

## Psychologist - Counselling

A counselling psychologist talks and listens to people to help them to deal with a range of mental health problems relating to life issues including bereavement, domestic abuse and relationship problems.

### The Work

You could be:

- working with children, older people, families, victims of sexual or physical abuse, or people suffering from phobias, addictions, depression, eating disorders or stress
- interviewing people on a one to one basis, in couples or as a family
- running group sessions for people who have the same problem
- carrying out tests to assess people
- applying psychological theories to solving clients' problems
- applying psychotherapy and relaxation techniques and evaluating the outcomes
- helping clients cope with events such as bereavement
- training others in counselling skills
- carrying out research, writing reports and keeping records.

### Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- your field of specialism
- whether you are in public or private practice or are self-employed.

The salaries for NHS 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 might work in an office, health centre, school, university or college, hospital or prison or even in a client's home.
- You usually work office hours from Monday to Friday.
- There is opportunity for part time work.
- You might have to see patients in the evening or at weekends.
- Clients might be nervous, angry or sad, so your work can be emotionally demanding.

## Getting In

- You would work towards registration as a Chartered Counselling Psychologist with the British Psychological Society (BPS).
- To get 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 registered Chartered Counselling Psychologist, you need an accredited Doctorate in Counselling Psychology or the BPS's Qualification in Counselling Psychology (QCoP).
- Glasgow Caledonian University offers the only accredited doctorate course in counselling psychology in Scotland.
- 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 counselling psychologist, you must be registered with the [Health and Care Professions Council \(HCPC\)](#) to work in the NHS.

There are jobs with local authorities and the civil service, the National Health Service (NHS), and in private hospitals. About half of counselling psychologists do clinical work in health and social care settings. There are jobs in the human resource management departments of private companies.

## What Does It Take

You need:

- listening skills and patience
- sound judgement
- good observation
- clear, logical thinking
- respect for confidentiality
- self-awareness and insight
- organisation skills
- good research skills.

You should be:

- sympathetic and tolerant
- assertive
- resilient
- able to communicate with different people and build relationships with clients
- able to help clients open up and discuss distressing experiences.

## 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

You could set up as a self-employed consultant, working from home or from an office.

## 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](http://www.facebook.com/OfficialBPS)

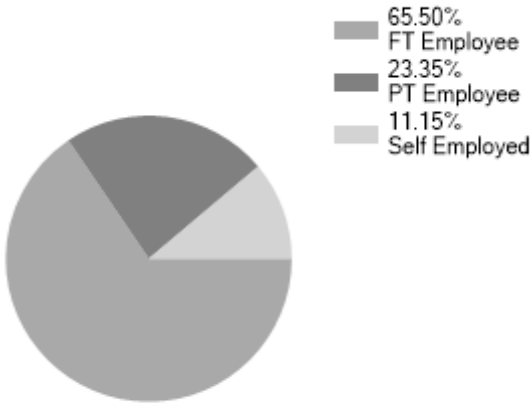
### **NHS Scotland Careers**

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 %

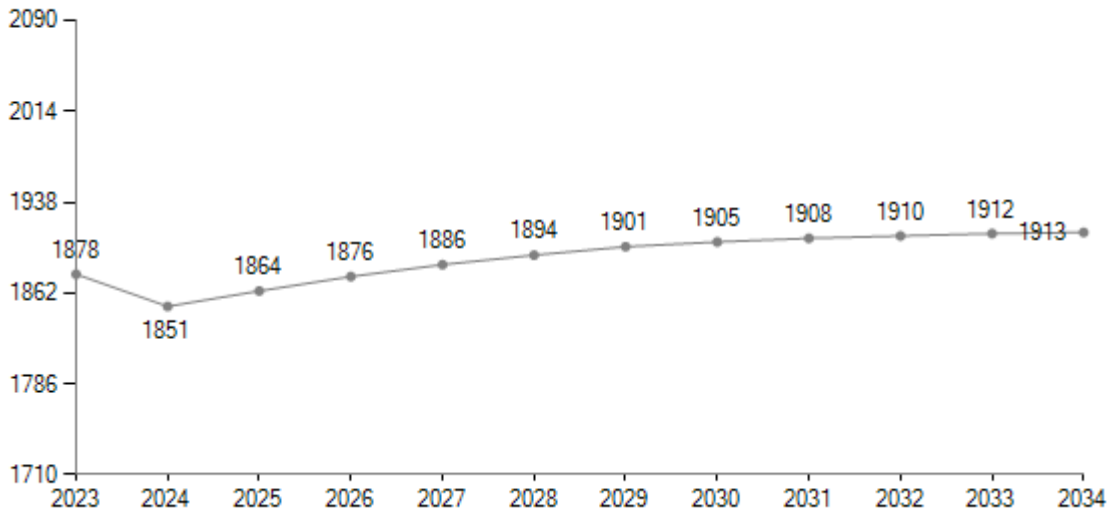


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)