

University of Bath Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Programme Admissions Selection Process

The selection process will involve four stages, an initial administrative check, scoring of academic qualifications, consideration of essential and desirable criteria by short-listing panels and a final interview stage.

Please note that from 2014 all applicants to the Bath Programme will also be required to submit a response to an additional question to those included in the Clearing House application form, named 'Question 13'.

Following the Clearing House closing date in early December we will email all applicants to request a response to this question. You will have 2 weeks from the date of the email to submit your response. The purpose of this 'Question 13' is for you to tell us how you feel you fit our Programme ethos, within a word limit of 4000 characters. Responses will be submitted electronically directly to the Programme and assessed as part of the short listing process. Applications submitted without a corresponding Question 13 response will be considered incomplete and will not pass the Stage 1 administrative check.

STAGE 1: Administrative Check

All applications submitted by the Clearing House closing date (see www.leeds.ac.uk/chpccp) will be accepted. There will be an initial screen to ensure the application is complete (including a check that the candidate has submitted a response to Question 13) and to verify the following:

- Right to work in the UK and eligibility for home fee status
- Evidence of competency in English language
Competency in English language is defined thus: Candidates for whom English is not their first language will be required to provide proof that they possess an adequate level of English competence. The minimum level is an IELTS score of 7.0 or completion of the first degree in English
- Meeting criteria for GBC with the BPS
Candidates from courses not GBC-accredited need to apply themselves for GBC
- Degree minimum of 2.1 or equivalent in Psychology

STAGE 2: Academic ability Score

An academic score will be calculated using the following scale:

Completed PhD	- 10 points) Score for one or other
Masters or PhD beyond 2 years	- 5 points) Maximum score = 10 points
1 st class Honours degree	15 points	
A pass at A-level	8 points (+ extra 1 point for 3As)	
B pass at A-level	5 points	
C pass at A-level	3 points	
Other A-level	1 point	
Total maximum A level score = 25 points		
Total maximum academic score = 50 points		

Grade equivalents will be calculated for candidates with qualifications other than A levels

All PhDs must be submitted and viva completed with no more than minimum corrections to be made at the point of commencing training

Academic scores will be used to select the top 240 scoring candidates who will then move to stage 3: short listing. It is not possible to specify the exact cut-off point at this stage as it will depend on the distribution of scores in this year's candidate pool. However, as an indication, candidates in previous years who were selected for short listing have had Bs and Cs with no As at A level. Lower A level scores were often balanced with either a first class degree and/or postgraduate study.

STAGE 3: Short listing

There will be 8 short listing panels, each comprising 2 clinical psychologists, one being a member of the programme team and the other a clinical psychologist working in the Region.

Each panel will consider a total of 30 applications together with references. Applications will initially be screened in relation to 'Essential criteria'. These are as follows:

Essential criteria:

1. Clear evidence of commitment to the course ethos and core values of the NHS constitution and able to demonstrate the personal qualities and values which are crucially important in establishing a therapeutic relationship and working alongside people with psychological needs.
2. Experience of working with people with psychological needs, either in a paid or voluntary capacity (there is no minimum necessary amount of clinical experience).
3. Research experience, other than undergraduate project, i.e. MSc, PhD or other relevant research experience, including service evaluation and audit.
4. Experience in the practice of evidence based approaches to therapy or expressed commitment to developing expertise in evidence-based approaches consistent with the Bath programme ethos.

Both panel members will then rate all of the 30 applications fulfilling the essential criteria for that panel and score the strength of each application independently, in relation to the aspects specified below. Scores will then be compared within panels and any gross discrepancies resolved. Candidates will then be ranked within short listing panels on the basis of their scores. The top 5 ranked candidates from each short-listing panel will be offered an interview place. The next 5 ranked candidates, i.e. those ranked 6-10 of the 30 from each short-listing panel, will be considered further. Following checks to establish consistency in scoring across short listing panels, the next top 20 scoring candidates will also be offered an interview place, thus 60 candidates

will be selected for interview. Interview reserves will be drawn in rank order from the remaining 20 in this group.

Double-tick candidates, who meet essential criteria, which includes scoring above the academic cut-off discussed above, and have satisfactory academic and clinical references will go straight through to interview. They will be additional to the 60 chosen through short-listing.

Short listers are trained in the use of the short-listing tool and process to ensure greater consistency.

The addition of the second stage of short-listing is intended to control for any discrepancies between panels particularly in relation to the quality of applications considered.

Aspects rated at Short-listing (Desirable Criteria):

1. References

It is important that appropriate referees are chosen, ideally a university tutor for the academic reference and recent clinical psychologist employer for the clinical. It is appreciated that this may not always be possible. However, candidates should make sure they chose referees who are able to speak to the relevant abilities e.g. a current research supervisor must be able to speak to academic abilities if they are the academic referee and both referees should not address the same aspects. Any deviation should be explained in section 12c of the application. Candidates should ask referees to make sure they note their own occupation at the head of the reference and not the applicant's. In scoring references, particular attention will be paid to written comments.

