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MSc in Applied Psychology for Children and Young People

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Clinical Associate in Applied Psychology (CAAP)

- Introduced to Scottish psychological workforce in 2005
- Psychology graduates trained to deliver psychological assessment, formulation and intervention for a specific client group
- Work under the supervision of a Clinical Psychologist or Clinical Associate in Applied Psychology (CAAP)
- Generally work in Tier 2 remit, within Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
 - Trained in appropriate evidence based psychological therapies for specific client group
- Difference to Doctorate in Clinical Psychology – not as autonomous, qualification to work with defined population undertaking specific assessment/interventions.



Scottish Training Programmes

Child/young people: MSc in Applied Psychology for Children and Young People – held within the University of Edinburgh in partnership with NHS Education Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (First intake 2007)

Adults: MSc Psychological Therapy in Primary Care - jointly run by the Universities of Dundee and Stirling and in partnership with NHS Education Scotland (First intake 2005)

Both training courses designed to produce CAAP's in specific fields (adult and child/young people) to work with mild to moderate mental health difficulties



MSc Applied Psychology for Children and Young People

- Trains psychology graduates in assessment, formulation and evidence based psychological interventions for children and young people alongside masters level research skills
- Competencies are aligned with evidence-based interventions for circumscribed Tier 2 CAMHS work, e.g., CBT for mild to moderate presentations, Triple P, Incredible Years etc.
- Trained in interventions strongly aligned with an early intervention/prevention approach.
- The programme runs February - January each year



Entry Requirements and Application Process

Entry Requirements:

- Psychology Degree at 2.1 level or above (confers graduate basis for chartered membership) or equivalent (needs to be MSc conversion or Irish Diploma)
- Experience of working with children and young people in clinically relevant field
- 35 + places; applications exceed 400

Applications for February 2025 are now closed. Next applications are in July 2025 for February 2026 intake.

- From 2024 intake: Trainees cannot apply for NES-funded doctorate in Clinical Psychology (Edinburgh, Glasgow) whilst on the NES-funded Applied MSc.
 - Feb 2025 intake on MSc Applied Psychology will be eligible to apply for Sept 2027 DClinPsychol in Edinburgh/Glasgow, but not Sept 2026 intake.



Selection Process

- July
 - Online Application; open for two weeks
 - August/September
 - Applications shortlisted jointly by University of Edinburgh (UoE) and NHS staff
 - September
 - Successful candidates invited to interview
 - October - November
 - Pre-interview event – early October
 - Joint NHS & UoE Interview Panels (MS Teams)
 - Interview candidates advised of outcomes
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Programme Structure

- Full time MSc Programme with University of Edinburgh
- Part time study is not available on this programme
- Training is funded by NHS
- Self-funding is not available
- Programme commences on February – 2 week NHS induction; 4 week teaching block
- Teaching normally delivered in 2 week blocks, one week Edinburgh, one week Glasgow.
- Majority of teaching is face to face, occasionally online



Clinical Placement

- All trainees placed in a CAMHS team for one year – paid as a Band 6 Trainee Clinical Associate
- Supervised by a Clinical Psychologist or a CAAP
- Competency based training and assessment
- Structured tools for assessment of competency
- Supported by a minimum of two placement visits by Clinical Tutor



Teaching Structure

- Block teaching: trainees attend teaching in week-long blocks through the year in Edinburgh and Glasgow.
- Full day teaching: 9:30am-4:30pm with breaks and lunch
- Teaching: 30%, Clinical practice: 50%, Independent study: 20%
- One study day per week
- Time allowed for holidays/annual leave

Example (2024)

February: Weeks 1 & 2 in **Edinburgh**

March: Weeks 3 & 4 in **Glasgow**

April: Week 5 in **Edinburgh**

June: Week 6 in **Glasgow**

July: Week 7 in **Edinburgh**; Week 8 in **Glasgow**

September: Week 9 in **Glasgow**

November: Week 10 in **Edinburgh**



Teaching Content

- Accredited BPS course for training Clinical Associates in Applied Psychology.
- Academic syllabus based on Level 11 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)
- Learning: Lecture/seminars, clinical skills workshops, online learning, practical clinical work on placement.
- Taught by: Lecturers, practitioners, previous CAAPs

Seven courses:

- Professional Context and Clinical Management; Evaluation and Research; Assessment and Formulation; Child and Adolescent Development; Early Years and Early Intervention; Promotion of Mental Health and Emotional Well-being; and Psychological Intervention and Structured Treatment Approaches.
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Research Component

Skills developed through the Evaluation and Research course

- Quantitative and qualitative research methods and data analysis
- Systematic review
- Research proposals
- Ethical considerations

Dissertation

- A journal article (7,000 – 8,000 words) and academic poster (1,000 words).
 - Plan and execute clinically relevant applied research
 - Supervised by academic member of staff on relevant project
 - Range of methodologies and topics
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Academic Course Assessments

Course work staggered and submitted throughout the year including:

- One research proposal for a research project (2,500 words).
- One individual essay for health promotion (4,000 words).
- A written report/brief (2,500 words), and a portfolio of developmentally appropriate materials/resources relating to an aspect of clinical service delivery or service innovation
- A written case report (3,500 words) and an audio sample of clinical work.
- A dissertation, consisting of a journal article (7,000 – 8,000 words) and an academic poster (1,000 words).



Employment Opportunities

Clinical Associate in Applied Psychology for Children and Young People

- Local variation / banding:
 - Child and Adolescent Therapist
 - Child & Adolescent Mental Health Clinician
 - Primary Mental Health Care Worker
 - Psychological Therapist
 - Wellbeing Practitioner
 - Third sector – Glasgow Infant Mental Health Team (GIFT), National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Place2Be
 - Quality Improvement Scotland
 - Public Health Scotland
 - Academic or Research Role
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Hints and Tips for Applying

Understand the role you are applying for

- What the training will involve
- How this role fits within NHS CAMHS settings
- Understand and value importance of early intervention/prevention with children and young people and how this is aligned with mental health strategies and policies
- Enjoy working with children and young people

Reflect on your experience

- We don't have a 'wish list' of experience – trainees come from all sorts of backgrounds
- What transferable skills/learning you have that would make you appropriate (bearing in mind this is an academic masters and a clinical training)



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Any questions? 😊