



**Oxford
Mindfulness
Centre**

TEACHER TRAINING PATHWAY

www.oxfordmindfulness.org

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INTRODUCTION

Mindfulness involves paying attention to our experience in the present moment, with curiosity, compassion and acceptance. It is a blend of modern psychology and the ancient wisdom of meditation, which helps us to live life more fully and with a greater sense of perspective.

Our vision, at the Oxford Mindfulness Centre, is a world where mindfulness is integrated into everyday life, where there are mindfulness teachers and champions in all areas of society using mindfulness explicitly (via courses and training) and implicitly (in their everyday work and way of living) to support well-being, and where mindfulness is within easy reach of anyone wanting to experience its benefits.

Our work toward this vision is centred around Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), a set of structured, evidence-based curricula. The original curriculum, MBCT for Depression, has been shown in rigorous research to help people at risk of depressive relapse to stay well. Adaptations of this curriculum are beneficial for people with a wide range of other conditions, including anxiety, stress, illness and pain.

Our newer curricula, Mindfulness for Life (sometimes known as MBCT-L) and Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World, are based on theory and research on the whole range of human functioning, from deep distress to wellbeing and flourishing. They are designed for diverse groups of people in a wide range of settings, such as workplaces, education, and the general population. Research shows that they are effective and accessible ways of reducing stress and unhappiness and enhancing mental health and wellbeing.

An important part of our work is training MBCT teachers to integrate mindfulness into different contexts and help people make it part of their lives. Our Training Pathway follows the international guidelines developed by Segal and colleagues, with the specific intention to extend the global reach of mindfulness. Our part-time, flexible teacher training programmes, with both online and face-to-face formats, increase accessibility and allow us to work internationally. We train teachers to introduce mindfulness to individuals and groups, and to teach evidence-based MBCT curricula.

Our teacher training programmes include theoretical, empirical, and ethical foundations; personal mindfulness practice; and teaching skills and professional competencies. We use a variety of teaching methods, including experiential practice, didactic teaching, skills training, supervision and mentoring. We provide options for mindfulness teachers to work with the general population or to specialise in a particular area, such as depression or other health conditions, and in a variety of contexts such workplaces, education, and criminal justice. We offer ongoing support and context-specific training for mindfulness teachers.

Mindfulness has enormous potential to enhance personal resilience and wellbeing and to support people in their work. Some may benefit from MBCT courses; others from learning to embody mindfulness and integrate appropriate practices into their lives and work. To serve these diverse needs, we offer two routes for teacher training. Route 1 teaches skills for introducing mindfulness; Route 2 trains teachers to provide MBCT courses.

We hope that this booklet will help you decide which of our teacher training programmes is the best fit for you and your teaching goals.

YOUR INTENTIONS FOR TEACHING

In deciding whether to apply for one of the OMC's teacher training programmes, your first step is to consider your intentions for teaching. Our pathway offers two training routes for people with different intentions:

- Route 1: Introducing Mindfulness
- Route 2: Teaching MBCT Courses

Route 1: Introducing Mindfulness

This training route is for people whose intention is to bring mindfulness into their community, workplace, or other setting, but not to teach full-length MBCT courses. For example, you might like to offer informational sessions, guide short mindfulness practices, facilitate experiential drop-in sessions, or teach the OMC's introductory programme. To introduce mindfulness with integrity, it is important to have clarity of intention and a strong ethical foundation, to be well informed about mindfulness and MBCT, to understand mindfulness through personal experience, and to have skills for sharing mindfulness with others. This training route supports the embodiment of mindfulness and equips you with the essential knowledge and skills to introduce mindfulness to others.

Route 1 is taught as a 6-month programme.

