



Sussex
Mindfulness
Centre

NHS
Sussex Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Handbook for Mindfulness Teacher Training: MBCT & MBSR

For intake in 2027

Version 1

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Sussex Mindfulness Centre (SMC) Training

Mindfulness-based approaches (MBAs) have an ever-expanding evidence base, with MBCT being recognised in the NICE guidelines. MBSR and MBCT are being used for an ever-broadening range of applications in clinical, organisational and community contexts. They can help manage distress in the form of stress, anxiety, depression and physical pain, and they can also be part of our movement towards living with greater meaning and satisfaction.

The SMC (<https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/>) brings together a group of people who have been teaching, training, and researching MBAs in Sussex for over a decade. The SMC includes collaboration between Sussex Partnership NHS staff, researchers at Sussex University, and experienced teachers and trainers in the local community. We aim to ensure safe and high-quality provision through excellent training, clear governance and an understanding of the existing evidence base. At the same time, we seek to develop new evidence by developing and evaluating innovative mindfulness approaches, and with groups that may not otherwise have been considered to be able to benefit from MBAs.

SMC has good links with local, national and international teachers and researchers with whom it facilitates a community network through CPD events, research collaborations, an annual conference and a regional gathering. The SMC has been a member of the British Association for Mindfulness-based Approaches (<https://bamba.org.uk/>), and its precursor organisation, almost since its inception and is represented at leadership level of this organisation.

The SMC training had its first intake in 2011 and was at that time a new model of NHS-based teacher training using an apprenticeship model. This had a strong emphasis on teaching from the embodiment of personal practice and learning through feedback and supervised teaching. (For further information about the development and evaluation of this model, see Marx, R., Strauss, C., Williamson, C. (2014). Mindfulness apprenticeship: a new model of NHS-based MBCT teacher-training. *Mindfulness*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-013-0254-2>). Since then, the training model has retained its apprenticeship ethos and has moved from being predominantly an in-house MBCT training for NHS staff to being a more inclusive programme that trains both NHS and community teachers in key elements of both MBCT and MBSR.

There is currently no means of accreditation for MBCT or MBSR in the UK. The Good Practice Guidelines (GPG) for teaching mindfulness-based courses (MBCs) published by the British Association for Mindfulness-based Approaches, provides a set of standards that are considered nationally to be the minimum required for delivering quality in teaching mindfulness-based groups (for details see: <https://bamba.org.uk/teachers/good-practice-guidelines/>). This SMC training programme enables graduates to meet the experience and training required by the national GPG and, after running two groups, one within training and one of the same curriculum following completion of the training, to apply to join the register held by the British Association for Mindfulness-based Approaches of teachers who meet the GPG.

Eligibility to apply to train

The training is open to people who:

- Have completed an 8-week MBCT or MBSR group, in person or online, as a participant.
- Have a regular mindfulness practice (including practices taught on the MBCT/MBSR courses).
- Can envisage and describe ways in which they could run MBCT or MBSR groups after completion of the training.

In addition, for Sussex Partnership applicants applying for Trust funding:

- To have a professional mental health training.
- To have the support of their manager and clinical lead to take the necessary time to do the training.
- To work in a role which allows for the delivery of the 8-week MBCT course.
- To work in a service where there is some evidence that the populations using that service can benefit from MBCT; or where there are proposals from the Trust Research dept to work on innovative approaches with that population.
- To work in an area and service where there is currently minimal provision of MBCT and where the Trust aims to extend mindfulness provision.

Application process

For more information about the course, and/or an application form, please go to:

<https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/train-to-teach-mindfulness/mbct/>

Applications should be emailed to spft.smc@nhs.net by **24th November 2026**.

Interviews will be held in mid-December 2026, online, by video conferencing.

Applicants who are external to Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) are welcome to submit their applications early and to request an earlier interview date.

For further information about the training, please contact spft.smc@nhs.net or call Niki Larsen-Johnson, SMC administrator on 0300 304 0689. Regular information sessions will be held about SMC's trainings throughout the year. You'd be welcome to attend one of these. Please email spft.smc@nhs.net to book a place.

Fees

There should be some Trust funded or part fund places available for Sussex Partnership Foundation NHS Trust (SPFT) employees this year. Anyone who gets Trust funding will need to personally pay the cost of the retreat that is part of the programme (cost TBC - likely around £750). For part funded places, SPFT employees will need to also pay a proportion of the training cost (e.g. £950 payable by the trainee and £3,000 covered by the Trust).

For non-Sussex Partnership employees, the cost of the training, excluding the 5-day residential retreat, is £3,950. These course fees can be paid in instalments over a 9 month period. We hope to be able to offer some reduced cost places, at 75% of the full cost (i.e. £2,962), to applicants who have limited financial means and/or who come from backgrounds that are currently under-represented in the mindfulness practitioner and teacher community. We won't know how many reduced cost places will be available until January 2027. However, you will be able to express an interest being considered for one of these on the application form and won't need to make a decision on accepting an offer of a place until you know the cost.

The cost of the retreat, which is likely to be around £750, will be payable by all trainees. We will confirm its exact cost in the Autumn of 2026, prior to the closing date for applications.

