



IGA Qualifying Course in Group Analysis (Manchester)

Information for Applicants

Closing date for application for September 2026 entry: 31 January 2026



About the Course

Thank you for your interest in the IGA Qualifying Course in Group Analysis based in Greater Manchester. This is a full professional training in group analytic psychotherapy accredited by the Institute of Group Analysis (IGA) and administered by Group Analysis North (GAN). You may be considering this as a current or previous Manchester student or wishing to come to us having completed an IGA Diploma elsewhere. The aim of this booklet is to provide you with information about admission requirements, the content of the training and the admissions procedure and guidelines.

The Qualifying Course in Greater Manchester is a 'block training' run mainly over 10 weekends each year. Between weekends, students also have weekly online supervision, via Zoom and five online Friday afternoon seminars. The theory component of the curriculum is run over three and a half years. Personal group therapy takes place alongside other aspects of the course. This provides a particular structure where focus can be brought to how different experiences and ways of learning are integrated and how we navigate the boundaries between the different elements.

The Greater Manchester training attracts applications from those close to Greater Manchester and those from further afield, including overseas. The mostly block nature of the training makes Greater Manchester a good option for those coming from further afield. Transport links to Greater Manchester are good via rail, air or road.

You may be reading this certain that you want to apply or be starting from a more tentative place; either way, I would be very pleased to hear from you and to answer any queries you may have. I will be holding an informal "open" session, online for anyone interesting in applying for the course on Wednesday 12 November 2025, 7.00pm. A zoom link for this session can be requested from bethan@groupanalysisnorth.com

Students progress through the course at different rates, depending on their prior experience and you are advised to read carefully the information on page 7 which details the prior psychiatric and individual psychotherapy work which is required alongside the setting up of a training group under supervision. Students from non NHS or non-clinical backgrounds may wish to defer their place on the course so that this experience can be gained prior to joining the course. In some cases students may choose to join the course in therapy only while this work is undertaken. See also page 7 for a sample course timeline which you may also find helpful.

I will be happy to discuss any aspect of the training with potential applicants either at the open session or separately by zoom or phone. In addition some applicants have valued speaking to existing students and this can also be arranged.

Chris MacGregor

Manchester Courses Director

coursesdirector@groupanalysisnorth.com

Components of the Training

Personal Therapy

Personal therapy is the cornerstone of an analytic training, so as a student on the IGA Qualifying Course in Group Analysis you will join an analytic therapy group and be a member of this group throughout the training. Your group will meet for five sessions of 1.5 hours each training weekend.

Large Groups

You will also take part in two 1-hour Large Groups during each training weekend. The Large Groups include the other students in the training community from the Diploma Course, together with students who have previously undertaken the Diploma or Qualifying Course and are attending the training weekend for therapy-only. The Large Groups are spaces to explore the complex dynamics of social identity and social processes as they are experienced both on the training and within the wider society.

Conducting Groups under Supervision

Typically, the training group is a once-weekly, in-person, slow open mixed, clinical stranger group for adults. However, other groups which do not obviously meet this description may be considered if it can be shown that the proposed group will enable the student to demonstrate the course 'clinical competencies.'

In the first instance the proposed group should be discussed with the Courses Director and the Qualifying Course Training Supervisor. Subject to their agreement, a training group proposal form should then be submitted to Manchester Courses Committee for approval, and approval should be obtained prior to setting up the group. Students must then select and assess patients for their training group, and this must be done only when they are established in their supervision group on the course.

Arrangements for training groups may be made at a student's own place of work but the change in status is often difficult to manage and often we recommend an alternative placement be sought.

Group supervision for this work is included in the course fee and takes place in person during the training weekends and via zoom online sessions in-between the training weekends. The training group must be conducted for a minimum of 80 sessions and should continue until the clinical competencies are met and the group is accepted by the Courses Committee as having met the training requirements.

If you do not have IGA Group Work Practitioner status, you will be required to conduct a second training group under supervision for a minimum of 30 sessions.

Theory Seminars

You will study a broad range of topics related to group analysis, psychoanalysis, social issues and psychotherapeutic practice. In addition to the two seminars that take place each training weekend, there are 5 afternoons online 'Friday Seminars' which take place each year with a focus on applied group analysis. These seminars are also attended by IGA Diploma Course students and Manchester University students. During the course there will be other support seminars provided to help you with the written work.

Written Assessments:

- Essay: 4,000 words, submitted in June of first year;
- Case Study: 3,000 words, submitted within 6 months of starting your training group (typically in the second year);
- Dissertation: 10,000 words submitted in penultimate year;
- Qualifying Paper: 9,000 words, submitted in final year.

Training Weekend dates for 2026-27

18-20 September 2026
16-18 October 2026
13 – 15 November 2026
11-13 December 2026
15-17 January 2027
12 - 14 February 2027
19-21 March 2027
23-25 April NLE
7-9 May 2027
11-13 June 2027
9-11 July 2027

The 5-half day Friday Seminar provisional dates for 2026-27 will be confirmed shortly

23 October 2026
20 November 2026
29 January 2027
26 February 2027
12 March 2027

The Seminars run on zoom from 1.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.

Course fees and Bursaries

The fees for 2026 are £9,163 and monthly payment options are available (the fee is £9,999 for places funded by employers). There is a one-off selection fee which is payable to the IGA upon submission of the completed application form (currently £635). If you are offered a place on the course, an additional fee of £75 will be payable to GAN for a therapy group intake interview.

Fees are reviewed and increased usually in line with inflation each year. Full fees (which include all elements of the core course) are payable for years 1, 2 and 3. In year 4, fees are reduced once students are no longer required to attend theoretical seminars. Once a student has completed the training group requirement, they will attend the training weekend for Therapy Only until their Qualifying Paper is accepted (Therapy Only fee is £4,675 per year).

A limited number of bursaries are available each year from Group Analysis North and in addition the organisation offers fee assisted places and scholarships to those who may find it more difficult to train as they are disadvantaged by hardship, including those on a low income, or who come from BAME or other under-represented backgrounds or those who work in under-represented sectors – full details can be found on the GAN website. [BURSARIES & ASSISTED PLACES - Group Analysis North](#)

Bursaries are also available from the Harry Guntrip Trust, for those living or working in Yorkshire
<http://harryguntriptrust.co.uk/bursaries/>

Weekend Course Timetable

Friday	
(3.00– 4.15)	<i>Occasional writing seminars as required*</i>
(4.15 – 4.35)	<i>(Break – if required)</i>
4.35 – 4.45	Plenary – usual start of course
4.45 – 6.15	Supervision
6.15 – 6.45	Break
6.45 – 8.15	Supervision
Saturday	
9.00 – 10.30	Therapy group
10.30 – 11.00	Break
11.00 – 12.00	Large group
12.00 – 1.00	Lunch
1.00 – 1.20	Student meeting (including therapy-only)
1.30 – 3.00	Therapy group
3.00 – 3.30	Break
3.30 – 4.45	Seminar
4.45 – 5.15	Break
5.15 – 6.30	Seminar
Sunday	
9.00 – 10.30	Therapy group
10.30 – 11.00	Break
11.00 – 12.00	Large group
12.00 – 12.45	Lunch
12.45 – 2.15	Therapy group
2.15 – 2.45	Break
2.45 – 4.15	Therapy group

* Writing seminars are timetabled to support the various writing tasks. You will be informed at the beginning of the academic year of those you are required to attend.

Friday Seminar online timetable

1.30 - 2.15	Introductions and presentation
2.15 – 2.30	Break
2.30 – 3.00	Workshop session led by presenter
3.00 – 3.15	Break
3.15 – 4.00	Small groups
4.00 – 4.30	Plenary

Example of Qualifying Course Student Timeline

Year 1

September - The student joins the course and if new to the training community they will be allocated a **student mentor**.

September – November

In supervision, the student completes:

- Assessment of individual psychotherapy experience form
- Assessment of psychiatric experience form

Both forms are submitted to the Courses Director and the Manchester Courses Committee in November.

(Students may be asked to undertake additional work following the submission of the forms.)

If requested, the student will be allocated a tutor, to assist with the first-year essay, case study and qualifying paper (a separate supervisor will be allocated for the dissertation).

Spring/summer - Student discusses potential training group placement in the supervision group (referring to handbook for requirements). When the student has a suitable placement, the **training group proposal form** is completed, shared, and discussed with the supervision group. Once agreed with the course training supervisor, the completed TGP form is submitted to the Courses Director who informs the student and supervisor if the form is accepted, this is ratified by the Manchester Courses Committee. The Training Administrator writes, on behalf of the Courses Director, to the student's **workplace supervisor**, outlining the course requirements for the group and detailing supervision arrangements on the course. Copy of letter to supervisor and student.

Students must discuss all potential training group members with the supervision group as part of the preparation for starting the group.

Supervision reports are submitted to the Manchester Courses Committee in November and June, reporting on student progress.

In January, a self-evaluation is completed and presented in supervision and to MCC.

Individual psychotherapy placement and psychiatric placements are set up depending on student's previous experience.

In June of the first year – theory essay submitted.

Year 2

Training group starts. Within 6 months after the start of the training group the case study is submitted - in November or May, depending on when the group started. Once the case study is submitted the student starts to consider their dissertation topic.

Year 3

A dissertation proposal is submitted typically in March of the third year with the dissertation then being submitted in the following September.

Once the requirements of the course are met, including those of the training group (refer to the clinical competencies), students will be invited by the MCC to write their Qualifying Paper. Students are required to stay in therapy until the paper has been accepted.

It's usual to leave aspects of the course at only 2 points in the academic year – January and July. Students can choose to stay in supervision (if places are available) and/or therapy if they wish.

Course Admission Requirements

Academic Requirements

Candidates with a University degree or equivalent professional qualification and experience in the field may apply. Those who do not have a degree will have been required to submit an essay for consideration as part of the selection to the Diploma Course which is a requirement for entry.

Prior Training

Applicants will have completed an IGA Foundation Course and an IGA Diploma Course prior to commencing a Qualifying Course. Students who have achieved the status of Group Work Practitioner will be required to set up and run one training group during the Qualifying Course. Those without Group Work Practitioner status will be required to present a second 'application' group.

Prior Psychotherapy

Candidates are required to have spent at least one year in a slow-open twice-weekly or a block therapy group with a Training Group Analyst prior to the commencement of the Qualifying Course. It is advised that applicants are in their therapy group at the time of application to the Qualifying Course. Applicants who are not in their therapy group at the time of application will be asked to explain this to the Admissions Interview Panel and Admissions Board who will consider their circumstances.

In circumstances where an applicant has been in a group with a Group Analyst who is not a Training Group Analyst prior to applying to the Qualifying Course, the Group Analyst's experience and qualifications can be considered for suitability by the National Training Management Committee. Students undertake a block group analysis with a Training Group Analyst, throughout their training. Although the duration of a personal group analysis is not stipulated - it is a matter for the student, the group and the group analyst - it must continue at least until their Qualifying Paper has been accepted.

Evidence of Individual Psychotherapy Experience

Students will need to show competence in therapeutic work with individuals outside the group setting. This involves demonstrating evidence of experience of providing psychodynamic psychotherapy under the supervision of a supervisor registered with the CPJA section of UKCP or BPC. Those with insufficient individual experience will be required to treat patients for individual psychotherapy and attend a weekly supervision for this. This supervision is not provided as part of the course. Each patient is required to be seen for a minimum of 60 sessions. You may be requested to see one, or two patients, according to the level of your previous clinical and supervision experience. Patients may be seen concurrently or consecutively.

Evidence of Psychiatric Experience/observation

The IGA's admission panel must be satisfied that students have adequate experience of working with people with mental health problems before completion of the formal part of the training. This is because once qualified, clinicians will need to be able to recognise serious mental health problems or those in danger of becoming ill and intervene appropriately. The Course Director can advise, prior to the admission process, those who still require such experience. While it is possible to gain this experience during the training, students are encouraged to complete as much of this as they can prior to beginning the course. This work experience can be gained in the NHS, social services or in a voluntary sector organisation. It should provide demonstrable experience of the following:

1. The ability to recognise serious mental illness.
2. The ability to tolerate being with someone with severe and enduring mental illness.
3. An understanding of the risks associated with serious mental illness.
4. Experience of risk assessment and management of people with severe and enduring mental health problems.
5. Experience of face-to face work with people with serious mental health problems.
6. The ability to recognise serious mental health problems.
7. Knowledge of services available for people with serious mental health problems.
8. Knowledge of Mental Health Legislation.
9. An understanding of how the statutory mental health system works.
10. Experience of communication with a variety mental health practitioners.

Course Admission Procedure

All prospective applicants are asked to speak with the Course Director, Chris MacGregor, prior to submitting a formal application, so that they can discuss their prior experience and their readiness to train.

Application Form

Applicants complete an application form, which includes a personal statement outlining why they wish to train as a group analyst. Any other information, which may support the application, should also be included, e.g. a Curriculum Vitae. The application form must be submitted by email to Training@groupanalysis-uk.co.uk at the IGA, London by 31 January 2026. A copy of the application form should also be sent the GAN Training and Administrator, Bethan Marreiros – bethan@groupanalysisnorth.com. Once the application form is received, an invoice for the recruitment and selection fee (currently £635) will be issued to the applicant by the IGA (London office).

Clinical Interview

All applicants will have a Clinical Interview prior to the panel interview. This is likely to involve some searching questions. The purpose of this interview is to ascertain whether there are any psychological/emotional reasons why it would not be advisable for an applicant to commence training in group psychotherapy. The Clinical Interviewer will provide a report to the IGA Admissions Interview Panel and the IGA Admissions Board. Applicants can request a copy of this report from the IGA administrative office Training@groupanalysis-uk.co.uk

IGA Interview Panel

IGA Admission Interview Panels are held normally before the end of April each year. A panel of three members of the Institute will conduct the interview. The panel uses its experience of the live dialogue and interaction in the interview as a central medium and source of information. The interview panel also draws on the following information:

- The application form (including personal statement and other supporting information such as a CV).
- References.
- The report from applicant's Diploma Course Work Reflection Group Supervisor.
- The report from applicant's Clinical Interviewer.
- For applicants re-applying – Admissions' Board letter and Admissions' Interview Panel report.

Using the above parameters, the panel will assess the candidate on the following criteria:

- The applicant's capacity for self-reflection.
- The applicant's capacity for insight and self-understanding in relation to their application to train as a Group Analyst.
- The applicant's interest in, and awareness of, self in relation to others.
- The applicant's capacity for empathy with others.
- The applicant's psychic resilience.
- The applicant's awareness of power relations and the dynamic impact of difference such as race, sexuality, gender and religion.
- The applicant's capacity to be part of a group or community.
- The applicant's ability to think theoretically about clinical work and write to the required academic standard.
- The applicant's experience of working with people with mental health problems.
- Whether the applicant has been in personal group analysis with a Training Group Analyst for the required period before the course starts, and the applicant's attitude towards this requirement.
- The applicant's ability to use therapy.

The Interview panel may use other criteria as seem relevant at the time. The reasons for use of additional criteria should be clearly explained in the report, as should the reasons for omission of any of the above criteria.

IGA Admissions Board

The Admissions Interview Panel will produce a report following the interview, which will be sent with the references to the IGA's Admissions Board. The Admissions Board will then review all the reports and come to a decision about the application. A letter will then be sent from the IGA informing the applicant of the Board's decision.

Offer and Secure your Place

If you are offered a place on the course, you will be asked to sign and return an acceptance form and pay the first month's fees to Group Analysis North, in advance, by 31 May 2026. Prior to the course starting you will be offered a therapy intake interview with your allocated training group analyst if you are not already in a Manchester therapy group (£75 fee is payable for this).

Qualifying Course Application Check list

Criteria	Where	When	Notes/items to clarify with Courses Director
IGA Foundation Course completed			
IGA Diploma course completed			
Groupwork Practitioner achieved			
Psychiatric experience/observation required or met admissions criteria			
Experience of Individual Psychotherapy required or met criteria			
Completed a minimum of 1 year in group therapy with a training group analyst			

If you wish to apply for the IGA Qualifying Course, please use the above check list to ensure you meet the admissions criteria and you are aware of the course requirements in relation to psychiatric experience and individual psychotherapy.

Please also speak to Chris MacGregor, Courses Director, prior to completing your application form. Chris can be contacted by email coursesdirector@groupanalysisnorth.com