



Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice

Administration Handbook
& Program Overview

Version 06.10.2024





Phoenix Family Therapy Academy

Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice

Why complete the Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy and Practice?

Phoenix Family Therapy Academic operates in line with contemporary practice, taking a multi-positioned perspective, drawing on theory and practice from across the evolution of family therapy including first, second and third generation approaches, and contemporary practice including considerations of Neuroscience, Evidence-Based Practice, Trauma Informed Care and Integrative Practice.

This philosophy is based on integrative practice principles and acknowledges the significant contribution of different approaches to family therapy across time and the benefit of multiple perspectives in finding manoeuvrability in effectively supporting clients.

In the Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy and Practice participants will:

- Be thoroughly grounded in Systems Theory in order to develop and refine their ability to 'think systemically'
- Develop knowledge and skills in a variety of First and Second Generation schools of Family Therapy, including core principles, frameworks and philosophies
 - First Generation: Understanding and changing patterns of behaviour and structures, and beliefs that hold these in place
 - Second Generation: Understanding and working with meaning making, context, relationships and language
- Learn a meta-framework for integrative practice and knowledge and skills for working systemically with trauma in line with Third Generation approaches to Family Therapy in order to provide effective, individualised interventions.
 - Third Generation: Integrative practice across schools of family therapy and with other psychotherapeutic approaches and paradigms e.g., neurobiology, trauma
- Explicitly link theory to practice

The Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy and Practice offers a unique opportunity to develop the capacity to use Systemic Family Therapy principles and practices in a wide range of settings with families, couples, individuals (Children, Adolescents, Adults), stakeholder groups, teams and organisations.

This program incorporates adult learning principles and has a large experiential component including experiential workshops, systemic group supervision, live supervision, and advanced workshops, as well as a structured reading group and as such is open to both local and distance students.

Teaching Location: TBA pending enrolment numbers

Postal Correspondence: Dr Leonie White, PO Box 141, Beaudesert, 4285

Contact Number: Dr Leonie White 0401 002 544

Email: phoenixftacademy@gmail.com

Website: www.phoenixftacademy.com

What's in a name?

The Phoenix Family Therapy Academy's Advanced Certificate is called "Systemic Family Therapy and Practice" to highlight:

A focus on the underlying concepts and foundations of family therapy to encapsulate that this is a framework for practice regardless of who the client is. As a framework for practice the focus is on how you think about and work with whoever the client is. This means a systemic framework can be used with an individual of any age, a couple or other dyadic constellation (e.g., a young person in residential care and a key worker, two adult siblings, a parent and child), a family of any constellation, a group of stakeholders who work together, a team, or even an organisation. Systemic thinking is also helpful for organisational consultancy and community work.

Advanced Certificate Program Details

Duration: Two Years Full-Time (3 units per semester for a total of 4 semesters)

Course List:

Year 1 Semester 1 \$2600 +GST (or \$2400 +GST discounted rate for advanced payment).

- Foundations for Systemic Family Therapy & Practice – Part A: Workshop Program
- Foundations for Systemic Family Therapy & Practice – Part B: Reading Program & Tutorials
- Foundations for Systemic Family Therapy & Practice – Part C: Systemic Group Supervision

Semester 2 \$2600 +GST (or \$2400 +GST discounted rate for advanced payment).

- Core Knowledge for Systemic Family Therapy & Practice – Part A: Workshop Program
- Core Knowledge for Systemic Family Therapy & Practice – Part B: Reading Program & Tutorials
- Core Knowledge for Systemic Family Therapy & Practice – Part C: Systemic Group Supervision

Year 2 Semester 1 \$2800+GST (or \$2600 +GST discounted rate for advanced payment).

- Advanced Practice in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice (First Generation Approaches) – Part A: Workshop Program
- Advanced Practice in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice (First Generation Approaches) – Part B: Reading Program & Tutorials
- Advanced Practice in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice (First Generation Approaches) – Part C: Systemic Group Supervision

Semester 2 \$2800 +GST (or \$2600 +GST discounted rate for advanced payment).

