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Forensic Clinical Psychology Doctorate (ForenClinPsyD)

This is the first practitioner Doctorate in the UK to provide people who complete the course eligibility to practise in two different branches of applied psychology, in this case Forensic and Clinical Psychology. Successful completion of the course will lead to a dual qualification conferring eligibility to practise as a Forensic and Clinical psychologist. The course will run in collaboration with St Andrew's Healthcare.

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham has been awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

Type of Course: Continuing professional development, doctoral research

Study Options: Full time

Duration: 4 years

Start date: September

Contact

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Centre for Forensic and Criminological Psychology - School of Psychology (/research/activity/psychology/forensic/cfcp/index.aspx)

Details

This Doctorate in Forensic Clinical Psychology programme is aimed at psychologists wishing to work in forensic and clinical settings who need skills from both forensic and clinical disciplines. Self funding trainees will also be considered. The programme is four years long in duration, and took its first intake of five trainees in September 2013.

Approval for the programme has been granted by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and accreditation has been received from the British Psychological Society (BPS) for dual recognition in Forensic and Clinical Psychology. Candidates who complete the programme successfully will be eligible to become Chartered Forensic and Clinical Psychologists within the BPS and to apply for registration with the HCPC as Forensic and Clinical Psychologists.

The programme seeks to train reflective scientist-practitioners who are able to use their core knowledge and skills to formulate problems in psychological terms and draw creatively on theories and techniques from the discipline of psychology to find feasible solutions to a wide range of presenting issues, considering both clinical and forensic approaches. There is an increasing need in prisons and in the community for skills that draw upon both forensic and clinical disciplines. A large number of individuals within prison and probation settings have mental health problems, while some of those in forensic mental health settings need robust risk assessment to identify criminogenic need and inform release decisions. The programme is deliberately generic to promote flexibility but also emphasises evidence-based practice. In line with NICE guidelines and the 'What Works' approach, special consideration is given to cognitive-behavioural approaches.

A number of principles underpin the provision of training:

- The core principle is to apply psychological theories, principles, knowledge, models and methods in an ethical and evidence based way to promote the wellbeing and effectiveness of individuals, families, groups, organisations and civil society, respecting the dignity and rights of both victims and offenders and remaining mindful of the need to protect the public from harm.
- The programme encourages an attitude of 'critical open-mindedness' to a range of approaches and theories.
- The programme team works in close partnership with forensic mental health, clinical and correctional colleagues in setting the direction of the programme, in its delivery and in its review.
- The programme recognises that trainees are mature students who bring a rich variety of experiences to their training and have a clear voice on programme matters.
- The programme is situated in an area of rich ethnic diversity, and ethnic and cultural issues are fully addressed during training.
- The essential aim of the programme is to provide professional, doctorate level training, commensurate with the requirements of the HCPC and BPS to qualify individuals to work as both forensic and clinical psychologists in forensic mental health, clinical, prison and other forensic settings.

- Trainees are required to gain *specialty specific* competencies in both forensic and clinical psychology over the four years of training and to complete placements with each of the following four clinical client groups:
  1. Children and Young People
  2. Adults (Mental Health)
  3. Older People
  4. People with Disabilities

  as well as victims of crime and/or offenders, appellants and litigants in forensic settings. To achieve this two of the six placements will be in clinical settings, two in forensic settings and two in forensic clinical settings.
- The HCPC requirements for both forensic and clinical psychology training are defined through a set of Standards of Proficiency (SoPs), which trainees need to achieve by the end of their training and a set of Standards of Education and Training (SETs) that the training provider needs to meet. Full details can be found at: **www.HCPC-uk.org/assets/documents/10002963SOP_Practitioner_psychologists.pdf (http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10002963SOP_Practitioner_psychologists.pdf)** and at: **http://www.HCPC-uk.org/assets/documents/1000295EStandardsofeducationandtraining-fromSeptember2009.pdf (http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/1000295EStandardsofeducationandtraining-fromSeptember2009.pdf)** .

Teaching and learning

In the first year a block of University based study prepares trainees for a ten month forensic clinical foundation placement with a shorter teaching block part way through the year. In the following years trainees follow individually tailored programmes with two five month clinical placements in Year 2, forensic placements in Year 3 and a ten month forensic clinical placement in Year 4. Further teaching takes place a day a week during term time complemented by teaching blocks to prepare trainees for forensic clinical work and provide space for reflection, review and integration of theory and practice.