2. Relevant work experience and what the candidate has made of this work experience

Experience particularly in the NHS or in a relevant health or social care setting i.e. those commissioned by NHS Commissioning Groups will be considered particularly valuable. The amount of experience will be rated as well as the range of settings worked in and range of client groups. Applicants still completing their undergraduate degree will be able to gain maximum points for work experience if they can demonstrate that they have made extensive and determined efforts to gain relevant experience during evenings, weekends and holidays. For those who have done a placement year as part of their degree, work experience gained during this year will count if it is in a relevant clinical setting. Direct experience of conducting therapy under appropriate supervision either as an assistant psychologist, IAPT worker or PWP will be particularly valued. Experience of structured clinical/neuropsychological assessments will be considered as will experience in clinical health psychology, given that this is a strength of the Bath programme. Extra credit will be given for significant voluntary work over and above full-time education or employment. Particular attention will be paid to what candidates have made of their experience

and its relevance to training as a clinical psychologist and this will also be rated as part of the short listing process.

3. Relevant research experience and what the candidate has made of this

Masters and PhDs have previously been rated as part of the academic score. Candidates whose research experience has been exclusively gained in the context of such a post-graduate programme will be considered to have met the essential criteria in this respect but will not gain extra points at short listing. Candidates whose only research experience is their undergraduate project will not be considered to have met the essential criteria for research. This section will relate to other non-degree related research experience. Amount of experience will be considered together with the nature of the role, so it is important that the exact nature of the role is specified. Responsibility for developing or coordinating research, applying for ethics approval etc. will be rated more highly than collecting and entering data. Credit will also be given for service evaluation and audit projects. What candidates have made of their research experience will be rated separately to clinical experience.

4. Publications/dissemination

It will be important to list all publications, including those submitted, indicating authorship (the programme may request copies of articles under consideration). Particular credit will be given for lead authorship and publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Contribution to a substantive (regional or national level) health service publication such as a research report from a funded study will also be considered as well as oral presentations or poster presentations at national or international conferences, local service evaluation reports or pamphlets for service users.

5. Additional skills and competencies

Activities, skills and training not previously rated will be considered here. This might include those of direct relevance to the practice of clinical psychology such as PG certificate level trainings, counselling courses, but also activities that involve skills relevant to the varied roles of a clinical psychologist e.g. those involving leadership skills, teaching qualifications, community involvement projects, drama skills, competency in different languages, publishing, media experience etc.

6. Presentation of the form

Clarity of expression, coherence, conciseness, spelling and grammar will be considered.

7. General strength of the application

This is a rating of the application as a whole and specifically the response to the Bath Programme additional question (question 13) relating to fit with the Programme ethos and core values of the NHS constitution. Ratings will be made in terms of whether the candidate stands out as someone who would cope well with the many and diverse demands of the

programme and appears to have the potential to make a good clinical psychologist.

STAGE 4: Clinical task and Interviews

There will be three parts to the interview process, all conducted for each candidate on the same day. The three parts are:

1. Brief clinical task + related written exercise (30 minutes)
2. Clinical/General interview (30 minutes)
3. Academic/Research interview (30 minutes)

Candidates will complete the clinical task first, followed by the clinical/general interview and then academic/research interview.

Clinical task:

Candidates will be asked to view a brief video clip involving a clinical psychologist interviewing a client. Candidates will then be asked to give written answers to a few appropriate questions based on what they witnessed in the video clip and wider implications for the practice of clinical psychology. These answers will be scored blind by the interview panels at the end of the day. Scores will be based on content, ability to gather and organise information, think analytically and most importantly, reflect as well communicate in writing clearly, concisely, and accurately.

Clinical/General Interview:

Candidates will be asked a series of questions which will then be rated in relation to the following criteria:-

1. Commitment to developing a career in Clinical Psychology
2. Commitment to implementing empirically grounded approaches to Clinical Psychology
3. Awareness of the NHS context, core values of the NHS constitution and implications for the profession of clinical psychology
4. Awareness of own psychological strengths and vulnerabilities and how these might impact on others, particularly within a therapeutic relationship, but also including colleagues
5. Understanding of the value of supervision and readiness to be reflective and utilise feedback constructively, including openness to personal development
6. Values and personal qualities as evidenced by responses to questions as well as interpersonal skill and sensitivity demonstrated in the course of the interview.

Academic/Research Interview:

Candidates will be asked a series of questions which will be rated in relation to the following criteria:-

1. Ability to apply theoretical knowledge of Psychology to the practice of Clinical Psychology
2. Ability to reflect critically from a psychological perspective.
3. Ability to communicate academic knowledge and understanding in an appropriate, clear and concise manner

4. Ability to understand and apply research on psychopathology to the assessment and treatment of clinical problems
5. Understanding of research strategies in clinical psychology
6. Values and personal qualities as evidenced by responses to questions as well as interpersonal skill and sensitivity demonstrated in the course of the interview.

Criteria for both the clinical/general and academic/research interviews will be rated by each panel member independently on a scale of 1-5, as below:

1 = Very poor

2 = Poor

3 = Average

4 = Good

5 = Excellent

Final decisions on allocation of places will be based on scores for each of the 3 interview components together with the academic and short listing scores.

The Programme operates an equal opportunities policy and candidates will not be disadvantaged in the selection process because of race, religion, age, gender, social class or sexual orientation.