

CANDIDATE PACK

Mental Health Practitioner

Student & Academic Services

UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER 



OUR UNIVERSITY

Under the inspirational leadership of Professor Peter Bonfield OBE, the University of Westminster is a place where discoveries are made, barriers are broken, diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome. Serving more than 21,000 undergraduate, postgraduate, apprentice and executive students, our mission is to transform the lives of young people from all backgrounds. We seek to make the world a more inclusive, sustainable, better and healthier place through our educational, research and knowledge exchange endeavours.

Since our founding in 1838 we have stood out as innovators, committed to tackling social inequalities. In 2021, our University ranked 2nd in England out of more than 100 higher education institutions for social mobility. The ranking - produced by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and the Sutton Trust - compares the number of students from low-income backgrounds at universities, and the extent to which their studies helped them to move up the income ladder. Westminster has the second highest performance among universities in England.

As we focus forward to 2029, we will continue to do so in a way that is true to our progressive, compassionate and responsible values. Our education offer will be more personalised and authentic, giving students from all backgrounds an opportunity of transformative learning, helping them succeed in their studies and professional lives. Our curriculum will be employability-linked, leading to stronger outcomes and helping prepare our graduates for the world of work and for life. Our research and knowledge exchange will enable us to maximise our positive impact on societies in the UK and around the world in an environment where everyone is inspired to succeed. Our priorities of wellbeing, inclusion and sustainable development will help us as we navigate through the challenges and opportunities towards 2029.



OUR PRIORITIES

The University's 2022-2029 strategy, *Being Westminster*, sets us apart and builds on our unique history and achievements. In our University, we value social justice, moral conscience, inclusivity and equality, acting positively together to make change for good.

The University of Westminster has three priorities.

WELLBEING

Working and studying together at Westminster as a community of students and colleagues is a big part of our lives – doing so in an environment that places our wellbeing front and centre helps us to be safe and feel safe. We care for the safety, health and wellbeing of those around us as well as ourselves.

INCLUSION

All Westminster, colleagues and students are in a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and is a place where harassment and discrimination are not tolerated. As a responsible institution, we strive to ensure and to champion equality. As a progressive institution, we take pride in our diversity. As a compassionate institution, we commit to an inclusive culture that allows students and colleagues to reach their full potential.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We take inspiration from the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in how we drive our actions and activities and governance across our University. As a community, we bring together our collective energies to play our part in addressing the climate crisis and inequalities to enable a more sustainable and socially just world. We are one of the top 20 universities in the world in SDG 5 for providing equal access and supporting the academic progression of women. We are one of the top 25 universities in the world in SDG 10 tackling economic, health based and international inequalities. We are in the top 50 universities in SDG 12 for promoting resource and energy efficiency, having a sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services for all.



OUR OBJECTIVES 2022-2029

Against a backdrop of a changing and challenging higher education environment, the University has recently completed a major review of its objectives and strategy, and has published its commitments for the period 2022-29.

EDUCATION

We will offer personalised and authentic education, underpinned by an inclusive curriculum, to enable all our students, from all backgrounds, to engage in transformative learning and to succeed in their studies and professional lives. We will address global, political, and social challenges through a relevant demand-led and forward-looking portfolio. We will do this by offering authentic teaching, learning and assessment modes which immerse students in the wider-world through live projects, work-based learning and global opportunities. We will invest in our people to enable all teaching colleagues to plan and deliver exceptional learning experiences and professional colleagues to offer exceptional support. Students will be empowered by working in partnership with colleagues and fellow students to shape the Westminster experience. We will develop an integrated physical and digital environment that supports excellent practical, active and collaborative learning for all our students.

