

Guidelines for accreditation applicants

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Introduction

COSRT holds two distinct registers - Psychosexual Therapist and Relationship Therapist and both have individual accreditation pathways.

Individuals are solely responsible for their applications for Accredited or Senior Accredited Membership. However, supervisors should play a key role in supporting people through the process. This document outlines key elements and principles of Accreditation to help applicants make a well-presented application however, applicants are advised to read all the documents in full before applying as they give further guidance.

What is Accreditation

Accredited and Senior Accredited Membership are for therapists with high levels of expertise and experience. Applicants must meet stringent criteria as these set the standards for the profession. Accreditation at either level indicates seniority and is sought after by service users, employers, and fellow professionals as a sign of quality. Accreditation is awarded to applicant who demonstrate exacting standards of practice and understanding.

What does Accreditation involve

Accreditation comprises of two elements:

1. The provision of detailed documentary evidence of clinical practice, supervision, CPD and personal therapy.
2. The completion of a rigorous assessment.

Proof of Training

Accreditation rests in part on proof of appropriate training in psychosexual and relationship therapy or relationship therapy. Applicants can build their application on a single eligible qualification, or a 'basket' of multiple qualifications. If the latter route is taken, there must still be a single main qualification around which others can be grouped. To apply you must have been in practice as a psychosexual and relationship therapist or a relationship therapist for three years.

The grandparenting route may be operational for some applicants, please consult Appendix 2.

Period of specialised practice

To be eligible for Accreditation, an individual must meet strict criteria on their previous clinical practice within psychosexual and relationship therapy or relationship therapy. The clinical hours requirement is 450 which must have been supervised at the correct ratio and evidence in a log. They must also evidence 30

hours of CPD per year and have completed 80 hours personal therapy. 50 during training and 30 pre or post training.

Additional documentary evidence

Applicants must also provide the following core evidence when applying for Accreditation:

- Evidence of Insurance
- Evidence of use of title if applicable
- Copy of the applicant's service user agreement
- Copy of the applicant's supervision agreement/s

Assessments

No individual is awarded Accreditation without successfully completing all parts of assessment. The aim of the assessment is to allow applicants to demonstrate their expertise in psychosexual and relationship therapy or relationship therapy practice and theory.

Assessments are anonymously marked by members of an Accreditation Panel – not COSRT staff. A detailed marking schema is used to ensure uniformity across assessments, this can be found in the case study guidance document.

It is obviously vital that any work is the work of the applicant. It is also important that the submission shows critical thinking and supports the seniority of the applicant. Supervisors can play a key role in helping applicants reflect on their work and experiences, to in turn provide compelling and high-quality assessment submissions.

Accreditation is about practice as much as training. Therefore, it is highly recommended that applicants use materials in the required assessments, based on clinical practice and development. You are advised not to use activities completed within training which are unlikely to reach the required standard of accreditation, which demands a more sophisticated and nuanced approach to clinical work.

Assessment 1 – Reflection and Insight

The applicant is required to complete four pieces of work as part of assessment. This section focuses on how the applicant has developed over time.

The topics are:

- Model of choice when working clinically
- CPD that has affected practice
- Supervision and use of
- Personal development

Successful applications share common traits – critical thinking, clarity of focus, and adherence to basic requirements on word limits.

Assessment 2 – case Study

Applicants must submit a large case study drawing on a real-life example of their work with the service user(s) to show their experience.

Your supervisor can support your application to focus on the clearly articulated elements that must be demonstrated within the case study. Detailed guidance on preparing a case study is available to all applicants on the website and you are advised to read this carefully before you commence writing.

It is inadvisable for applicants to re-use case studies or materials created for other purposes unless there is reflection of practice and theory in-light of consolidated experience commensurate with accredited status.

Provision of evidence logs

As part of the application, individuals must also submit the following logs that are assessed by COSRT staff:

- Clinical practice
- Supervision
- CPD
- Personal therapy

All the logs must be signed by the supervisor as verification. Please ensure that the supervision log marries up with the clinical practice log in terms of the supervision requirement. If you have more than one supervisor, please separate the practice and supervision log for each supervisor so they can be clearly identified, and the assessors can be clear about who supervised which pieces of clinical practice. The assessors clearly need to see what clinical practice was undertaken in training and the post training clinical hours. They will also scrutinise for a range of presentations commensurate with this level of clinical practice. The logs must demonstrate the clinical practice as detailed in requirements documents available to applicants.

The application

Please collate your application into one email only and send to memberships@cosrt.org.uk part applications will be returned.

Please ensure you have included everything required and that you have followed the word limit guidance as an applicant is unlikely to succeed if they are not within the word limit. Also consult the case study guidance for formatting and suggested layout See appendix 1.

