

External Assessment - Guidelines for Applicants

Procedure applies to:	Applicants to Volunteer Counsellor positions
Procedure approved by:	Trustee for Counselling
Procedure start date:	January 2016
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Version number:	4
Contact for queries about procedure:	Counselling Manager
To be read in conjunction with:	Application and Selection Process Guidelines for Applicants

Definitions

Placement Counsellors – these are counsellors who are training at an external training institution and are on a counselling placement at BCS

Volunteer Counsellors – these are qualified counsellors who see clients in a voluntary capacity at BCS

The process

Following a successful interview, all applicants applying to become Placement or Volunteer Counsellors at Basingstoke Counselling Service must undergo an external assessment.

The aim of the assessment is to:

- Determine the applicant's suitability to see BCS clients.
- Determine the applicant's potential to work with the unconscious and their awareness of the need for developing self-awareness and personal growth.

The external assessor is an experienced and well qualified psychodynamic counsellor or psychotherapist who has no other connection with the counselling service. The applicant should be unknown to the assessor.

A written report will be prepared by the assessor and sent to the applicant. The applicant is then requested to send a copy of the report to the Counselling Manager to share with the rest of the interview panel. A position of Placement or Volunteer Counsellor cannot be offered if the applicant is unwilling to share the assessment with the Counselling Manager.

The Counselling Manager may wish to discuss the report with the applicant, as part of the application process.

If the applicant is offered a position as a Placement or Volunteer Counsellor, it is recommended that a copy of the report is also made available to the applicant's new Supervisor at BCS as this will help in the process of allocating suitable clients. If, for any reason, there are aspects of the report which the applicant wishes to remain confidential, this can be discussed with the Counselling Manager, and appropriate extracts made available to the Supervisor.

Decision making

The decision on the applicant's suitability to be taken on as a Placement or Volunteer Counsellor is the responsibility of the Service, and not the assessor.

The assessment

A copy of the applicant's application form will be sent to the assessor before the interview. The Counselling Manager may ask for specific areas to be explored.

During the interview the assessor may explore any of these areas:

- personal history, past and present family dynamics, traumas or significant losses
- professional training and experience
- reasons for wanting to become a counsellor and relevant current life situation
- personal experience of counselling or psychotherapy
- understanding of the counselling process
- understanding of unconscious processes
- capacity to be in touch with own feelings
- any particular rigidities of the personality
- potential to work with negative reactions
- ability to relate - using the experience of the assessment