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Research and knowledge exchange are fundamental to our commitment to making a positive difference to the world and transforming lives. We are committed to research in four priority areas: Diversity and Inclusion; Health Innovation and Wellbeing; Sustainable Cities and the Urban Environment; Arts, Communication and Culture. Our excellence in research and knowledge exchange will infuse our education endeavour, inspiring and equipping our students as agents of change locally as well as globally. We will continue to grow our community of PhD researchers, ensuring that the Westminster postgraduate research experience remains sector leading and the foundation for great careers. In knowledge exchange we will focus on engagement with government, business and with the public and local community. We will achieve more when we identify shared interests and build partnerships with our communities and collaborate for the public good with a clear civic purpose.

EMPLOYABILITY

We will ensure that all our students benefit from employability-led learning and purposeful engagement with employers, business and industry, to give students from every background the best possible preparation for the world of work and enable the best possible employability outcomes. We will do this through the further extension and embedding of programmes such as work-based and placement learning; the Westminster Employability Award; Westminster Working Cultures; mentoring; and student enterprise. Employability-related learning will be a core and critical part of the courses and curriculum we offer, right across the University. It will be front and centre of life at the University for students and colleagues.



A key priority will be the development of a dedicated Centre for Employability and Enterprise at 29 Marylebone Road, intended to transform our student experience and our engagement with business, industry and employers. The Centre will provide a game-changing experience through which undergraduate and postgraduate students from across Westminster will come together and practise enterprise; develop an entrepreneurial mindset and skills; access training, work, projects, business advice and mentoring; and connect directly with employers. The future-focused environment of the Centre will scale up our employability provision, helping our students to be 'fit for the future' in the most challenging of post-pandemic labour markets and economic environments. It will strengthen links between our UK-based and international employer partners and our motivated, bright, work-ready students, affording employers access to a diverse mix of people right for the needs of the contemporary workforce.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

We will raise the international reputation and reach of the University, ensuring that 30% of our undergraduate community and 70% of our taught postgraduates come to us from overseas. Overseas partnerships will remain central to our global engagements. We will prioritise the outward mobility of our students to partner institutions, Contributing to students' development of employability skills and competences. We will extend and deepen our Trans-National Education relationships. These partnerships, particularly that with Westminster International University in Tashkent, will move beyond franchised or validated arrangements to embrace employability, alumni-related research, CPD and knowledge exchange connections.



OUR STRUCTURE

ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

Our structure is built to deliver an enhanced learning environment, stronger and broader industrial, international and professional connections and pioneering and impactful research. The University comprises three Colleges:

Westminster Business School

- School of Organisations, Economy and Society
- School of Finance and Accounting
- School of Applied Management
- School of Management and Marketing

College of Creative Arts and Technologies

- School of Architecture and Cities
- Westminster School of Arts
- School of Computer Science and Engineering
- Westminster School of Media and Communications

Liberal Arts and Sciences

- School of Social Sciences
- Westminster Law School
- School of Humanities
- School of Life Sciences

The University Executive Board comprises:

- Vice Chancellor and President
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Employability and Global Engagement)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education and Students)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange)
- Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
- Three Heads of College

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Our Professional Services teams support the effective and professional delivery of our teaching, research and knowledge exchange and the management of student residences and sports facilities.

- Academic Registry
- Business Engagement and Graduate Futures Directorate
- Estates
- Finance and Commercial Activities
- Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications
- Information Systems and Support
- People, Culture and Wellbeing
- Strategy, Planning and Performance
- Student and Academic Services
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Office
- Graduate School
- Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Mental Health Practitioner

Reports to: Senior Mental Health Practitioner

Department: Student & Academic Services

Grade: NG6

ROLE PURPOSE

This post is based within the Counselling and Mental Health Service and the post holder supports the Senior Mental Health Practitioner in providing mental health advice and support to students across the University.

