



**Oxford
Mindfulness
Centre**

The background is a blurred photograph of a classroom. A male teacher in a white shirt stands at the front, facing a group of students whose heads are visible in the foreground. A large, semi-transparent blue arc is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**APPLYING FOR AN ASSESSMENT
OF COMPETENCY TO TEACH MBCT**

PREAMBLE

This process is based on best practice in the assessment of Mindfulness Based Programmes in a range of teaching and research settings and builds on work collaboratively developed with colleagues at the Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice, Bangor University. It may be reviewed and improved as necessary. In submitting your application, you will be expected to meet the requirements detailed on the website at the time of your application.

APPLICATION PROCESS IN SUMMARY

Step 1

You will be asked to supply a portfolio for assessment. This would typically include:

1. reasons for the application
2. summarised (and ideally evidenced) information demonstrating that you have fulfilled the prerequisites outlined in the [MBCT Training Pathway](#) (version 2.0 Segal et. al., 2018)
3. evidence that your supervisor feels that you are ready to be assessed and supports your application
4. video recordings of all 8 sessions of the MBCT course you have run, with supporting documentation (see below)
5. A reflective commentary on your experience of teaching the course
6. The portfolio should include evidence of meeting the Good Practice Guidelines for MBCT teachers

The portfolio and recordings will then be passed on to an OMC assessor. If you do not meet the prerequisites, the portfolio will be returned to you and the application fee will be refunded, minus a processing fee of £50. If the portfolio meets all of the pre-requisites, the recordings will then be assessed as below.

Step 2

Your assessors will always rate two whole sessions for competency in teaching MBCT using the Mindfulness Based Interventions Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI-TAC). Normally this will be one session from the first half of the course (not session 1) and one from the second half of the course (not session 8). Your assessor may also sample parts of any other sessions to see further examples of your teaching – practices, didactic teaching or inquiry – if necessary. The approach to assessment of competency is set out in the MBI-TAC Manual [here](#). An independent moderator will moderate both the competency assessment and the feedback. This may include further review of the recordings and discussion with the assessor.

Step 3 (competency met)

A certificate of competency is issued if you meet the criteria for competency on ALL six domains of the MBI-TAC. Formative feedback will be provided that includes strengths and areas for development.

Step 3 (competency not yet met)

If you do not yet meet competency across the domains, formative feedback will also be provided that includes strengths, areas for development and what is required to meet competency. You can then come back to be reassessed at Step 2, providing a statement of how the feedback has informed further learning.

APPLICATION PROCESS IN DETAIL

Your application must include:

1. an application form
2. video recordings of an 8-week MBCT course which you have taught recently
3. a time-line synopsis of each session
4. consent forms from your participants
5. your consent form
6. a page explaining your teaching context
7. a reflective commentary on your experience of teaching the course
8. payment of the fee of £595

1) Application Form

Please submit your application form online. The online application form can be found [here](#). This must be in English and provide details of your readiness to be assessed. This will typically include

- (a) reasons for your application and
- (b) summarised (and ideally evidenced) information demonstrating that you have fulfilled the requirements of the MBCT Training Pathway, version 2.0 (Segal et. al., 2018) including the prerequisites and an apprenticeship with supervision. If you teach within the UK, the application should also include evidence of meeting the [Good Practice Guidelines for MBCT teachers](#)
- (c) evidence that your supervisor feels that you are ready to be assessed and supports your application

2) Video Recordings

Your application must be accompanied by video recordings of all sessions of a recent 8 -week MBCT course that you have taught. ***It is your responsibility to send us recordings in which you are visible and both you and your participants are audible. Recordings which do not meet these criteria cannot be assessed.***

Please submit two copies of your recordings on two separate USB memory sticks. If possible the memory sticks should be password protected. The following USB stick will hold the full 16 hours of your recordings. It will allow you to set up a password-protected private folder and will secure your files with 128-bit AES encryption:

SanDisk SDCZ48-128GU46 Ultra USB Flash Drive USB 3.0

Please send your USB stick by secure courier or delivery service to:

Competency Assessment,
Oxford Mindfulness Centre,
Kellogg College,
60-62 Banbury Road, Oxford,
OX2 6PN.

Please also supply us with an address for returning the USB stick to you when the assessment is complete. Once we have received your recordings, we will email you to ask for your password.

2.1 Guidance on making video recordings

What you need to submit

1. You will need to submit video recordings of all 8 sessions of your course
2. The camera must be trained on you (see below) so that your face and as much of your body as possible is visible
3. As far as possible your participants should not be visible
4. Both you and your participants must be audible
5. You will need to submit two copies of your recordings on two separate password-protected USB sticks
6. **Recordings that are not visible and audible cannot be assessed**

The guide below may help you to produce good quality recordings for assessment purposes.