Assessment methods

The course is assessed by means of:

- A thesis containing a practice volume with five clinical practice reports and a research volume compiled over four years
- Two credit bearing forensic clinical practice courses completed in the first two years
- Seven credit bearing forensic courses related to practice in the criminal justice system completed in the third and fourth years

Why study this course

- This is a unique course integrating forensic and clinical psychological practice at doctoral level
- The qualification confers a dual qualification, BPS and HCPC approved, for practice in forensic, clinical or combined settings
- You can expand the knowledge base in this crucial area of psychological practice through your own forensic clinical research
- You can push the boundaries to improve forensic clinical practice and protect the public

Modules

The programme is full time for four years, delivered partly at the University and partly in supervised practice on placement. The general pattern throughout is of one taught day a week during term-time, one day study leave and three days a week on placement. Attendance at University sessions is compulsory for all four years, and placements continue outside of term-time.

The first two years of the programme provide clinical training with some additional specialist forensic input, taught alongside clinical doctorate students. In their first year trainees receive a block of full time teaching in preparation for their placement at the University prior to the start of a ten month placement. Individual placements are negotiated with each student to provide foundation competencies in forensic-clinical psychology, generally at one of three St Andrews' locations, Northampton, Birmingham or Nottingham over three days mid week. Monday is available as a study day and teaching at the University continues on Friday during term-time. In their second year trainees follow two individually tailored placements of five months each in the community, within an adult, child or older adult service to complement experience that has been gained in Year 1.

In their third and fourth years trainees receive forensic training alongside forensic psychology postgraduate students. Teaching takes place on Thursdays following placements which are generally Monday to Wednesday; Friday becomes a study day. In their third year trainees are placed in prison or probation settings in the community, or with a provider of clinical forensic services where equivalent experience can be obtained, normally in either a single ten-month or two five-month placements. In their fourth year trainees return to a forensic-clinical placement at St Andrews or similar provider for a final placement that ensures that all of the required competencies and specialities for clinical and forensic training are covered. Placements are assessed by the placement supervisor in conjunction with appraisal tutors from the University, under the direction of a Coordinator of Training. Given the broad range of competencies and core roles that are required to be both a forensic and clinical psychologist we do not anticipate trainees having a great deal of choice in the selection of placements. Trainees may also have to travel considerable distances to and while on placement.

Throughout their four years trainees also pursue a research interest that builds into a research thesis to be completed in Year 4. It consists of two volumes. The forensic-clinical volume contains five Forensic Clinical Practice Reports (FCPRs) which are submitted and assessed at intervals during the programme, and the research volume reflects research work carried out over the four years of the programme, containing a literature review, a report of an empirical study and a lay summary.

Fees and funding

Fees for 2014/5 will be £10,260 for home students and £15,525 for overseas. No specific funding has been identified to support students entering in 2014/5, however enquiries are welcome from individuals prepared to self fund or who can get their own sponsorship.

Entry requirements

- A good honours degree (typically a high 2.i or above or a 2.i and a Masters in a related discipline) in psychology that confers Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) from the British Psychological Society.
- HCPC requirement of English language proficiency (IELTS level 7.0 with no element below 6.5)
- Enhanced CRB check.
- No criminal convictions (Psychology is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act so no criminal convictions are ever considered 'spent').
- At least 12 months relevant experience of working in a clinical and/ or forensic setting.

How to apply

When clicking on the Apply Now button you will be directed to an application specifically designed for the programme you wish to apply for where you will create an

account with the University application system and submit your application and supporting documents online. Further information regarding how to apply online can be found on the **How to apply pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)**

Apply now (https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/LES057.htm)

Related research

- **Clinical psychology research - School of Psychology (/research/activity/psychology/clinical/index.aspx)**
- **Forensic and criminological psychology - School of Psychology (/research/activity/psychology/forensic/index.aspx)**

Employability

The course will confer a qualification to work as both a clinical and forensic psychologist at doctorate level within the legal and ethical boundaries of both professions. It is particularly appropriate for those planning to work in a forensic mental health setting where clinical skills need to be supplemented by the ability to carry out risk assessment for public protection purposes, and for those working in forensic settings where mental health needs can be overlooked.

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