

ART THERAPY INFORMATION

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WHAT IS ART THERAPY?

Art Therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses art media as its primary mode of communication. Clients who are referred to an art therapist need not have experience or skill in art. The art therapist is not primarily concerned with making an aesthetic or diagnostic assessment of the client's image. The overall aim of its practitioners is to enable a client to change and grow on a personal level through the use of art materials in a safe and facilitating environment.

The relationship between the therapist and the client is of central importance, but art therapy differs from other psychological therapies in that it is a three-way process between the client, the therapist and the image or artefact. It offers the opportunity for expression and communication and can be particularly helpful to people who find it hard to express their thoughts and feelings verbally.

Art therapists have a good understanding of art processes, underpinned by a sound knowledge of therapeutic practice, and work with individuals and groups in a variety of residential and community-based settings, for example: adult mental health, learning disabilities, child and family centres, palliative care and the prison service. The diversity of these areas of work is reflected in the number of special interest groups that have developed in affiliation with the British Association of Art Therapists.

The art therapist's work is sometimes challenging and calls for skill and sensitivity. It follows that those who wish to pursue a career in art therapy should be mature, flexible people. The training course, which combines theoretical and experiential work, is for a Postgraduate Master's degree to be completed over two years full time or three years part time. Applicants should already have a degree in art, although other graduates with experience of working in health, education or social care are sometimes considered. Details of training and a list of training institutions are attached.

Art therapy is a diverse profession, and it is important to ensure that those who practice it are maintaining the standards that we, as a professional body, uphold. Art therapists, along with music and drama therapists are state regulated with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (www.hcpc-uk.org). **In order to practise in the UK as an art therapist or art psychotherapist (both titles are protected by law), practitioners are legally bound to be registered with the HCPC.** Registration with the HCPC demands high standards of education and clinical practice and ensures public protection.

The British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT) is the professional organisation for art therapists in the United Kingdom and has its own Code of Ethics of Professional Practice. Comprising regional groups and a European and International section, it maintains a comprehensive directory of qualified art therapists and works to promote art therapy in the UK.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAINING AS AN ART THERAPIST

1 Q Are there any colleges closer to me than the ones listed?

1A No, at present the attached list of establishments are the only ones in the UK that run HCPC approved MA / MSc in Art Therapy courses which is the mandatory qualification required to practise as an art therapist in the UK. There are no HCPC approved evening or distance learning courses.

2 Q What qualifications do I need to enable me to start training as an art therapist?

2A Applicants for Art Therapy training should normally be graduates in art and design but qualified teachers, social workers, psychologists and other professionals with a commitment to the practice of the visual arts are also considered. For further information you will need to contact the individual university directly.

3 Q The course fees are very expensive; how can I go about getting funding for my training?

3A Due to the large number of successful graduates in Art Therapy each year, there is currently no specific funding body that will give grants to those wishing to undertake the MA/MSc in Art Therapy. However, organisations that are known to provide funding, where they see appropriate, are listed in two publications (available at your local library) 'The Educational Grants Directory' and 'The Directory of Grant Making Trusts'.

4 Q What are the career prospects once I have completed my training?

4A Like any graduate, networking and persistence reap rewards. Do not be afraid to write and ring and ask if you can look round and visit. Making personal contact is important, because even if there is no present job available, people will remember you; leave your phone number so that you can be contacted and write and thank them for meeting you. Do not turn up unannounced to visit places you feel might present job opportunities.

Some Art Therapy posts are advertised through The British Association of Art Therapists, which circulates this information to members monthly. Some generic or related jobs advertised in national newspapers or online are also opened to art therapists, although not advertised specifically as art therapy posts. For instance, Social Services 'continuing needs' jobs, often give job specifications for 'Officers', which would be quite suitable for an Art Therapist, if the job requires group work and individual work. It is then up to you to convince your prospective employer why employing an Art Therapist will bring benefits to both the team and the clients.

Much depends on the particular client group you decide to work with and the area in which you can live in. For instance, the south of England and in particular the London area employs the greatest number of Art Therapists, and also the cities and surrounding areas where the art therapy training courses are run. However, this does not mean that there is not employment to be found in the area in which you live.

5 Q What practice areas do art therapists work in?

5 A Art Therapists are employed in many different settings. These include: -

- child, adolescent, adult and older aged psychiatry
- secure hospitals
- departments dealing with head injuries and stroke victims
- departments dealing with disabilities which include learning, deafness, physical and mental impairment, autism and speech difficulties
- palliative care and bereavement projects
- forensic services
- psychotherapy departments
- drug and alcohol projects
- trauma units
- education
- mental health projects including drop in centres.

Employers include the National Health Service, private hospitals and organisations, the Prison Service, Social Services, Education services, charities and mental health projects.

6 Q I completed an equivalent art therapy training abroad. Can I work as an art therapist in the UK?

6 A Only those who have applied for and been granted State Registration by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) may work in the UK as an art therapist. Contact the HCPC for an application form and guidance notes - <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registration/getting-on-the-register/international-applications/>
Full membership of BAAT can be applied for when registration with HCPC has been obtained.