Get some help. If you have not used a camera before, ask for help and advice from a friend or a colleague who has used a camera. Perhaps even borrow a camera to practice with.

Pick the right camera. If you are buying or hiring a camera or video camera, it needs to have good sound and a reasonably clear picture (don't worry too much about pixels – if it's a fairly recent digital camera it will be good enough). It is usually helpful to attach an external microphone to a camera. Don't forget to make sure your camera has all the connectors it needs to transfer your footage to the computer and copy onto a USB stick. Please ensure you submit two copies on separate USB sticks.

A video camera and some new cameras will record continuously for 2 hours; other cameras will record for a maximum of 30 minutes. If you have a camera that only records for 30 minutes, you will need to find a way to restart the camera after each 30 minute period, which could be difficult if you do not have a helper. It would also be easier to make sure that the SD card in the camera will take a 2 hour recording.

There is a lot of different software available to convert your media if required. In most cases, the computer will come with software to do this. You can also buy more advanced software packages.

Make sure the sound is as good as the picture. To be assessed properly, it is essential that we can hear both you and your participants clearly. Remember that the assessor will not be able to see the participants' faces, which makes the sound quality even more important. Make at least one test recording before you start teaching. As far as possible, make sure that there are no loud noises from outside the room (e.g. construction work) which might make it difficult to hear what is being said on the recording (you may need to shut windows and doors). If the sound quality is doubtful, try using an external microphone.

Make sure there is enough light in the room to allow a clear picture.

Put the camera somewhere stable. You don't want the camera to fall over or tilt while you are filming. It might be worth purchasing a tripod. Otherwise make sure that there is a surface or table at the right height and in the right place for you to rest the camera.

Check where you are aiming the camera. It is really important to make sure that you are filming what needs to be seen. It is important to see the whole of your face and not just a side view. As much of your body as possible should be in camera view (so the assessor can see your body posture); at the same time, avoid having the camera so far away that your face cannot be seen clearly. As far as possible, your participants should not be in the camera for reasons of confidentiality. You may be able to position the camera between two participants (perhaps looking over their shoulders) on the other side of the circle to yourself. Putting the camera inside the circle is very intrusive, but too far outside makes the picture small and the sound too quiet. Find a balance that suits your situation.

It is important that you are audible all the time and visible most of the time. This includes being visible and audible whilst guiding practices lying down (body scan, mindful movement) and standing (stretch and breath). At times, you may be audible but lose some of the picture for short periods e.g. when transitioning between sitting and lying down, or when teaching walking meditation and you go out of sight of the camera.

If at all possible, have someone else operate the camera for you. This is particularly helpful when you are recording for summative assessment, so that your attention can be fully on your teaching (not on the camera) and you can be kept 'in shot' at all times. It is important that your helper is also a participant in the class and not a passive observer. This could be someone who has done the course before and is happy to do it again and operate the camera for a reduced fee or free course.

Practice where to place the camera before the start of each session and decide how to position the camera when you move from your chair – e.g. to the flip chart, a body scan or a movement practice. If moving the camera would interrupt the teaching process or distract the group, e.g. in a walking practice, it is possible to point the camera towards the floor or a wall and to have the sound only recorded for short periods (but remembering to point the camera at you afterwards).

Be aware of the effects of recording on yourself. If you are worrying about whether the camera is working etc. it can distract you from your teaching. Also you may feel initially uncomfortable about being recorded. It is helpful to practice recording yourself as early as possible in your teaching (before you come to make the recordings for assessment) so that it begins to feel more comfortable. Watching your recordings will give you a greater sense of familiarity and ease. Your mindfulness practice, especially grounding yourself in your body, will be a support with any feelings of anxiety or self-consciousness. *Remember that that recorded teaching is very helpful indeed for you to watch, learn from and give yourself feedback on and is part of the supervision process.*

Be aware of the possible effects of recording on the group members. You will need to tell your participants in advance about being recorded and ask for their consent (see consent form). Talking it through in a matter of fact and reassuring way is helpful, as is being clear that recording is for supervision or assessment purposes only and that the recordings will only be seen by you and your supervisor and assessor. It is important to be clear with participants about whether they will be in view or not, and that it is only *you* being filmed and not them. Remember that inadvertent recording of participants often occurs e.g. when they forget about the camera or when they are doing movement or walking. Usually as long as you are relaxed about the camera and process of recording, your participants will accept it as part of the furniture and will be supportive of your work, seeing it as part of ensuring high standards in teaching.

