



2021

External Graduate Internship
Information Pack



Thank You for Your Interest in Completing an External Graduate Internship at ConnectGround Clinic

Throughout the year, places permitting, we offer Internships for graduates of other recognised counselling and psychotherapy programs.

These internships are designed for graduates of counselling programs to complete face-to-face clinical work to meet accreditation for professional memberships and to develop skills, knowledge and confidence in their practice.

As well as the opportunity to work with clients, interns will be offered individual & group supervision and an individual learning plan to support reflective and relational practice.

This internship will support your professional development by offering an opportunity to practice in a community-based counselling service that supports humanistic and relational ways of working with clients.

History

ConnectGround Clinic emerged from the Gestalt Therapy Australia training program in 2013 to provide our psychotherapy students an opportunity to practice. The Connect Ground clinic was established for two purposes, the first being to provide a learning environment where GTA students and graduates can put into practice the skills and knowledge they have been developing within the training program and the second being to provide an opportunity for members of the wider community to access affordable gestalt psychotherapy.

Clinic Model

The clinic offers a model of ongoing (non-time limited) therapy. ConnectGround is currently staffed by Gestalt Therapy Australia student interns, graduate volunteers and external graduates and provides low cost, ongoing, individual and group therapy that has a relational and humanistic focus.

The clinic operates as a small community health centre. In addition to seeing clients, interns may be asked to support the clinic and clinic staff by assisting with reception, intake & assessment, preparation of materials and the promotion of the clinic.

Clinic Hours

Thursday morning	12pm- 4:30pm
Group Supervision	3.30-4.30pm
Thursday evening	4.30-8.00pm

Friday morning	9.00-1.30pm
Meeting/Supervision time	12.30-1.30pm
Friday afternoon	1.30-5.00pm

Each student intern, graduate volunteer & external graduate intern will be expected to attend the clinic **for the full 4.5 hour shift weekly**. The clinic will run for 48 weeks of the year and currently operates on Thursdays and Fridays. Student interns, graduate volunteers & external graduate volunteers will be expected to make themselves available for the twice monthly group supervision at the nominated times. All client appointments are to be made around supervision times. Interns are given a detailed schedule of dates for all clinic days and supervision groups.

Clinic Staffing and Supervision

Carolyn Stewart is the Clinic Manager and works across both the Thursday and Friday clinic shifts. She will liaise with and provide fortnightly supervision and debriefing, as required, to all interns and is responsible for the day to day operations of the clinic, and facilitates one of the bi-monthly supervision groups. The other monthly group will be facilitated by interns interested in developing their supervisory skills.

The Assistant Manager, Belinda Gibson, works on Thursdays and facilitates the Thursday shift group supervision. Belinda is available for secondary consults and any other logistical support you may have in regards to your weekly shift (i.e. writing case notes, navigating the IT system, etc)

External Graduate Interns will engage in 20 hours of individual supervision and attend twice-monthly group supervision.

Each intern will also meet regularly with the Clinic Manager to review progress, learning needs, caseload, case notes, and referral processes etc.

Why do an internship?

External Graduates are often social workers, psychologists, nurses, teachers, occupational therapists, welfare workers etc. They have training and experience, and are aware of wanting to further develop and deepen their capacity to work with clients in therapy over a longer period of time.

External Graduates undertake an internship to:

- Complete training and client contact hours in order to achieve accreditation as the next step in establishing themselves as a counsellor or therapist.
- Bridge the gap from study to private practice or to a counselling role within an organisation.
- Build on their learning through practicing in a clinic setting where they have access to clients and the benefits of working in a supported, reflective, collegial environment offering the opportunity to bring theory and practice to life.
- Extend their clinical thinking, and to deepen their presence – a fuller capacity to be with themselves and others
- Feel supported and challenged to develop their embodied awareness and deepen their capacity for compassion, curiosity, relational courage and intimacy.

Some of the following considerations may help you to consider why you may want to complete an internship with Connectground.

- Are you *interested/curious/motivated/influenced* by your own learning and development?
- Are you wanting to develop your capacity for empathy with clients?
- Are you wanting to develop your *practice/style/approach* but unsure what it is that is missing or needs to be developed?
- Do you feel a disconnect between theory and practice when it comes to applying the knowledge you have learnt as a developing practitioner?
- Would you like the opportunity to work long term with a diverse range of clients and issues?

