

FROM THE MINISTER

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Mr McIlveen has asked:

To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning how many counsellors have been trained by each university, in the last 5 years.

ANSWER

As the Department does not hold the information requested, my officials contacted Queen's University, the University of Ulster and the Open University. The universities have indicated that a total of 902 students have completed counselling courses in the last 5 years.

Details of the universities responses are attached at Annex A.

**DR STEPHEN FARRY MLA
Minister for Employment and Learning**

The University of Ulster

The Diploma of Higher Education in Counselling was approved in 2004 and admitted its first intake of students in September of that year. It was designed to fill an identified gap in education provision namely a scarcity of Counsellor “pre registration” training in Northern Ireland. This gap was identified in the Government’s review into Counselling Services which reported in 2002 (DHSSPS Counselling in Northern Ireland Report of the Counselling Review). This review had recommended that there should be a rationalisation of courses for Counselling Students and that there should be a rationalisation of the existing range of course titles which were at that stage confusing. This was revalidated as a Foundation degree in March 2009.

The FdSc in Counselling was designed to meet the needs for professional training of people who are involved in counselling roles in a number of distinct professional contexts. It provides students with an opportunity to develop theoretical knowledge in counselling together with practical skills appropriate to their role. This programme provides a flexible yet coherent framework that enables students to exit at a level commensurate with their work roles. At the highest level it provides students with a programme that meets the educational requirements of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). This is the only professional counselling ‘training’ programme based on supervised practice experience.

While there is an increase in the number of individuals wishing to become professionally accredited as counsellors, it should be noted that the majority of applicants to counselling courses do not envisage their professional careers developing along a purely counselling route. Rather, they would wish to develop the counselling aspect of their current role. The Certificate, UG and PG programmes offer academic knowledge and counselling skills development.

The Certificate and FdSc Degree is offered in collaboration with key counselling staff in all the Northern Ireland Regional Colleges. The Counselling Education and Training Partnership is an informal collaborative network with Counselling teams in: Belfast Metropolitan College (Gerald Moag Campus), Northern Regional College (Ballymena Campus), North West Regional College Derry and Limavady campus), South East Regional College (Lisburn campus), Southern Regional College (Banbridge and Newry campus) and South West College (Omagh campus). The Partnership works on a basis of mutual cooperation and respect with each member playing in equal role in decision making and course management.

Both the British and Irish Associations for Counselling and Psychotherapy require that counselling training programmes are built around a core theoretical model in order to ensure that students are exposed to a sufficient depth of knowledge and skills training. The professional ethos of the University of Ulster FdSc in Counselling is to encourage the students to develop a 'Humanistic Integrative' approach to counselling practice, providing a framework of practice that incorporates key theoretical principles and practice from Humanistic, Cognitive and Behavioural theories with consideration being given to the Psychodynamic approach, in keeping with current professional standards.

University of Ulster Graduates from Selected Counselling Courses 2008/09-2011/12

Year	Course	Course Description	Faculty	CAMPUS	Graduates
2007-08	G680UX	DipHE Counselling BIFHE PT	SS	FBT	30
	G682UX	DipHE Counselling LCFHE PT	SS	FLY	10
	G683UX	DipHE Counselling LIFHE PT	SS	FLN	19
	G685UX	DipHE Counselling NEIFHE PT	SS	FNE	17
	G686UX	DipHE Counselling NWIFHE PT	SS	FNW	4
	G687UX	DipHE Counselling UBIFHE PT	SS	FUB	2
		Total			82
2008-09	2439	DipHE Counselling MIL PT	SS	MIL	13
	2441	DipHE Counselling LIM PT	SS	LIM	8
	2442	DipHE Counselling LIS PT	SS	LIS	16
	2444	DipHE Counselling ANT PT	SS	ANT	29
	2445	DipHE Counselling DER PT	SS	DER	13
		Total			79
2009-10	2439	DipHE Counselling MIL PT	SS	MIL	21
	2441	DipHE Counselling LIM PT	SS	LIM	13
	2442	DipHE Counselling LIS PT	SS	LIS	10
	2444	DipHE Counselling ANT PT	SS	ANT	27
	2445	DipHE Counselling DER PT	SS	DER	17
	2446	DipHE Counselling BAN PT	SS	BAN	14
		Total			102
2010-11	2439	DipHE Counselling MIL PT	SS	MIL	14
	2441	DipHE Counselling LIM PT	SS	LIM	8
	2442	DipHE Counselling LIS PT	SS	LIS	14
	2444	DipHE Counselling ANT PT	SS	ANT	25
	2445	DipHE Counselling DER PT	SS	DER	10
	2446	DipHE Counselling BAN PT	SS	BAN	14
	6447	FdSc in Counselling MIL PT	SS	MIL	2
		Total			87
2011-12	2439	DipHE Counselling MIL PT	SS	MIL	3
	2441	DipHE Counselling LIM PT	SS	LIM	2
	2442	DipHE Counselling LIS PT	SS	LIS	2
	2444	DipHE Counselling ANT PT	SS	ANT	2
	2445	DipHE Counselling DER PT	SS	DER	5
	6447	FdSc in Counselling MIL PT	SS	MIL	10
	6448	FdSc in Counselling LIM PT	SS	LIM	12
	6451	FdSc in Counselling LIS PT	SS	LIS	4
	6453	FdSc in Counselling DER PT	SS	DER	10
	6455	FdSc in Counselling BAN PT	SS	BAN	12
	6475	FdSc in Counselling NEW PT	SS	NEW	8
	6761	FdSc in Counselling BNA PT	SS	BNA	31
		Total			101

In addition, in AY 2012/13, there are the following students registered:

Undergraduate:

BSc Communication and Counselling – Minor pathway in communication degree comprises six modules.

Registered 2012/13 **32**

BSc professional Development in Counselling – ‘top up’ for Foundation degree students comprises 6 modules

Registered 2012/13 **5**

Postgraduate:

MSc Counselling and Therapeutic Communication full and part time

Registered 2012/13 **9**

Queen’s University Belfast

Queen’s University previously offered a number of counselling courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The following are the numbers of students who successfully completed these courses:

2011-12	66
2010-11	61
2009-10	64
2008-09	61
2007-08	199

The Open University

The Open University Foundation Degree in Counselling does not result in accreditation to practice as a counsellor. Students have to undertake at least 150 hours’ supervised practice and then apply for individual accreditation to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

No students have completed the Open University Foundation Degree in Northern Ireland since it was offered in 2008. Additionally, The Open University does not record the number of graduates who continue to gain accreditation and practice as a counsellor.