The Doctorate of Clinical Psychology: Career Options and Alternatives

The Doctorate of Clinical Psychology is the only route to becoming a chartered Clinical Psychologist. The degree is awarded as DClinPsy, DClinPsychol, PsychD or ClinPsyD depending on which university awards it - there is no difference between any of these qualifications, what is important is that the courses are currently recognised by the British Psychological Society.

Clinical psychology aims to reduce psychological distress and to enhance and promote psychological well-being. A wide range of psychological difficulties are dealt with, including anxiety, depression, relationship problems, learning disabilities, child and family problems and serious mental illness.

To assess a client, a clinical psychologist may undertake a clinical assessment using a variety of methods including psychological tests, interviews and direct observation of behaviour. Assessment may lead to therapy, counselling or advice.

Where they work
Clinical psychologists work largely in health and social care settings including hospitals, health centres, community mental health teams, child and adolescent mental health services and social services.

Who they work with
They usually work as part of a team with, for example, medical practitioners, social workers and other health professionals. Most clinical psychologists work in the National Health Service, which has a clearly defined career structure, but some work in private practice.

The work is often directly with people, both individually or in groups, assessing their needs and providing therapies based on psychological theories and research.

Clinical psychology is a rapidly developing field and adding to the evidence base through research is very important. Some clinical psychologists work as trainers, teachers and researchers in universities.

Requirements for the DClinPsy programme
To become a Chartered Member of the British Psychological Society through the clinical training route, you will need the following qualifications:

- Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC). This is achieved by completing a Society accredited degree or conversion course
- Society accredited Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

In order to use the title Clinical Psychologist, you will need to be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). This involves completing a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (or equivalent) that has been approved by the HCPC. Contact the HCPC for more information on their entry requirements.

The NHS funds the Doctorate programme. Applicants who are successful in gaining a place on the programme are employed by the NHS as trainee clinical psychologists. If you are a non-EU applicant it is difficult to gain a place on a Clinical training course as the NHS is unlikely to employ someone who needs a work permit to work in the UK.

The Clearing House for Postgraduate Training Courses in Clinical Psychology (CHPCCP) manages the applications for courses and funding for the majority of doctorate programmes. Please contact the CHPCCP directly for more information on the application process.

Applications for the doctorate programmes at the University of Hull and Queens University Belfast are managed by the universities themselves. For advice with applications please get in touch with either university directly.

How do I improve my chances of getting on an NHS funded training course?
There is a lot of competition for places on clinical training courses - fewer than 30 per cent of applicants are successful each year. To increase your chances, you would need a good degree classification, (normally a 2:1 or above), relevant work experience and demonstrable research skills. It is also a good idea to attend open days and conferences to further your understanding and knowledge of the profession.

It is worth knowing that many courses assess A-level performance too. So if you do not have good A-level results and haven't then made up for this with really good degree grades plus a distinction at MSc level or even a PhD, some courses may not consider you.

It is sometimes helpful to talk to course directors to get a better idea of the profile of successful applicants.
Links to relevant courses
And more can be found here:
www.bps.org.uk/bpslegacy/ac?frmAction=results&Course_Is_Selected=&CourseType=PG&Search_Type=NC&Order_By=NAME&OrderDir=ASC&INSTITUTION_NUMBER=&TRAINING_COMMITTEE=CTCP

London Courses
King’s College London, Institute of Psychology (IOP)
www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/graduate/doctorate-in-clinical-psychology
University College London (UCL)
http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dclinpsy/

Other regions
University of Essex
www.essex.ac.uk
University of Hertfordshire
www.herts.ac.uk
University of Oxford
www.ox.ac.uk
University of Surrey
www.surrey.ac.uk
Bath
http://www.bath.ac.uk/psychology/clinical/
Birmingham
http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/combined/psychology/clinical-psych-doctorate.aspx
Cardiff
http://psych.cf.ac.uk/degreeprogrammes/postgraduate/clinica1/
Edinburgh
http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health/clinical-psychology/studying/doctorate
Exeter
http://cedar.exeter.ac.uk/programmes/clinres/
University of Glasgow
http://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/clinicalpsychology/
Hertfordshire
http://www.herts.ac.uk/courses/Clinical-Psychology.cfm
Hull
http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fhs/c/clinicalpsychology/information--doctorate.aspx
Lancaster University
http://www.lancs.ac.uk/shm/study/doctoral_study/dclinpsy/new/
University of Lincoln
http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/course/clipsytd/

The central clearing house where everything’s processed (http://www.leeds.ac.uk/chpccp/).