The Mental Health Practitioner provides advice and support to students with mental health difficulties and plays a role in the safeguarding and protection of vulnerable students, through direct intervention or through signposting or referring to specialist services. The postholder supports liaison between the University and mental health services in the community and contributes to training across the University in relation to supporting students with mental health difficulties.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Manage a caseload of students with mental health difficulties, including those who have disclosed conditions prior to commencing their studies, to ensure they are effectively supported throughout their time at university. This includes assessing their needs, developing appropriate support plans, and coordinating care with internal colleagues and external services as required.
- Provide a flexible service offering support, outreach work, directed self-help, and advice with a wide range of emotional, interpersonal, and behavioural difficulties to help overcome barriers to the student's learning.
- Working under the direction of the Senior Mental Health Practitioner, to provide support for students experiencing mental health difficulties when a student's health is significantly impacting on their ability to study, ensuring that appropriate links are made with university colleagues and external health care professionals and services. To support students who may need to suspend studies due to mental ill health and their return to study after a period of interruption.
- Under the guidance of the Senior Mental Health Practitioner, provide support on matters relating to students' fitness to study, ensuring that agreed support plans are implemented and review meetings take place.
- With support from the Senior colleagues respond to complex situations/incidents, through consultation/attendance, where mental ill health may be a contributing factor.



- Assess students who may be at risk of suicide, self-harm and/or breakdown, and under the guidance of the Senior colleagues and Designated Safeguarding Leads, help them access appropriate support. Liaise with statutory services such as NHS and Emergency services alongside university services at times of crisis or emergency situations. To work closely with Senior Mental Health Practitioner to provide care for students following hospital admission, attending discharge planning meetings, liaising with external agencies, as required.
- Contribute to the whole-university approach to student wellbeing by assisting in the delivery of training to students and staff, by supporting activities to promote mental health awareness and wellbeing and by contributing to transition activities including open days and inductions.
- Keep informed of best practice related to mental health in Higher Education through training and networking and contribute to service development, improvement and delivery.
- Other duties appropriate to the grade as required by the Senior Mental Health Practitioner and Senior Management
- The University of Westminster supports hybrid working, with colleagues normally expected to be on campus for approximately three days per week, subject to service needs and with final arrangements agreed at the discretion of their line manager.

CONTEXT

The post is located in the Counselling and Mental Health Service, situated within the Student Support and Residential Life area within Student Academic Services (SAS) directorate, operating alongside counsellors and Specialist Mental Health Mentors.

Student and Academic Services (SAS)

- SAS provides professional, efficient, effective and consistent support and services for the whole University community and external partners. It leads on professional support for a wide range of governance, research, learning, skills development and wellbeing interventions that enhance the experience of students, colleagues, alumni and external partners throughout their relationship with the University.
- SAS activities are key to the success of the University's strategic objectives and enable the University to deliver on its mission:
- To help students and colleagues from different backgrounds fulfil their potential and contribute to a more sustainable, equitable and healthier society.
- To achieve this, SAS is organised into four clusters:
Business Operations
Library and Archives Service
Student Centre and Customer Experience
Student Support and Residential Life
- Uniting these services in a single Directorate enables a powerful synergy between support for learning, teaching and research & knowledge exchange, and co-locates



these with the professionals who lead on student wellbeing. In turn, this informs the whole-University approach to the wellbeing of all colleagues.

- SAS teams contribute to increasing success in the NSS/PTES/PRES, TEF, REF, KEF and Graduate Outcomes and therefore positively impact league tables. Services delivered by SAS student-facing teams are critical to achieving the priorities of the University's Access and Participation Plan.
- SAS is a large and diverse Directorate comprising circa 160 colleagues who, between them, work in every University building and have a strong online presence to support and collaborate with students and colleagues who prefer/need to work virtually. SAS teams are very flexible, and roles evolve with changing needs. There is a strong commitment to developing the skills and capabilities of colleagues through a proactive programme of colleague development. The post holder will be expected to engage in personal development and to be a role model to all members of the team.
- The post holder will be expected to embed and role model the University's values: Progressive, Compassionate, Responsible and our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion commitments in all that they do.
- The post is based in the West End and regularly works at all other University sites.

The University requires all post holders to have an understanding of individual health and safety responsibilities and an awareness of the risks in the work environment, together with their potential impact on both individual work and that of others.

