

# **Advanced Skills Practitioner Programme**

a guide for new and prospective colleagues



## Advanced Skills Practitioner Programme - A Guide For New And Prospective Colleagues

### Who are we?

First Psychology is an established and independent provider of counselling, CBT and psychological therapies based in Scotland. We have a pluralistic philosophy embracing different models and professions within the therapy field. With 11 therapy centres located throughout Scotland, as well as a centre in Newcastle and an established online portal, we deliver therapy services to individuals, organisations, couples, children/younger persons, and families.

### About our advanced practitioner programme?

Our academy provides a supportive and developmentally focused experience in the independent sector for those who have recently qualified in the therapy field (counselling, CBT, etc) or for those currently in doctoral training in applied psychology (counselling, health, etc). We offer advanced skills practitioner positions as part-time (0.4FTE or 0.6FTE), paid clinical roles for

up to two years (all contracts are offered initially on a 12 month basis with the opportunity to extend). These are awarded on a competitive basis and start in either April or October each year. These roles may be suitable for use as a clinical placement.

### What does the academy offer practitioners?

All advanced skills practitioners are offered extensive support in relation to development of a clinical practice in the independent sector. This includes:

- A thorough programme of training and mentoring managed by a dedicated member of clinical staff
- Free one-to-one clinical supervision from a highly experienced supervisor
- Membership of a regular peer-support group (participation required) facilitated by an experienced clinical practitioner
- The opportunity to work within a large community of practitioners offering extensive networking and learning activities
- Free access to the First Psychology annual conference, study days and other peer-development activities
- Free access to certificated CPD courses available in the First Psychology Institute



([www.firstpsychology-institute.co.uk](http://www.firstpsychology-institute.co.uk))

- Opportunities to undertake research presentations, webinars, training events, and other professional activities
- Access to an academy 'development fund' providing small bursaries to support attendance at conferences and study days.

### What is expected of advanced skills practitioners?

Practitioners are allocated to clinics (morning, afternoon and/or evening) in line with the number of hours contracted and in the context of their agreed and stated availability upon application. Some evening and/or Saturday work will be required and clinics will likely be a mix of different times/



days. Each clinic lasts four hours and it is expected that practitioners will normally be available to see three clients in each clinic unless undertaking supervision or other associated activities. There will be opportunities to work with adult clients, as well as couples and young people/children (depending on your experience). Clients will be mainly self-referred with some referred from organisations and businesses. Some online work may be required (training provided).

**Locations available in Scotland:** Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Perth, Peebles.

**Locations available in England:** Newcastle.

## Who is the role suitable for?

The applied skills practitioner role is suitable for mature, motivated, enthusiastic and clinically-experienced (normally minimum of 150 hours clinical experience) practitioners who have fully completed a formal training (Diploma or above) in counselling, psychotherapy, CBT or couples therapy. It is also suitable for applied psychology trainees in advanced training (post-MSc) in counselling psychology, health psychology, coaching psychology or occupational psychology. The ability to work within a team, appreciate different viewpoints and perspectives and take a pragmatic, flexible approach is essential.

NOTE: Due to the demands and nature of the role it is not suitable for practitioners who have or intend to have) an additional and significant (3 hours or more per week) clinical commitment elsewhere such as a placement in the NHS, or a paid or voluntary role within another therapy practice (or a personal therapy practice) operating in the independent sector. These stipulations will be a condition of employment.

## Salary and holidays

The role is salaried (reviewed yearly) and appointees will be eligible for 28 days' (pro rata) paid holidays and may also join the First Psychology Pension Scheme.

## Opportunities for progression

Following completion of an advanced skills practitioner role, participants may be able to continue into permanent employment within First Psychology (full- or part-time) or apply to join us as a self-employed partner.

## Find out more and to apply

Please contact the First Psychology team on

[hello@firstpsychology.co.uk](mailto:hello@firstpsychology.co.uk)

We would be delighted to hear from you, to answer any questions you may have.

If you wish to apply, please ensure you do so in line with the closing date advertised (this is usually in June each year). You will be asked to complete an application form, which will include providing the following information:

- Your CV
- A summary of your relevant clinical experience including training (models, specialisms) and qualifications
- The number of supervised clinical hours you have completed to date
- A summary of your current commitments (employment, clinical/placement training/academic, other)
- A statement of your availability to undertake this role (days/times when you are available and unavailable each week)
- The names of three references. These must include, your current or previous clinical supervisor, a current or former employer, and a teacher or lecturer familiar with your learning.
- The locations where you would wish to be based should you be successful – Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Newcastle, Peebles, Perth
- Your preference for a part-time role at either 0.4 or 0.6FTE.



