



**MA Practical Skills
Therapeutic Education**
Prospectus



The Field Centre, the research centre at Ruskin Mill

CONTENTS

MA Practical Skills Therapeutic Education.....	4
Course structure.....	6
Who is the course for?.....	8
How to apply.....	10
Entry requirements.....	12
Additional information.....	13
Ruskin Mill Trust.....	15
Our Vision, Values and Purpose.....	16
Our Method: Practical Skills Therapeutic Education.....	17
Seven Fields of Practice.....	18
My notes.....	20
Ruskin Mill Trust centres.....	22

MA PRACTICAL SKILLS THERAPEUTIC EDUCATION



The Ruskin Mill Centre for Practice MA: Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (MA PSTE) will provide you with an opportunity to:

- learn about the provenance and development of PSTE
- experience/appraise/develop/contribute to the theory and practice of PSTE
- apply the method to your own professional practice and/or context
- appraise your own personal development in relation to PSTE

For over 30 years, using its approach *Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE)*, Ruskin Mill Trust has provided specialist independent education to children and adults with complex needs including learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions and disabilities. Ruskin Mill Trust promotes research into the practice and development of education in the areas of arts, crafts, agriculture and environmental sciences, with particular reference being given to the indications and insights of Rudolf Steiner in these areas.

With this degree, Ruskin Mill Trust is inviting Master's level research into *Practical Skills Therapeutic Education*. The theories and practices of *Practical Skills Therapeutic Education* are open to comparison, appraisal and development by Ruskin Mill Trust staff and other practitioners in the fields of education, special education, or health and social care.

The MA: *Practical Skills Therapeutic Education* is an award of the University of Huddersfield

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Participants working with clay

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is delivered over three years on a part-time basis, through a series of taught blocks at the Field Centre in Nailsworth, Gloucestershire

MA PSTE modules

- Field 1 *Genius Loci: Holistic Inquiry*
- Field 2 *Methods: Practice and Theory*
- Field 3 *Biodynamic Ecology as Educational Practice*
- Field 4i *Investigating the Wider Contemporary Context of PSTE*
- Field 4ii *Exploring Holistic and Therapeutic Education*
- Fields 5, 6 *Holistic Support and Care, and Child/Student Study*
- Field 7 *Researching Transformative Leadership and PSTE*

To work effectively with learners, in Ruskin Mill Trust provisions or elsewhere, practitioners need to be able to apply the method, or elements of it (depending on your role and type of education/health care provision), to your professional practice.

To do so requires a deep appreciation not only of each Field of Practice but also, and importantly, of their inter-relationship and interconnection.

MA PSTE Whole course timetable showing taught blocks (dates are indicative)

	Modules	Module Taught Block	Module Taught Block Dates	Module Duration
YEAR 1	Module 1: Genius Loci: Holistic Inquiry	2 weeks	27 Aug–6 Sep 2024	11 weeks
	Module 2: Methods: Practice and Theory	2 weeks	6–17 Jan 2025	11 weeks
	Module 3: Biodynamic Ecology as Educational Practice	2 weeks	22 Apr–2 May 2025	11 weeks
YEAR 2	Module 4i: The Wider Contemporary Context of PSTE	2 weeks	18–29 Aug 2025	17 weeks
	and 5 (of 5,6) Holistic Support and Care	3 days	27–29 Oct 2025	
	Module 4ii: Exploring Holistic and Therapeutic Education	2 weeks	5–16 Jan 2026	21 weeks
and 6 (of 5,6) Child/Student Study	3 days	30 Mar–1 Apr 2026		
	Module 5,6: Holistic Support and Care, and Child/Student Study	alongside 4i and 4ii	18–29 Aug 2025 5–16 Jan 2026	9 weeks
YEAR 3	Module 7 – Part 1 Leadership Module 7 – Part 2 Dissertation	1 week 3 days 3 days	10–14 Aug 2026 26–28 Oct 2026 22–24 Feb 2027	42 weeks

WHO IS THE COURSE FOR?

The course is aimed at individuals with experience of working in an educational setting who have an interest in exploring holistic pedagogic approaches, special needs education, or health and social care.

Potential participants might include individuals who:

- work in schools and colleges
- work with land, nature and craft in a pedagogical context
- work with learners with special educational or complex needs
- have an interest in alternative pedagogic approaches
- wish to engage in continued professional development, in order to enhance their pedagogic practice
- wish to further their research into pedagogic approaches



Shaping a stool leg on the pole lathe

HOW TO APPLY

Applications are made through the Ruskin Mill Centre for Practice (RMCP). For further information please contact sophie.creed@rmlt.org.uk

The Application Process

For Ruskin Mill Trust Staff the application process has three stages (see below). All other applicants need only complete stages 2 and 3.

