

PSYCHOLOGY CAREERS

ESSEX PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATES HAVE A WEALTH OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES OPEN TO THEM.

Many students study psychology with the aim of becoming a Psychologist but the majority of them end up working in diverse fields utilising their interest and knowledge of human behaviour. It is possible to work in some fields related to Psychology without a Psychology degree, for example counselling, research and mental health.

The Prospects link below is a great starting point in understanding where your psychology degree could take you

www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/psychology

BECOMING A PSYCHOLOGIST

If you want to become a qualified Psychologist then completing a BPS accredited Psychology degree is the first step. To practice as a Psychologist in the UK, you must also have completed an approved postgraduate training programme (usually a doctorate) to enable you to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

If you are doing a degree in something else but would like to become a Psychologist, there are 1 year MSc conversion

courses, including the MSc Psychology at Essex. Essex also has accredited programmes for Clinical Psychology and Sport & Exercise Psychology.

There are nine areas of Psychology recognised by the British Psychological Society (BPS):

- Clinical Psychology
- Counselling Psychology
- Educational Psychology
- Forensic Psychology
- Health Psychology
- Occupational Psychology
- Sport and Exercise Psychology
- Neuropsychology (through Clinical or Educational)
- Academia, Teaching and Research

Find out more about the professional Psychology routes on the BPS website at careers.bps.org.uk. The BPS also has a job vacancy page where you can view a range of relevant opportunities www.jobsinpsychology.co.uk

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WITH A PSYCHOLOGY DEGREE?

Our recent Psychology graduates reported they were working in jobs such as Data Analyst, Research Assistant, Assistant Psychologist, Human Resources Executive, Information, Advice and Guidance Officer and Operations Manager 15 months after graduating. They worked for organisations including Priory Group, Essex Police, Colchester Borough Council, Lloyds Bank, NHS, Accenture and Hitachi.

This shows the range of graduate roles open to you as many employers focus on the transferable skills gained rather than the specific degree subject studied.

WORK EXPERIENCE

It is unusual to progress straight from a BPS accredited degree or Masters to professional training as a Psychologist. Relevant work experience is usually required, both during your studies and often for a minimum of 1-year full time afterwards. All areas of psychology have their own requirements, as do different institutions, which you can check through the careers resources on the BPS website.

It's not an expectation that you get direct experience as a Psychologist as without professional qualifications, this isn't possible. While a few candidates will manage to get an Assistant Psychologist role, these are very competitive. There are lots of settings where you can gain valuable experience working with people who are dealing with difficult issues; learning how to communicate and support them effectively and working as part of a team will be beneficial to you and help you assess whether this is your long term goal.

When deciding what type of experience to seek, think about the client group you would like to support in your career, the environment you would like to work in and the types of issues you would like to engage with. You can then research organisations you could apply to.

Some examples include:

Mental Health charities such as MIND www.mind.org.uk or the **Samaritans** www.samaritans.org/volunteer-us

Care facilities for specific client groups (search www.yell.com in your local area)

Social justice organisations such as NACRO www.nacro.org.uk or organisations helping ex-offenders such as **St Giles Trust** www.stgilestrust.org.uk

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

Essex Interns www.essex.ac.uk/student/careers/essex-interns - paid internships exclusively for Essex students and graduates

Support roles in schools (often advertised by local authorities), educational charities or other organisations supporting children www.charityjob.co.uk

Sport coaching, training or experience with sport clubs careers-in-sport.co.uk

Volunteering Matters www.volunteermatters.org.uk

Do-it doit.life/discover volunteer database

University of Essex Nightline www.essexnightline.org.uk/volunteers

CAREERS AROUND PSYCHOLOGY

Your psychology degree provides you with lots of transferable skills which would be useful in a wide range of jobs. See below for some of the most common job roles and sectors.

Assistant Psychologist Posts
www.jobs.nhs.uk NHS Jobs

HM Prison and Probation Service
www.prisonandprobationjobs.gov.uk Vacancy search page

Research
You don't have to be an academic to have a career in research. As an example, see www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/ux-researcher

Human Resources
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/human-resources-officer

Recruitment
Prospects job profile www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/recruitment-consultant

Teaching
There are various routes to becoming a qualified teacher. Visit getintoteaching.education.gov.uk explore-my-options

Marketing
There are a broad range of careers for Psychology graduates in traditional and digital marketing. Explore the sector using www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/marketing-advertising-and-pr

Therapy and Counselling:
There are multiple professions and services offering therapy and counselling including:

Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/psychological-wellbeing-practitioner

High Intensity Therapist
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/high-intensity-therapist

Counselling
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/counsellor

Psychotherapy
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/psychotherapist

Did you know?
You may have heard of a Psychiatrist. These are actually qualified Doctors who have chosen to specialise in psychiatry, therefore you need to study medicine if you wish to become a Psychiatrist.