

Application information

Paid Clinical Experience Opportunities for Disadvantaged Aspiring Clinical Psychologists

Please read this document carefully and use it to help you complete your application form.

Applications that do not follow this guidance will not be shortlisted.

Background

In the UK, 20,000 people graduate with a degree in Psychology each year. A significant proportion want to find a career in healthcare but can find it hard to find a way into the profession. Entry-level posts are often poorly connected to a career path meaning that there is high levels of risk for graduates taking this route. Many graduates find that they have no option but to take on unpaid placement experience to gain the experience required for higher level qualifications such as the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

Owing to the intersectional nature of disadvantage, these uncertainties and the volunteer culture have contributed to a disproportionate disadvantage for psychology graduates who are from an ethnic minority, socio-economically disadvantaged background, or have caring responsibilities.

Eligibility Criteria

To fulfil the ambitions of these posts to expand representation, we are seeking applicants who may be disadvantaged in entering the profession because they are unable to take the financial burden of an unpaid role to gain experience needed to further their career. This could be for reasons including but not limited to:

- Family being on a low income or supported by benefits
- Receiving grants, bursaries or award via your university student support service or government maintenance grants, **(i.e. money that is not required to be repaid)**
- You are the in the first generation of your family to go to university
- You are a care leaver or are a student not supported by their family or parents
- You have additional responsibilities, such as being a carer, that mean taking unpaid experience is not a practical option.

In addition, these posts are aimed at psychology graduates who,

- Are not salaried or post graduate trainee in university programmes.
- Are not studying or have completed a master's degree (with the exception of a master's degree completed as a conversion degree for applicants with a non-psychology undergraduate degree OR a combined undergraduate MSc degree on the basis that the financial position is the same as an undergraduate degree and different from an MSc).

[* If you have completed a Master's degree programme, but through your individual circumstances you believe that you are still financially excluded, please make an application and provide further information to clarify].

- Must not have held any substantial previous paid Assistant Psychologist post or similar. Previous paid work experience at a very limited period of employment (for example, sessions for less than the equivalent of four weeks in total) as a research assistant / assistant psychologist, will be accepted.

Application Process

Applications will only be accepted through the online Trac system.

Supporting Statement Guidance

You should follow this guidance when completing your **supporting statement** on your application form. In order to demonstrate how you meet the requirements for this scheme please use the following 7 headings to structure your Supporting Statement.

(1) **Statements of confirmation** [*You may copy and paste this section*]

I confirm that:

- a) I am NOT currently a salaried or post-graduate trainee in a university programme.
- b) I have not studied, and am not currently studying for a Masters' Degree,

or

I have studied for or am studying for a Masters' degree, but I still believe that I am financially excluded and have provided further explanation below [*please delete as appropriate*].

- c) I am not currently and have not previously been employed as an Assistant Psychologist, Research Assistant, Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP) or similar.

(2) **Interest in Clinical Psychology**

Please tell us about your aspirations to work as a Clinical Psychologist; this can include details of other posts e.g. Assistant Psychologist, that you have previously applied for.

(3) **Values or experiences that demonstrate your ability to work with a diverse population of people and their families.**

Please tell us about your qualities, values, and experiences that you think show that you could work well with a wide range of people who may be in distress. We do not expect applicants to already have experience of providing direct clinical care.

(4) Experiences that show how you work with others.

Please tell us about experiences and values that show your ability to work with other people towards a common goal.

(5) Other relevant experiences and qualities

With reference to the person specification, please tell us about any other experiences, values, or qualities that you think are relevant to this role.

(6) How do you meet the criteria relating to Financial Exclusion?

Please refer to the examples below and use and elaborate on any that apply to you and additional ones from your own personal situation, if appropriate.

*You do **NOT** need to meet all of these criteria, they are examples.*

You are not required to provide any evidence of these at this stage of the application, but this could be requested at a later stage.

Financial

- I received Free School Meals (FSM) and / or my family received Income Support during my school years (or other governmental income support scheme).
- I have received additional bursaries, grants or awards to support me attending university (in addition to the student loan and repayment scheme).
- I received Income Support during my undergraduate degree.

Educational & Social

- I am in the first generation of my family to go to university.
- I have been in Care, or I am a Care Leaver.

- I was estranged from my family before the age of 19 years old.
- I am currently caring for someone with additional needs e.g. disability, physical or mental health problems, or drug or alcohol problems.
- Due to an illness as a child, or due to other responsibilities, I experienced a significant period of time out of the education system.
- I grew up in an area that has a low level of engagement in higher education (as indicated by the POLAR4 quintile 1 or 2, <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/>)

To summarise, your “Supporting Statement” on the application form should include all of the sections 1 to 7 outlined above.

Section (1) should be a copy of the Statements of Confirmation.

Sections (2) - (5) should include details in your own words and from your own experience.

Section (6) should include one or more of the examples provided, or other examples from your own situation as are relevant.

What happens next?

After the closing date for the post, all applications will be reviewed against the eligibility criteria and the Person Specification and those that match these will be shortlisted. Applicants who have been shortlisted will be invited for an interview. This will be done online via Microsoft Teams. If you are asked to attend an interview, you will be emailed all of the necessary details.

If you have any questions about the process or eligibility, please contact Dr. Laura Toplis, Lead Consultant Clinical Psychologist at:

laura.toplis@cpft.nhs.uk