

PROSPECTS

Job profile

Educational psychologist

The dedication, sensitivity and assertive nature of educational psychologists is rewarded with the ability to help students learn and watch them thrive

Educational psychologists support children and young people from birth to 25 years old through the application of psychological theory and research in order to promote their emotional and social wellbeing.

You'll work with children and young people who are experiencing problems that hinder their successful learning and participation in school and other activities. These problems can include a range of emotional and social issues or learning difficulties.

The role requires working in consultation with parents, teachers, social workers, doctors and other people involved in the child's education in a variety of ways, including observations, interviews and assessments of the child. You'll also offer a range of appropriate interventions, such as learning programmes and collaborative work with teachers or parents.

You might also provide in-service training for teachers and other professionals on issues such as behaviour and stress management. A further aspect to the job is research and advising on educational provisions and policies.

Responsibilities

As an educational psychologist, you'll need to:

- assess children's learning and emotional needs by observing and consulting with multi-agency teams to advise on the best approaches and provisions to support learning and development
- develop and support therapeutic and behaviour management programmes
- design and develop courses for parents, teachers and others involved with the education of children and young people
- designing and developing projects involving children and young people
- write reports to make formal recommendations on action to be taken, including formal statements
- advise, persuade, support and negotiate with teachers, parents and other education professionals
- attend case conferences involving multidisciplinary teams on how best to meet the social, emotional, behavioural and learning needs of the children and young people in your care
- prioritise effectiveness - the context and environment that influence the child's development are seen as increasingly important
- conduct active research
- formulate interventions that focus on applying knowledge, skills and expertise to support local and national initiatives
- develop and apply effective interventions to promote psychological wellbeing, social, emotional and behavioural development, and to raise educational standards.

Salary

- Salaries for trainee educational psychologists in England, Wales and Northern Ireland range from £22,955 to £31,355. Once fully qualified, salaries begin at £35,731 and rise incrementally up to £48,211. This can increase to £52,903 with the addition of structured professional assessment points.
- Senior and principal educational psychologists can earn from £44,797 to £60,409. With the addition of discretionary scale points and structured professional assessment points, this can increase to £66,276.
- Fully-qualified educational psychologists in Scottish local authorities earn in the region of £42,495 to £52,068. Salaries for senior and management-level educational psychologists range from £55,311 to £64,098.

Salaries in the London area attract a London weighting.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland most salaries are set using the Soulbury Agreement. Find current Soulbury pay scales via the National Education Union (<http://www.teachers.org.uk/node>).

Pay scales in Scotland are set by the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) (<http://www.snct.org.uk/>) and are similar to those set by the Soulbury committee.

Income figures are intended as a guide only.

Working hours

Formal working hours tend to follow the standard 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday pattern, often with some evening work for parent-teacher meetings. Flexibility is common provided the job requirements are met.

There are opportunities for part-time work, career breaks and job-sharing.

What to expect

- You'll usually have a central office base and travel locally to schools and clients' homes as required. Opportunities are available throughout the UK.
- You'll usually work as part of a multidisciplinary team and will collaborate closely with teachers, social workers and doctors.
- Self-employment and freelance work as a consultant is an option for experienced educational psychologists. The work is more likely to be focused on individuals, or within certain sectors, such as independent schools.
- The work can be challenging as it involves contact with children and young people who are facing difficulties, but can also be rewarding.
- Educational psychologists receive supervision throughout their career.

Qualifications

To practise as an educational psychologist in the UK you must be registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC), which involves training at postgraduate level.

To begin training you'll normally need Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC), which is achieved by completing a psychology degree or conversion course accredited by The British Psychological Society (BPS). For a full list of GBC qualifying courses see BPS - Find an accredited course (<https://www.bps.org.uk/public/become-psychologist/accredited-courses?type=CONV>).

You'll then need to complete a BPS-accredited Doctorate in educational psychology or, for Scotland only, a BPS-accredited Masters in educational psychology from a Scottish university followed by the BPS Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (QEP(S)).

The Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP) (<http://www.aep.org.uk/training/>) manages the recruitment process for all the courses in England. These courses are eligible for funding via the Educational Psychology Funded Training (EPFT) scheme. For full information and details of eligible courses, see AEP - Training (<http://www.aep.org.uk/training/>).

BPS-accredited Doctorate-level courses in Wales and Northern Ireland are offered by the University of Cardiff and Queens University Belfast. These courses aren't covered by the EPFT and you should apply direct to the course provider. Courses in Scotland are offered by the universities of Dundee and Strathclyde. Government funding is no longer provided for the Masters course in Scotland.

Entry onto an accredited Doctorate course is becoming increasingly competitive and requires a good first degree, usually a 2:1 or higher, as well as a minimum of one year's full-time experience working with children and young people in an education, health, social care, youth justice or childcare setting. Entry requirements vary between courses, so contact admissions tutors for full details.

Most of your first year on the Doctorate is university-based, while in your second and third year you'll spend three to four days a week on a practice-based placement with a local authority educational psychology services or other approved provider. You'll also need to complete a substantial piece of research and a dissertation.

On successful completion of the required qualifications, you're entitled to chartered status and full membership of the BPS Division of Educational and Child Psychology (and also the Scottish Division of Psychology for the QEP(S)). You'll also be eligible for entry onto the HCPC register, which allows you to use the title 'educational psychologist'.

Skills

You'll need to have:

- excellent communication skills
- sensitivity, tact and diplomacy
- an open-minded and sensitive approach when dealing with children and young people
- the ability to explore emotional issues with children and young people
- a healthy curiosity and research-minded approach to work
- analytical skills
- the ability to work as part of a team
- the ability to be assertive, persuasive and an effective facilitator
- independence and self-motivation
- self-awareness, self-knowledge, security and self-belief
- capability to working under pressure
- time management skills to be able to manage a caseload
- understanding of cultural and religious diversity.

Work experience

To be accepted onto a postgraduate course, you'll need at least one year's full-time experience working in an education, health, social care, early years or youth justice setting, although two years are sometimes required.

Experience as a teacher is valuable, and many successful applicants are experienced teachers. However, other relevant areas of work include social work assistant, assistant psychologist, teaching assistant, learning mentor or literacy tutor, careers adviser, community education officer, residential child care officer worker or early years worker.

Employers

Most educational psychologists in England and Wales are employed by local authority children's services. In Scotland, most newly qualified educational psychologists are employed by the local authority educational psychology service or psychological service. In Northern Ireland, the main employer is the Education Board.

Other employers include:

- colleges
- community environments
- NHS hospital trusts – typically in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- nurseries
- private consultancies
- social enterprises
- schools (public and independent sector)
- special units
- voluntary and charitable organisations such as Barnardo's or The National Autistic Society.

There are also opportunities for experienced educational psychologists to work on a self-employed basis as a sole practitioner or in a private practice partnership.

You might also work in a research establishment or university and become involved in teaching as well as research.

Look for job vacancies at:

- AEP Careers (<https://www.aep.org.uk/careers/>) - AEP's broadsheet is the key source of vacancies (available to members).

- Jobs in Psychology (<https://www.jobsinpsychology.co.uk/>)
- Local Government Jobs (<http://www.lgjobs.com/>) (England and Wales).
- myjobscotland (<https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/>)

Professional development

Once qualified, continuing professional development (CPD) will be an integral part of your career and is an essential requirement of retaining your HCPC registration and chartered membership of the BPS.

Your ongoing development should include a mixture of directed and self-directed activities, including:

- post-qualification courses, which help to develop your knowledge of different theoretical approaches
- professional supervision
- lecturing, teaching or giving presentations
- attending workshops or conferences to learn about new therapeutic techniques or 'tools'
- topical research, writing articles or papers
- mentoring, supervising or assessing trainees
- development of expertise with a particular age group (e.g. pre-school or primary) or a particular condition, e.g. dyspraxia or autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Courses in areas such as IT skills, team working and time management are often available from your employer. A formal management qualification can be useful if you're looking to move into a senior role.

