

Pre Course Clinical/ Work Experience – MA in Art Therapy

Prior to starting the MA in Art Therapy, it is a requirement that applicants have at least one year's experience of working in either a clinical, care work, educational or supportive client setting. This requirement is to help students gain an understanding and an experience of working within a team/ staff structure, where the concern relates to the emotional, psychological, physical or educational needs of service users of that service. This learning and experience can then be built on and utilized when the clinical placement component begins.

We would suggest that your pre course experience is largely confined to one or two areas of a more substantial length, rather than a large number of short experiences. Work experiences can be overseas.

Types of pre course experience

The type of pre course experiences that are suitable varies widely and does not necessarily need to be exclusively within an arts setting, although this is an advantage. Your involvement can be paid or voluntary and the range of experiences and situations past applicants have used have included:

- HSE/ Social Service Day Centres in areas such as – psychiatry/ learning disabilities/ elderly/ community support initiatives
- Residential/Care organizations – e.g. Brothers of Charity, Cope Foundation, Enable Ireland, Headway Ireland working as care assistants or support workers
- Primary & Secondary Education, Special Education – working as SNA's, support staff
- Youth Reach/ Adolescent Services
- Samaritans
- Simon Community
- Barnardos

Past work experience from a number of years ago can also be used as pre course experience, but please check with us if the timescale for this is over 8 years.

You already have a Professional Qualification?

If you have a professional qualification and have work experience in that area, then normally additional pre course experience will not be necessary. Qualifications may be in areas such as:

Teaching
Counselling & Psychotherapy
Clinical Psychology
Occupational Therapy
Social Work
Youth services
Prison/ Probation Services

Most large institutions or organizations have voluntary service organizers with whom you can arrange your work experience. Other sources of possible work experiences can be gained via:

- Voluntary Ireland - www.volunteerireland.com

The details given above are not exhaustive in terms of the types of areas in which you might find work experience.

You will be asked on the application form to list all of your work experiences that you have undertaken, with dates.

If you have any queries do not hesitate in contacting the department.