

# Non-clinical psychologist

Join the team and make a difference

Psychologists use their scientific knowledge about how we think and behave to help people overcome problems, and bring about improvements for individuals and groups. The scope is wide – from counselling people who face difficult life events to working within the justice system.

(See also *clinical psychologists factsheet*)



## What will you do?

The kind of work you will be doing, and where you do it, will depend on which area you decide to specialise in. The areas of psychology include clinical, counselling, educational, forensic, health promotion, occupational, and sport & exercise. We focus on the main three areas below.

### Counselling

You will be working with clients who are struggling to come to terms with challenges such as bereavement, family break-ups or mental health problems. Along with the client, you will gain an understanding of the

full extent of the problem and develop strategies to cope and move forward, through a series of one-to-one sessions. You could be working in a variety of settings, from hospitals to local clinics, and will be collaborating with other members of the healthcare team and social services.

### Forensic

In this area, you'll be applying psychology to analyse criminal behaviour and working with offenders to modify future behaviour. You may also be called to give expert evidence in court and comment on the reliability of eyewitness testimony. Most of your work will

Where will you work?	What skills and qualities will you need?
<p>You are likely to work in one or more of the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hospitals, clinics and health centres</li> <li>• community mental health teams</li> <li>• the justice system and prisons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an interest in how people think and behave</li> <li>• the ability to relate to a wide range of people – clients and colleagues</li> <li>• excellent communication skills</li> <li>• a patient, sympathetic approach</li> <li>• the ability to work on your own as well as in consultation with others</li> <li>• a responsible, professional approach, respecting client confidentiality</li> </ul>

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be done in association with the police, probation services, prisons and young offender institutions, trying to understand the psychological problems leading to criminal behaviour and looking for ways to prevent it.

### Health promotion

This is a relatively new area, addressing attitudes and awareness around healthcare issues. You will be using your specialist knowledge and skills to promote changes in people's thinking and behaviour, for example in relation to alcohol or drug misuse. You could be working directly with individuals or small groups in trying to modify behaviour, or providing information and advice to healthcare authorities and planners concerned with wider public health.

### What entry routes are available?

To practise as a psychologist in the NHS you will need an approved degree in psychology followed by a period of professional training, combining study and supervised practice in your chosen area. Your undergraduate degree must be accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) which will give you eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR). If you are a graduate of a non-accredited undergraduate degree, you have the option of completing either a BPS accredited conversion course or the BPS's qualifying exam.

Your postgraduate training will usually lead to a Doctorate course or Masters degree.

There are opportunities for psychology graduates to work as assistant psychologists or research assistants supporting psychology

teams. These roles will give you more exposure to the work of psychologists, and the experience will be useful if you apply for a postgraduate course.

### How can you develop your career?

As your clinical experience and knowledge grows you may specialise in working with a particular group, such as young people, and move into more senior positions such as heading a psychology service. Psychology relies heavily on research to add to the evidence base of practice. You will be able to contribute to this development of the profession through research work and teaching.

Non-clinical psychologists are employed in a range of NHS organisations and by providers of social care.

You will also have the chance to take on additional responsibilities and progress within the organisation, as part of the Career Framework. For more information about this initiative please see the *Careers in the allied health professions* booklet.

### Pay

The national pay system in the NHS is called Agenda for Change (AfC). This applies to all staff in the allied health professions except the most senior managers. These are examples of roles and the AfC bands at which they may be paid: counsellor – entry level (Band 5); counsellor (Band 6); counsellor specialist (Band 7); counsellor consultant (Band 8a). To find out more about pay bands, and to see the most up-to-date salary information, visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/payandbenefits](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/payandbenefits)

**For more information on the range of opportunities available in the allied health professions, please visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/qualifications](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/qualifications). This gives more specific details about what qualifications are necessary for each role. You can search for current vacancies and download job descriptions at [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)**

**To find out more about careers in the allied health professions, please visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/working](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/working)**

**For more information on the professional bodies relevant to the allied health professions, visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/contacts](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/contacts)**