PRACTICE! This is the most important thing of all. Test out the functions and settings on your camera before you start the recording sessions. Remember to take the lens cap off and press all the right buttons to start the recording. Make sure your memory cards record for long enough. The amount of recording time each card can hold will depend on the type of camera and size of the card. Check before you start (sometimes the remaining time will be shown on the screen). Make sure your speaking voice is loud enough and the light is sufficient.

We strongly suggest that record yourself teaching before you submit a recording for assessment, for example recording some of the first course you teach and showing your recording to your supervisor. You will then know how to adjust the picture, sound etc. so that your recordings are audible and visible.

2.2 Guidance on recording whilst co-teaching

The requirements for co-teaching are given in Domain 2 (Relational Skills) of the MBI-TAC manual. Please note that your relationship with your co-teacher will have a strong influence on the quality of the teaching process for participants. Domain 2 will assess your co-teaching relationship as well as your teacher-participant relationship.

If you are recording yourself co-teaching with another teacher, you must have explained the requirements to your co-teacher in advance and have their written consent.

You must record the whole of each session and the camera must be trained on you throughout, even when your co-teacher is teaching.

You must record yourself teaching each of the following, from any of the relevant sessions

1. Raisin exercise (and inquiry)
2. At least 1 body scan (and inquiry)
3. At least 1 mindful movement practice (and inquiry)
4. At least 2 main sitting practices in different sessions (and inquiry)
5. At least 2 didactic sessions/exercises (e.g. 'walking down the street'; teaching on depression or stress; 'office scenarios')
6. At least 2 different breathing spaces (and inquiry)

You must teach at least two whole sessions on your own – one from the first half of the course, but not Session 1, and one from the second half of the course, but not Session 8 – so that your assessor can see how you manage the time, hold the group, etc. Your co-teacher can be present. For the remaining sessions, you must be teaching the group for a minimum of 50% of the time.

2.3 Hire of video recording equipment

Please note that you can hire a full kit of video recording equipment, with instructions on how to use it, from the Oxford Mindfulness Centre, for a fee of £50. There are a limited number of kits, so if you would like to hire one, please check availability before submitting your application.

3) Time-line synopsis of each session

On the application form you will be asked to upload a time-line synopsis of **each session** which includes each curriculum component timed from the beginning of the recording. Here is an example of one session:

Session 2:	Date:
Living in our heads	Duration of session: 2 hrs 10 secs
Body scan	0:00 – 31:05
Inquiry – body scan	31:05 – 41:30
Home practice review	41:30 – 1 hr 10 mins 28 secs
Thoughts and feelings exercise	1:10:28 – 1:33:10
Sitting meditation: mindfulness of breath	1:33:10 – 1:43:03
Inquiry – sitting (popcorn)	1:43:03 – 1:47:10
Home practice assignment	1:47:10 – 1:57:17
Explain pleasant experiences calendar	
Short sit to end class	1:57:17 – 2:00:10

4) Participant Consent Form

All participants on your course must have given their consent for the sessions to be recorded and assessed and you must provide evidence of their consent. It is important that you gain their consent before the course starts and recording begins. Appendix 1 contains a sample consent form which you can use if your teaching context does not already have a way of asking for consent. Please ask all participants of your course to sign the participant consent form, or provide evidence that consent has been given in a different way. The consent form includes an additional **optional** consent for you and your participants to consent to the recordings being securely filed and used for future training of new assessors.

You will be asked to upload this consent with your application form.

5) Your Consent Form

You must give your consent for the recordings to be assessed and confirm that your participants have given their consent. A template for this form can be found in Appendix 2. The consent form includes an additional **optional** consent for you and your participants to consent to the recordings being securely filed and used for future training of new assessors. You will be asked to upload the consent form with your application form.

6) Teaching Context

Please submit one A4 page describing the teaching context of the course you have recorded. This should include a description of your participant group and any associated vulnerabilities or challenges; the context in which you are teaching (hospital, therapy centre, school, privately, etc.) and any adaptations you have made to the MBCT curriculum with an explanation of the rationale behind your changes.

You will be asked to upload the consent form with your application form.

7) Reflective commentary: 1000 words approx.

When we assess your teaching we see your observable behaviour. This piece of writing is your opportunity to reflect on your teaching process, and tell us about your actual experience while teaching. This commentary will not be assessed, but is intended to support and inform our assessment of your teaching. Please include any observations or reflections that you consider to be relevant, for example:

- 1) Were you facing any particular internal or external challenges (e.g. illness, difficulties at work or at home) as you taught each session of this course and if so, how did you work with them?
- 2) How did you respond to any difficulties within the session (e.g. someone who becomes angry or distressed; someone who dominates the group; someone who says nothing and appears disengaged)?
- 3) How has your personal practice supported or enriched your teaching?
- 4) Did you have any concerns about ethics or the safety of your participants? If so, how did you work with them?
- 5) How did you deal with absences or drop outs?
- 6) What have you learned from teaching this course? Have any key issues or questions emerged for you?
- 7) How will you take this learning forward?