DIMENSIONS

The Counselling and Mental Health Service currently operates on two sites (Cavendish and Harrow) offering support through in person and online appointments, drop in and group sessions. The Service also offers workshops and training for colleagues and students.

The role reports to a Senior Mental Health Practitioner. The postholder works alongside, and is March 2023 expected to form good working relationships with, other student support practitioners, including Specialist Mental Health Mentors, counsellors, wellbeing, DLS advisers and student advisers. The postholder is also expected to work collaboratively with personal tutors and other academic colleagues to develop support plans for students.

This post has no specific line management or budgetary responsibilities.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

Educated to degree level in a relevant field or have equivalent relevant mental health work experience with adults.

Desirable

- Relevant professional qualifications in the field of mental health (e.g., Nursing with RMN or CPN specialities, Mental Health Social Worker, Occupational Therapist)
- Current accreditation/registration with a relevant and appropriate professional body and provide membership details.
- Safeguarding training would be considered desirable for this role

TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Demonstrable experience in the assessment of mental health needs and the assessment of risk
- Relevant work experience, including working in a Further or Higher environment with students with mental health issues and/or community-based experience of working with people with mental health issues.
- Experience of managing casework effectively and sensitively with individuals presenting with varying degrees of mental health difficulties; able to work collaboratively with senior colleagues to manage high-risk or complex cases, while maintaining accurate and appropriate records.
- Experience of responding proactively to crisis/challenging situations involving mental health issues in a timely manner
- Thorough knowledge of mental health issues, practices, provisions, relevant legislation and the range of mental health services available where external referral may be required.
- A comprehensive understanding of the needs of students with mental health conditions in a Higher Education context.
- A high level of awareness of ethical and professional boundary issues which may present in this role.
- Demonstrable understanding of the legal and equal opportunities issues in the current Higher Education environment
- Experience of delivering training/workshops to staff and students, including those with limited understanding of the issues, to promote positive attitudes to mental health and support student success.
- Experience of effective liaising and networking, within and outside own work team.
- Commitment to actively participating in supervision



Desirable

- Experience of working with young adults and the issues of this age and stage of development and understanding of issues facing students
- Knowledge and experience of the impact of mental health problems on students' capacity to learn effectively

APTITUDES, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Essential

- Demonstrated competence in working with clients in crisis; proven ability to assess risk of self-harm to self or others; to manage and refer appropriately in such circumstances
- Ability to demonstrate a flexible and adaptable approach to working.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills (verbal and written), with experience of effectively dealing with individuals who are seeking help or advice with enduring mental health difficulties
- A firm grasp of requirements and limitations of confidentiality and able to maintain professional boundaries.
- Shows strong emotional resilience, staying calm and steady in high-pressure situations while helping others to regulate and contain anxiety.
- Ability to work effectively and collaboratively as part of a team, both within the Counselling and Mental Health Service and the University community to enhance the overall quality of the student experience.
- Well-developed time management and organisational skills, ability to prioritise and meet deadlines
- Ability both to take responsibility and decisions and to consult with and refer matters to colleagues when appropriate
- Ability to keep accurate records and contribute to service reports.
- Good IT skills including word processing, email and internet facilities.

Desirable

Experience of delivering training on topics related to mental health and wellbeing

Other

- Commitment to continuing professional development
- Satisfactory enhanced level disclosure from the DBS
- Fully committed to creating a stimulating learning and working environment which is supportive and fair, based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.



HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this vacancy, please visit our [vacancies page](#) where you will be able to download our application form template. You will then be requested to complete a quick registration before being able to upload completed application form and any supporting documentation.

Applications should include:

- A concise statement in support (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification and motivation for applying.
- You may also include an up to date curriculum vitae;
- names and contact details of two referees (although referees will only be approached at offer stage).

The deadline for receipt of applications is midnight on 4 March 2026

Interviews will take place on week commencing 23 March 2026.

