
PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE IN YOUTH PSYCHIATRY



COURSE OUTLINE 2026

OVERVIEW

Developed by Orygen, a global leader in youth mental health, the Professional Certificate in Youth Psychiatry is the only fully online course in Australia and New Zealand designed specifically for psychiatry trainees and consultants who wish to specialise in youth mental health (YMH).

As a student, you will have access to expert knowledge and the latest theory, research and evidence-based approaches in the specialised and rapidly evolving area of youth mental health.

COURSE AIMS

The course aims to provide graduates with the following learning outcomes:

- Explain the rationale for providing dedicated youth mental health services, identifying common barriers and enablers to accessing and maintaining care.
- Identify best-practice engagement and clinical approaches to optimise the therapeutic alliance with young people and their families.
- Identify common biological, psychological and social factors contributing to the aetiology of mental ill-health, and the impact of mental ill health on young people.
- Demonstrate the ability to critically appraise and apply contemporary research, psychiatric knowledge and treatment guidelines to enhance patient outcomes and clinical care in youth mental health.
- Describe ethical and legal issues, and the appropriate application of mental health legislation to youth mental health clinical practice.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct comprehensive, developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive assessments, which are youth friendly and account for the needs of families of young people experiencing mental ill-health.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate available information to develop biopsychosocial case formulations for young people experiencing mental ill-health, which facilitate a diagnosis according to ICD or DSM criteria.
- Identify and describe a wide range of mental disorders in young people and produce tailored treatment plans that incorporate best-practice psychosocial and biological interventions, which also accommodate the needs of families and carers.
- Describe the key issues and principles surrounding psychopharmacotherapy for young people.



COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is a one year, graduate-level program designed for psychiatry trainees who have an interest in specialising in youth mental health. It will be delivered across two 12-week semesters, with a total time commitment of approximately 240 hours. The course is delivered fully online in order to allow students to easily access the content and work flexibly around other commitments. Lectures are delivered by experts in research and clinical practice in the field. The course is coordinated by experts in youth mental health who have joint appointments with Orygen and the University of Melbourne.

COURSE CONTENT

Students receive approximately 1-2 hours of lectures each week.

Week	Lecture Topic	Lecture Topic
Semester 1		
1-2	Why youth mental health? The impact of mental ill-health on young people	Barriers and enablers in youth mental health
3-4	Aetiological models in youth mental health	Transdiagnostic approaches with young people
5-6	Ethical and legal considerations in youth mental health practice	Forensic issues in youth mental health
7-8	Therapeutic principles in youth mental health practice	Engaging young people in clinical practice
9-10	Assessment in youth psychiatry	Self-harm and suicide risk assessment
11-12	Family needs assessment	Working with First Nations young people in Australia Working with Rangatahi Māori
Semester 2		
13-14	Working with young people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	Autism spectrum disorder in young people
15-16	Depression and bipolar disorders in young people	Social anxiety disorder in young people
17-18	Post-traumatic stress disorder in young people	Personality disorder in young people
19-20	Eating disorders in young people	First episode psychosis in young people
21-22	Substance use and mental ill-health in young people	Cognitive behavioural therapy with young people ACT and Mindfulness-based approaches with young people
23-24	Principles of prescribing in youth mental health	Managing the impact of psychopharmacology on physical and sexual health

KEY DATES

Date	Activity
16 th Feb 2026	First semester commences (Weeks 1-12)
16 th March 2026	Census date (withdraw by this date to avoid incurring a fee)
30 th March-12 th April 2026 : MID-SEMESTER BREAK	
13 th April 2026	Return from mid-semester break
22 nd May 2026	First semester concludes
31 st May 2026	Semester 1 assignments due (Critical Literature Review; Quizzes for weeks 1-12; Discussion Posts for weeks 1-12)
31 st May to 12 th July 2026: SEMESTER BREAK	
13 th July 2026	Second semester commences (Weeks 13-24)
24 th August to 13 th September 2026: MID SEMESTER BREAK	
14 th September 2026	Return from mid-semester break
23 rd October 2026	Second semester concludes
1 st November 2026	Semester 2 assignments due (Assessment, Case Formulation, & Treatment Plan; Quizzes for weeks 13-24; Discussion Posts for weeks 13-24)

ASSESSMENT TASKS

The assessment requirements for this program have been designed to support students' skills development in youth mental health and aim to ensure students achieve the key learning objectives of the program, whilst allowing for meaningful engagement with the content.

