

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGIST

As a counselling psychologist you will work with a wide range of mental health problems that may occur. These include common mental health conditions such as anxiety or depression, as well as eating disorders, psychosis, personality disorder, negative life events, bereavement, domestic violence, sexual, emotional and physical abuse, traumas and relationship issues.

Counselling psychologists consider how people relate, how they think and behave, and take into account their experiences of the world and how they function in their everyday life. This will include exploring people's social, economic, cultural, spiritual and physical health experiences. Counselling psychologists use psychological and psychotherapeutic theory and research. They work to reduce psychological distress and to promote the wellbeing of individuals, groups and families.

The collaborative therapeutic relationship between a psychologist and client is considered to be central for counselling psychologists as it helps to inform the understanding of particular psychological difficulties as it applies to clients. As part of counselling psychology training and continued professional development, counselling psychologists engage in personal therapy as a client as they may bring aspects of themselves to their work, derived from their training, wider knowledge, and lived experience.

WHO CAN TRAIN FOR THIS ROLE?

- Psychology Graduate



REQUIRED TRAINING FOR THIS ROLE

Counselling psychologists will usually have completed an undergraduate degree or master's degree in psychology accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) to confer the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (usually 2:1 or higher).

This will be followed by further training and some experience of face-to-face work with adults or children. Finally, counselling psychologists complete an accredited practitioner doctoral degree in counselling psychology, or the completion of the qualification in counselling psychology is awarded by the BPS. The courses require supervised counselling practice of 450 hours over three or more years in a variety of settings. Trainees are required to receive personal therapy during training.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS TO TRAIN



QUALIFICATIONS

You will need to have an 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

Lived experience of mental health difficulties is desirable, and excellent interpersonal skills are essential.

SALARY EXPECTATIONS



Qualified counselling psychologists are employed at Band 7 on the NHS Agenda for Change pay scales. Progression to a higher band requires further specialisation, as well as additional management and leadership responsibilities.

FUTURE CAREER OPTIONS



As a counselling 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. Some counselling psychologists go on to work at senior level leadership positions.

REGISTERING OR ACCREDITING BODY



In order to practice as a counselling 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 Counselling Psychology (DCoP).

USEFUL LINKS



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