- Advanced Practice in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice (Second and Third Generation Approaches) – Part A: Workshop Program
- Advanced Practice in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice Second and Third Generation Approaches) – Part B: Reading Program & Tutorials
- Advanced Practice in Systemic Family Therapy & Practice Second and Third Generation Approaches) – Part C: Systemic Group Supervision

All fees are + gst as noted.

Additional cost for The University of Queensland Community Library Membership \$25 is optional. This membership gives you access to the UQ Library's physical resources. Please note that you will not gain access to electronic journals. <https://app.library.uq.edu.au/#/membership/form/community>

Please refer to the "Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy Program Financial Guide" for further details regarding fees and payment options.

All fees must be paid in full to complete the Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy Program

Staff Details

Teaching Staff:

Dr Leonie White (Clinical Family Therapist & Psychologist)

AAFT Status: Clinical Member and Accredited Supervisor

Role: Director, Teaching & Supervision

Laura Hawkins (Clinical Family Therapist & Occupational Therapist)

AAFT Status: Clinical Member and Accredited Supervisor

Role: Teaching & Supervision

Shivon Baressi (Clinical Family Therapist & Counsellor)

AAFT Status: Clinical Member and Accredited Supervisor

Role: Teaching and supervision

Catherine Falco (Clinical Family Therapist & Psychologist)

AAFT Status: Clinical Member

Role: Teaching and supervision

Guest Presenters:

Roger Lowe (Counsellor & Supervisor; Lecturer QUT, Author, Retired Psychologist & Retired Clinical Family Therapist)

AAFT Status: Former Clinical Member

Role: Guest Presenter

Glenn Lerner (Clinical Family Therapist, Clinical Psychologist and Editor ANZJFT)

AAFT Status: Clinical Member and Accredited Supervisor

Role: Guest Presenter

Dr Paolo Bertrando (Family Therapist & Psychologist)

Role: Guest Presenter

Louise Munro (Psychologist)

Role: Guest Presenter

Seanna Keeley (Social Worker & Clinical Family Therapist)

Role: Guest Presenter

Claire Barbagallo (Speech Pathologist & Family Therapist)

Role: Guest Presenter

Entry Requirements

Pre-requisites

An appropriate degree in health, counselling, social work, teaching, or related discipline and the completion of at least 1 year of work experience in the helping profession.

Process

Applications will be received and assessed through the following process:

Step One

Email Phoenix Family Therapy Academy (phoenixftacademy@gmail.com) an expression of interest in the program and include as an attachment a CV and a referee (does not have to be a Family Therapist; must be someone who knows the applicant's work).

Step Two

A phone call will be offered with the Director of Phoenix to discuss the program, questions the applicant may have

Step Three

An orientation interview will occur with the Director to discuss the program content and process, and suitability of the program for the applicant – professional goals, time commitment and financial guidelines.

Course Enrolment End Date

All applications for Semester One 2025 must be received by close of business: TBA

Program Requirements

To complete the Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy and Practice the participant must meet these requirements:

- Completion of the 8 courses (two courses per semester).
- A pass mark of at least 50% for each course.
- A minimum attendance requirement of 90% with make-up tasks completed as necessary. Make up tasks are used for example, if participants take “sick leave”, “family leave”, or “other leave” and are unable to meet the 90% attendance.
 - The tutorials require a minimum of 6 of 7 tutorials per semester
 - The systemic group supervisions require a minimum of 6 of 7 supervisions per semester
 - The reading program requires a minimum of 11 of 13 reading journals per semester
 - Workshops require a minimum of 3 of 4 workshops per semester in first year, and 4 of 5 workshops per semester in second year
 - Participants will be supported with individualised plans accommodating their circumstances to meet the 90% attendance criteria

Contact Hours and Requirements:

First Year – Semester 1:

- 4 workshops (3 in person, 1 online). Workshops 1 and 2 run on a Thursday and Friday, and then the remaining workshops run on Fridays spread across the semester.
- 7 evening online tutorials spread approximately fortnightly across the semester.
- 7 evening online systemic group supervisions following the tutorials
- Weekly reading program – a low 2 to 3 hours per week.
- Weekly journaling for the reading program – nongraded, 300 words, focus on the application of ideas to practice.
- 2 assignments - resources and support provided.

