

A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, surrounded by lush greenery and mountains in the background. A person is standing on a hill to the right, looking out over the water. The title text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

Guide to Understanding the Role of a Psychologist and the Expectations of Their Service

Understanding the role of a Psychologist and what to expect in your first session can help ease any concerns or apprehension, while making you/your child feel more prepared and comfortable in engaging with the service.

The Role of a Psychologist

Expertise in Mental Health: Psychologists are trained mental health practitioners who specialise in understanding thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. They use evidence-based methods to help individuals improve their mental well-being and overall daily functioning at home, work or school.

Assessment and Therapy: Psychologists assess your concerns, help you understand underlying issues, and provide therapy to address them. They can assist with various mental health issues, from anxiety and depression to relationship problems and trauma. Psychologists can also undertake different forms of assessment (*e.g. Educational Assessment*) that can provide a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of the client's presenting issues, difficulties and challenges.

Supportive and Non-Judgmental: Psychologists provide a safe space to discuss sensitive topics without fear of judgment. They are bound by confidentiality, except in rare cases where safety or legal concerns arise.

What to Expect in Your First Session

Introduction and Review of Current Challenges

- Your Psychologist will introduce themselves, provide further information about their experience and the services they provide, as well as outline their approach in supporting you/your child.
- You'll likely answer questions related to all areas of your life and functioning - it's important for the Psychologist to obtain a detailed developmental history of their clients.
- Building rapport and relationship with the client is a very important first step. Gaining a shared understanding of your background, your current challenges/difficulties, and what led you to seek support will be a priority for the first session.

Defining the Purpose of Support and Therapeutic Goal Setting

- Together, you and your Psychologist will discuss what it is you hope to achieve in engaging with the service.
- Developing some collaborative therapeutic goals sets a framework for future sessions and helps track progress over time. Therapeutic or assessment direction may also come from you/your child's Mental Health Treatment Plan developed by your General Practitioner.

Therapeutic Approach and Confidentiality

- Your Psychologist may explain their therapeutic approach (*such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Motivation Interviewing, etc.*) and how it can help address your specific challenges and difficulties.
- Understand that what you discuss in therapy is confidential, except in cases where there may be risks to your safety or others', or as required by law.

Ongoing Questions and Service Feedback

- Feel free to ask questions about the process, the Psychologist's approach, or anything else on your mind.
- Providing feedback helps ensure you feel comfortable and understand the assessment and therapy processes.

Next Steps

- After the initial session, you may want to reflect on how you felt during the session.
- Your Psychologist may need to action any follow up tasks from the session such as; email you the key points from the session, contact your school, or getting in touch with your doctor.
- Therapy is a process that does takes time and effort. Be patient with yourself and the progress you and your Psychologist make.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss you/your child's situation, challenges or difficulties please don't hesitate get in contact via our [Bookings and Enquiries](#) form on our website or directly contact [Third Space Psychology](#).