

# CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Clinical psychologists work with a wide range of psychological difficulties in mental and physical health. This includes anxiety, depression, adjusting to and managing long term physical health conditions, as well as other specialist areas like substance misuse, eating disorders, severe mental health difficulties, challenging behaviours, neurological disorders, etc.

As a clinical psychologist you will be trained in a number of psychological approaches, and be able to use psychological evidence and theory to create a shared explanatory model or "formulation" of psychological difficulties, which will guide therapies and other interventions. Clinical psychologists are trained to deliver cognitive behavioural therapy as well as at least one other major psychotherapeutic approach. You will also offer specialist assessments, which may include neuropsychological testing, mental state examination and risk assessment. Clinical psychologists are trained mental health practitioners who may also apply their skills in physical health and social care contexts.

As a clinical psychologist, you will be working with a specific population, such as children and young people, adults of all ages, or people with learning disabilities. You will provide individual therapy, and work with couples or families, as well as teams and services. You will also provide supervision and support to other professionals and teams, and also develop services and carry out research.

Clinical psychologists are more than just therapists, and use their scientist-practitioner training to address whole system problems at family, community, managerial and institutional level. They are trained to provide multidisciplinary leadership and innovation throughout the health and social care system.

## WHO CAN TRAIN FOR THIS ROLE?

- Psychology Graduate



## REQUIRED TRAINING FOR THIS ROLE

It takes at least 7 years to train and qualify as a clinical psychologist. This includes an undergraduate study and training in psychology and the functions of the mind and brain. This is followed by postgraduate training in psychological problems and their treatment, mental health practice, specialist assessment, supervision and leadership, applied clinical research, etc.

During the postgraduate professional doctorate course, you will spend the majority of your week on clinical placements supervised by a qualified clinical psychologist, but also attend university and complete academic and research components. Recognised doctorate courses are accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) and approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS TO TRAIN



## QUALIFICATIONS

You will need to have a high 2:1 undergraduate degree in psychology, or an undergraduate degree in a different subject followed by a master's level psychology conversion course. Your psychology degree or conversion course must be accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS), and lead to the Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) with the BPS.



## EXPERIENCE

You will also need substantial experience that relates to the field of clinical psychology, which includes applied clinical work as well as research. Lived experience of mental health difficulties is seen as an advantage, and excellent interpersonal skills are essential.



## **SALARY EXPECTATIONS**

Trainee clinical psychologists are employed at Band 6 on the NHS Agenda for Change pay scales. Once qualified, you would typically be employed at Band 7. Progression to a higher band requires further specialisation, as well as additional management and leadership responsibilities. Some clinical psychologists progress to leadership positions across the full range of Agenda for Change pay all the way to Band 9.



## **FUTURE CAREER OPTIONS**

As a clinical psychologist you may have opportunities to progress into roles where you supervise and lead other psychological professionals or multi-professional clinical teams. You may also be able to progress into training others or doing research. You may design, develop and lead new services. Some clinical psychologists go on to work at very senior level leadership positions.



## **REGISTERING OR ACCREDITING BODY**

In order to practice as a clinical psychologist, you must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).



## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION**

Once you qualify, you can apply for chartered status with the British Psychological Society (BPS), and become a full member of the BPS Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP). You can also become a full member of the Association of Clinical Psychologists UK (ACP-UK).



## USEFUL LINKS

[READ MORE: Health Careers NHS](#)

[READ MORE: Prospect Careers](#)

[READ MORE: The British Psychological Society](#)

[READ MORE: Association of Clinical Psychologists UK](#)

[READ MORE: Pay scales - NHS Employers](#)

[READ MORE: NHS Jobs](#)