First Year – Semester 2:

- 4 workshops (3 in person, 1 online). Workshops are generally scheduled on Fridays spread across the semester.
- 7 evening online tutorials spread approximately fortnightly across the semester.
- 7 evening online systemic group supervisions following the tutorials
- Weekly reading program – a low 2 to 3 hours per week.
- Weekly journaling for the reading program – nongraded, 300 words, focus on the application of ideas to practice.
- 2 assignments - resources and support provided.

Second Year – Semester 1:

- 5 workshops (4 in person, 1 online). Workshops are generally scheduled on Fridays spread across the semester.
- 7 evening online tutorials spread approximately fortnightly across the semester.
- 7 evening online systemic group supervisions following the tutorials
- Weekly reading program – a low 2 to 3 hours per week.
- Weekly journaling for the reading program – nongraded, 300 words, focus on the application of ideas to practice.
- 2 assignments - resources and support provided.

Second Year – Semester 2:

- 5 workshops (4 in person, 1 online). Workshops are generally scheduled on Fridays spread across the semester.
- 7 evening online tutorials spread approximately fortnightly across the semester.
- 7 evening online systemic group supervisions following the tutorials
- Weekly reading program – a low 2 to 3 hours per week.
- Weekly journaling for the reading program – nongraded, 500 words, focus on the application of ideas to practice.
- 2 assignments - resources and support provided.

Program Overview

Semester One, Year 1

FOUNDATIONS FOR SYSTEMIC FAMILY THERAPY & PRACTICE

Course Aims

To develop a solid foundation of knowledge for effective systemic thinking, systemic family therapy, and systemic practice, including specifically an understanding of what family therapy is, the theoretical underpinnings of family therapy and the practical applications of these underpinnings, theory of change, therapeutic alliance, ethical considerations, and assessment and hypothesizing with a systemic lens.

Learning Objectives

Course participants will develop knowledge and skills relating to:

1. Understanding what family therapy is:
 - a. What family therapy is
 - b. How family therapy is different from individual and dyadic Psychotherapeutic frameworks
 - c. The context of family therapy
 - d. The influence of the paradigm shift to a systems perspective
2. Understanding general systems theory and cybernetics
3. Understanding the influence and application of post-modernism and social constructionist thinking
4. Understanding key systemic concepts in relation to change
 - a. Theory of change
 - b. Process of change
 - c. Types of change: first and second order change
5. Understanding the therapeutic alliance in couple and family therapy
 - a. Theoretical understanding
 - b. Practice applications
 - c. Implications from neuroscience & trauma informed care
 - d. Introduction to the importance of the self of the therapist
6. Understanding gender diverse and neurodiverse families.
7. Understanding the ethical considerations involved in couple and family therapy and systemic practice
 - a. Theoretical understanding
 - b. Practice applications
8. Understanding the applications of systemic family therapy beyond “the family”
 - a. Systemic family therapy with individuals
 - b. Systemic family therapy with couples
 - c. Systemic family therapy with stakeholder groups, teams and organisations
9. Completing a systemic family therapy assessment & preliminary intervention plan
10. The self of the therapist

Workshop Program

Workshop Day 1- Introduction to Systemic Thinking and Practice: Part 1
Workshop Day 2 - Introduction to Systemic Thinking and Practice: Part 2
Workshop Day 3 - Ethics + Working Systemically “Beyond the Family”
Workshop Day 4 - Application of Systemic Family Therapy Theory to Practice