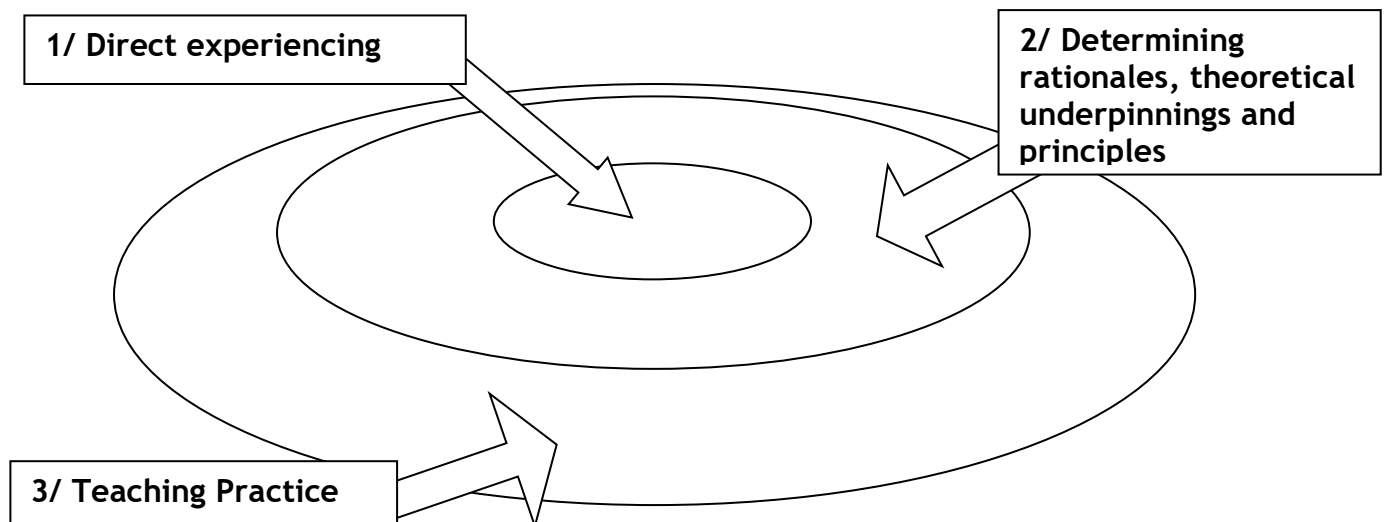
Time commitments (for Sussex Partnership employees only)

The training involves 11.5 days and an additional optional day for the conference. It is expected that trainees' managers will release trainees for the 7.5 days of teaching that happen on weekdays (predominantly Fridays) and that the remaining 4 days of the training, the 5 days residential retreat, one day retreat and the daily personal mindfulness practice will be done in participants' own time. Time for writing reflective accounts, attendance at peer learning meetings, at the 8-week assisting teaching groups and supervision are more likely to happen within working hours, but may happen in evenings, and time for these is to be negotiated locally with managers and leads.

Course philosophy and approach

The training is based on an inner core of direct personal experiencing of mindfulness. This forms the basis for the succeeding circles of determining rationales, theoretical underpinnings and principles, and learning through teaching practice:

- 1) **Direct experiencing:** of all the practices and exercises of the 8-week courses, including dialoguing about these experiences, both in formal Inquiry and peer to peer discussion.
- 2) **Determining Rationales:** linking these direct experiences to the aims of the mindfulness work. This involves placing the learning in a wider context of theoretical understanding.
- 3) **Teaching Practice:** exploring and dialoguing how the learning in 1) and 2) inform the way practices and exercises can be taught. This facilitates the development of the skills required to communicate the ideas, qualities and approach of mindfulness-based work.



As a mindfulness community, we recognise that the cause of suffering in individuals cannot be seen only in terms of internal processes and must be thought of in the context of the unequal power structures in society that shape those processes. As a part of the NHS, we strive to work towards a society in which our services are accessible and welcoming to all those who need them. We recognise and respect our differences; we celebrate the rich contribution made to society by a multiplicity of voices; and we commit to continue to learn from them by listening deeply to their wisdom. Sussex Mindfulness Centre totally rejects discrimination based on ethnic, racial and other kinds of difference.

Course objectives

On completion of the training, graduates should be able to:

- Establish whether a Mindfulness-based Approach (MBA) is appropriate for particular participants through an understanding of both the potential risks and benefits of MBAs with different populations.
- Depending on previous mental health training, either facilitate MBCT for clinical groups, or MBCT or MBSR for staff or community groups. These may initially need to be run with more experienced teachers or peers.
- Demonstrate skills in each of the six domains of the Mindfulness-Based Assessment: Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI-TAC): coverage, pacing and organisation of the session curriculum; relational skills; embodiment of mindfulness; guiding mindfulness practices; conveying course themes through interactive inquiry and didactic teaching; and holding the group learning environment (see <https://mbitac.bangor.ac.uk/mbitac-tool.php.en> for further details of these).
- Understand, and question, the theoretical underpinnings of MBAs.
- Know the evidence base for MBAs and be able to evaluate groups.
- Take responsibility for their own supervision and Continuing Professional Development as a mindfulness teacher.

Course structure

- Eight and a half days of teaching workshops between Feb. and Dec. 2027.
- Three day-long master classes
- 4 peer learning meetings
- Three tutorials
- Sussex based conference
- Assisting in the teaching of a mindfulness-based course involving 8 or 9 weekly sessions with each session lasting 2 hours or more.

- 8 hours of supervision across the duration of the 8-week assisted teaching course.
- Personal mindfulness practice - approximately 30-40 minutes daily.
- Attending a one-day retreat and a five-day residential mindfulness retreat.
- Writing reflective accounts throughout the training.

Course dates and venues

NB Occasionally dates may be subject to change, but we do our best to avoid this.

Selection interviews

Mid. Dec. 2026, online.

Applicants external to Sussex Partnership can request an earlier interview date

Orientation half day:

Fri 19th Feb 2027 -morning only (9am-1pm) [Online via Zoom](#)

Modules/workshops (all 9am-5pm, with some time at the beginning for arriving/ networking):

Fri/Sat 19th/20th March 2027 (Module 1) [Online via Zoom](#)

Fri/Sat 23rd/24th April 2027 (Module 2) [Online via Zoom](#)

Fri 7th May 2027 (Trauma-informed and effective mindfulness teaching) [Online](#)

Fri/Sat 25th/26th June 2027 (Module 3) [In person, in Brighton or Hove](#)

Fri/Sat 22nd/23rd October 2027 (Module 4) [In person, in Brighton or Hove](#)

Masterclasses and conference:

Buddhist Foundations of Mindfulness with Christina Feldman - Fri 8th Oct. 27 [Online](#)

The Evolving Story of MBCT - date TBC [Online via Zoom](#)

Optional free in-person attendance at the SMC conference, if one is run in 2027. For updates see <https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/mindfulness-events-and-retreats/sussex-mindfulness-centre-conferences/>

Day retreats ('all-days')

Trainees need to attend one all-day retreat. The dates of the all-day retreats offered by SMC will be confirmed nearer the time. Further details will be posted here: <https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/events/retreats/>

Please note that while you need to attend one all-day during your training, it doesn't have to be one of the SMC ones. For example, it may be that your assist teaching course (see below) has an all-day as part of it. However, we'd recommend at least pencilling in one of the SMC dates (once they are available), as many of the assist teaching courses don't have an all-day. If you're considering doing an all-day outside of these options, please talk with one of the trainers first to think about how well it fits with the training.

Retreat

Trainees also need to attend a 5-day residential retreat. This will likely be in September 2027. We will confirm its date and location in the Autumn of 2026, prior to the closing date for applications. If this retreat is impossible to make then you can attend an equivalent, alternative retreat that you organise yourself. However, we ask that you attend the retreat connected with the course, if at all possible.

Peer learning meetings

All trainees will be allocated to a peer learning group. Each peer learning group will meet on 4 occasions (once following each module) to be organised at mutually convenient times. These meetings can occur remotely, for example using Zoom, which has free accounts: <https://zoom.us/> or in person, as participants prefer. Prior to the peer learning meetings, trainees will make a practice recording and share it in drop box for their peers and tutors to listen to.

Tutorials

All trainees will be allocated a tutor at the beginning of the training and will have a mid-point and end of course tutorial [via Zoom]. The latter will be with their tutor and their supervisor from their assisted teaching group.

Assist Teaching

Regarding the experience of assist teaching a full MBCT or MBSR course, trainees will be presented with a list of possible courses to choose between. We aim to offer a range of possible courses, with different dates and course contexts. These assist teaching courses are typically delivered over Zoom. Some assist teaching courses will occur towards the end of 2027 and others at the beginning of 2028. In previous years, we have been able to allocate nearly all trainees to one of their first preference assist teaching courses.

Training Content

The orientation, first two modules and masterclasses will be undertaken with trainees from the *Mindfulness Teacher Training: Brief & Adapted Interventions* course. The content of the sessions will be as follows (note that sometimes minor changes are made to the below content):

Orientation

Introduction to:

- i/ The ethos and structure of the training programme
- ii/ Each other: opportunities for connecting and starting to build community.
- iii/ Practice, particularly the body scan
- iv/ Practical issues: e.g. the library, peer buddy groups, reflective writing.

Module 1: Foundations

Day 1: Deepening our Experience of Mindfulness and Session 1

- i/ Orientation and Intentions:
Experiential and theoretical exploration of the importance of these
- ii/ Auto pilot and Coming to Our Senses:
Body Scan and Raisin exercise
- iii/ Introduction to the Underpinning Theories & Rationales of MBAs
- iv/ Teaching practice (raisin exercise)
- v/ Reflections on beginnings of 8-week course and theory and practicalities of session 1

Day 2: The MBCT and MBSR Course Session 2

- i/ Body scan
- ii/ Perception and 'Working with Barriers':
'Walking Down the Street Exercise', 9 dots + setting up
'Everyday Mindfulness' and 'Pleasant Events Calendar'
- iii/ Theory/rationales for Session 2
- iv/ Establishing the culture of teaching practice
- v/ Teaching in triads (body scan)

Module 2: Opening to life: from reaction to response (Sessions 3-4)

Day 1: Mindfulness of Breath and Body

- i/ Mindful movement (MM) e.g. Yoga-based or Qi Kung + Inquiry
- ii/ Breath-body Sitting Meditation + Inquiry into 'Pleasant/Unpleasant Events'
- iii/ Theory/rationales for Session 3 (MM, Breath-Body, Events Calendars)
- iv/ Teaching Practice (triads): Mindful movement

Day 2: Returning to the Present Moment

- i/ Sitting Meditation Practice: Breath/Body/Sounds/Thoughts + inquiry
- ii/ Unpleasant events
- iii/ Automatic Negative Thoughts Exercise + The Territory of Stress and Depression + 3 Step Breathing Space (3 SBS) + 'Pausing'

- iv/ Teaching Practice 1: Short Sitting Meditation (breath and body) + Inquiry process

Module 3: The Power of Acceptance & Perspective (Sessions 5-6)

Day 1: Allowing-acceptance... 'letting be'

- i/ 4-stage sitting practice
- ii/ Aikido (+ 'the Guest House' poem discussion)
- iii/ Sitting with a difficulty practice
- iv/ Theory input on 'the two Darts' + Approach-Avoidance + 3 SBS 'Responsive'
- v/ Teaching Practice: Sitting meditation + Inquiry

Day 2: Applying mindfulness: Thoughts are not Facts and Interpersonal Mindfulness

- i/ Sitting Meditation: 4 stages including 'Working with the Difficult'
- ii/ 'Moods and Thoughts' alternative viewpoints exercise + 3SBS with 'Thoughts Step'; interpersonal mindfulness exercise
- iii/ Stressful communication
- iv/ Input on inquiry
- v/ Teaching Practice: any of the practices so far practiced plus emphasis on inquiry

Module 4: Day 1: Using What we Have Learnt to Take Better Care of Ourselves

- i/ Sitting meditation with an emphasis on taking care
- ii/ Activity and Mood Exercise + Relapse Signature and 3 SBS Action Step
- iii/ What we take in from the environment (MBSR)
- iv/ The arc of the 8-week course
- v/ Teaching Practice: 3 SBS and other short practices

Module 4: Day 2: Putting Our Learning into Action

- i/ consolidating learning in the whole group
- ii/ Endings

Trauma-Informed and Effective Mindfulness Masterclass

This day will offer a session on identifying and working with traumatic reactions to mindfulness practice, assessing and screening for mindfulness groups, understanding the evidence base and hearing from ex-service users about what they have found helpful and unhelpful in the way mindfulness has been delivered.

Other Masterclasses

These two Masterclasses will be an opportunity to explore the theoretical underpinnings of MBSR and MBCT in greater depth. Clara Strauss and Taravajra will be exploring contemporary psychological understandings and the evidence that inform these. Christina Feldman will focus on underpinnings from Buddhist psychology. Even though many of us deliver entirely secular MBCT or MBSR programmes, many of the ideas in contemporary mindfulness-based programmes make more sense when we understand their origins and intentions from Buddhist psychology. These masterclasses, and the safe and effective practice day, will also be open to others not on this training.

Assist teaching an MBCT or MBSR course

Every course participant will assist in the teaching of a mindfulness-based course (MBSR or MBCT). Depending on the availability of suitable courses and on the teaching experience of the trainee, we will aim for the assisted teaching courses to begin in the second half of 2027. Trainees sometimes opt to have their assist teaching experience after the modules and masterclasses are complete (i.e. in early 2028).

Trainees will be asked to select preferences for which course they would like to assist teach and these preferences will be met as far as is logistically possible. In allocating courses, consideration will also be given to the context trainees would like to run groups in when they complete the training, and suitable experience will be provided where possible. The courses offered are likely to include those run by Sussex Partnership for service-users, those run by Sussex Partnership for staff, and community-based groups. Most courses are run live online via Zoom. The assist teaching courses that trainees select from are usually run by core and associate SMC trainers, who are experienced mindfulness-teachers. If a trainee does not live within feasible travelling distance of Sussex and does not wish to assist teach an MBCT or MBSR course offered over Zoom then, availability allowing, it is sometimes possible to assist teach with a teacher in their local area who meets the BAMBA Good Practice Guidelines and has undertaken mindfulness supervisor training.

Sometimes we may ask that trainees who are Sussex Partnership staff complete their assist teaching experience in their own or a related clinical service/team.

Depending on their experience and readiness, during the assist teaching trainees will teach as many elements of MBCT or MBSR as is practical. Weekly supervision will be offered for the duration of the course with the lead facilitator. This will comprise a total of 8 hours spread across the duration of the course. Supervision may take place face-to-face or over the phone or via Teams or Zoom. All six

domains of the MBI-TLC (Appendix E) need to be considered within the framework of supervision.

We also encourage trainees to organise an opportunity to join an MBSR or MBCT group as a participant observer either before the training begins or during the training. This offers a wonderful chance to experience the course again from a slightly different position of being a teacher in training. Appendix A gives some guidance on how to be a participant observer, if you do organise this opportunity. Areas for reflection could include: how the curriculum of each session is structured; how the various elements of the 8-week course support and augment each other (i.e. to see how a particular element in one session prepares for future elements and/or builds on previous ones); how group processes are used to support the aims of the session; and on what seems to facilitate positive change in participants. Trainees could record their reflections using the framework provided in Appendix B, which is based on the MBI-TLC / MBI-TAC, for each weekly session. This will enable a growing familiarity with the MBI-TLC / MBI-TAC, with the curriculum and with important ingredients for effective mindfulness teaching.

Personal mindfulness practice

The literature on MBCT and MBSR makes very clear that those leading groups must teach from a thorough grounding in personal experience of mindfulness practice. Participants will therefore be expected to already have a regular, ideally daily, mindfulness practice before starting the course, and to continue with a daily practice for the duration of the course. This will take different forms for different people and may draw on the range of mindfulness practices taught on the course. Suggestions for practice will be given at the workshops.

Retreat experience

One of the required features of the training is a more intensive experience of personal mindfulness practice. Practice can be significantly deepened by this kind of more intensive experience.

As an ‘All Day’ session of silent mindfulness practice is often included in MBCT and MBSR groups, it is important that trainees have an experience of this before they contemplate leading such a day. Trainees will therefore be asked to join one of the mostly silent day retreats for service users and staff offered as part of standard mindfulness provision in Sussex Partnership, and a mostly silent 5-day mindfulness retreat held at a residential retreat centre.

Reflection

The reflective process brings together the various theoretical and experiential components of the training and helps make them part of a trainee’s own experience. To aid the reflective process, trainees are asked for a reflective account of 600 words for module 1 on their practice and their view of themselves as prospective teachers at the beginning of the training; this should be submitted after the orientation, two weeks before module 1. Further accounts of the same length are required after each of modules 1-3, giving a synopsis of learning from each of

the three dimensions of the training: personal practice, theoretical underpinnings and teaching practice. These 600-word summaries need to be e-mailed to the training programme's convenor two weeks prior to each training module. Please see Appendix C for further guidance on reflective writing.

A further 600-word account is required for the end of training tutorial. The subject of this is the trainee's own style and development as a mindfulness teacher, including strengths and areas for further development.

Peer learning process

Trainees will be allocated to peer learning groups. These groups will meet online for four approximately 90-minute sessions across the duration of the training. Prior to each peer learning meeting, trainees will record a practice and share this with their peers and tutors via drop box.

End of training assessment

Awarding of the SMC certificate for successful completion of the course will depend on:

- Attendance at and submission of a minimum of 80% of each of the following: training module and masterclass days, assist teaching groups and supervision sessions, 4 peer learning meetings and the 5 reflective summaries. This means that only 2 out of 11.5 of training events (workshops and master classes) can be missed, and only 1 of the peer learning meetings and reflective accounts. If more than 2 sessions of the assisted teaching 8-week course are missed, it must be repeated. A 5 day and 1 day retreat must be attended.
- Completion of the portfolio - see Appendices D and E.

In the final tutorial, the aim is to have a collaborative discussion between trainer, supervisor and trainee about competence in all domains of the Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Teaching and Learning Companion (MBI:TLC) / the Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI:TAC) (Appendix E), about the trainee's strengths, areas for further development, and the readiness of each trainee to lead courses. A decision will be made at the end of the programme tutorial about the further development needs of a graduate. In practice, the recommendation is likely to be that most graduates continue some aspect of their development before being the main facilitator of their own groups. These recommendations will be communicated in writing to the graduate and, if a SPFT employee, to their manager and clinical lead.

Next steps

SPFT employees will need to meet not only national GPG but also additional Trust governance criteria for running MBCT groups (available at <https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/about-sussex-mindfulness-centre/governance/>) before becoming the sole or lead facilitator running their own groups. This will be communicated to managers and clinical leads prior to the

training and plans to enable this will be needed before an applicant can take up a place on the training.

Non-NHS graduates hoping to deliver MBCT/MBSR groups in private practice or in community settings should be aware that this process is often not immediate after completion of the training and that costs for supervision and CPD continue to be payable whilst mindfulness work is being conducted.

In 2016 the UK Network for Mindfulness-based Teacher Training Organisations (which is now called the British Association for Mindfulness-based Approaches [<https://bamba.org.uk/>]), of which SMC is a member, set up the register for teachers of the main 8-week courses (e.g. MBSR, MBCT, Breathworks, MBLC). The register is based around adherence, checked by a referee, to the Good Practice Guidelines (GPG) which provide a set of standards that are considered nationally to be the minimum required for delivering quality in teaching mindfulness-based groups. The 12-month SMC programme fulfils the training requirements of the GPG. In order to be accepted onto the BAMBA register, teachers are also required to teach two 8-week courses in either MBCT or MBSR under supervision. The course taught as an assistant teacher during the training alongside an experienced teacher can be treated as one such course. The trainee will subsequently need to teach a second course with the same curriculum (i.e. teaching, in total, 2 supervised groups of MBSR or 2 supervised groups of MBCT) to meet the minimum teaching experience criterion for BAMBA listing.

Course Reading

NB: Links have been provided to the journal articles that are freely available on the internet. For the other articles, you'll need to use your library account to access them. The books we think are most important are those marked in bold.

Crane, R. (2017). *Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy*, 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Crane, R. (2015). Some Reflections on Being Good, on not Being Good and on Just Being. *Mindfulness*, 2015, 6, 5, 1226-1231. DOI 10.1007/s12671-014-0350-y. [which can be found [here](#)]

Crane, R. S., Brewer, J., Feldman, C., Kabat-Zinn, J., Santorelli, S., Williams, J. M. G., & Kuyken, W. (2017). What defines mindfulness-based programs? The warp and the weft. *Psychological Medicine*, 47(6), 990-999. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291716003317> [which can be found [here](#)]

Crane, R., Karunavira, & Griffith, G. (2021). *Essential Resources for Mindfulness Teachers*. London: Routledge.

Crane, R., Kuyken, W., Williams, J.M.G., Hastings, R.P., Cooper, L., Fennell, M.J.V. (2012). Competence in teaching mindfulness-based courses: concepts, development and assessment. *Mindfulness*, 3, 1, 76-84.

Griffith, G.M., Bartley, T., & Crane, R.S. (2019). The inside out group model: teaching groups in mindfulness-based programs. *Mindfulness*, 10, 1315-1327. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-019-1093-6> [which can be found [here](#)]

Hölzel et al. (2011). How does mindfulness meditation work? Proposing mechanisms of action from a conceptual and neural perspective. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 6, 537-559.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full catastrophe living, revised edition: how to cope with stress, pain and illness using mindfulness meditation*. Hachette UK.

Rosenberg, L. (2004) *Breath by Breath: The Liberating Practice of Insight Meditation*. Boston: Shambala.

Santorelli, S. (1999). *Heal Thy Self: Lessons on mindfulness in medicine*. New York: Bell Tower.

Segal, Z.V., Williams, J.M.G. & Teasdale, J.D. (2013). *Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression*. 2nd Ed. Guilford Press: New York.

Shapiro, S.L., Carlson, L.E., Astin, J.A., & Freedman, B. (2006). Mechanisms of mindfulness. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 62, 373-386.

Shapiro, S., Siegel, R., & Neff, K. D. (2018). Paradoxes of mindfulness. *Mindfulness*, 9(6), 1693-1701.

Teasdale, J., Williams, J.M.G., & Segal, Z. (2014). *The Mindful Way Workbook*. New York: Guilford Press.

Treleaven, D. A. (2018). *Trauma-sensitive mindfulness: Practices for safe and transformative healing*. WW Norton & Company.

Williams, J.M.G. (2008). Mindfulness, Depression and Modes of Mind. *Cognitive Therapy Research*, 32, 721-733. DOI 10.1007/s10608-008-9204-z.

Williams, J.M.G & Penman, D. (2011). *Mindfulness: a practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world*. London: Piatkus.

Williams, J.M.G. & Kabat-Zinn, J. (Eds.) (2013). *Mindfulness: Diverse perspectives on its meaning, origins and applications*. London: Routledge.

Williams, J.M.G., Teasdale, J.D., Segal, Z.V. and Kabat-Zinn, J. (2007). *The Mindful Way Through Depression*. Guilford Press: New York.

Woods, S., & Rockman, P. (2021). *Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction: Protocol, Practice, and Teaching Skills*. New Harbinger.

The reading will form an important part of discussions on the module days and is a crucial underpinning for the ‘Inquiry Process’ in teaching practice.

All trainees on the training programme are eligible to join the Sussex Partnership library and the specialist librarian at the Sussex Education Centre, Amy Dunn, can help direct trainees to relevant resources.

Ethical Practice, confidentiality and safety

Trainees and trainers will be expected to work within the ethical codes of their professional bodies and to follow their employers' policies. Trainees will need to ensure that their (or their employers') professional liability insurance covers the assist teaching that they will be doing.

The confidentiality of group participants in mindfulness groups that trainees assist teaching in must be respected.

As a general rule, trainers will keep information shared by trainees in confidence. However, members of the training staff group will share information about trainees with each other, and with supervisors, where necessary in order to work as a cohesive training team. In the unlikely event that there are concerns about professional practice and/or other areas of risk and safety, information might need to be shared more widely, but the trainers would endeavour to speak with the trainee about this first.

Feedback and Complaints procedure

Honest and constructive feedback is encouraged at all times. Feedback is formally collected at various stages of the training year but is welcomed informally at any other time. Feedback is used to reflect on the training and to make improvements where possible.

If any trainee has a complaint, this should be addressed in the first instance to the person who is the subject of the complaint. If this does not produce satisfactory resolution, the complaint can be addressed to the course convenor or to a member of the training team, who will then share it with other members of the training team and work towards facilitating a resolution. If this still does not produce a satisfactory resolution, the complaint will then be directed to the Trust's Mindfulness-based Interventions Practice Network group which advises on good mindfulness practice in Sussex Partnership, or where necessary, to the Director of Psychology and Psychological therapies.

Course staff

Training programme convenor:	Dr. Fergal Jones
Main trainers, supervisors and group facilitators:	Taravajra, Ruth Sequeira and Dr. Bridgette O'Neill
Additional core trainers and supervisors:	Heather Ball, Nicky Mouat, Kate Gooch, Jiva Masheder,

Richard Gilpin, Anita Raybould,
Lynn Ley and Rosalie Does

Additional trainers:

Prof. Clara Strauss and Dr.
Robert Marx

Additional group facilitators from within the NHS and the community will offer groups for trainees to observe.

Mindfulness training administrator:

Niki Larsen-Johnson

Contact

In the first instance, requests for information about the training programme can be addressed to spft.smc@nhs.net and tel. 0300 304 0689. Regular information sessions will be held about SMC's trainings throughout the year. You'd be welcome to attend one of these. Please email spft.smc@nhs.net to book a place.

Biographies

Taravajra has been teaching MBCT in Sussex since 2005. He gained a Masters degree in mindfulness based approaches in 2010 at Bangor University. Since 2011, he has been part of the core training team at Bangor, initially teaching on the Masters programme, then on the teacher training pathway (TTP) in the UK and internationally. In 2016 he was convenor of the UK Network of Mindfulness-based teacher training Organisations and led the creation of the register of teachers. He also holds a British Wheel of Yoga teaching diploma and is a Focusing practitioner. Taravajra has been one of the main trainers on the trainings since 2011.

Bridgette O'Neill is a mindfulness teacher, trainer and supervisor, and a consultant clinical psychologist. She previously held a leadership position within SPFT and has been involved in the development and governance of mindfulness interventions in the Trust. Bridgette now works as a trainer for the Sussex Mindfulness Centre; she also teaches on the Masters course at the Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice, Bangor University, and is Retreat Lead for the Mindfulness Network.

Ruth Sequeira is a Mindfulness Lead and Senior Primary Mental Health Worker at East Sussex CAMHS. Ruth has a longstanding interest in mindfulness and meditation and is passionate about increasing access to mindfulness courses in different populations. Ruth teaches MBCT courses to staff groups and the general public and facilitates an adapted course for adolescents. Ruth is also a Mindfulness Supervisor and supports trainee Mindfulness teachers.

Robert Marx is a consultant clinical psychologist and lead for mindfulness training and governance in the Sussex Mindfulness Centre. He chairs the mindfulness-based interventions practice Network group. He has been involved in running mindfulness groups for staff and adult service users in primary and secondary care since 2006, and in supervising mindfulness

work over the last few years. He is also a Mindful Self-Compassion teacher and a cognitive-analytic psychotherapist and is interested in integrating relational, compassion-based and mindfulness approaches.

Fergal Jones is a consultant clinical psychologist and cognitive behavioural therapist who completed mindfulness teacher training at the University of Bangor. He currently works one day a week as Sussex Mindfulness Centre's training programmes convenor and for the remainder of the time as the Research Director on the clinical psychology training programme at Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology, Canterbury Christ Church University.

Clara Strauss is the Research Lead for the Sussex Mindfulness Centre. She is particularly interested in developing and evaluating new forms of mindfulness-based intervention (MBI), particularly for those people who may not be able to access MBCT. Along with other members of her research Clara has been developing and evaluating MBIs for people experiencing longstanding depression (with Paul Chadwick and Mark Hayward), for people distressed by hearing voices (with Paul Chadwick and Mark Hayward) and for people experiencing obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

Heather Ball is a Psychiatric Nurse and CBT therapist working in secondary care adult mental health, Group Treatment Service. She is an MBCT and supervisor who teaches 8-week MBCT groups, Mindfulness for Voices, and Brief Mindfulness interventions. Heather has been involved in SPFT mindfulness research trials. She runs MBCT drop-ins for SPFT clients and staff, and at Brighton Buddhist Centre. She has particular interest and experience in mindfulness for ADHD and Autism. She gains inspiration from poetry, nature, Buddhism, walking and qi gong practice in daily life.

Jiva Masheder completed an MSc in Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapies from Exeter University in 2013 and has taught the 8-week mindfulness course to a wide variety of people over 10 years, delivering the course over 100 times both to groups and 1-1. Jiva also supervises trainees on Exeter University's MSc programme in MBCT and with Mindfulness Network. She has been practising mindfulness since 1997 and has seen herself becoming calmer, happier and more emotionally stable over that time.

Kate Gooch holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Mindfulness Based Approaches from Bangor University (2012) and has taught Mindfulness since 2007. She teaches the general population, clinical populations, and carers, as well as delivering courses in educational settings and the workplace. She's trained in .b, .b Foundations, and MYRIAD, in addition to being a Mindfulness supervisor for the Mindfulness Network. She also has a Speech and Language Therapy background.

Lynn Ley has been facilitating Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy Groups (MBCT) within Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust since 2008. Within Health in Mind, there is a rolling eight-week MBCT program, and Lynn holds groups in Lewes, Hastings, and Eastbourne/Hailsham. As with all teachers of MBCT within Sussex Partnership Trust, Lynn has a personal meditation practice which she has found life-enhancing. She also contributes to the mindfulness-based interventions practice network group.

Nicky Mouat is a Mental Health Nurse and Mindfulness teacher. She works in the NHS at Pavilions Drug and Alcohol Service, where she has been facilitating Mindfulness Based

Relapse Prevention courses, and holding a weekly drop in for Service Users and Staff. She has been teaching MBCT for the Wellbeing Service, and Recovery College in Brighton. She is also part of the Myriad Mindfulness in Schools Research Project, and has been involved in teaching Mindfulness for Life to teachers in Sussex Schools in 2017. She has a particular interest in working with Service Users with 'Dual Diagnosis' (Substance Misuse and Mental Health Issues), and the way that Mindfulness can be helpful to this client group.

Richard Gilpin is Counsellor and Cognitive-Behavioural Therapist, who has worked for various mental health services, including Sussex Partnership. He has trained in mindfulness-based practices since the 1990s and been facilitating Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy Groups (MBCT) courses since 2007. He has also written extensively on mindfulness, including two self-help psychology books: 'Mindfulness for Unravelling Anxiety' (2016) and 'Mindfulness for Black Dogs and Blue Days' (2012).

Rosalie Dores is a mindfulness teacher, supervisor, mentor, trainer and assessor. She teaches mindfulness, and interpersonal mindfulness, courses to the general public in London and workshops and courses within organisations. Rosalie has sustained a meditation and yoga practice since 1992 and is keen to support others in experiencing the benefits of committed practice. She has taught Yoga since 2005 and, in 2011, completed a five-year Master's degree in Teaching Mindfulness Based Approaches (with distinction) at Bangor University. In addition, she has completed training in the assessment of mindfulness teachers using the MBI-TAC, Teacher Assessment Criteria and is trained as a mentor for new teachers. She is a supervisor with The Mindfulness Network.

Appendix A

Being a participant-observer: a guide for trainees and teachers

We encourage you to organise an opportunity to take part in another 8-week course as a participant (observer). This is likely to be a valuable learning experience for you. And, at times, this may also be uncomfortable for you. This is normal! Here are some suggestions about working with this.

1. You are primarily a participant. You are not a 'supporter' or an assistant. There may be some courses, e.g. carers or mental health groups, where you are clearly not part of the client population. In that case, you could be more transparent about yourself as a trainee teacher. You are there to experience the 8-week course 'again' during the sessions and with the home practice. You are welcome to speak in the group as a participant. And, of course, there is the added aspect of reflecting on what you see and hear, using the suggestions we have provided. It would be best to do this reflection outside of the group.

Please avoid drawing attention to yourself as a trainee teacher. Of course this can be mentioned at the beginning but best to avoid the following

- taking notes or using ipads
- speaking in the group about future aspects of the course before the group has arrived there, e.g. talking about breathing spaces, topics such as 'thoughts are not facts', keeping a practice going after the course
- asking 'training' questions before, during or after the session

2. From the teacher's side, there is no element of training, supervision or answering questions. So there will not be supervision/discussion between the trainee and the teacher in person, phone or e mail. This will all happen in your assisted teaching 8-week course later in the year.

Appendix B

Participant-observer reflective sheet

Session #	<i>What I noticed about this domain</i>	<i>Challenging aspects for me to develop</i>	<i>Questions for further discussion</i>
Domain			
1. Coverage, pacing and organisation of session curriculum			
2. Relational skills			
3. Embodiment of mindfulness			
4. Guiding mindfulness practices			
5. Conveying course themes through interactive teaching			
6. Management of group learning environment			

Appendix C - Reflective journal and portfolio

We would like you to keep a journal throughout your year of training. The reflective process brings together the various theoretical and experiential components of the training and helps make them part of a trainee's own experience.

We strongly recommend that this reflective journal is created on a computer so that parts of it can be shared easily by email. We also suggest that entries are made to it on a regular basis. During the year, you will need to periodically email a 600-word summary of the relevant elements from your reflective journal to the training programme convenor, who will pass it to your tutor. These should be submitted 2 weeks before each of the modules. The first summary, which is due 2 weeks before Module 1, should be on your practice and your view of yourself as a prospective teacher at the beginning of the training. The summaries due 2 weeks prior to the subsequent modules should give a synopsis of your recent learning from each of the three dimensions of the training: personal practice, theoretical underpinnings and experience of practising teaching. The summaries should be fairly straightforward to complete if your reflections are entered regularly in your journal. The detailed content of this material will be kept confidential to the core group of trainers, but the themes will be used as a basis for the group discussions in seminars and modules.

At the end of your training year, you will also need to submit a portfolio, compiled from your journaling, which will include:

- A 600-word account of what has been learnt and what the trainee wishes to continue to develop in terms of style, content and intention as a mindfulness teacher. This can be in note form.
- The self-assessed completion of the MBI:TLC (see Appendix E)
- An outline teacher guidebook divided into 8 sessions, which can be used for subsequent teaching (see Appendix D).

This portfolio will form the basis of the end of course tutorial that is held with the trainee's tutor and assist teaching experience supervisor.

Appendix D: Making your own ‘Session by Session Teachers Guide’: key curriculum elements, time frames, resources, practical teaching considerations, inquiry themes, and ‘notes to self’

In the first few years of teaching, it can be helpful to have a handy ‘under-the-chair’ Session-by-Session Teachers Guide for quick and easy reference.

This appendix gives an example of what this guide might helpfully contain and how it might helpfully be organised and laid out for Session 1. It is then up to you to compile the rest of the guide using the various module handouts, book references, notes from your assistant teaching experience and discussions with student colleagues. Making this guide is a formative and clarifying process...and one which you will most probably repeat after your first year of teaching to incorporate new poems, stories and ‘notes to self’.

Your end of year portfolio should include this completed guide.

Format:

Larger A4 files can be intrusive and awkward to use in the ‘live’ moments of a class. We suggest a wire bound A5 book that can be organised into 9 easy to find sections using edge of page markers (i.e. one section for the Orientation Session and then one for each of the 8 sessions). Such a book can live under your chair and referred to if necessary before each new aspect of the class.

Organisation of material:

The ‘facing’ page of each of these 9 sections could have the full (itemised) session schedule with time frames ... and also the various session titles (these vary from MBCT and MBSR and also have varied with time!).

The next facing page (can be entitled): ‘Introducing Session 1’

This will list the main points desirable for a brief (3-4 minute) introduction to the theme(s) of the session. Plus any reminders about confidentiality and the invitational stance etc that may help the group feel ‘safe’ to start. The adjacent page may be a good space to write any aphorisms, quotes or poems that give flesh to the theme of Session 1: ‘Introducing Mindfulness’; ‘Automatic Pilot’ etc

The next facing page: ‘The Raisin Exercise’ lists brief notes on:

- i/ Introducing the exercise (creating a curious and light/open atmosphere)
- ii/ Practical considerations (i.e. hygiene, invitational stance, etc)
- iii/ Brief ‘guiding’ notes (not a transcript!!)

The adjacent page can be entitled: ‘Inquiry notes for the Raisin Exercise’

This can (in brief note form) list likely inquiry themes and important ‘notes to self’ about this first inquiry session.

Perhaps the most important pointers can be written in red at or near the top of this page under ‘notes to self’: e.g. ‘aim to create a light, open, curious ethos in the group...this is more important than ‘getting to’ the main inquiry themes of ‘auto-pilot’ or ‘non-judgment’ or ‘how paying attention changes the experience’. The ‘Green Book’ has a comprehensive coverage of the ‘course themes’ arising from the Raisin Exercise.

This page can end with notes about how to summarise (i.e. naturally and without needing to cover all the learning themes itemised in the 'Green Book'!)

The next facing page: 'The Body Scan' lists in note form:

i/ Practical considerations: 'notes to self' about warmth in room, equipment, physical limitations in the group etc.)

ii/ Introductory 'framing' remarks: posture, invitational stance, etc)

iii/ Notes to self about 'guiding the practice': not a transcript but notes such as how to pace, use of tone or use of questions and 'direct pointing'. You may, in early years of teaching, include pointers such as about 'choices' in relation to pain or emotional intensity...or normalising sleep and wandering mind in ways that do not overly encourage a 'concentration' approach.

The next page can be dedicated to 'The Inquiry Process for the Body Scan'. This can list main themes that may arise...but, at or near the top (perhaps in red ink), can have 'reminders to self' about prizing curiosity and openness over content...and/or remembering to repeatedly seek permission if engaging in 'vertical inquiry' etc.

The next page can be dedicated to brief notes about summarising the sessions learning and perhaps have indications about possible poems or stories that support this summary. The 'reminders to self' section, at or near the top, may say: use the group as much as possible rather than becoming too didactic. So, for example ask: 'What have we been learning today?'...or, 'What can we start to say about Mindfulness?'

The final page for this first section is for: 'Introducing Home Practice'.

The 'Notes to self', at or near the top of this page may say: 'Use the Handbook'...so as to indicate its importance to the group and give reminders about how to use it.

This last page can include brief notes on how best to introduce the 'Everyday Mindful Activity' and perhaps ideas about contracting with a partner about 'what' activity to do and 'when'.

Practical considerations: CDs or web-based instructions for audio etc.

There can also be notes about how best to encourage and motivate etc. Also, how to contact you if question arises or if delayed next week.

Then at the bottom of the page: Final brief sitting practice: perhaps a 'note to self' about leaving sufficient silence...

The Rest of the Guide!

This guide for Session 1 can be used as a template for the subsequent 7 sessions. Thus, each section will dedicate one or two pages to each main curriculum item (i.e. one page for the 'introduction' and 'practical considerations' when guiding...one page for the 'inquiry process' or 'discussion process' following ...perhaps with some notes to self about 'summarising'.

Appendix E: MBI-TLC / MBI-TAC: Brief Notes on the 6 Domains

The Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Teaching and Learning Companion (MBI:TLC) and the Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI:TAC) are based on the same six domains. These are:

Domain 1: Coverage, pacing and organisation of session curriculum

The teacher adequately addresses and covers the curriculum content of the session. This involves creating a skilful balance between the needs of the individual, the group and the requirements of teaching the course. The teacher is well-organised with relevant course materials and teaching aids readily available and the room appropriately prepared for the group. The session is well 'time-managed' in relation to the curriculum. The session is well-paced with a sense of spaciousness, steadiness and lack of time pressure. Digressions are steered back into the session curriculum with tact and ease.

Domain 2: Relational skills

Mindfulness-based teaching is highly relational - mindfulness practice engages us in a process of developing a new relationship both with ourselves and our experience. The qualities that the teacher brings to participants and the teaching process mirror the qualities that participants are learning to bring to themselves during the MBI programme. Mindfulness is the awareness which emerges through paying attention to experience in a particular way: on purpose (the teacher is deliberate and focused when relating to participants in the sessions); in the present moment (the teacher has the intention to be whole heartedly present with participants); and non-judgmentally (bringing a spirit of interest, respect and acceptance to participants).

Domain 3: Embodiment of mindfulness

Mindfulness practice permeates the teacher and is expressed through two interconnected aspects to embodiment - 'present moment focus', and bringing the attitudinal foundations of mindfulness to moment by moment experience. Embodiment of mindfulness involves the teacher sustaining connection and responsiveness to moment by moment arising (within self, within individuals and within the group) and bringing the core attitudinal foundations of mindfulness practice to all of this. These attitudes are non-judging, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance, and letting go.

Domain 4: Guiding mindfulness practices

The teacher offers guidance that describes accurately what the participant is being invited to do in the practice, and includes all the elements required in that practice. The guidance enables participants to relate skilfully to mind wandering (seeing this as a natural mind process, working gently but firmly to cultivate the skill to recognise when the mind has wandered and to bring the attention back). The guidance suggests the attitudes to bring to self and experience throughout the practice. The practice balances spaciousness with precision. Skilful use of language is key to conveying all this.

Domain 5: Conveying course themes through interactive inquiry and didactic teaching

This domain assesses the process through which the course themes are conveyed to participants. These are at times explicitly drawn out and underlined by the teacher and at other times emerge implicitly within the process. The domain includes

inquiry, group dialogue, use of stories and poems, facilitating group exercises, orienting participants to session/course themes and didactic teaching.

Domain 6: Facilitating the group learning environment

The whole teaching process takes place within the context of a group, which if facilitated effectively, becomes a vehicle for connecting participants with the universality of the processes being explored. The teacher creates a 'container' or learning environment that 'holds' the group and within which the teaching can effectively take place. The teacher works responsively with group process through bringing an appropriate leadership style to the teaching; through taking good care of managing group safety, trust and boundary issues; through employing a teaching style which takes account of the individual within the context of the group, and balances the needs of both; through using the group process to draw out universal learning themes; through working with and responding to group development processes by managing the various phases of group formation, development and ending. The teacher is able to 'tune into', connect with, and respond appropriately to shifts and changes in group mood and characteristics.