Please submit your application in word format so we can redact anything that is personally identifying.

Please pay your application fee when you have sent your application by contacting kate.crane@cosrt.org.uk

What does my supervisor need to do?

A supervisor's report will be requested from all supervisors who have undertaken supervision of the applicant's clinical work. While this is an important document, a good report does not indicate the applicant will pass the accreditation.

Further help and advice

If there are any queries COSRT is always pleased to help, please contact jo.coker@cosrt.org.uk

Appendix 1: Case Study and Assessment Guidance

Introduction

Applicants for COSRT Accreditation are required to provide detailed answers to questions plus a case study. The latter should be an in-depth examination of your work with one case - either a completed or ongoing. The purpose is to allow an examination of how you apply skills, knowledge and experience to therapy practice and work to maximise outcomes for service users.

Core Case Study Requirements

The length for the Case Study is 4000 words +/- 5%. Please note that case studies that exceed this limit will not be accepted. The word count should be shown on the front page.

- Service user data must be excluded from the case study – only anonymised case studies will be accepted.
- The case study should be in Word format, using Calibri Light, Ariel, or Times New Roman. Font size must be
- 12 point minimum. And double line spacing must be used. All pages must be numbered, and any referencing should be in Harvard style.

Theme

To ensure relevance to COSRT, your case study must demonstrably be focused on psychosexual and relationship issues or relationship therapy. Underneath that overarching theme however, your case study can relate to therapy provision that deals with more nuanced issues. For example, clients dealing with challenges related to trauma, loss, insecurity, identity, or others that might underpin a psychosexual or relationship case.

Theory

A key element of the case study is to demonstrate your use of evidence-based theory, knowledge, and skills in therapy provision. Where the thematic focus provides the context for the case study, the exploration of theory provides the demonstration of your expertise.

Your case study can be focused on the application of any accepted psychotherapy or counselling theory subject to it being evidence-based. If you apply more than one theory, it is acceptable to explore and discuss that within the case study.

You can structure your case study in any way you feel appropriate. It is recommended that you break your study up into sections with headings that clearly highlight the content.

Within the structure you choose, your case study must cover the following elements:

- An explanation of the theory underpinning your practice and, if working with a couple, your understanding of the dynamic process.

Give a brief explanation of the theory that underpins your practice, it may be that you integrate more than one theory so explain the rationale behind this. If appropriate, consider the effect of the couple dynamic in the room and how that impacts on process.

- Successful link between theory and practice.

There should be consistency in the way you work and the theoretical model you are applying. The case study needs to demonstrate the integration of psychotherapeutic understanding to psychosexual and relationship work, both written and practical.

- Use of self-awareness in the therapeutic relationship

An essential part of the case study is to demonstrate your ability to reflect critically on the work. You need to show your understanding of the dynamics in the therapy room and your reflective awareness of yourself within the work.

- Equality and Diversity

Show how your practice demonstrates awareness of issues of equality and diversity and how these issues have an impact on the therapeutic relationship and the model of working.

- The use of Supervision

Show how you use supervision sessions to deal with the dilemmas and challenges of your work, what was learnt and how would you apply the reflections of this in your work.

- Application of the COSRT Code of Ethics

Please demonstrate how the Code of Ethics and Practice informs your work.

- Management of the service user agreement

Please illustrate how you use a service user agreement and include a copy of the agreement in the appendices.

Suggested Format

Whilst you are free to structure the case study content as you wish, COSRT requires that you include the following as a minimum:

- Front sheet. Your submission should have a front page stating your name, case study title, date, and word count. Pages must be numbered.
- Abstract. A brief synopsis of the case study
- Table of contents. Include all headings and sub-headings.
- Introduction. An introduction to what will be explored and why.
- Main content. Address all the required content outlined above, structured in a way that makes it easy to understand and assess.
- Conclusion. An exploration of the outcome(s), lessons, impacts, and wider reflections.
- Bibliography. Using the Harvard referencing system.
- Appendices. Include things such as research tools, Questionnaires, Consent Forms etc.

Marking

Assessors mark all assessed elements of your application – questions and case study. A common set of marking criteria is used to ensure consistency. Your case study has no set headings or sections and therefore there are no set marks for such headings. This allows you to be creative and communicate complex ideas in the essay form you feel appropriate.