Reading Program

13 week reading program with written reflections + 7 online tutorials

Supervision Program

7 online systemic group supervision sessions

Assessment - Please refer to the course outline

Semester 2, Year 1

CORE KNOWLEDGE FOR SYSTEMIC FAMILY THERAPY & PRACTICE

Course Aims

To develop knowledge to provide a range of effective Family Therapy interventions, including specifically an understanding of First, Second and Third Generation approaches in Family Therapy, Contemporary Practice including integration, and the Evolution of Family Therapy. This course will develop knowledge regarding how Family Therapy is applicable across a broad range of treatment applications, and how Family Therapy considers contextual factors including working with different age groups, family structures, and different cultural backgrounds.

Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course, participants should be able to:

- 1 Develop theory and practice knowledge of First and Second Generation Schools of Family Therapy, as well as Contemporary Practice and Integration.
 - a. Strategic Family Therapy
 - b. Structural Family Therapy
 - c. Bowen Family Systems
 - d. Experiential Family Therapy
 - e. Milan Systemic Psychotherapy
 - f. Post Milan Psychotherapy
 - g. Solution Focused Therapy
 - h. Narrative Therapy
 - i. Collaborative Therapy
- 2 Understand the Evolution of Family Therapy in order to contextualise Contemporary Practice in a way that enhances Systemic Family Therapy interventions.
 - a. First, second and third wave approaches
- 3 Critically examine Schools of Family Therapy.
 - a. Core theory and principles
 - b. Mechanisms of change
 - c. Therapeutic interventions
 - d. Evidence base for specific problems/disorders and/or populations
- 4 Utilize personal reflection and theoretical understanding to explain how family of origin and family relationships affect mental, emotional and social well-being, and highlight the importance of therapist family of origin in relation to professional practice.

Workshop Program

Workshop Day 1 - First Generation Schools of Family Therapy (Structural, Bowen, Experiential)

Workshop Day 2 - First and Second Generation Schools of Family Therapy (Strategic, Milan, Post-Milan/Dialogical)

Workshop Day 3 - Second Generation Schools of Family Therapy (Solution Focused, Narrative, Collaborative)

Workshop Day 4 - Evolution of Family Therapy + Integration of Systemic Family Therapy Practice

Reading Program

13 week reading program with written reflections + 7 online tutorials

Supervision Program

7 online systemic group supervision sessions

Assessment - Please refer to the course outline

Semester 1, Year 2

ADVANCED PRACTICE IN SYSTEMIC FAMILY THERAPY

(First Generation Approaches)

Course Aims

To develop specialist knowledge and skills for effective Family Therapy practice, with an emphasis on First Generation Schools of Family Therapy including Bowen Family Systems, Strategic, Structural and Experiential approaches with individuals, couples, families, and broader systems.

To use family life cycle concepts, thinking analytically about this model, to examine typical clinical presentations at particular transition points, and to learn systemic interventions which may be utilised.

Through applied clinical practice and live supervision to draw upon and integrate a number of Family Therapy schools and conceptual models to match client needs and goals. This semester has a particular focus on enhancing skills and knowledge of working with First Generation ideas and techniques.

Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course, participants should be able to:

1. Understand what Structural Family Therapy is:
 - a. Understand the theoretical underpinnings, key concepts and mechanisms of change in Structural Family Therapy.
 - b. Understand how to assess and hypothesise about families and presenting problems using Structural concepts.
 - c. Understand how to use Structural techniques with clients/families.
2. Understand what Bowen Family Systems is:
 - a. Understand the theoretical underpinnings, key concepts and mechanisms of change in Bowen Family Systems.
 - b. Understand how to conduct a genogram with clients for both assessment and intervention.
 - c. Understand how to assess and hypothesise about families and presenting problems using Bowen concepts.
 - d. Reflect on Family of Origin influences and Social GRACES when working with clients.
3. Understand Experiential approaches to Family Therapy:
 - a. Understand the theoretical underpinnings, key concepts and mechanisms of change in Experiential approaches to working with families.
 - b. Understand how to assess and hypothesise about families and presenting problems using Structural concepts.
 - c. Understand how to use Experiential techniques with clients/families.
4. Apply theory to practice in a Live Supervision clinic
 - a. Understand what live supervision is and the purpose of this type of supervision
 - b. Understand team-based work and develop an effective team
 - c. Understand team-based interventions from both first and second generation approaches to family therapy i.e., the use of messages and the use of the reflecting team
 - d. Improve self-reflexivity
 - e. Begin to "internalise their team"
5. The self of the therapist

Workshop Program

Workshop Day 1 - Bowen Family Systems

Workshop Day 2 - Strategic Family Therapy

Workshop Day 3 - Structural Family Therapy

Workshop Day 4 - Experiential Approaches to Family Therapy

Workshop Day 5 - Live Supervision: Part 1

Reading Program

13 week reading program with written reflections + 7 online tutorials

Supervision Program

7 online systemic group supervision sessions

Assessment - Please refer to the course outline

Semester 2, Year 2

ADVANCED PRACTICE IN SYSTEMIC FAMILY THERAPY & PRACTICE

(Second and Third Generation Approaches)

Course Aims

To develop specialist knowledge and skills for effective Family Therapy practice, with an emphasis on Second Generation Schools of Family Therapy including Solution Focussed Therapy, Narrative Therapy and Collaborative Therapy with individuals, couples, families, and broader systems.

To use family life cycle concepts, thinking analytically about this model, to examine typical clinical presentations at particular transition points, and to learn systemic interventions which may be utilised.

Through applied clinical practice and live supervision to draw upon and integrate a number of Family Therapy schools and conceptual models to match client needs and goals. This semester has a particular focus on enhancing skills and knowledge of working with Second Generation ideas and techniques.

Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course participants should be able to:

1. Understand what Solution Focussed Therapy (SFT) in systemic practice is:
 - a. Understand the theoretical underpinnings, key concepts and mechanisms of change in Solution Focussed Therapy (SFBT 1:0 & 2:0)
 - b. Understand how SFT principles and techniques can be used with clients/families/systems
 - c. Learn SFT techniques for use in clinical practice
2. Understand what Narrative Therapy in systemic practice is:
 - a. Understand the theoretical underpinnings, key concepts and mechanisms of change in Narrative Therapy
 - b. Understand how Narrative Therapy principles and techniques can be used with clients/families/systemic
 - c. Learn Narrative Therapy techniques for use in clinical practice
3. Understand what the Collaborative Language Systems approach of Harlene Anderson is
 - a. Understand the theoretical underpinnings, key concepts and mechanisms of change in Collaborative Therapy
 - b. Understand how Collaborative Therapy principles and techniques can be used with clients/families/systems
 - c. Learn Collaborative Therapy techniques for use in practice
4. Understand how to work Systemically with Trauma:
 - a. Understand what Trauma is
 - b. Understand the impact of Trauma on the individual, relationships, family and broader system
 - c. Learn how Systemic approaches can be used effectively with this presentation
 - d. Learn specific techniques from Systemic frameworks for working with the effects of trauma
5. Apply theory to practice in a Live Supervision clinic
 - a. Understand what live supervision is and the purpose of this type of supervision
 - b. Understand team-based work and develop an effective team
 - c. Understand team-based interventions from both first and second generation approaches to family therapy i.e., the use of messages and the use of the reflecting team
 - d. Improve self-reflexivity
 - e. Develop the "internalisation of their team"
6. The self of the therapist

Workshop Program

Workshop Day 1 - Solution Focussed Therapy in Systemic Practice

Workshop Day 2 - Narrative Therapy in Systemic Practice

Workshop Day 3 - Collaborative Language Systems

Workshop Day 4 - Working Systemically with Trauma

Workshop Day 5 - Live Supervision: Part 2

Reading Program

13 week reading program with written reflections + 7 online tutorials

Supervision Program

7 online systemic group supervision sessions

Assessment - Please refer to the course outline

Policy Statement

The mission of Phoenix Family Therapy Academy is to provide exceptional quality resources and training in Systemic Family Therapy and Practice that acknowledges and draws on the roots of systemic thinking and classic Family Therapy approaches while also bringing a focus on contemporary practice including integrative family therapy practice and understandings of neurobiology and trauma.