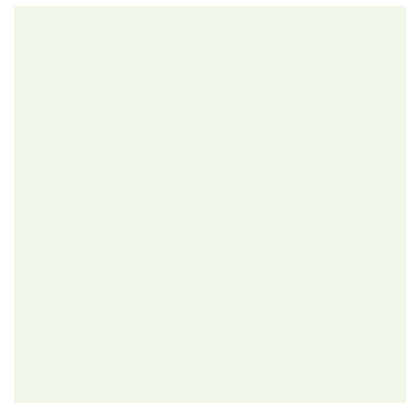
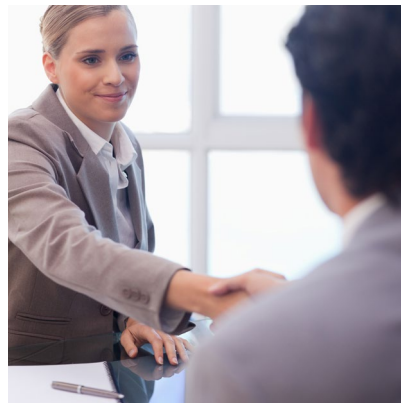
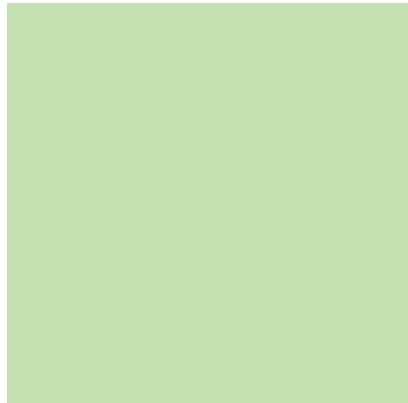
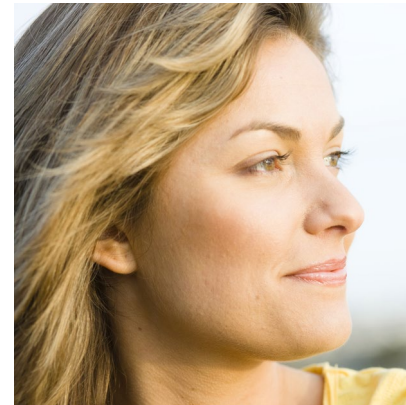
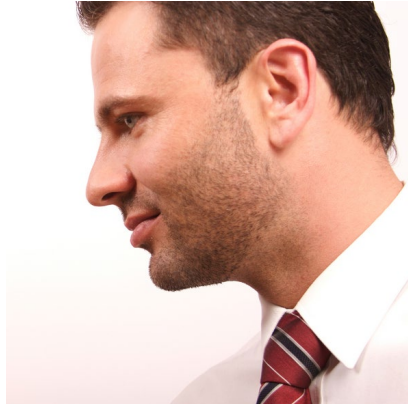
## What previous ASPs say about their experience

“ Working at First Psychology in the final year of training had a tremendously positive impact on my development as a psychologist. Not only through learning how to manage my own caseload, client logs, therapeutic resources, and clinical projects, but most significantly through the development of my own personal identity as a psychologist. „

“ I really enjoyed my time as an ASP - I felt supported, welcomed, and appreciated every step of the way. In terms of the programme, the highlights for me were the group supervision meetings and the opportunity to meet the other ASPs. The other major benefit of working with FP has always been the extremely efficient and helpful team. There is a genuinely supportive and open atmosphere in FP and a real sense of transparency and fairness. „

“ I was able to build upon my skill set and knowledge base while ‘testing the waters’ of private practice. First Psychology provided excellent support and guidance via formal supervision groups and informal email support. Having the reassurance that someone was there to assist and answer any question or query, regardless of how insignificant you felt it might be, was incredible. „

“ Overall, it was a challenging but hugely beneficial and educational experience. The ASP programme allowed me to have both fellow ASPs and other FP colleagues present to support me through the transition from student to counsellor. The experience allowed me to develop as a practitioner, focus on my clients and learn the ropes of private practice knowing that I was supported both professionally and personally with any issues that arose. „



### First Psychology offers:

Therapy & coaching services for individuals, couples, children, young people & families.

Employee support & assistance, training, consultancy, assessment, & performance development services for organisations & businesses.

© 2025 First Psychology Ltd

Aberdeen | Borders | Dundee | Edinburgh | Glasgow | Inverness | Perth | Newcastle | Online