Overview of assessment tasks

Task	Length
Weekly quiz	4 - 5 multiple-choice questions per week
Graded discussion board	3000 words (250 words per post, with 12 required across the year)
Critical literature review	2000 words
Assessment, case formulation, treatment plan and reflection	1500-2000 words

MATERIALS PROVIDED

You will also have access to the following via Orygen's online LMS (learning management system).

- Lectures for viewing and download
- Required reading materials
- Lecture slides for download
- Optional extra learning resources

ONLINE LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

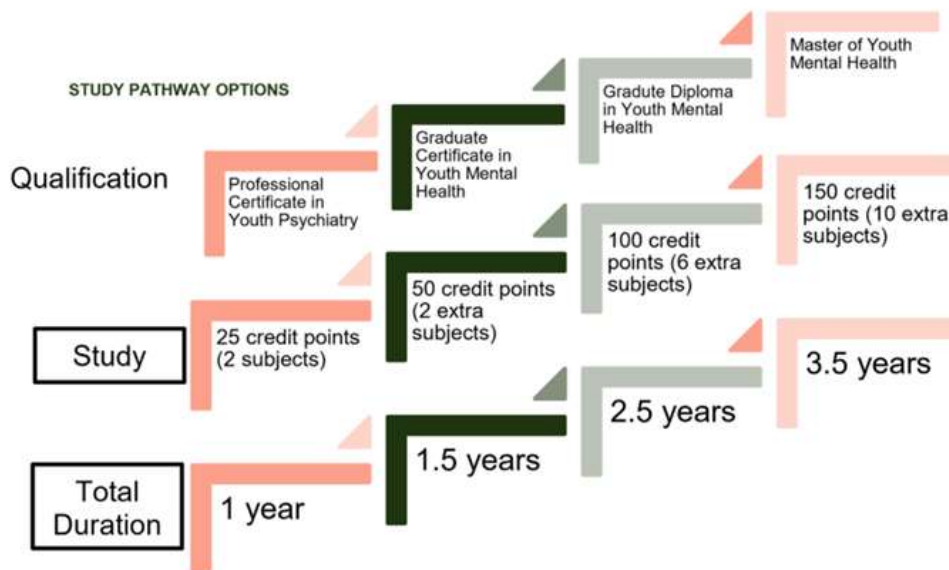
It is strongly recommended that you take a week-by-week approach to your study in this course. We encourage you to consider the following steps in approaching the learning requirements of the program. Start by watching the lecture for the week. Following the lecture, complete the weekly quiz, then work through each week's required readings. Try to ensure that you post your reflections on the graded discussion board once per fortnight, after viewing the learning materials. Please refer to the assessment guidelines document for detailed guidance regarding assessment requirements.

FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS

Participants will be able to exit this course with a Professional Certificate in Youth Psychiatry. Under recognition for prior learning arrangements with the University of Melbourne, completing this certificate will be recognised as the equivalent of 25 credit points (or two of the University's graduate level subjects). This advanced standing can be used to substitute the first two subjects in any of the following qualifications at the University of Melbourne, if you enrol within four years of graduating from this course.

- Master of Youth Mental Health
(<https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/master-of-youth-mental-health/>)
- Graduate Diploma in Youth Mental Health
(<https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/graduate-diploma-in-youth-mental-health/>)
- Graduate Certificate in Youth Mental Health
(<https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/graduate-certificate-in-youth-mental-health/>)

These courses follow a nested structure, outlined below, which offer students the opportunity to pursue the qualification that best suits their career development.



ASSISTANCE OR SUPPORT AVAILABLE FROM THE ACADEMIC STAFF

The course coordinator will provide support that includes:

- Moderating online discussions if necessary
- Answering general enquires regarding the course materials or teaching procedures
- Assistance with clarifying assessment requirements
- Assistance with accessing additional reading materials

You are also welcome to contact the course coordinator at any time to provide feedback on materials provided to you.

CONTACTING OTHER STUDENTS

The General Discussion Forum will remain open for the duration of the course. This is the best way to communicate with your fellow students.

CONTACTING THE COURSE STAFF

The easiest way to contact the course coordinator is by e-mail via youthpsychiatry@orygen.org.au

FEES

The 2026 fee for the Professional Certificate is \$4500 AUD (including GST).

ENROLMENT

To enrol, please complete the [Professional Certificate in Youth Psychiatry](#) application form. Successful applicants will be emailed further instructions for payment of course fees. Full payment is required prior to commencement of the course. **Please note that applications close 27th January 2026.**

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact us at youthpsychiatry@orygen.org.au if you have any questions.