

Accredited Registers Impact Assessment

Accredited Register: British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Type of Review: Full Renewal Assessment

Period under review: 2021-2024

Date Approved for Panel: 18 December 2024

Introduction

Before we make a decision about accreditation, we undertake an impact assessment to understand likely effects on different groups, and the wider health system. We begin to gather the information required for the impact assessment when a Register first applies for accreditation. We consider any changes to impacts when we renew accreditation, and when taking other decisions that affect accreditation status such as imposing Conditions or suspension.

A key part of the impact assessment is consideration of equalities. The Equality Act 2010 imposes a legal duty, the Public Sector Equality Duty on all public bodies to consider the equality impact of its policies and decision making. The duty is known as the Equality Duty and it requires a public authority, in the discharge of its function to consider the following three aspects which form the basis of the duty:

- Consider the impact and eliminate unlawful (direct or indirect) discrimination and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people with protected characteristics and those who do not share these characteristics
- Foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and those who do not share these characteristics.

This means that public bodies must consider equality impact on individuals protected under the Equality Act 2010 in carrying out their work. The Authority, therefore, needs to be always mindful of the public duty when carrying out its oversight role which includes the approving of registers. It needs to have 'due regard' to the needs to balance the three aspects which make up the Equality Duty when achieving its goals.

The Equality Impact Assessment is an important tool/mechanism for demonstrating 'due regard' through the consideration of evidence and analysis, actual and potential to identify positive and/or adverse impacts. The key groups we need to consider when making our decisions are, sex, age, ethnicity, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, and maternity.

Impacts

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Equalities impacts - summary

- BACP registrants work in many different settings with a range of clients from different groups, age ranges and demographics.
- We have identified positive findings in relation to some protected characteristics. Particularly in relation to gender reassignment and sexual orientation in that the BACP are signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy which aims to eradicate all forms of conversion therapy. We also noted positive findings in relation to Race, in that the BACP a member of the Coalition for Inclusion and Anti-Opressive Practice which is a cross-cutting industry group aiming to develop and deploy knowledge and understanding for delivering inclusive counselling and psychotherapy training.

Impacts on groups with protected characteristics

Age

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified
Neutral				

Disability

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified
Positive	People who are seeking support around their mental health.	The BACP are working to improve their Good Practice in Action Guidelines pertaining to suicide and self-harm. This work is on conjunction with Dr Adrian Whittington. The improvement of these guidelines is likely to be of greater benefit to men where the instance of suicide is greater.	No actions required.	November 2024.

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Gender reassignment

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified
Positive	People who are seeking support around their gender identity.	The BACP are signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy (MoU) . This is a joint document signed by over 25 health, counselling and psychotherapy organisations which aims to end the practice of conversion therapy in the UK.	No actions required.	November 2024

Marriage and civil partnership

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified
Neutral				

Pregnancy and maternity

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified
Neutral				

Race

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified

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Positive		<p>The BACP is a member of the Coalition for Inclusion and Anti-Opressive Practice which is a cross-cutting industry group aiming to develop and deploy knowledge and understanding for delivering inclusive counselling and psychotherapy training.</p> <p>The Coalition have launched a toolkit 'Race is complicated: a toolkit for psychological therapies' which is an interactive PDF which aims to demonstrate core ideas and suggestions for best practice. As part of its launch, the BACP hosted an in-depth guidance and support event on how to apply the toolkit in practice for trainers and training providers.</p>	No actions required.	November 2024
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Religion or belief

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified
Neutral				

Sex

Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified

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Type of impact (positive/neutral/negative)	Group(s) affected	Description	Actions required	Date identified
Positive	People who are LGBTQ+	The BACP are signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy (MoU) . This is a joint document signed by over 25 health, counselling and psychotherapy organisations which aims to end the practice of conversion therapy in the UK.	No actions required.	November 2024

Cost and market impacts – summary

- Membership with the BACP costs £186/year. The BACP offer a reduced fee for £96/year.
- The BACP told us they continue to see a steady increase in membership numbers.
- In review of the BACPs register, typically, registrants are self-employed and can charge anywhere from £30-£120/hour.

Social and environmental impacts – summary

- The BACP noted that they continue to hope that having counselling and psychotherapy registers will help employment opportunities for counsellors and also provide a way of closing the skills and demand gaps in the current state provision of mental health services.
- Employers are reassured by the register once they understand what it represents. Unfortunately, on its own, the register may appear to be an insufficient authority to provide employers (including the NHS) with full confidence in and understanding of registrants. However, the BACP's work as part of a Partnership arrangement with other Accredited Registers and national health service providers has taken

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significant steps towards ensuring that at least NHS organisations are seeking Accredited Register status as part of employment and commissioning requirements.

- Accreditation through the programme will provide employers with further reassurance that practitioners have met its registration standards including education and training.
- Accreditation is therefore considered to have a positive impact given that it will raise confidence and awareness in the profession, and therefore, increase referrals from GPs, alleviating pressures on the NHS.

Decision

The Panel noted the above actions and considered the conditions and recommendations highlighted as part of the assessment. The Panel agreed with these actions and considered that it is in the public interest to re-accredit the BACP.