7 Q Where can I find work experience as an assistant Art Therapist?

7 A Because art therapy is practised in confidential and sensitive settings it is often difficult to accommodate people who are wishing to get experience of working as an Art Therapy assistant or wish to observe art therapy in action. We recommend that you approach the art therapy departments of local NHS trusts, Prison and Special Hospitals, special needs schools and hospices in your area to see if they can offer you any experience.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

The British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT) is a dynamic organisation, who welcomes both art therapists/art psychotherapists and people with an interest in art therapy. There are two categories of the Associate membership which is both for Non-HCPC registered art therapists and individuals with an interest in art therapy:

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|---|-----------------------|
| - UK Associate | £95 per annum |
| - Overseas Associate (EU/International) | £100 per annum |

Associate membership benefits

- The BAAT offers CPD/short courses and conferences at discounted rates for Associate members. Upcoming courses and events can be found on the BAAT website: <https://baat.org/training-cpd/>
Please note: some BAAT courses is open to all who wish to attend, and some is for qualified and trainee art therapists and other qualified creative therapists from around the world.
- Free access to all *International Journal of Art Therapy* articles and the journals of our partner professional bodies in the USA and Canada.
- Free access to our membership magazine, *Newsbriefing*, which provides a wide range of articles about art therapy and our work.
- Regular bulletins with all the latest art therapy news and updates.
- Access to the members' area of our website, which offers a wealth of resources, documents, and guides for professionals and trainees.
- All members can join a regional group and full and trainee members can join any of the Special Interest Groups, which provide opportunities to network and engage with colleagues within the forum and attend free art therapy events and meetings that count as CPD.
- Access to a library of free CPD resources to help support your professional work.
- Access to a Rewards Scheme offering cashback and discounts at major retailers.
- 30% discount on Jessica Kingsley Arts Therapies books

If you should wish to join BAAT you can apply online for the Associate membership here:

<https://baat.org/baat-membership/>



BAAT COURSES AND SEMINARS

BAAT runs courses and seminars online and onsite throughout the year. These include courses suitable for qualified art therapists, related professionals and for the general public.

You can explore all our courses here: <https://baat.org/training-cpd/>

We run a course aimed at those who are considering a career in art therapy.

The one-day ***Introduction to Art Therapy*** course consists of information about the practice of art therapy and the possible career routes into it, examples of art therapy casework and some one-to-one advice with one of the course leaders about the specific circumstances of each individual attending.

The BAAT also runs the **One-week Art Therapy Foundation Course** regularly throughout the year. For further details on these courses, please visit our website: <https://baat.org/training-cpd/introductory-courses/>

Delegates to the One-week Foundation course are eligible for a **one-year Associate BAAT Membership at a discounted rate of £35** (instead of £95/£100).

QUALIFYING ART THERAPY / ART PSYCHOTHERAPY COURSES IN THE UK

In order to work legally as an Art Therapist, it is mandatory to possess the post-graduate MA/MSc in Art Therapy or Art Psychotherapy. Applicants for art therapy training should normally be graduates in Art and Design but qualified teachers, social workers, psychologists and other professionals with a commitment to the practice of the visual arts are also considered.

**PLEASE CONTACT THE RELEVANT ESTABLISHMENT FOR COURSE
INFORMATION AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS DIRECTLY**

Validated courses are in the following locations (listed alphabetically):

- **Belfast, Northern Ireland**
- **Chester**
- **Derby**
- **Edinburgh, Scotland**
- **Hatfield - Hertfordshire University**
- **London - Brunel University**
- **London - Goldsmiths University**
- **London - IATE/ University of East London**
- **London - Roehampton University**
- **Newport, Wales**
- **Sheffield**

<p>BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER - MSc Art Therapy https://www.ulster.ac.uk/courses/202223/art-psychotherapy-28321</p>
<p>CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER - MA Art Therapy https://www1.chester.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/art-therapy/201910</p>
<p>DERBY UNIVERSITY OF DERBY - MA Art Therapy https://www.derby.ac.uk/postgraduate/therapeutic-practice-courses/art-therapy-ma/</p>
<p>EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY - MSc Art Psychotherapy https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/postgraduate-study/2022/msc-art-psychotherapy/</p>
<p>HATFIELD/ HERTFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE - MA Art Therapy https://www.herts.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate-masters/ma-art-therapy</p>
<p>LONDON BRUNEL UNIVERSITY - MA Art Psychotherapy https://www.brunel.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/Art-Psychotherapy-MA</p>
<p>LONDON GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE - MA Art Psychotherapy https://www.gold.ac.uk/pg/ma-art-psychotherapy/</p>
<p>LONDON THE INSTITUTE FOR ARTS IN THERAPY AND EDUCATION/ UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON MA in Integrative Arts Psychotherapy https://www.artpsychotherapy.org/art-therapy/-arts-psychotherapy/masters-degree-in-integrative-arts-psychotherapy</p>
<p>LONDON UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON - MA Art Psychotherapy https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/postgraduate-courses/art-psychotherapy/</p>
<p>NEWPORT, WALES UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES - MA Art Psychotherapy https://www.southwales.ac.uk/courses/ma-art-psychotherapy/</p>
<p>SHEFFIELD SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY - MA Art Psychotherapy Practice https://www.shu.ac.uk/courses/occupational-therapy/ma-art-psychotherapy-practice/part-time</p>