Alternatives to the DClinPsy
iAPT/CBT therapist/Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (http://www.iapt.nhs.uk/)
The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme supports the frontline NHS in implementing National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines for people suffering from depression and anxiety disorders.

It was created to offer patients a realistic and routine first-line treatment, combined where appropriate with medication which traditionally had been the only treatment available.

Visit here for the frequently asked questions page where you can find out about jobs and training http://www.iapt.nhs.uk/silo/files/iapt-jobs-education-and-training-faq.pdf

Counselling Psychologist
Counselling psychology is a fairly new division of psychology, only really in the last fifteen years identifying itself as a separate field. All counselling psychologists have a minimal 2:1 degree in psychology or counselling & psychology. They then undertake further training either at masters’ level or doctoral level in counselling psychology. From 2011 onwards counselling psychologists have to be trained to doctoral level to become chartered. They work from a mainly pluralistic approach which means that they have a range of models and techniques that they use to tailor therapy individually for each client though some doctoral training in counselling psychology is CBT based. There is a strong emphasis in the training on social issues and a commitment to phenomenology and research into difference and diversity.

Training will ultimately be around seven/eight years from degree to doctorate (from beginning a degree to completing the doctorate). Training is academically based with minimal experiential work. Research is an important part of the training as essentially you will ultimately qualify as a psychology researcher as well as therapeutic practitioner.

http://careers.bps.org.uk/area/counselling
http://www.prospects.ac.uk/counselling_psychologist_entry_requirements.htm

Mental Health nurse
Mental health nurses work in hospitals and the community to support people with a range of mental health issues. They aim to build good relationships with clients and their families so that everyone is involved in the therapy process.

A mental health nurse has to be sympathetic and non-judgmental. You will need to be able to gain a patient’s trust. You’ll also need to manage emotional situations.

https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/mentalhealthnurse.aspx
http://www.prospects.ac.uk/mental_health_nurse_job_description.htm
https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/mental-health-nurse

Research
Forum – continuing research after D ClinPsy
Becoming a teacher and researcher in Psychology

Work within mental health charities
Together http://www.together-uk.org/
Mind http://www.mind.org.uk/
ReThink http://www.rethink.org/
SANE http://www.sane.org.uk/
Time to Change http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/
NHS Careers
https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/
http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/

Department of Health
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health/about/recruitment
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health

Biotechnology
Biotechnology is a rapidly growing sector with many universities doing research into the area and then setting up their own businesses. An ageing workforce suggests that there may be skills shortages over the next 10 years.

The recession has meant that some projects have been postponed. There has been a farming out of research at Pfizer and SKB to the smaller pharmaceutical and biotech companies, as they can do this more cheaply than in-house. Some of the smaller pharmaceutical companies and scientific services organisations are growing due to larger companies outsourcing to them and also new drug discoveries.

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
www.bbsrc.ac.uk
Careers Information and Jobs in Biotechnology

Bioindustry Association
www.bioindustry.org
List of UK Biotechnology firms plus profiles

London Biotechnology Network
www.londonmedicine.ac.uk
Lists firms by sector in London

BioHealthMatics
www.biohealthmatics.com
Job vacancy site covering Bioinformatics, Health Informatics, Health IT or Health Tech, Biotechnology and Telemedicine Jobs.

Occupational Therapists
Occupational therapy is concerned with the assessment and treatment of patients suffering from mental, physical, emotional or developmental conditions that are negatively affecting their everyday lives. The therapy may take place in hospitals, community centres and clients’ own homes and is aimed at helping people work towards a more independent style of living.

Occupational therapists and therapy assistants work with individuals, families and communities, addressing both domestic and work-related issues, as well as those affecting leisure and self-care. The work covers a wide variety of duties, from supporting those suffering from depression to helping victims of accidents adapt to their disabilities.

https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/occupational-therapist
https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/occupationaltherapist.aspx
http://www.prospects.ac.uk/occupational_therapist_job_description.htm
http://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions/276237-occupational-therapist-job-description

Occupational Psychologists
Occupational psychology is concerned with the performance of people at work and with how individuals, small groups and organisations behave and function. Its aim is 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.

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/occupational_psychologist_job_description.htm

Careers adviser and Social and community work
Please see our separate Social care and Guidance work Information sheet

Clinical trials
Please see our separate Clinical Trials information sheet

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