1 A CPD form for the MA PSTE

This provides your declaration of interest and evidence of your line manager's approval. It confirms their enabling you to attend the taught blocks. Please make sure you provide your line manager with these dates if you haven't already done so.

2 An RMCP application form

This is for Ruskin Mill Trust purposes only. It provides details about how you fulfil the entry requirements and your reasons for wanting to do the course. All applicants who satisfy the entry requirements will be invited for interview. There are additional requirements for applicants who do not have a Bachelor's degree. Please see pages 12–13 for these requirements.

3 Our partner university application

You will need to do this in order to become a student of the university with the right to access their library resources and student services. You will be provided with information on how to do this.



Studying the animals on the farm

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The specific entry requirements and admission criteria are:

- Applicants should have a first or second class honours degree or postgraduate qualification.
- Applicants with a third class honours degree, ordinary degree or with no degree may still apply but will be asked to evidence their ability to work successfully at level 7. Please refer to the additional entry details.
- In addition to the first criterion, applicants who work for Ruskin Mill Trust must have successfully completed at least one of the Ruskin Mill Trust professional development courses. You will be asked to present your learning outcomes from one of these courses at interview.
- Applicants must have at least two years of full-time (or equivalent) experience of working in the field of education and/or special education.
- Applicants must be working in a role and/or setting to which they can apply their learning on the course. This work must be for a minimum of one day per week, for at least 30 weeks of the year. Evidence of such professional practice may be required.
- Applicants from overseas who are speakers of English as a second language must have an IELTS score of at least 6.0 with no element lower than 5.5 or a TOEFL IBT score of 80 or above.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course cost, accommodation and travel

The total fee for the course is £6,900. For Ruskin Mill staff this fee will be funded by Ruskin Mill Trust, and a learner agreement will be in place. Support towards accommodation and travel can be offered, please contact: sophie.creed@rmlt.org.uk

Additional entry details

Although the taught blocks are delivered in-person, all other communication is online. Assignment submissions, feedback and course materials are available via the University of Huddersfield Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Searching for and accessing relevant academic literature via the university library is also entirely online. Applicants will need access to a computer and internet, and be confident in its usage.

Applicants without a degree may still apply for the course by demonstrating their ability to study at this level due to their experience or through other types of evidence. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate ability to produce work of an appropriate practical and/or academic standard in all or some of the following ways:

- a 30-minute interview with the admissions panel
- evidence such as authoring a journal article or other high-quality publication
- holding an NVQ or other qualification at level 5 or above
- producing a portfolio of evidence that includes, for example, copies of presentations, reports or projects undertaken in your current or previous employment
- demonstrating production of high-quality documentation, processes, systems or activities in a workplace environment
- completing an example assignment, for example a 1000-word essay

RUSKIN MILL TRUST

Ruskin Mill Trust is a long-standing registered charity. For over 35 years we have provided a unique, research-led approach to education and care for children, young people and adults with learning differences and difficulties across England, Wales and Scotland.

Since our foundation, thousands of pupils, students and adults have engaged with the education and care offered by Ruskin Mill Trust's innovative method of *Practical Skills Therapeutic Education*. We take an integrative and holistic approach, placing the individual pupil, student or adult at the centre. *Practical Skills Therapeutic Education* draws its principal inspiration from the insights of Rudolf Steiner, John Ruskin and William Morris.



OUR VISION, VALUES AND PURPOSE

As well as working with the method of Practical Skills Therapeutic Education, each Ruskin Mill Trust provision works with the Trust's central vision, values and purpose.

Our vision

That each individual has the potential to shape their own future through experiencing meaningful relationships with universe, earth and people.

We value

- ▶ Inclusive learning and living activities that integrate practical activity, thinking and emotions
- ▶ Mutual respect; we strive to understand all people's differences and uniqueness
- ▶ The capacity for re-imagination present in all people towards positive change and development
- ▶ Openness, goodwill, tolerance and treating people with dignity and respect

Our purpose

To provide students with holistic learning through positive role models, relationships, arts, crafts, commerce, agriculture, nutrition, living skills and the environment. This is so that students learn to look after themselves to the best of their ability, move closer to realising their capabilities and make a positive contribution to society.

OUR METHOD: PRACTICAL SKILLS THERAPEUTIC EDUCATION

All students are taught and cared for through our research-based method of Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE). Practically applied principles, known as the Seven Fields of Practice, underpin PSTE and guide each student's journey.

