

Educational Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP) Programme London & Southeast

Prospective Candidate FAQs

EMHP Basics

What is an EMHP?

EMHP stands for Educational Mental Health Practitioner. They are the core workforce for the Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) and specifically trained to provide:

- Evidence-based interventions for mild-to-moderate mental health and emotional wellbeing issues
- Support to the senior mental health lead in each school or college to introduce or develop their whole setting approach
- Timely advice to staff in schools and colleges, and liaison with external specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education

EMHPs will be trained over the course of a year to offer brief, focused evidence-based interventions in the form of low intensity support and guided self-help to young people who demonstrate mild/moderate:

- Anxiety (primary and secondary school age)
- Low mood (adolescents)
- Common behavioral difficulties (working with parents for under 8s)

What do EMHPs do?

Under supervision, EMHPs will deliver and assess outcome focused, evidence-based interventions to children and young people with mild-to-moderate mental health problems, and their families, parents, and carers.

They will support the Senior Mental Health Lead to introduce or develop their whole school/college approach and give timely advice to education setting staff, and liaise with external specialists, to help children and young people stay in education. They will also liaise with supervisors to agree appropriate signposting and referrals for children and young people. EMHPs will play an important role in supporting and working with education to identify and manage issues related to mental health, and work with them to improve access to mental health services.

What are EMHPs trained to do?

Work across education and healthcare to provide early intervention mental health support for children and young people in schools and colleges. To help support schools and colleges to identify and manage issues relating to mental health and wellbeing as well as delivering high quality evidence-based interventions for children and young people experiencing mild and moderate needs and referring onto specialist support, as necessary.

Where do EMHPs work?

The delivery of the programme will be provided through a combination of taught days at the Anna Freud Centre, independent self-directed study days, as well as through working directly with children, young people, parents/carers in educational settings. This could include primary, secondary, and all-through schools, Further Education and 6th Form colleges, special schools, alternative provision, pupil referral units, virtual schools, home education or hospital schools.

Who do EMHPs work with?

You will work within a Mental Health Support Team (MHST), designed to help meet the mental health needs of children and young people aged between five and 18. The teams work in primary, secondary and further education settings and consist of:

- a team of EMHPs (usually four)
- higher-level therapists and senior staff, some of whom will undertake specific training to act as EMHP supervisors
- a service lead or team manager, who may manage more than one MHST across a regional area
- administrative support

You will be supervised throughout your training year and beyond. You will be supported by experienced staff members who have undertaken EMHP supervision training.

When do I start my practice as an EMHP?

Following the initial period of block teaching, it is anticipated you will then start preparing for practice, under supervision, with your new service at your allocated location. Your direct work with children and young people will commence shortly after this. It is suggested that you begin your practice with small caseloads before building your caseloads size as you progress in competence and confidence.

EMHP Recruitment

How do I apply to be an EMHP?

To apply for an EMHP trainee post, prospective candidates must follow a dual-application process. Candidates will need to apply for a role within one of the recruiting services and for the University training course at either UCL or KCL, depending on that service's allocation to a particular university. Trainees will not be accepted onto the training programme if they have only applied to the job or the university course.

EMHPs will be recruited and employed by either an NHS, voluntary or third sector service involved in provided mental health provision to children and young people.

Services will release job adverts at different times – we recommend that interested candidates set up job alerts for terms such as

- 'Mental Health Practitioner'
- 'EMHP'
- 'Children and Young People'

Details on how to apply for the university course will be embedded into the job adverts.

Can I apply if I live outside of the UK?

No. The university course requires students with Home Fee status (pre-settlement status or permanent residency). The course will not arrange student visa.

What experience will candidates need?

Each service will have specific requirements for their roles – Please pay particular attention to the person specification of the role you are applying for.

What qualifications will candidates need?

Both UCL and KCL request the following in relation to the EMHP training programme:

- A minimum of a second-class bachelor's degree (2:1 or 2:2) from a UK university or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard is required (in any academic subject).
- Evidence of prior experience working with children and young people is preferred.
- If your education has not been conducted in the English language, you will be expected to demonstrate evidence of an adequate level of English proficiency. The English language requirement for this programme is: Good.
- The course requires students with Home Fee status.

Can candidates still apply if they haven't yet finished their degree, by demonstrating a predicted degree award?

Candidates will need to have passed their degree when they are appointed to the role – by showing their degree certificate or a letter demonstrating that their degree award is pending. Candidates will not be accepted based on predictions alone.

Please also note that candidates will not be able to access this training with KCL or UCL if they are already enrolled on another Higher Education Institution (HEI) course.

How can candidates receive information about recruitment?

Candidates can express their interest in the EMHP role by filling in [this form](#). We aim to alert this mailing list to job adverts as they come out (but this is not always possible). We strongly recommend candidates also check via search engines up to five months prior to the course start date.

How many EMHPs will be recruited?

This will vary from year to year depending on demand but usually each service advertises for 4-8 EMHPs. In previous years, EMHP trainee cohorts have had between 30-50 students each at KCL or UCL in London & Southeast.

Do candidates need to apply to UCL/KCL more than once?

Only one candidate application is needed per university. Many candidates will apply for various EMHP trainee roles within an application cycle that may be aligned with the same or different universities. Candidates should apply to the university required by the job adverts, but repeated applications to one university is not necessary.

EMHP Training

Who will I be employed with for the duration of the contract?

Your contract will be with the local employer within your agreed locality and service.

Do I have to pay the course fees or get a student loan?

No, the course fees and your salary are paid by Health Education England.

How is the role split between in-service work and University led teaching?

The teaching is divided into three terms. For the first and second term, teaching will be delivered with a mixture of online and face-to-face delivery. Teaching will be held on three days per week during term 1. Practice Tutor groups will be held once a week in person at the Centre. During term 2, there are two teaching days per week. In the third term, Practice Tutor groups will continue to meet once a week. The remaining days are spent working within the service.

Will training continue over the summer holidays and half term?

As with other university led teaching, the training aspect of the EMHP programme will not take place during university holidays. As a result, EMHPs will be based within their service full time over this period to allow them to put their skills into practice and see their own caseload (under close supervision). Trainees should not take annual leave during term time.

What does the EMHP training curriculum look like?

Training will be delivered as part of lectures, seminars, and skills sessions; allowing EMHPs to put the skills they have learnt into practice as part of role plays and group discussions. Over the course of the year, training will focus on:

1. Fundamental Skills: CYP Mental Health Settings: Context and Values
2. Fundamental Skills: Assessment and Engagement
3. Evidence Based Interventions: Theory and Skills
4. Working, engaging, and assessing in educational settings
5. Common problems and processes in educational settings
6. Interventions for emerging mental health difficulties in educational settings

What is meant by the term 'guided self-help'?

- EMHPs will not be expected to treat young people. 'Treatment' implies an obligation to cure which is not the model for this programme. Instead, young people will be guided by their EMHP, through a course of self-help and self-management.
- Focus should be on working collaboratively with young people and their families towards a model of self-help.
- Goal setting and monitoring will not just be specific to the young person but will incorporate their support 'team'.

Can candidates do the course part time?

No, the EMHP course is full-time only (teaching and service-based casework).

Supervision

What supervision can EMHPs expect?

For the duration of EMHP training, EMHPs should receive close supervision that should include:

- Regular (weekly) case review
- Group supervision
- Support with skills development, such as video review and feedback

Contact

Please contact emhp@annafreud.org with any UCL related enquiries and cyp-mh@kcl.ac.uk for KCL related queries.