

Eligibility Criteria to begin UK, ISST-Approved Schema Therapy Training Programmes - Minimum Standards

Access to UK, ISST-approved schema therapy training programmes is only open to candidates who are already qualified practitioners allowed to provide one-to-one psychological therapy to clients. Such candidates will have graduated from a counselling, psychotherapy or applied psychology training programme run by an approved professional body. The training programme will have included research and significant amounts of supervised one-to-one clinical practice within the adult population, culminating in accreditation of that regulatory body, conferring the right to practice one-to-one therapy.

The candidate, both as a schema therapy trainee and later as an accredited schema therapist must be, and then continue to be, a fully accredited member of the regulatory body that accredited the training programme they attended which in turn conferred the right to practice one-to-one therapy, and their clinical practice will continue to be regulated by it. Currently, training and regulatory bodies recognised by UK, ISST-Approved Schema Therapy Training Programmes are the BABCP, BACP and BPS. Being fully accredited to such a body before embarking on a schema therapy training programme leading to accreditation as a schema therapist will also facilitate gaining and maintaining the required Professional Indemnity Insurance. Proof of accreditation to one of these bodies will be required by the directors of training programmes and by the ISST. Psychologists should be registered with the Health Care & Professions Council (HCPC) and continue to be registered both as a trainee schema therapist and as an accredited schema therapist.

Applicants are expected to be academically capable of following the rigorous accreditation route for schema therapy and they must hold at least a bachelor's degree.

Applications for UK certification programmes will be scrutinised on a case-by-case basis. Applicants will be required to produce detailed evidence to the UK Training Programme Director and possibly later to the ISST of their eligibility to join a training programme leading to accreditation as a schema therapist. This includes:

1. Full Accreditation by the BABCP
OR
2. At least Individual Counsellor/Psychotherapist Accreditation by the BACP
OR
3. Eligibility for chartered membership of the BPS within one of the following divisions:
 - a. Clinical Psychology
 - b. Counselling Psychology
 - c. Forensic Psychology.
4. Psychologist applicants must also be registered with the HCPC.
5. At least a bachelor's degree.

If accepted for training onto a UK, ISST-approved schema therapy training programme the candidate, both as a schema therapy trainee and later as an accredited schema therapist must be, and then continue to be a fully accredited member of that regulatory body and their clinical practice will be regulated by it.

Exceptions for Practitioners who hold a Core Qualification in Mental Health

Applications from practitioners who do not meet the above training criteria but hold a **core qualification in mental health** may still be eligible to join an ISST-approved training programme due to their general qualifications and experience in mental health. Such applications will be scrutinised on a case-by-case basis and applicants will be required to produce detailed evidence to the UK Training Programme Director and possibly later to the ISST that the criteria as outlined below has been met. Such applicants include, mental health social workers, mental health occupational therapists, mental health nurses, nurse therapists, community psychiatric nurses and psychiatrists. Applicants holding a core qualification in mental health and requesting that their applications be processed under the Exception provision must meet the following criteria:

1. Applicants must hold at least a bachelor's degree in their field (unless their professional training route accepted a non-related degree and postgraduate diploma together with mental health experience) in either psychology, nursing, psychiatry, occupational therapy, social work, medical, or in a counselling area that leads to accreditation.
2. Applicants will be required to demonstrate to the UK Training Programme Director and possibly later to the ISST, a comprehensive portfolio spanning several years of comprehensive and well-rounded training (not in-house training), in a psychotherapeutic approach such as CBT, CAT, ACT, (not DBT, mindfulness, compassion-focused, hypnotherapy, coaching, neurolinguistic programming or similar types of training) with at least 200 hours of supervised clinical practice by experts in that area.
3. The applicant must be a fully accredited member of the relevant professional body and their one-to-one clinical practice must be regulated by it. Relevant professional bodies include:
 - a. **Nursing**: Nursing and Midwifery Council
 - b. **Occupational Therapy**: British Association and College of Occupational Therapists (BAOT/COT).
 - c. **Psychiatry**: Royal College of Psychiatrists.
 - d. **Social Work** (England): British Association for Social Workers
 - e. **Social Work** (Northern Ireland): Northern Ireland Social Care Council
 - f. **Social Work** (Scotland): The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
 - g. **Social Work** (Wales): Care Council for Wales
4. If accepted for training onto a UK, ISST-approved schema therapy training programme the candidate, both as a schema therapy trainee and later as an accredited schema therapist must be, and then continue to be a fully accredited member of their professional body and their clinical practice will be regulated by it.
5. Contingent on prevailing statutory requirements applicants applying under this exception rule might be required to belong to the HCPC. Currently, this requirement applies to mental health social workers, mental health occupational therapists and nursing staff.

Interviews and Assessments

Applicants may be expected to attend interviews and undergo written assessments by means such as phone, Skype, or face-to-face.