These are: genius loci, practical skills, biodynamic ecology, therapeutic education, holistic support and care, holistic medicine, and transformative leadership and management.

Practical Skills Therapeutic Education and its Seven Fields of Practice were developed by Aonghus Gordon, drawing inspiration from the work of Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), John Ruskin (1819–1900), and William Morris (1834–1896). The method is constantly subject to research, up to our own in-house Masters and doctoral partnerships with leading universities.

Practical Skills Therapeutic Education offers a rich and varied curriculum, providing pupils and students with opportunities to engage in practical activities that can have transformative effects. These include: arts, crafts, social enterprise, agriculture, nutrition, living skills, therapies, positive role modelling, and work placements.

SEVEN FIELDS OF PRACTICE

Practically applied principles, known as the Seven Fields of Practice, underpin PSTE and guide each student's journey.

Together, the *Seven Fields of Practice* form an educational continuum that assists in the structuring of the student journey. The *Seven Fields of Practice* are subject to research up to Masters and PhD level and inform staff training across the Trust. The *Seven Fields of Practice* contribute to Ruskin Mill Trust's vision that each individual has the potential to shape their own future through experiencing meaningful relationships with universe, earth and people.

Field 1: Genius Loci/Spirit of Place

Genius Loci recognises the heritage and uniqueness of place. In each educational provision, we work holistically with the landscape, its geology, flora and fauna, and history of human activity, to develop specialist curriculum activities that are deeply connected to the locality.

Field 2: Practical Skills

The field of Practical Skills, founded on craft and land-based activities, is designed to support students' cognitive, emotional and physical development, and embed functional skills. Through sourcing material (mineral, plant, animal) from the place, forming it with their own hands and making something that is valued by others, the students reconnect to the earth, themselves and their community.

Field 3: Biodynamic Ecology

Biodynamic Ecology recognises that each farm and garden is an integrated dynamic organism that responds to wider, more subtle, cosmic influences. Students follow a seed-to-table curriculum that celebrates nature's rhythms and helps them understand different kinds of connection, and are encouraged to eat healthily.

Field 4: Therapeutic Education

The student journey at Ruskin Mill Trust places an emphasis on facilitating wholeness where there is fragmentation, and movement where there is stagnation. This transformative approach to education is underpinned by human phasic development and applied sensory integration. By engaging with age-appropriate activities, students re-step missed developmental opportunities.

Field 5: Holistic Support and Care

The field of Holistic Support and Care stands behind the 24-hour educational curriculum and, in particular, the life of students in their residential provision. It is here that students actively engage in homemaking and master basic living skills. These learning experiences provide support for the development of healthy life processes.

Field 6: Holistic Medicine

Ruskin Mill Trust offers a range of holistic therapies to support students' health and wellbeing in accordance with the whole human being approach. The field of Holistic Medicine is promoted through collaboration between a multi-disciplinary team of practitioners, support staff, doctors and nurses. At the heart of this field is our practice of the *Student Study*.

Field 7: Transformative Leadership

Ruskin Mill Trust acknowledges and appreciates multiple intelligences, such as emotional and aesthetic intelligence, and situational awareness. To support the student journey towards self-generated conscious action, staff consciously role model how to have positive relationships with other human beings as well as with the environment.

MY NOTES

RUSKIN MILL TRUST CENTRES

In England, Scotland and Wales

1. grace garden school
Bristol, 9–16
 2. grace garden lower school
Bristol, 7–10, opening 2023
 3. helios health centre
Bristol, opening 2024
 4. ruskin mill college
Nailsworth, 16–25
 5. coleg plas dwbl
Clynderwen, 16–25
 6. ty'r eithin
*Coleg Plas Dwbl
satellite campus
Swansea, 16–25*
 7. sunfield school
Clent, 6–19
 8. argent college
Birmingham, 16–25
 9. glasshouse college
Stourbridge, 16–25
 10. trigonos
*Social enterprise and
conference centre*

coleg trigonos
opening 2024
 11. freeman college
Sheffield, 16–25
 12. brantwood
specialist school
Sheffield, 7–19
 13. clervaux garden school
Darlington, 10–19
 14. clervaux fold
Darlington, army families

clervaux **rise**
Darlington, 18+
 15. fairhill **rise**
East Lothian, 16+
- **Research Centres**
- A. the field centre
*Nailsworth, RMT
research centre*
 - B. colquhoun
research centre
Fairhill, East Lothian
 - C. castelliz
research centre
*Clynderwen,
opening 2024*
 - D. sunfield
research centre
*Clent, opening
2024–25*





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