



Factsheet for Suitability Statements

CLEARING HOUSE FOR POSTGRADUATE
COURSES IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Thank you for providing a Suitability Statement for someone applying for doctoral level clinical psychology training.

When writing the Suitability Statement, please bear in mind that **application to these courses is highly competitive** and Suitability Statements can play an important part in the selection process.

Please also bear in mind the responsibility to **provide an accurate portrayal** of the person applying: **both their weaknesses and strengths**. This helps courses to choose the best people to train and to work with vulnerable adults and children.

These Suitability Statements are used in a variety of ways by different clinical psychology courses within their selection processes, so **both the text questions and the ratings questions are important**.

Questions you are asked

All questions on Suitability Statements are mandatory.

If you are **unable to answer several of the questions you are asked**, please let the person applying know as this could adversely affect their application.

Text Questions

For the text questions, please give enough detail for it to be meaningful but bear in mind that clinical psychology courses receive hundreds of applications each year. For courses to be able to see evidence of knowledge and/or competence, please **give brief specific examples to demonstrate the person's ability and performance.**

Rating Questions

All Suitability Statements include questions using a rating scheme of 1 to 5. Please remember that:

1 is a POOR rating and 5 is an EXCELLENT rating

If you are **rating someone 3 or lower** for any question, **please also give details of the reasons** in the text questions at the end of the Suitability Statement.

Who should provide a Suitability Statement

Each Suitability Statement can only be provided by one person. Applicants are asked to nominate one person to write their Academic Suitability Statement and a different person to write their Experience Suitability Statement.

If you are unable to comment on the areas covered by the type of Suitability Statement you are being asked to write, please let the person applying know as this could adversely affect their application.

If you are only able to provide a standard reference document which does not address the questions in the Suitability Statement, please let the person applying know as this could also adversely affect their application.

You can find sample copies of both types of Suitability Statement at our website, for information:

www.clearing-house.org.uk/applications/references-suitability-statements/choosing-who-nominate

Academic Suitability Statements

Academic Suitability Statements should, where possible, be from an academic institution where the person applying has studied and, as their nominee, **you should have direct experience of their academic ability and performance** (i.e. competence in academic performance, academic study/scholarship, and research experience/performance).

Experience Suitability Statements

If you are providing an **Experience Suitability Statement** you should have **direct experience of**, and be able to comment on, **the applicant's performance in a relevant role**. Their role should be relevant to clinical psychology and be **in a clinical context** i.e. you should have worked with the applicant in a therapy setting (and/or research context if appropriate).

The applicant should nominate their current employer to provide their Experience Suitability Statement, where possible. However, applicants may request a Suitability Statement from a previous employer if there is a good reason e.g. they are not currently working in a relevant role, or they have only worked in their current role for a few months, or their current employer can only provide a standard HR reference. They will be asked in their application to explain why they are not nominating their current employer to provide their Experience Suitability Statement.

Personal Connections

Please note that you should not normally provide a Suitability Statement for your close relations, members of your immediate household or your business partner. In other words, **the applicant should not have personal connections with you**.

What is the person applying for?

The applicant is applying for clinical psychology training, and you are providing information to support selection decision-making.

The qualification is a **doctoral level postgraduate research degree**, which integrates research, academic and clinical practice throughout all aspects of the training. This prepares trainees for practice as professional Clinical Psychologists, eligible to apply for registration with the Health & Care Professions Council and for Chartered Clinical status with the British Psychological Society (BPS).

Once qualified, Clinical Psychologists provide **face-to-face therapy for individuals, families and groups**. They also supervise and teach other professions to provide psychological treatments.

Clinical Psychologists **apply the science of Psychology to a range of clinical healthcare services**. Clinical Psychologists use this knowledge to design, implement and evaluate healthcare services that enhance wellbeing and minimise ill-health and impairment.

They are trained to apply their knowledge in systematic methods and practice which are scientifically evaluated, and to test clinical practice for its

effectiveness. Clinical Psychologists are **committed to research**, both drawing on the evidence base and contributing to it.

Clinical Psychologists offer leadership in organisational development, audit, service redesign and development.

Data Protection

Whilst it is Clearing House policy to keep Suitability Statements confidential, due to data protection law this cannot be guaranteed. If an applicant requests a copy of a Suitability Statement we will contact you for your authorisation to release it. However, please assume that the applicant may be able to see the Suitability Statement.

For more information on data protection and privacy, please see our website:

www.clearing-house.org.uk/about-us/data-protection-privacy