You'll need to keep an up-to-date and accurate record of your professional development activities and show that your CPD contributes to the quality of your practice and service delivery and also benefit your clients.

More information can be found at the BPS Professional Development Centre (<https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologists/professional-development>).

Career prospects

There's a defined organisational structure and a clear progression route in local authority work to senior and principal educational psychologist roles. However, there are a limited number of steps on the ladder.

In a large authority, psychological services are usually organised into districts, with individual psychologists responsible for the majority of the work in their own area. Also, there are likely to be some specialist posts held by experienced practitioners, for example working in specialist units or with one particular condition.

Career development can take many forms. For some people the option to become self-employed, undertake work on a freelance basis or become an active member within the profession will provide new challenges. There are also opportunities to influence policies and develop best-practice models.

Another way you might develop your career is by specialising in a particular area of psychology, often selected through local need. If you're in a position to choose a specialty, opt for one that you have an affinity with as you should enjoy the research.

As your expertise and interests develop, your career could move into new areas or branches of psychology, transferring your skills to other related careers.



(<http://agcas.org.uk/>)

AGCAS

Written by AGCAS editors

June 2018

(/)

Get in touch



[\(/contact-us\)](#)



[\(/https://www.facebook.com/graduateprospects/\)](https://www.facebook.com/graduateprospects/)



[\(/https://twitter.com/graduateprospects/\)](https://twitter.com/graduateprospects/)



[\(/https://www.linkedin.com/company/graduateprospects/\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/graduateprospects/)

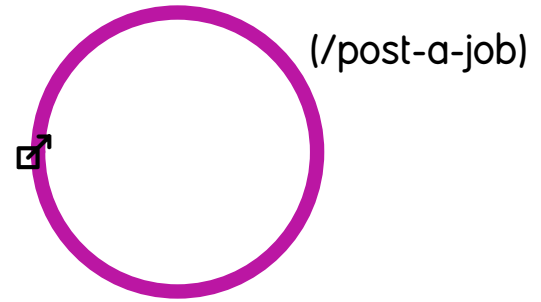


[\(/https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...\)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

Promote job vacancies, courses or events

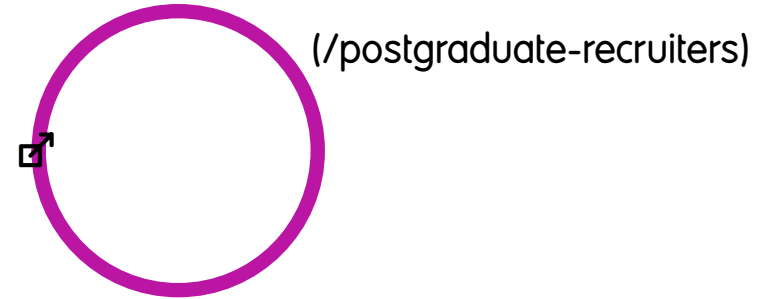
Employer advertising

Prices from £480



University packages

Prices from FREE



COMPANY

[About us \(/about-us\)](#)

[Work for us \(/about-us/working-for-prospects\)](#)

[Our publications \(/prospects-publications\)](#)

[Press office \(/prospects-press-office\)](#)

LEGAL

[Privacy \(/privacy\)](#)

[Cookies \(/cookies-list\)](#)

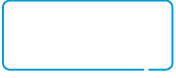
[Terms of use \(/terms-of-use\)](#)

[Accessibility \(/accessibility-information\)](#)

MADE WITH IN MANCHESTER

Registered number
2626618 (England and Wales)

PART OF THE HECSU FAMILY



(//www.hecsu.ac.uk)



(//hedd.ac.uk)



(//luminate.prospects.ac.uk)

© Copyright 2018 Graduate Prospects Ltd. All rights reserved.