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# COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY PRACTITIONER TRAINING COURSE YEAR ONE

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## COURSE OUTLINE

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### ABOUT COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY

Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) is an integrative, time-limited therapy that was originally developed by Dr Anthony Ryle in the UK for use in public health settings. The CAT model is collaborative and flexible, and seeks 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 a relational framework and as an individual therapy. In individual therapy, CAT allows the therapist and client to work together to make sense of the patterns of thinking, feeling, behaving and relating to facilitate change. CAT can be used as a treatment for a wide range of disorders including depression, anxiety, personality disorder, eating disorders, substance abuse, psychosis and self-harm.

CAT as a relational therapy focuses on the interaction between the client and therapist. It explores familiar roles and patterns, naming patterns of reciprocation in the way the person has been related to since childhood, postulating that these are replicated in current relationships and in the person's internal conversations. As such it is a helpful model for understanding social processes as well as for conducting a therapeutic relationship.

CAT as an individual therapy is usually provided over 16 or 24 weeks and uses letters and diagrams as the focus of a collaborative journey with the client to work out how they experience themselves in relation to key people in their lives and to draw out the states they get into. In therapy, the client begins to recognise the way these patterns, that often started as a way of coping with difficult feelings, end up making matters worse and lead to repeated disappointments and tensions. The aim of therapy is to help the client find better ways of being with other people and of taking care of themselves.

### COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY 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 international standards set by the International Cognitive Analytic Therapy Association (ICATA).

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

This year one training course has been designed to introduce students to the theory and the core concepts of CAT; provide students with opportunities to practise the tools used in CAT; and deliver a minimum of four CAT interventions under supervision. Satisfactory completion of this year one training course is required to register 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 student numbers.

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## REVOLUTION IN MIND

Students 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.

This training course will also help students 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 role and procedural patterns will shape the sometimes contradictory ways they relate to others, including other professionals and agencies.

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, and some students might need further supervised practice to reach the standard required for accreditation as a CAT practitioner by ANZACAT.

Once students complete the course and discuss the criteria with their supervisor/course coordinators, they must apply to ANZACAT for accreditation as CAT Practitioners (in a separate process).

## COURSE STRUCTURE

### PRE-REQUISITES

This training course is intended for mental health clinicians with a core degree in a mental health area (such as social work, psychology, occupational therapy, psychiatric nursing or psychiatry). Students are also expected to have at least two years of experience (post-qualification) 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](mailto:training@orygen.org.au).

Students must complete a [year one course application form](#) and submit the completed form to [training@orygen.org.au](mailto:training@orygen.org.au).

Students must also have appropriate access to clients to provide CAT interventions.

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

The aim of the year one training course is to help students learn how to collaboratively work with people through the three phases of CAT: reformulation, recognition and revision. Students 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.

### WORKSHOPS

The year one training course 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.

The training 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 training course and are discussed in each block over the year.

The four themes are:

**theme one:** introduction to core principles of CAT;

**theme two:** the practice of CAT through CAT tools;

**theme three:** the structure of CAT; and

**theme four:** the model of 'self' in CAT.

## STUDENT-LED STUDY SESSIONS

The year one student-led study sessions aim to promote students' learning of CAT theory and CAT concepts and consider how this knowledge can be applied to their own settings and practices. This involves students participating in three 2.5-hour student-led study sessions over the course of the year and completing a reflective journal, which is to be updated after each of the three study sessions.

## SUPERVISION

The year one supervision groups provide more practical experience about how CAT is applied in students' own settings and practices. This involves students delivering a minimum of four individual CAT interventions under qualified CAT supervision on a weekly basis, of which ideally at least two are 16-session CAT interventions. CAT supervision in most cases is offered face-to-face, in small groups on a weekly basis.

## 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 counter transference 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 this training course, students are expected to:

- increase their confidence and competence in delivering a standard CAT intervention;
- explain and understand the development of the CAT model;
- understand how a range of theories and models have been integrated into the CAT model;
- identify the key principles of CAT;
- understand the CAT models of normal and abnormal personality development and other disorders, for example eating disorders and psychosis;
- 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;
- have experience 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;
- have an awareness of the CAT competency domains; and
- complete at least two cases where the phases of CAT are undertaken or at least the barriers to recognising or revising are identified.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment is conducted in four ways. Formal assessment includes the successful completion of the training course and requires passing all four components.

- Assignments must be successfully passed. (Guidelines that detail marking criteria and due dates for each assignment are provided separately.)
  - Reflective essay (1,500-2,500 words).
  - Case presentation to the year one training group.
  - Case study (2,500-3,500 words).
  - Participation in three 2.5-hour student-led study sessions. Reflective journal updated after each student-led study session.
- Attendance in all components of the training course must be at least 80 per cent.
  - Attendance at workshops (80 per cent = 7 of 9 days).
  - Attendance at supervision groups (80 per cent = 32 of 40 sessions).
  - Participation in three 2.5-hour student-led study sessions.
- Supervision evaluation of student competence in using the CAT model.
  - Supervisors will provide regular, informal feedback to students in their supervision groups, on their progress in learning CAT.
  - In addition, a more formal evaluation of competence is conducted twice, mid and end of the year. Progress is recorded on the Orygen Supervision Evaluation form.
- A minimum of four completed cases, of which ideally at least two will be 16-session CAT interventions. It is expected that CAT sessions will be held weekly and all must include supervised reformulation, middle and goodbye phases.

## STUDENT PROGRESS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

As a student in this training course you have both rights and responsibilities.

Your rights:

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

Your responsibilities:

- adhering to assessment task formats and timelines;
- working collaboratively with others in the workshops; and
- notifying the course coordinator of any issues that may impact on your ability to keep up with training course requirements.

## 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 training course should be discussed as soon as possible with either the supervisor or the course coordinator. Complaints or feedback can also be provided via [training@orygen.org.au](mailto:training@orygen.org.au) or directly to the course director, Louise McCutcheon ([louise.mccutcheon@orygen.org.au](mailto:louise.mccutcheon@orygen.org.au)).

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

Any assignments judged to be in either the borderline (resubmit) or failed categories will be marked by a second person, and students will receive clear feedback by 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 translation (referred to as research and translation director in chart below).