Route 1 includes:

CONTENT	DELIVERY
Teaching MBCT practices and exercises	8 training days
Theoretical foundations of MBCT	Half-day workshop
Developing your mindfulness practice and learning to embody mindfulness	2-day Personal Practice Intensive
Safeguarding	Half-day workshop
Introductory Inquiry and Group Skills	1-day workshop
Research & Evaluation	Half-day workshop
Inclusion and Communication	Half-day workshop
Implementation	Half-day workshop
Teaching the introductory curriculum	1-day workshop

If you complete Route 1, we expect you to be able to:

- Embody mindfulness
- Offer sessions introducing mindfulness
- Guide mindfulness practices and exercises
- Teach the OMC's Introduction to Mindfulness curriculum
- Understand the theoretical foundations of MBCT
- Ensure that your work is informed by current research and that your mindfulness teaching is evaluated

Continually working with a supervisor is expected and essential to meet OMC's ethical standards. If teaching the Introduction to Mindfulness curriculum, we also ask that you teach your first two courses with an experienced co-teacher or with frequent supervision from an experienced supervisor.

Route 2: Teaching MBCT courses

This training route will prepare you to teach a range of MBCT curricula. It includes the knowledge and skills taught in Route 1 (Introducing Mindfulness), with additional and more in-depth training necessary for teaching full-length MBCT courses.

Route 2 is available through the Master of Studies and the 12-month cohort programme.

Route 2 includes:

Content	Delivery
Teaching MBCT practices and exercises	8 training days
Ethics, Orientation and Assessment	1-day workshop
Origins of Mindfulness	1-day workshop
Theoretical foundations of MBCT	Half-day workshop
Developing your mindfulness practice and learning to embody mindfulness	5-day Personal Practice Intensive / Retreat
Safeguarding	Half-day workshop
Inquiry Skills	1-day workshop
Group Skills	1-day workshop
Research and Evaluation	1-day workshop
Inclusion and Communication	Half-day workshop
Further teaching skills: Teaching MBCT in a group	5 training days
Teaching the Finding Peace in a Frantic World (FPFW) curriculum (choose this or MBCT for depression day, depending on teaching context)	1-day workshop
Teaching the MBCT for depression curriculum (choose this or FPFW day, depending on teaching context)	1-day workshop

If you complete Route 2, we expect you to be able to do all of the activities described under Route 1:

- Embody mindfulness
- Offer sessions introducing mindfulness
- Guide mindfulness practices and exercises
- Teach the OMC's Introduction to Mindfulness curriculum
- Understand the theoretical foundations of MBCT
- Ensure that your work is informed by current research and that your mindfulness teaching is evaluated

In addition, we expect you to be able to:

- Teach Mindfulness for Life courses to a range of populations
- Teach MBCT in a clinical context, if you are a clinician and opted to complete the training day on MBCT for depression.
- Teach Finding Peace in a Frantic World, if you opted to complete this training day
- Enrol on specialist teacher training for specific populations / contexts, such as workplace training (further entry criteria may apply)

Teaching your first two courses under supervision (preferably with an experienced teacher) and continually working with a supervisor is expected and essential to meet OMC's ethical standards.

If you complete Route 1, and later decide you would like to teach MBCT curricula, you can apply to re-enter the training pathway and complete all elements not included in Route 1. This is possible but there is some repetition.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Route 1 is available through a 6-month cohort programme. Route 2 is available through a 12-month cohort programme or a University of Oxford Master of Studies degree. All of our teacher training programmes are designed for professionals from a variety of backgrounds who are interested in teaching in a broad range of settings and contributing to international development and dissemination. Route 1 (Introducing Mindfulness) is taught as a 6-month programme. Route 2 (Teaching MBCT courses) is available through the Master of Studies or the 12-month cohort programme.

It is important to choose a training programme that best suits your interests and needs. The following factors may be helpful in choosing in a programme:

ENTRY CRITERIA FOR ALL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES

- Participation in an 8-week Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Life course (MBCT-L) – in person or online*
- Regular mindfulness practice of at least 6 months
- Knowledge, competencies, and experience of the population and setting where you plan to teach. For clinical populations, a professional qualification in a relevant healthcare or mental health field is required. For nonclinical settings, a background that provides knowledge and competencies necessary to work in the intended setting is required.
- Experience working with individuals and groups using skills such as empathic listening, teaching, therapy, counselling, coaching, or facilitating other group activities
- Note: The Master of Studies has additional academic entry criteria.

