

## **Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Programme**

### **Application Process: Frequently Asked Questions**

A wealth of useful information on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Programme (including entry requirements) is available for prospective candidates to read on the Programme's [online prospectus](#) and in guidance on the [Clearing House website](#). To assist candidates with any queries they might have, this Frequently Asked Questions document has been developed to complement the guidance already available.

It is recommended that all prospective candidates read through this information when considering whether to apply and before contacting the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Programme with any queries.

Please do not contact the Programme if the answer to your question is already covered in this document.

### **How do I apply for a place on the Programme?**

There are two different routes available to apply for the DClinPsy Programme.

The [Clearing House for Postgraduate Courses in Clinical Psychology](#) deals with all of our applications from those with Home/EU Fees Status who are eligible for an NHS Funded Place on the Programme. Applications are accepted between September-December each year for entry in October the following year. There is no other possible route of application for those with Home/EU fees status.

Applications from candidates with overseas fees status must be made via the [King's College London applications portal](#). Applications are accepted between October-January each year for entry in October the following year. There is no other possible route of application for those with overseas fees status.

Please note that if you miss the application deadline, you will **not** be able to apply for entry until the following year.

### **What is my fee status?**

Discerning whether an applicant has Home/EU fees status from their application alone can be complex as there are a number of criteria which must be met to be eligible for this. The Programme expects candidates to know the correct route of application for their status and will not consider applications made via the wrong route of application.

Even if you are a UK/EU citizen, a residency criteria needs to have been met for a candidate to have home/EU fees status.

To ascertain your fees status, please see the following guidance on the Clearing House webpage <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/chpccp/BasicInternationalFees.html>

## **What avenues of funding are there? How much are the course fees?**

Successful Home/EU fee candidates are awarded an NHS-funded place and are employed under a fixed term training contract, and their fees are paid.

Those who do not qualify for Home/EU fees status can apply for a self-funded place as an overseas candidate. Places for those with overseas fees status are not NHS funded and the tuition fees are approximately £90,000 for the full 3 year duration of the Programme. The tuition fees **do not** cover lodging or travel costs, and no salary is paid.

The fees can be met via self-funding and/or sponsorship. Please note that overseas candidates are expected to provide proof of funding at the time of their application. The programme particularly welcomes applicants with sponsorship who intend to disseminate knowledge and skills in their home country.

Please see the [KCL graduate funding database](#) for details of possible avenues of funding that overseas candidates may be eligible to apply for.

## **Can you provide feedback on why my application has been unsuccessful?**

Due to the high numbers of applicants, the Programme does not give feedback to applicants who are not offered an interview. Feedback will be offered to those who are interviewed in the week following the interviews.

## **Is it possible to meet a course tutor to discuss applying to the Programme?**

Due to the high demand and constraints on professional time, it is not possible for course tutors to meet with prospective applicants.

The Institute of Psychiatry holds postgraduate research Open Evenings and other events for prospective applicants to meet course staff and students. If you are interested in attending one of these, please see the [Institute of Psychiatry events calendar](#) for event announcements.

## **Is there an age limit for applicants to the Programme?**

There is no age limit for applicants to the Programme. All applicants are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential and applications are scrutinised on this basis alone.

## **Why is the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology different from a PhD? What happens upon completion of the Programme?**

The Doctorate in Clinical Psychology is a specialist training doctorate which combines academic and practical training, including both a research project and six clinical placements. It is intended to prepare graduates for careers as practising clinical psychologists. The research conducted as part of the DClinPsy constitutes part of the training Programme. You do not have to submit a research proposal as part of your application.

Upon successful completion of the Programme, candidates are eligible to apply to the Health & Care Professions Council for registration as a clinical psychologist in the United Kingdom and apply for jobs as a Clinical Psychologist within the UK. Most graduates continue working within the NHS, however some also work for the private sector. (Overseas students may need additional permissions and visas in order to take up work in the UK).

Please note that the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology may not confer eligibility to obtain accreditation as a qualified clinical psychologist in any country other than the United Kingdom. Applicants wanting to practise elsewhere after completion of the Programme are encouraged to look at the accreditation requirements in the relevant country prior to applying for a place on the Programme.

## **What are the entry requirements?**

Candidates must meet the entry requirements for the Programme at the time of application to be eligible for shortlisting. These are provided in detail on our [Clearing House profile](#) and the [KCL DClinPsy Programme Prospectus](#), however for your reference a brief overview of the frequently asked questions we receive from prospective applicants has been provided below.

### **Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC)**

All applicants to the Programme must have Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society (BPS), preferably at the time of applying but certainly by the time shortlisting takes place (February).

### **What is GBC Status?**

Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership is a standard set by the British Psychological Society (BPS). It ensures that, before anyone can start a clinical psychology course, they have already studied psychology in sufficient breadth and depth to provide a sound basis for their postgraduate training and professional practice.

### **How can I obtain GBC Status?**

GBC is usually obtained by completion of **one** of the following:

- i) An honours degree that has psychology as the main field of study
- ii) A Masters or Doctoral degree that has psychology as the main field of study
- iii) A recognised conversion degree that confers eligibility for GBC

If you studied in the UK or the Republic of Ireland and are unsure whether your qualification was accredited at GBC level, or are looking to undertake an accredited course in the United Kingdom, the British Psychological Society website has an [accredited course search](#). Candidates eligible for Graduate Membership of the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) after having gained an academic award accredited by the PSI are eligible for GBC of the BPS.

If you are still unsure whether your qualification was accredited at GBC level, you should check with the BPS or the institution where you studied.