The word limit of 1000 words is for guidance only. Please present your commentary in a clear and concise form, and you can include lists or bullet points. Please note that you must maintain your participant's confidentiality at all times.

You will be asked to upload your reflective commentary with your application form.

8) Payment of the Fee

On submission of your application form you will be required to pay the fee of £595 online. If for any reason you have not fulfilled all the requirements of the MBCT Teacher Training Pathway and your application is not accepted, your payment will be returned to you minus a £50 processing fee.

The Assessment

The recordings of your teaching will be assessed by one of the OMC's team of trained competency assessors.

The assessors will rate two whole sessions for competency using the MBI-TAC. Normally this will be one from the first half of the course (not session 1) and one from the second half of the course (not session 8). Your assessor may also sample parts of any other sessions to see further examples of your teaching – practices, didactic teaching or inquiry – if necessary. The approach to assessment of competency is set out in the MBI-TAC Manual [here](#).

An independent moderator will moderate both the competency assessment and the feedback. This may include further review of the recordings and discussion with the assessor. If the tapes are in a language other than English the moderator will not review the tapes but will ask the assessor for greater detail in the moderation discussion about the observed MBCT teaching.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Competency met

A Certificate of Competency to Teach MBCT will be awarded from the Oxford Mindfulness Centre if you meet criteria for competence on ALL six domains of the MBI-TAC. We will provide summative feedback that highlights your strengths and areas for development.

Competency not met

If you do not yet meet competency across all the domains, we will provide formative feedback that will highlight your strengths, areas for development and what you might need to meet competency. You can then come back to us to be reassessed, providing a statement of how the feedback we have given you has informed further learning.

Security

Your videos will be stored securely on a University of Oxford server and your USB stick will be returned to you.

If you have given your consent for your recordings to be used for further OMC assessor training, then they will continue to be stored securely. If you have not given this consent, your recordings will be deleted from the server when your assessment is complete.

Your recordings will be sent to the assessor and moderator by a secure University of Oxford file transfer system. All the assessors have signed an agreement to store the recordings securely and delete them after the assessment.

Complaint/appeals

If you have a concern about your assessment and it cannot be dealt with on a one to one basis with the assessor and resolved, you should follow the OMC's policy for handling complaints which is on our website:

<http://www.oxfordmindfulness.org/wp-content/uploads/omccomplaints-procedure1.pdf>

APPENDIX 1

Assessment of Competency to Teach MBCT Sample Participant Consent Form

- I understand that my MBCT teacher is applying to the Oxford Mindfulness Centre for an Assessment of Competency to teach MBCT
- I understand that sessions will be recorded and viewed by an assessor, and that the purpose of this is not to record the group, but to record the work of my teacher
- The camera will as far as possible be focused on my teacher, and I understand that although my voice may be recorded, it is unlikely I will be visually recorded unless I move in front of the camera
- I understand that these recordings will remain confidential, and will only be seen by my teacher and their assessors. The OMC administrative team processing the application will briefly check the recording for visibility and audibility
- I understand my teacher may also share parts of these recordings with their professional mindfulness supervisor during their supervision sessions
- These recordings will be destroyed after they have served their educational purpose.
- I have been given a copy of this information to keep

Optional Additional Consent

- I understand that these recordings of my MBCT teacher may be held by the Oxford Mindfulness Centre and used for training new assessors. In this case the recordings will be viewed only by those on a recognised training in competency assessment offered by the Centres for Mindfulness at Oxford, Bangor and Brown Universities. The recordings will be stored securely and used with sensitivity and confidentiality. I understand that giving this additional layer of consent will support the work of training mindfulness teachers and trainers for the future.

Continued overleaf...

APPENDIX 2

Your consent form

Assessment of Competency to Teach MBCT - Applicant Consent Form

I give my consent for the recordings of my teaching to be viewed by a member of the Oxford Mindfulness Centre's assessor team. I understand that the recordings will not be viewed by anyone other than the assessor and administrator of the programme, that the original recordings will be returned to me or destroyed, and that any securely shared files will be deleted after use. I confirm that all the participants in the recorded MBCT course gave their consent

Signed by: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Additional consent (optional)

I give my consent for the recordings of my teaching to be securely filed by the Oxford Mindfulness Centre and used for training new assessors. In this case the recordings will be viewed only by those on a recognised training in competency assessment offered by the Centres for Mindfulness at Oxford, Bangor and Brown Universities. The recordings will be stored securely and used with sensitivity and confidentiality. I confirm that all the participants in the recorded MBCT course have given additional consent

Signed by: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____