An appointment will be made subject to proof of eligibility to work in the UK and satisfactory references being obtained.

At the University of Westminster, diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders.

We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.

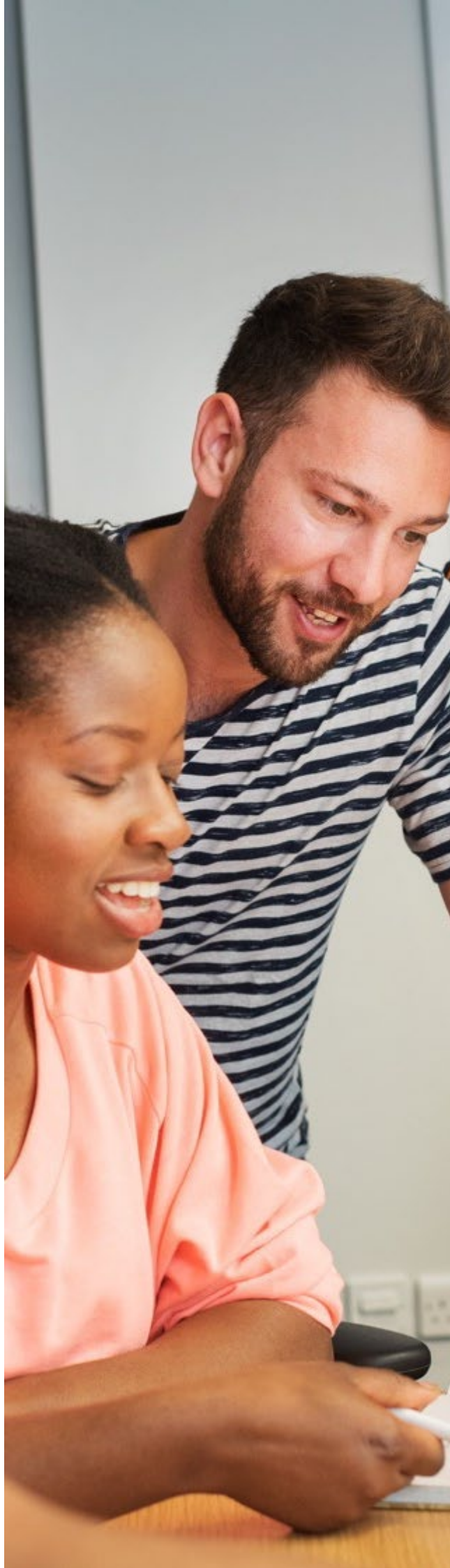
The University has adopted Smart Working principles to support and further our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aims of being an inclusive, collaborative and flexible employer. Further details of Smart Working can be discussed at interview stage.



OUR BENEFITS

The University offers a range of wellbeing and work-life balance benefits to recognise and reward the essential contribution our colleagues make to success and growth. Our benefits are inclusive for colleagues of all backgrounds including LGBTQ+ colleagues, disabled colleagues, pregnant colleagues, parents and carers, as well as colleagues of all genders, age, ethnicities, nationalities, religion and beliefs, and marriage and civil partnership status.

- 35 days annual leave per year, plus bank/national holidays and University of Westminster closure days (pro-rata for part-time staff).
- A generous occupational pension scheme.
- Annual incremental progression and/or cost of living reviews.
- Generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave.
- Flexible working and smart working.
- Learning and development opportunities.
- Free membership rates for a wide range of sporting facilities, including gyms at Regent Street and Harrow campuses, as well as the Chiswick Sports Ground.
- Employee assistance programme.
- The opportunity to participate in other attractive employee benefit schemes such as Cycle to Work, Eye Care Vouchers, Season Ticket Loans, and Give As You Earn.





westminster.ac.uk

The University of Westminster is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Registration number: 977818. Registered office: 309 Regent Street, London W1B 2UW. 9860/08.23/JT