Prerequisites

- Successfully completed, or be in the completion phase of, a relevant counselling or psychotherapy training program (Eg: Masters of Counselling, Degree in Counselling, Graduate Diploma in Counselling, Social Work, Psychology etc)
- Knowledge of clinical theory and a capacity for clinical thinking and practice
- Contact details of a professional referee who can comment on your capacity to work with clients under supervision
- To have secured professional indemnity insurance
- To be fully available for a 4.5 hour shift either on Thursday or Friday
- To be available to attend the professional development training and additional training as required
- To be available to attend twice monthly group supervision sessions
- To be available for the full year of the clinic (approx. 48 weeks)
- To attend 20 hours of individual supervision over the course of the internship
- Willing to work under direction and supervision
- Capacity to link theory and practice

Desirable

Understanding of the mental health system/some knowledge of diagnosis and capacity to work with presenting issues

Selection Criteria

Graduates applying for an internship at CG will be required to meet the following selection criteria. At the interview applicants will be invited to talk about their learning goals:

- Capacity for self-awareness, self-reflection and self-regulation
- Demonstrated counselling skills in small practice group
- Capacity to identify areas of development, receive feedback and reflect on practice
- Nascent capacity to think about what is happening in the here and now
- Willingness to commit to an allotted shift, work as a member of a small team and carry a caseload of three clients per week

What can I expect during an internship?

- Interns are able to complete client hours while working as part of a vibrant team in a thriving community clinic
- Opportunities to develop and sharpen the capacity for critical reflection
- Opportunity to gain valuable experience and confidence working with a wide range of clients and issues
- Potential to work with clients on a weekly basis for both long and short- term periods
- A stimulating graduate training program which includes regular ongoing professional development sessions
- Development of a clear learning & development plan
- Opportunity to work within a model that values and supports ongoing reflection and self-evaluation
- Twice monthly group supervision and 20 hours of individual supervision
- The opportunity to contribute to the development of ConnectGround as a service

Clinic Professional Development

External Graduate Interns will have the opportunity to attend quarterly professional development workshops and the three-day Specialist Gestalt Practice Module organised by ConnectGround and Gestalt Therapy Australia

Specialist Gestalt Practice Module

External Graduate Interns are required to attend the three-day Specialist Gestalt Practice Module with GTA student interns on:

August 13th Friday: 9.30-5.00pm

August 14th Saturday: 9.30-5.00pm

August 15th Sunday: 9.30-4.00pm

Location: The Gestalt Centre 622-624 Lygon Street, Carlton North VIC 3054

Clinic Costs

- External Graduate Interns are responsible for the cost of their professional indemnity insurance (\$ 220.00 compulsory: paid directly to AON)
- Graduate Interns are required to provide evidence of a current Police check and a Working with Children Check
- External Graduate internship fees are \$4400 including GST and payment may be negotiated to be paid in instalments

External Graduate Responsibilities:

- **Individual and Group Supervision** - You will engage in 20 hours of individual supervision, during the course of your internship, meet regularly with the clinic manager and attend twice monthly group supervision.
- **Insurance** – You will be expected to arrange professional indemnity insurance and provide a copy to the clinic manager before you commence seeing clients at the clinic.
- **Attendance** – The clinic will run for approx. 48 weeks of the year and you will be expected to attend all your shifts. Your shift will run for 4.5 hours, regardless of whether or not you have clients booked. If you do not have clients booked, you will be expected to perform other duties and support the clinic in other ways.
- **Leave and Absences**
All leave (including any changes to shift hours, such as arriving late or leaving early) needs to be negotiated in advance directly with the Clinic Manager. Once leave has been approved the Clinic Manager will inform the other interns on your shift.
Interns who are sick or absent at short notice are required to contact the Clinic Manager directly who will then cancel clients if necessary.
- **Availability** – By agreeing to join the clinic, you are also agreeing to see 3 clients per week during your shift. You will not be expected to immediately start with three clients, but once you are established you will be expected to take new clients when you have vacancies.
- **Referrals** – Interns will be offered new referrals based on their level of knowledge and experience. Interns have the right to decline an intake.
- **Case notes** – You will keep up to date online case notes for each session and maintain a client file including all relevant information for each client.
- **Risk** – As soon as possible, you will inform the clinic manager of any significant risk issues in relation to your work with clients in the clinic.
- **Dual relationships** - You will inform the clinic manager and supervisor of any dual relationships that emerge in your work with clients in the clinic and be open to a reflective planning process to ensure any issues relating to dual relationships are addressed ethically.
- **Duties** – In addition to seeing clients, you will be expected to contribute to the clinic in other ways, such as reception, intake & assessment, preparation of materials and promotion.

