

## Psychologist - Clinical

Clinical psychologists aim to reduce psychological distress and promote psychological wellbeing. They treat patients with emotional or behavioural problems using a variety of therapies. They have no medical training, and do not prescribe drugs.

### The Work

You could be:

- assessing patients and their families through interviews, observation and psychometric tests
- treating problems such as anxiety, phobias, depression, relationship difficulties, stress and addictions
- planning a programme of treatment and treating patients in groups or one to one
- applying relaxation therapy, behavioural therapy and psychotherapy
- specialising in work with children and adolescents
- training staff
- doing research on specific projects
- writing reports and attending case conferences or court cases.

### Pay

The salaries for NHS Clinical Psychologists in Scotland are usually based on the NHS Agenda for Change pay rates. The current pay scales are from April 2025.

Qualified psychologists start on Band 7, £50,861 to £59,159 a year. With experience this rises to Band 8a, £74,003 to £79,164 a year, and Band 8b, £74,003 to £79,164 a year.

Consultant/lead psychologists are on Band 8c, £87,400 to £93,685 a year.

### Conditions

- You work in hospitals, schools, prisons, local clinics, child guidance or social work units. You may have to travel between clinics.
- You usually work as part of a team with social workers, doctors and other health professionals.
- You might visit patients at home, perhaps including evenings and weekends.
- You usually work office hours from Monday to Friday.
- There is opportunity for part time work.
- Clients might be nervous, aggressive or depressed, so your work can be emotionally demanding.

### Getting In

- You would work towards registration with the British Psychological Society (BPS).
- To be eligible for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC), you need either a BPS recognised degree (first or second class Honours) in psychology, **or** a degree in another subject plus a BPS recognised conversion course.

- To do an Honours degree in psychology you usually need 4-5 Highers.
- Paid or unpaid work experience is advantageous.
- After your degree you would find relevant paid or voluntary work experience (at least 12 months) ideally as a psychology assistant or research assistant, before choosing your specialism.
- In order to qualify as a clinical psychologist, you must complete a three-year Doctorate in Clinical Psychology accredited by the BPS. In Scotland this is offered by the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow in partnership with NHS Scotland.
- See the [Clearing House for Postgraduate Training Courses in Clinical Psychology website](#) for details of doctoral training programmes.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.
- Before using the title clinical psychologist, you must register with the [Health and Care Professions Council \(HCPC\)](#).
- Most jobs are with the National Health Service (NHS), but there are some jobs in universities, local government, the prison service or in private practice.

## What Does It Take

You need:

- sound judgement
- good observation skills
- good concentration for long periods
- clear, logical thinking
- listening skills and patience
- emotional strength to cope with distressing situations
- organisation skills.

You should be:

- interested in healthcare and science
- sympathetic and tolerant
- assertive
- able to communicate with different people
- able to respect confidentiality
- resilient.

## Training

- Once you have achieved Chartered Membership of the BPS you will continue to learn and train during your career through a programme of Continuous Professional Development (CPD).
- You will need to keep up to date with research on a wide range of conditions and developments in the treatment of these conditions.

## Getting On

- Within the NHS there is a promotion path for clinical psychologists from assistant to trainee to clinical lead or consultant.
- You may have to move to other areas of the country for promotion.
- You might specialise in a particular area such as drug addictions or phobias.
- You could go on to train as a neuropsychologist by completing the BPS Qualification in Clinical Neuropsychology (QICN).
- You might move into teaching or lecturing, or do research work at a university.
- You could set up your own practice.

## Contacts

### British Psychological Society

Tel: 0116 254 9568

Email: [info@bps.org.uk](mailto:info@bps.org.uk)

Website: [www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)

Website (2): [careers.bps.org.uk](http://careers.bps.org.uk)

X: @BPSOfficial

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/OfficialBPS](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialBPS)

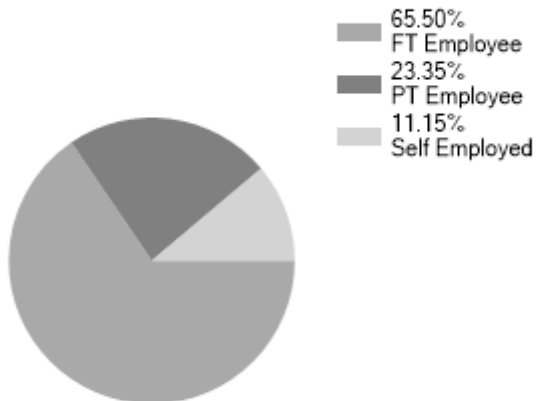
### NHS Scotland Careers

Website: [www.careers.nhs.scot](http://www.careers.nhs.scot)

Website (2): [jobs.scot.nhs.uk](http://jobs.scot.nhs.uk)

## Statistics

Employment Status UK %

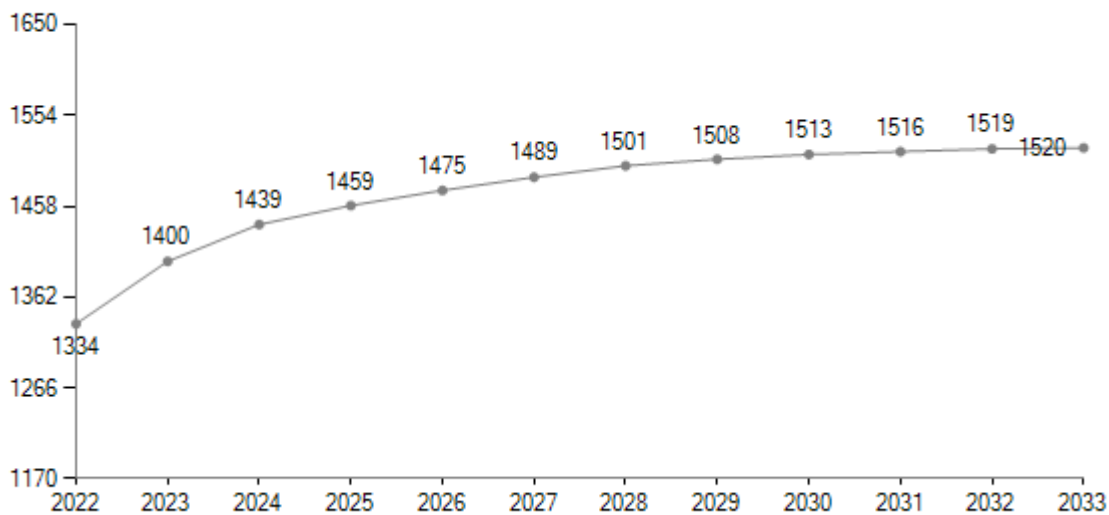


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)