

How to pick a training school

When choosing to train as a hypnotherapist, we are well aware that you have many choices and that it can be very confusing and difficult to determine which course would suit you best. To help, we have listed some factors that you may like to look for when searching the internet or looking through prospectuses.

- Does the course equip you to practice? Some schools divide their courses into, for example, foundation, certificate and diploma. Others may be highly theoretical with little practical application. Ensure that, if you wish to go into practice, that you will be able to do so.
- How much support do the course tutors offer you? All NCH accredited schools have at least two tutors, and even though you may have one primary tutor, there should always be someone else that you can go to with questions or comments. Support in between training days is important too. Is this offered? What about continuing support when you have completed the course?
- What are the qualifications of the course tutors? These will vary, but it is worth checking out their original training, how much continuing development they undertake and any other relevant qualifications they may have (for example in training or assessing). Also, how experienced are they as hypnotherapists?
- While there is no regulation of the profession of hypnotherapy in the UK, there are National Occupational Standards. Does the course you are looking at adhere to these standards, and can the school demonstrate this?

- What external validation is there for the course? Most hypnotherapy training is run through private schools, some of which have their own professional body and so, in effect, accredit themselves. Some however, are truly externally validated not only by independent professional bodies but also by an awarding body. Awarding bodies are given this designation by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in England, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority in Wales, the Scottish Qualifications Authority or the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment in Northern Ireland.
- Do the course tutors see real clients? Some trainers start a school because they can't make it as practitioners. Current practice is a very important element of the teaching process.
- We believe it is vitally important that you see demonstrations of techniques and also get to practice. This gives you the confidence to practice with "real people" as soon as you qualify. Not all trainers demonstrate, and not all give you a chance to practice and build your confidence.
- The UK Confederation of Hypnotherapy Organisations insists that schools train to minimum standards of 120 hours face to face and 450 hours of total study time. Does the course you are considering meet this criterion?
- It is important that you are able to see a full syllabus before you start the course and that this has sufficient depth to enable you to start in full practice as soon as you qualify.
- Does the course include business and practice management? This is important as you could qualify as a wonderful hypnotherapist, but if you don't have the skills to attract clients, you will not succeed in practice.

- Does the school have policies on such things as equal opportunities and appeals? Are they adaptable to special needs of students?
- Which professional body's code of ethics, if any, does the school teach? They should also subscribe to a code of ethics for training itself.
- Does the course entitle you to membership of a professional body? According to the Prince's Foundation for Integrated Health, professional bodies should:
 - produce high quality, clear information for the public on its registrants and what they offer
 - have registration requirements that include providing evidence of competence to practise
 - require registrants to be insured to practise the therapy
 - require or provide opportunities for continuing professional development
 - have a code of conduct and practice
 - have disciplinary and complaints procedures
 - involve its members in decision-making
 - publish its annual accountsCheck these things out.
- What is the tutor/student ratio? There needs to be sufficient personal attention.