How to Apply

Complete the application form, a written application, a response to the case study and submit with a copy of your current CV.

Application Process

Step 1: Written Application

Please submit to Carolyn Stewart (Manager of Clinical Services) at manager@connectground.com.au.

1. A full resume
2. A brief statement about your current experience as a counsellor / student. You may want to reference relevant study, work or volunteer activities.
3. Write a brief statement about your strengths and growing edges as a trainee counsellor.
4. Write a statement of 3 learning goals that you have in relation to your desire to participate in an internship. Also describe any supports and challenges that are relevant to these goals.
5. Anything that you need to tell us that might influence your capacity to practice as a student intern at ConnectGround eg: upcoming leave planned
6. A statement of your availability, preferred shift times and possible obstacles to full participation in an internship.
7. Reflections on and a brief outline of a possible therapeutic plan for working with the case study below to discuss at the interview:

Case study

Susan, aged 34, has just come out of a 4-year relationship that was ended by her partner. The end of the relationship has evoked anxiety and depression and fear that she will never find another partner. She is acutely aware of her biological clock and had thought that her ex-partner would be the father of her children.

Reflections

- What are the core themes of the case study?
- Is there anything about the client's story that you feel particularly challenged or impacted by?
- How might reflecting on this be a support?

Interview Process

Step 2: Interview and Referee check

After applications are received you will be invited to an interview with the ConnectGround Manager.

At the interview you will be asked to briefly outline a therapeutic plan for working with the case study above.

The interviewer will expect that candidates demonstrate:

- a. A high level of self-awareness and a capacity to articulate something of their developmental process around working with clients
- b. A personal interest in developing their capacity to work relationally with clients
- c. A capacity to articulate their approach to working with clients
- d. A willingness to participate in rigorous dialogue about their developing practice

References

You will be asked to nominate one of your course facilitator's or a placement supervisor to provide a reference regarding your level of skill and readiness for taking up a place in the clinic.

Step Three: offer of placement and feedback

At the conclusion of this process you will be contacted and offered an internship to start at an agreed upon date or advised that you will not be offered an internship at this stage. If you are not offered a place in the clinic, we will offer feedback regarding our decision and identify any areas of development. In addition to your readiness to practice, the needs of ConnectGround (gender balance etc) will also be considered in the selection process.

FAQ's

Will I be guaranteed work with clients?

Yes, absolutely. At Connectground clinic the clinic supervisor completes the intake and assessment process and then, holding in mind the needs of the client and the level of experience of the intern, allocates clients. Each intern will have a caseload of three clients who attend weekly sessions.

What if I receive a client I feel ill equipped to work with?

The clinic offers interns the opportunity to work with clients who present with a diverse range of experiences and issues so it will be normal to find yourself learning on the job. Your supervisor will support you to work with specific issues through supervision and the provision of readings. Interns have a right to choose not to work with

Will I receive internal supervision while I undertake my internship?

External Graduate Interns receive 20 hours of individual supervision and twice monthly group supervision.

Will I be able to use the hours accumulated in my internship as part of my professional body's accreditation process?

Yes, this is one of the many benefits of completing an internship at Connectground

Is there an application fee?

There is a non-refundable application fee of \$120 for the program which covers processing of your application, an interview and checking of references.

Will I feel competent as a practitioner after completing my internship?

At the clinic we provide a well-held and supportive learning environment that helps interns develop their confidence as practitioners. Throughout your internship there will be many learning opportunities and professional development sessions on offer. We believe that you will finish your internship with a deeper sense of how you work as a practitioner, where your areas of development and growth could be, and the insight to 'do something different' which may be more supportive.

I have had no formal training in any counselling course, but feel like I am self aware and reflective in my everyday life, can I complete an internship?

Unfortunately, the internships are only available to people who have studied a relevant course.

I previously commenced a clinical placement elsewhere so am I able to use this time as a credit for the hours I have already undertaken?

Our internship is for a full 12 months regardless of practice hours completed elsewhere

Can I undertake my placement fortnightly instead of weekly?

On being accepted into the clinic interns commit to a weekly 4.5 hour shift with a caseload of three clients.