaints or feedback can also be provided via training@orygen.org.au or directly to the course director, Louise McCutcheon (louise.mccutcheon@pymhws.org.au).

Concerns about a trainee's progress through the course will be discussed directly with the trainee. Staff involved in this process will depend on whether the problem applies to supervision or other parts of the course. The course coordinator will be involved in these discussions and will consider any adverse circumstances contributing to the problems.

* The year one course schedule can be accessed from the [year one](#) web page.

Any assignments judged to be in either the borderline (resubmit) or failed categories will be marked by a second, independent marker, and trainees will receive clear feedback from the course coordinator.

Therefore, appeals or complaints regarding the feedback on assignments should be directed to the course coordinator in the first instance.

To appeal a decision or request a review, please contact the chief of research and knowledge translation. The final outcome of all complaints and appeals will be determined by the chief of research and knowledge translation.

TRAINEE COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS

