

ASSESSMENT Policy

Introduction

The program requires students to meet personal, theoretical and practice standards, and such assessment always includes the possibility of students not achieving the required standards and therefore not graduating from the training program or being eligible for membership of GANZ. In addition to students displaying desired personal qualities and attitudes students need to demonstrate knowledge of Gestalt Therapy principles and ability to apply these theoretical concepts in practice contexts. Assessment addresses all three areas (personal, theory and practice) and can be carried out by the faculty of the training provider and/or by assessors from outside the program.

In the interests of supporting and focussing the learning process ongoing assessment occurs at each stage of the course. Special attention is given to assessment in the final year of a training program. A more definitive assessment process in the final year, assesses if a student is ready to graduate as a competent practitioner from the training program.

Trainers provide students with regular, relevant and detailed feedback on all assessment tasks as soon as possible after tasks are submitted.

Assessment feedback includes both peer and trainer comments in written and verbal forms.

Personal

The emphasis placed on the desired personal qualities of a Gestalt Therapist listed in the Curriculum Policy reflects a significant valuing by Gestalt training providers of personal development in conjunction with professional development. It is a core element of any Gestalt training program and therefore needs to be assessed. Information about assessing this dimension of the training program is communicated to students in published documents and at the time of enrolment.

Gestalt training is almost universally conducted in a group setting that actively promotes personal work and group process. This structure provides ongoing opportunities for trainers to offer feedback to students on their personal development that is based on the trainers' first-hand experience – especially in terms of students' relational skills and self-awareness.

While the personal qualities listed in the Curriculum Policy (and others) are more subjective than some other areas of assessment, and therefore more difficult to assess, these qualities are held in the foreground of the training experience and their importance stressed. To support a just and informed process of assessment, lecturers are encouraged to facilitate a continuing dialogue with students to evolve co-created meanings for these personal qualities.

Theory

Students' knowledge and understanding of theory that is relevant to the level of the course is assessed. The trainee needs to demonstrate an ability to engage in critical thinking in response to theoretical ideas through written assignments, examination, oral presentations, book reports, and class contributions.

Students are required to demonstrate an integrated understanding of Gestalt theory through their ability to talk about their practice work, and the work they see demonstrated by others, with reference to Gestalt theoretical concepts.

Practice

Since a central purpose of the training program is to produce competent Gestalt practitioners, there is an assessment of practitioner skills. This assessment includes evidence of the trainee's practice skills through live supervision, video and audio taped interviews, and/or rigorous, frequent one to one and/or small group supervision. Supervision in the training program requires the student to manage not only the micro level of particular interventions but also the macro level of the whole session and a sequence of sessions. In addition, as Gestalt therapy can involve ongoing work over several sessions, students are assessed on their ability to conceptualise their work over time. This involves discussing the course of psychotherapy, a consultation, or the application of the principles of Gestalt Therapy in a variety of health care, educational or organisational settings (engagement, middle and termination phases) through, for example, case study presentations (oral and written).