DETAIL	ROUTE 1: 6-MONTH PROGRAMME	ROUTE 2: 12-MONTH PROGRAMME	ROUTE 2: MASTER OF STUDIES
Duration	6 months part-time	12 months part time	Two years part-time
Additional Support within training	Mentoring sessions	Mentoring sessions	Mentor / Tutor
Additional Requirements	Some written work but no marked essays or assignments	Some written work but no marked essays or assignments	Academically rigorous, with marked essays and assignments
Additional assessment	N/A	N/A	Competency Assessment included
Qualification after completion	Certificate from the OMC	Certificates from the OMC	Degree from the University of Oxford

For more information about the Master of Studies degree, click [here](#).

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The OMC offers three certifications for people who have engaged with our training programmes.

1. **Trained to Introduce Mindfulness**
2. **Trained Teacher Certificate**
3. **Certificate of Competence**

1. Trained to Introduce Mindfulness

This certificate confirms that you have completed the OMC's training to introduce mindfulness (Route 1) and that you have taught at least two of the OMC's Introduction to Mindfulness curriculum under supervision. This certificate does not involve submission of teaching videos or an assessment with the Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI:TAC) and does not certify your level of competence. Your supervisor/mentor will have seen samples of your teaching and will be asked whether they support your application. This certificate is available only to people who complete their training with OMC.

2. Trained Teacher Certificate

This Certificate confirms that you have completed the OMC's training to teach MBCT courses (Route 2) and that you have taught at least two courses using a full-length MBCT curriculum (MBCT in a clinical context, Mindfulness for Life, or Finding Peace in a Frantic World) under supervision. This certificate does not involve submission of teaching videos or an MBI:TAC assessment and does not certify your level of competence. Your supervisor/mentor will have seen samples of your teaching and will be asked whether they support your application. This certificate is available only to people who complete their teacher training with OMC.

3. Certificate of Competence

This certificate requires a full competency assessment using the MBI:TAC. It involves submitting recordings of you teaching a complete MBCT course. The Certificate of Competence is awarded if your teaching is assessed as competent, or above, in all six domains of the MBI:TAC. This assessment is an internationally recognised process, and assessments are made by highly experienced assessors who have undergone lengthy and rigorous training in how to assess reliably.

Click [here](#) for further information on Teacher Certification.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Trained teachers are expected to keep their knowledge up to date and may wish to broaden their skills and competencies to include additional curricula or working in new contexts. The OMC offers a range of trainings that may be of interest. These are described on the OMC website. Additional entry criteria may apply; these will be described on the application forms.

BRANCH TRAINING

MBSR to Mindfulness for Life

The OMC offers a 5-day teacher training for trained teachers of MBSR who would like to learn to teach the Mindfulness for Life (MBCT-L) curriculum.

The Mindfulness for Life Curriculum

Mindfulness for Life is a development of MBCT for the general population. It includes 8 weekly sessions, home practice, and an all-day session and teaches skills both for working with painful and difficult experience and for increasing wellbeing and flourishing.

MBSR to Mindfulness for Life Branch Training Description

This teacher training includes theoretical and empirical foundations for Mindfulness for Life, the structure and sequence of the curriculum, and learning to teach key practices and exercises, including cognitive-behavioural exercises, appreciation and befriending practices, and a sitting with difficulty practice. It also includes discussion of how breathing spaces are used and how inquiry is conducted in Mindfulness for Life. It is assumed that all participants are experienced teachers of the practices that are part of both Mindfulness for Life and MBSR (raisin practice, body scan, sitting practices, mindful movement) and there is no training provided in these. Training in the basic 3-step breathing space is included for those without previous training in this practice and is optional for those who already include breathing spaces in their teaching. Full curriculum materials and handouts for teaching Mindfulness for Life will be provided.

ENTRY CRITERIA

MBSR teachers are eligible to attend this training if they:

- Have completed an 8-week Mindfulness for Life course as a participant
- Have completed an MBSR teacher training pathway of at least 12 months
- Have taught at least 5 MBSR courses

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This workshop offers you the opportunity to:

- Learn about the background and rationale for the Mindfulness for Life curriculum
- Understand the structure and sequence of this curriculum
- Practice teaching key practices and exercises that are part of this curriculum



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