If your qualifications are not from the UK or Republic of Ireland, you need to have them assessed by the BPS to see if they give you GBC. You must do this by applying for [membership of the BPS](#), who will automatically assess your qualifications for GBC as part of your membership application. If your qualifications meet the requirements, the BPS will send you a letter telling you that you are eligible for GBC.

Please note that applications without proof of GBC will not be considered.

## **Academic Requirements**

Normally, candidates are required to have a minimum 2.1 degree in psychology, or different discipline where the candidate has achieved GBC with the BPS via a conversion diploma. Please note that overseas candidates should have a qualification that is at least equivalent to a UK Bachelors Honours level.

### **Can I still apply for the Programme if I haven't completed my undergraduate degree or conversion degree?**

Applications from current undergraduates or those on a conversion programme at the time of the application cannot be considered. This is because proof of GBC status needs to have been received at the time of shortlisting and the final award of the qualification given to enable assessment.

### **I received a lower second (2ii) grade for my undergraduate degree. Will you still consider my application?**

Normally, candidates are required to have a minimum 2.1 degree in psychology, or different discipline where the candidate has achieved GBC with the BPS via a conversion diploma. We may consider candidates with a 2ii degree class if they have undertaken PhD research.

### **Which conversion degree should I consider? Do you value one over the other? Am I at a disadvantage for not studying psychology at undergraduate level?**

The Programme does not distinguish between types of accredited conversion degree, whether a postgraduate diploma or masters conversion course, as both offer valuable knowledge and experience. Completion of a conversion degree means that during our shortlisting process, we would weight your undergraduate degree in a different discipline the same as a psychology degree.

The decision of which conversion course to undertake is down to the candidate alone.

### **Which university is best for me to undertake my undergraduate degree or conversion course?**

Candidates must have qualifications at least to the standard of a British Bachelors Honours degree; however we do not value one university over another during our shortlisting process. We assess a candidate's academic achievement based on their results alone.

### **Do I need to have undertaken postgraduate study?**

Applications are enhanced by evidence of a postgraduate qualification relevant to clinical psychology. Where a candidate has strong clinical experience, postgraduate study is not a prerequisite for a successful application.

### **I am considering undertaking a Master's degree before I apply for the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. Which one will most benefit my application?**

As long as a Master's qualification is relevant to the field of clinical psychology, it will have the same weighting in our selection process as any other relevant Master's qualification. The

choice of which to undertake should be the candidate's alone, based on their own academic interests.

## **Clinical/Research Experience**

Applicants are expected to have **the equivalent of at least one year's** relevant clinical/research experience or employment, either paid or voluntary, prior to submitting their application. This work must be relevant to the field of clinical psychology. It is important for applicants to demonstrate clinical competence, reflective practice and a realistic understanding of the profession – including of its diverse role within the NHS.

Please note that part time volunteer work or placements during a first degree will be insufficient on their own, as is clinical experience limited to general healthcare (e.g. general practitioner, nurse).

### **What positions do you consider to be relevant?**

Positions for relevant experience include Assistant or Research psychologists. Other roles are also considered as long as they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Supervision by a clinical psychologist
- Familiarity with clinical populations and settings
- Substantive (voluntary) position (preferably within a statutory setting, e.g. Local Authority Mental Health Volunteer)
- Face to face contact with service users in a mental health service (e.g. graduate primary care worker, nursing or healthcare assistant).
- Applying/disseminating research

Please note that the following types of roles, whilst valued for development, would not be considered part of one year's relevant clinical experience or employment:

- Carer
- Mentor
- Helpline volunteer (e.g. Samaritans)
- Befriender
- Special Education Needs Assistant
- Teaching

### **Do I need to have worked for the NHS to be able to apply for the Programme?**

Candidates' relevant experience can be gained in any type of environment, as long as it meets the criteria above – whether within the NHS, another healthcare body (e.g. Health Service Executive) or in private practice. Candidates are however expected to have an understanding of the role of clinical psychology within the NHS and this will be assessed during the application process.

### **Who should I choose as my referees?**

All applicants must have one academic referee and one clinical experience referee. Please consider carefully who you ask to act as referee. A referee who has had little contact with you is unlikely to be able to write a reference of sufficient quality and depth. A referee who supervised you years ago may not be able to comment on your development and standard of your work at the time of the application.

Academic referees should be able to comment on an applicant's academic ability and preferably have direct experience of their academic work or research experience.

The clinical experience referee should be able to comment on an applicant's suitability for training as a clinical psychologist. Ideally this reference would be from a clinical psychologist, or at the very least, a mental health professional who has supervised a candidate's work in a clinical or research environment.

If this is not possible, the rationale for the selection of any particular referee should be detailed in the application.

The programme is unable to offer individual advice on choice of referee. If you are unsure, you may want to approach potential referees to ascertain if they would be able to offer the level of support needed.

### **What are your English language requirements?**

Candidates for whom English is not their first language will be required to provide evidence of [English language proficiency](#). The minimum levels are: IELTS score of 7.0 (with no element below 7.0), a TOEFL PBT score of 600 or 100 for the iBT. Past English qualifications would also be considered adequate: this must be Grade B or above in GCSE English, C or above at A level, 5 or above at Higher Level on the International Baccalaureate, or completion of the first degree in English. Please note that completion of a master's degree alone in English is not accepted as evidence of English language proficiency.

### **Who can I contact for further advice?**

If you require further clarification on issues not covered above, please contact [Mark.Ballham@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:Mark.Ballham@kcl.ac.uk) who will be able to assist you.