

Using Online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy – How to Ensure You Are Working With An Accredited CBT Expert



It's always been important to check your therapist's CBT credentials and clinical experience before starting Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. The increase in online CBT following the Coronavirus outbreak now means that this is more important than ever

Introduction

The title 'Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist' is not yet a protected professional term in the UK. This means that anybody can use the title without the recognised professional qualifications, training, experience or clinical supervision.

Whilst a number of well-known counselling and psychology directories offer therapist "verification", the directory verification process can often be misleading, only applying to self-declarations and confirmation of therapist contact details.

Unfortunately, this means that there are many unqualified individuals offering CBT and counselling services without the recognised professional credentials or experience. We have seen examples of counsellors offering CBT with only a few weeks and in many cases, only a few hours of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy training.

As it's likely that the Coronavirus isolation period will continue for many months before face-to-face therapy arrangements are back in place, this article explains how to ensure that you are working with a properly qualified UK CBT Psychotherapist. It also outlines the UK accreditation standards, so that you can properly assess the qualifications and expertise of your therapist before booking Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. You can check our online CBT services by visiting <https://thinkcbt.com/online-cbt>

The UK CBT Accreditation Register

The fastest and most reliable way to check that you are working with a professionally accredited Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist, is to check CBT credentials by visiting the UK CBT register at www.cbregisteruk.com

This register is the only recognised quality assurance check to confirm that your Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist is professionally accredited by the British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy (BABCP).

The BABCP is the only recognised UK professional body for the maintenance of clinical practice and training standards in CBT. The BABCP exists to protect the public and promote professional standards in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

The UK CBT register is used by all of the major insurance providers, the legal profession and many other professional bodies to check the accreditation status of CBT Psychotherapists before permitting panel registration.

You can use the simple surname check to find out if your UK CBT provider is listed on the accreditation register. If your therapist is listed, you know that they have achieved the rigorous training and clinical practice standards outlined later in this article.

If your therapist is not listed on the UK CBT register, this means that they have not been professionally verified by the BABCP.

The register also offers a postcode search; however this only identifies those accredited BABCP members who have chosen to advertise their services via the BABCP's own directory. Our advice is to find your chosen therapist and check the accreditation status using the simple surname check.

NOTE: The BABCP is often confused with the similarly sounding BACP.

The BACP is a professional body for Counselling and Psychotherapy and does not cover Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. This unfortunate similarity in names, often creates confusion for members of the public. If in doubt, always remember to check for the "double B" in BABCP.

At Think CBT, we are fully qualified and BABCP accredited. We are also approved Cognitive Behavioural Therapy experts for all of the major insurance providers and UK panel registrants for the medico-legal and court system. You can visit our website to find a therapist at <https://thinkcbt.com/cbt-therapy-appointments>

Minimum Training Requirements and Clinical Practice Standards for BABCP Accreditation

To apply for provisional accreditation with the BABCP, the clinician must be able to demonstrate the following criteria:

- A minimum of 12 months in a psychological core profession including HCPC registered clinical psychologist, psychiatrists or social worker. There is an extensive and in-depth clinical portfolio exercise known as the KSA assessment for applicants without a core psychological profession to demonstrate the equivalent clinical experience.
- Completion of a BABCP approved level 2 post-graduate training programme at Master's Degree level. Not all master's level CBT training programmes in the UK fully meet the rigorous standards applied by the BABCP.

- A minimum of 450 hours specialist Master's level CBT training. This involves written assignments, logs, case studies and research assignments amounting to approximately 25,000 words.
- A minimum of 40 hours professional CBT supervision delivered by a recognised CBT supervisor with BABCP accreditation.
- Presentation of eight detailed clinical cases for full clinical supervision.
- Three written clinical case studies of 4,000 words per case study to demonstrate competency in clinical practice.
- A minimum of 200 hours of supervised clinical work as a trainee CBT practitioner.
- Two written references covering clinical supervision and wider professional practice.

Once these criteria have been met, the therapist may apply for provisional accreditation by the BABCP. Provisional accreditation lasts for 12-18 months, during which time the provisionally accredited CBT Psychotherapist must demonstrate adherence to the BABCP codes of practice and professional standards. This includes a minimum of 90 minutes clinical supervision each month by a recognised CBT supervisor and engagement in a further five CBT training / learning activities.

Only at the end of this period is the Psychotherapist permitted to apply for full accreditation as a CBT Psychotherapist.

What if my therapist isn't on the UK CBT register?

Whilst there are some Psychotherapists who are able to meet the minimum training and practice standards without joining the BABCP, it's still important to personally check your therapist's credentials if they are not on the UK CBT register.

If your counsellor or therapist is offering CBT services and is not professionally accredited by the BABCP, our advice is to use the following simple questions and checklist to determine whether you are working with someone with equivalent qualifications and experience:

- How many hours of Post-graduate CBT training has the Psychotherapist completed?

(The BABCP standard is a minimum of 450 hours specialist post-graduate level training in CBT)

- How many hours of specialist CBT supervision has the Psychotherapist completed?

(The BABCP standard is a minimum of 40 hours of CBT specific clinical supervision).

- How many hours of supervised specialist practice has the Psychotherapist completed?

(The BABCP minimum standard is 200 hours of supervised practice as a CBT Practitioner)

- What approved post-graduate CBT specific qualifications does the Psychotherapist have?

(The BABCP standard is completion of a level 2 accredited post-graduate training programme at Master's level).

Some therapists have professional credentials that provide an equivalent to the above criteria without being on the UK CBT accreditation register, however it's often difficult to compare and quality assure without independent professional advice. If in doubt, consult the UK CBT register or use the above checklist.

This is what we offer at Think CBT

If you work with a Think CBT Psychotherapist, you can be assured that you are working with BABCP accredited CBT experts and HCPC registered psychologists. We only offer services that we are professionally qualified and accredited to deliver and we only work with clients when we are confident that we can help. We quality assure our team members so that our clients don't have to worry.

As part of our recruitment process we check professional credentials, experience, qualifications, DBS clearance and professional indemnity. All of our CBT Psychotherapists are interviewed, and we only accept CBT experts with a proven track record.

If you want advice or guidance on any of the above points, contact Think CBT via info@thinkcbt.com or by visiting our website at www.thinkcbt.com

Disclaimer: the information in this article reflects the opinions of Think CBT and does not represent the position of any other professional / membership body.