When the assessor looks at your submission they will read it multiple times, making comments and queries as they do. That will let them understand the content as well as possible. Then they will apply the Common Marking Rubric:

Criterion\Level	Unacceptable (1)	Reflective novice (2)	Aware practitioner (3)	Reflective practitioner (4)
Clarity L	Language is unclear and confusing throughout. Concepts are either not discussed or are presented inaccurately.	There are frequent lapses in clarity and accuracy	Minor, infrequent lapses in clarity and accuracy.	The language is clear and expressive. The reader can create a mental picture of the situation being described. Abstract concepts are explained accurately. Explanation of concepts makes sense to an uninformed reader.
Relevance	Most of the reflection is irrelevant to goals.	Applicant makes attempts to demonstrate relevance, but the relevance is unclear to the reader.	The content being reflected upon is relevant and meaningful to applicant and goals.	The content being reflected upon is relevant and meaningful to applicant and goals.
Analysis	Reflection does not move beyond description of the content(s).	Applicant makes attempts at applying the content to understanding of self, others, and/or concepts but fails to demonstrate depth of analysis.	The reflection demonstrates applicant attempts to analyse the content, but analysis lacks depth.	The reflection moves beyond simple description of the content to an analysis of how the experience contributed to student understanding of self, others, and/or course concepts.
Interconnections	No attempt to demonstrate connections between theory, practice and/or experience.	There is little to no attempt to demonstrate connections between theory, practice and/or experience	The reflection demonstrates connections between theory, practice and/or experience	The reflection demonstrates strong and insightful connections between theory, practice and/or experience
Self-reflection	Not attempt at self- reflection.	There is some attempt at self-reflection, but it fails to demonstrate a new awareness of personal biases, etc.	The submission demonstrates ability of the applicant to question their own biases, stereotypes, preconceptions.	The submission demonstrates ability of the applicant to question their own biases, stereotypes, preconceptions, and/or assumptions and define modes of thinking as a result.

A mark out of 20 is given to the answer to each question and the case study. Each mark must be at least 15 for your submission to be classified as a pass.

Assessors will also apply a series of binary questions to your case study. All must be answered yes by the assessor for your case study to be passed:

- Does the submission demonstrate a clear knowledge of theoretical clinical material and practice competencies?
- Does the submission demonstrate an understanding of relevant and up-to-date theory?
- Does the submission show an awareness of equality and diversity and its relationship to practice?
- Does the submission demonstrate the appropriate use of supervision in the work including challenges and dilemmas?
- Does the submission demonstrate how the COSRT Codes of Ethics inform practice?

Plagiarism

A case study must be your own work. If you use someone else's previous work, you must acknowledge it as, without doing so, you can be seen to be representing it as you own. This is known as plagiarism and constitutes academic misconduct.

Any applicant suspected of plagiarism will be subject to (if a COSRT Member) a complaint under the COSRT Conduct Procedure. Sanctions available will include termination of COSRT Membership.

Appendix 2: Transitional ‘Grandparenting’ Routes to Accreditation

A time-limited transition period allows Members caught in the transition to apply for Accreditation using amended pathways. These are referred to as ‘Grandparenting Routes.’

There are three amended routes to Accredited Membership available. If you choose to apply using one of these routes you must show how you meet all other requirements laid out for Accreditation. You also must attach a written explanation of your use of an amended route to your application form.

Route 1. COSRT non-Student Member 1st June 2021

If you were a COSRT Member (non-Student) on 1st June 2021, you can ask for exemption from:

- Demonstrating a total of 450 hours Guided Learning during training.

Instead, you can base your application for Accreditation on meeting all other criteria and demonstrating:

- Qualification from a COSRT-Accredited Practitioner Training course; or
- An RQF Level 7 (Masters) training course in Psychosexual and Relationship therapy.

This route will close on 31st December 2022.

Route 2. COSRT Student Member 1st June 2021

If you were a COSRT Student Member on 1st June 2021, you can ask for exemption from:

- Demonstrating a total of 450 hours Guided Learning during training.

Instead, you can base your application for Accreditation on meeting all other criteria and demonstrating:

- Qualification from a COSRT-Accredited Practitioner Training course; or
- An RQF Level 7 (Masters) training course in Psychosexual and Relationship therapy.

This route will close on 31st December 2024.

Route 3. COSRT-Accredited Course 1st January 2020

- If you were enrolled on (or actively enrolling on) on a COSRT-Accredited Practitioner Training course on 1st January 2020 (that began no later than 31st March 2020), you can ask for exemption from:
- Demonstrating a total of 450 hours Guided Learning during training; and
- The requirement to have been in practice for at least three years post-qualification.

Instead, you can base your application for Accreditation on meeting all other criteria and demonstrating:

- Qualification from a COSRT-Accredited Practitioner Training Course; and

- Completing 200 hours supervised practice post-qualification (over minimum one and maximum two years); and
- Completion of 100 hours of assessment and treatment in the year prior to your application for Accreditation; and
- Holding COSRT Registered Membership for at least one year.

This route will close on 31 December 2024.