

Exploring Career Pathways in Psychology and Counselling

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Introduction to various fields of Psychology

Counselling Psychology

- Counselling psychologists focus on working with a tailored psychological formulation to improve psychological functioning and well-being, working collaboratively with people across a diverse range of disciplines.
- Counselling psychologists deal with a wide range of mental health problems concerning life issues including bereavement, domestic violence, sexual abuse, traumas and relationship issues. They understand diagnosis and the medical context to mental health problems and work with the individual's unique subjective psychological experience to empower their recovery and alleviate distress.
- Counselling psychologists are a relatively new breed of professional applied psychologists concerned with the integration of psychological theory and research with therapeutic practice. The practice of counselling psychology requires a high level of self-awareness and competence in relating the skills and knowledge of personal and interpersonal dynamics to the therapeutic context.

- Counselling psychologists work in hospitals (acute admissions, psychiatric intensive care, rehabilitation), health centres, Improving Access to Psychological Therapy Services, Community Mental Health Teams and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. They also work within private hospitals, private practice, forensic settings, industry, education, research and corporate institutions.
- <http://www.bacp.co.uk/>
- <https://www.bps.org.uk/qualification-counselling-psychology>
- <https://youtu.be/btDPxR-Gauc>
- **We are Psychologists**

Clinical psychology

- Clinical psychologists deal with a wide range of mental and physical health problems including addiction, anxiety, depression, learning difficulties and relationship issues.
- They may undertake a clinical assessment to investigate a clients' situation.
- There are a variety of methods available including psychometric tests, interviews and direct observation of behaviour.
- Clinical psychologists work largely in health and social care settings including hospitals, health centres, community mental health teams, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and social services.
- They often work as part of a team with other health professionals and practitioners.
- Most clinical psychologists are employed by the National Health Service (NHS), but some work in private practice.

Educational Psychology

- Educational psychology is concerned with children and young people in educational and early years settings.
- Educational psychologists tackle challenges such as learning difficulties, social and emotional problems, issues around disability as well as more complex developmental disorders.
- They work in a variety of ways including observations, interviews and assessments and offer consultation, advice and support to teachers, parents, the wider community as well as the young people concerned.
- They research innovative ways of helping vulnerable young people and often train teachers, learning support assistants and others working with children.

Educational Psychology

- Local education authorities employ the majority of educational psychologists.
- They work in schools, colleges, nurseries and special units, primarily with teachers and parents.
- They regularly liaise with other professionals in education, health and social services, and a growing number work as independent or private consultants.
- The work of an educational psychologist can either be directly with a child (assessing progress, giving counselling) or indirectly (through their work with parents, teachers and other professionals).
- Direct work involves some form of assessment to uncover a child's problem through consultation with professional colleagues, observation, interview or use of test materials.

Educational Psychology

- Interventions might plan learning programmes and collaborative work with a teacher.
- Recommendations are then made to determine the most appropriate educational provision for that child.
- Indirect work requires consultation and careful discussion, as the psychologist's contribution needs to be seen as relevant to people who know little about psychology.
- In their role within a local authority, educational psychologists are often called upon to advise or join working groups concerned with organisation and policy planning.
- With their research background they are in an ideal and often unique position within the education authority to plan and carry out research activities.

Educational Psychology

- Examples of settings in which relevant experience is likely to be gained include work as a teacher, a graduate assistant in an educational psychology service, a learning support assistant, an educational social worker, a learning mentor, a speech and language therapist, a care worker and a worker in early years settings.
- Voluntary experience of various kinds may assist applicants in demonstrating a breadth of relevant experience.
- Whatever kind of work has been done, courses will be primarily interested in what applicants have learnt from the experience that is relevant to work as an educational psychologist and how they have been able to apply the knowledge of psychology gained through their first degree.

Health Psychology

- Health psychologists use their knowledge of psychology and health to promote general well-being and understand physical illness.
- They are specially trained to help people deal with the psychological and emotional aspects of health and illness as well as supporting people who are chronically ill.
- Health psychologists promote healthier lifestyles and try to find ways to encourage people to improve their health. For example, they may help people to lose weight or stop smoking.
- Health psychologists also use their skills to try to improve the healthcare system. For example, they may advise doctors about better ways to communicate with their patients.
- Health psychologists are employed in a number of settings, such as hospitals and community health settings, health research units, local authorities, public health departments and university departments. Consultancy companies may also employ health psychologists to provide expertise such as training, research or intervention skills.

Health Psychology

- They may deal with problems identified by health care agencies (including NHS Trusts and health authorities) or by patients themselves.
- This is in addition to working alongside other medical professionals such as GP's, nurses, dieticians, surgeons and rehabilitation therapists. Health psychologists may also deal with organisations and employees outside the health care system.
- In universities, Health Psychologists are employed in lecturing, supervision and research roles in a range of departments including; Psychology, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Health Services Research.
- Health psychologists may not necessarily stay with the same type of employer. An individual may move from a university to applied practice, and vice versa. There may also be joint appointments between universities and health services or units. Some health psychologists may also take on consultancy work, either for an employer, or on a self-employed basis.