Phoenix provides a range of professional development options to cater to individuals, teams and organisations across a diverse range of Family Therapy training and experience.

Phoenix Family Therapy Academy is committed to:

- Providing high quality learning opportunities for participants to support the development and accessibility of Family Therapy within Australia (and Overseas)
- Establishing and sustaining a learning community that supports learning, critical thinking and reflection, academic integrity and ethical standards in all students and staff.
- Involving participants actively in all stages of their program experience.
- Creating a learning environment characterised by adult learning principles, openness, reflection and engagement.
- Encouraging contribution to the field of Family Therapy.
- Ongoing reflection and review of all aspects of the program and curriculum in order to maintain a high quality program with integrity, and one that maintains currency in contemporary practice.
- A respectful, courteous, professional ethical learning experience for all participants and staff members, in all forms of communication and interaction (email, verbal, in person).
- A learning environment that is free from harassment, discrimination or bullying, that considers each person's unique circumstances, and that welcomes diversity.

Complaints and Grievance Resolution Process

Grievance resolution will be guided by the following resolution process:

1. The grievance will be addressed as expeditiously as possible.
2. The resolution of the participant grievance will be managed as close as possible to the source of course participant dissatisfaction and as informally as possible e.g., participants will be encouraged to speak with the staff member most closely involved in the grievance.
3. The course participant is entitled to appeal to the Director (the most senior decision maker) with any new or additional information to support their grievance, or they can explain why the original decision did not comply with Phoenix policies and discuss the policies with the Director.
4. The enrolment of the course participant will be maintained during the grievance process.
5. There will be no reprisal as a result of lodging a complaint, grievance or appeal for the course participant.
6. If an interview with the course participant and a Director is required, the participant may bring a support person (who is not a legal representative, or currently a practicing solicitor or barrister).
7. The Phoenix grievance process promotes the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
8. This process of supporting Grievances will be widely publicised to facilitate access to the grievance resolution process.
9. A course participant may choose to have their grievance reviewed by an external complaint handling process e.g., the Australian Association of Family Therapy.

Professional Memberships

Graduates of the Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy and Practice may be eligible for membership with the Australian Association of Family Therapy (AAFT) upon completion of the Membership requirements.

The Australian Association of Family Therapy is national organisation and peak body for family therapists in Australia. AAFT offers the only available pathway to accreditation of family therapy courses in Australia.

Please read the clinical membership requirements and contact AAFT to discuss further your individual circumstances.

Acceptance into the Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy program does not guarantee AAFT clinical membership.

See the AAFT website for further details <https://www.aaft.asn.au/membership/>

The Advanced Certificate in Systemic Family Therapy Program complies with the AAFT Core Content areas:

- An overview of the history of the development of family therapy.
- Developmental stages of family life.
- Clinical practice to specific client populations including for instance: children, adolescents, and elderly.
- Socio political influences.
- Models of assessment and intervention.
- Referral and referral options.
- Ethics of clinical practice and supervision.
- Theories and processes of family therapy.
- Integrating and understanding human diversity including culture, gender, age, ability, class, religion and ethnicity.
- Further development of self-awareness.
- Familiarity with research on effectiveness of family therapy.

This training includes a component relating to the Self of the Therapist (family of origin and contextual influences) across both first and second year with the depth of exploration deepening in the second year, and an ongoing consideration throughout the program