Forensic Psychology

- Forensic psychology is concerned with the psychological aspects of behaviour connected with crime, legal systems and vulnerabilities associated with crime including trauma and victimisation.
- Their role relates to working with people who have been affected by crime or other legal systems (e.g. family courts).
- Their aim is to work with people to help them address factors associated with risk of further offending and develop healthy, pro-social lives and contribute to a safer society.
- Sometimes this involves exploring and understanding offending behaviour, vulnerabilities connected with offending behaviour (e.g. past trauma, substance use).
- Their work is guided by empirically derived formulations, which feed in to treatment pathways, providing opportunities for recovery and rehabilitation.

Forensic Psychology

- The daily key tasks for forensic psychologists may include:
- Creating formulations of offence or other behaviours with people held in prison
- Delivering evidence informed psychological therapy at an individual or group level
- Supporting staff and multi-disciplinary teams to provide consistent care
- Supporting evidence informed policy and practice to maintain a focus on recovery and reconnection
- Evaluating and recommending changes to care where appropriate to ensure practice remains evidence driven
- Forensic psychologists also provide evidence in legal or quasi-legal settings for parole boards and mental health tribunals.
- Where
- The largest single employer of forensic psychologists in the UK is His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).
- Forensic psychologists are also be employed by a variety of NHS Trusts, Youth Justice, private justice and health providers, universities and third sector organisations (Charities). Some practitioners also go into private consultancy.

Neuropsychology

- Neuropsychology is concerned with the assessment and rehabilitation of people with brain injury or other neurological disease.
- Neuropsychologists work with people of all ages dealing with patients who have had traumatic brain injury, strokes, toxic and metabolic disorders, tumours and neurodegenerative diseases.
- Neuropsychologists require not only general clinical skills and knowledge of the broad range of mental health problems, but also a substantial degree of specialist knowledge in the neurosciences.
- Neuropsychology is a post qualification discipline, in which you first need to be a Chartered Psychologist within the field of clinical or educational psychology.

Neuropsychology

- The clinical side of neuropsychology overlaps with academic neuropsychology, which provides a scientific understanding of the relationship between brain and neuropsychological function.
- Neuropsychologists most commonly work in acute settings, usually in regional neuroscience centres where their main focus is on the early effects of trauma, neurosurgery and neurological diseases.
- They also work in rehabilitation centres providing post-acute assessment, training and support for people who have sustained brain injury, or who have other neurological problems.

Occupational psychology

- Occupational psychology is concerned with the performance of people at work and with how individuals, small groups and organisations behave and function.
- Occupational psychologists aim to increase the effectiveness of the organisation and improve the job satisfaction of individuals.
- The speciality is broader in scope and less formalised than many areas of psychology and it touches on diverse fields, including ergonomics, personnel management and time management.
- Work can be in advisory, teaching and research roles, and to a lesser extent, in technical and administrative roles.
- Occupational psychologists work with organisations and businesses of all sizes across the private, public and third sectors.

Occupational psychology

- You will find Occupational psychologists working in government and public services, in leadership development centres and consultancies
- They work alongside other professionals such as managers, HR, union representatives, training advisors and specialist staff within client organisations.
- The Civil Service is one of the largest single employers of occupational psychologists.
- The Prison Service, the Home Office, the Employment Department Group (including the Employment Service), the Ministry of Defence and the Civil Service Commission all employ occupational psychologists.

Choosing a Recognized Psychology Degree

- You should ideally select degree programmes that are recognized in the country where you intend to practice psychology.
- For example, studying on a degree programme that is recognized by ATEEN in Greece and also accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS), such as the University of Bolton BSc (Hons) Psychology, Psychotherapy and Counselling programme at NYC Athens, keeps many professional options open in both the UK and Greece.

Career Opportunities in Universities & Colleges

• Graduates of psychology and counselling play an important role in **universities and colleges**, both as **faculty members** and in **student counselling services**.

• They contribute through:

- **Individual counselling sessions**
- **Peer Mentoring projects**
- **Group psychoeducational seminars** (e.g., on stress and wellbeing)
- **Inclusion and diversity initiatives**
- **Special Educational Needs (SEN) committees**

The Importance of Research in Psychology

- Conducting research is a key part of training to be a psychologist.
- High-quality research ensures that psychological and counselling interventions are:
 1. Evidence-based
 2. Effective
 3. Ethically sound and do no harm

The BPS and APA have strict ethical guidelines for conducting research with human participants.

Useful websites for more information

<https://www.bps.org.uk/>

<https://www.apa.org/>

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/>

Thank you all for your time!

Contact details

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