



Association for Family &  
Systemic Psychotherapy

# AFSP Recommended Band 8a Job Description

**Effective from: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title:</b>	<i>Highly Specialist Family and Systemic Psychotherapist</i>
<b>Grade:</b>	<i>Band 8a</i>
<b>Specialty and place of work:</b>	*
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	10 Sessions/37.5hrs
<b>Professionally accountable to:</b>	Professional Lead Family Therapist/Consultant Family and Systemic Psychotherapist
<b>Operationally accountable to:</b>	*
<b>Reports to:</b>	*

## JOB PURPOSE

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\*To be added as appropriate to specific post

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### CLINICAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To be a member of the service team and to contribute to, participate in and adhere to the routines and policies of that service. To adhere to the organisation of the service particularly with regard to membership of the multidisciplinary teams.
2. To provide systemic psychotherapy as autonomous professional at highly specialist level employing methods based upon evidence.
3. At all times, work in ways which are sensitive to and appropriate for the needs of families from a wide range of racial, cultural and religious backgrounds. This



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- includes abilities to understand and offer therapeutic interventions to all varieties of family configurations. To take a proactive stance in challenging racism and discrimination and support the development of a culturally competent service. To take an active stance in reducing all types of harm and discrimination. To be responsible for implementing a range of systemic interventions for individuals and their families, including meetings with professional and community systems, adjusting and refining systemic formulations drawing upon different explanatory models and maintaining provisional hypotheses.
4. To undertake detailed and highly specialist psychological and systemic assessment of children and families using such assessment procedures as may be appropriate. This will involve face to face contact with all relevant persons to discuss and work through highly complex, sensitive and personal information related to their mental health presentation. This would also include the completion of personal and relational development, genograms, eco-maps, analysis and assessment of multiple levels of contextual meaning, deconstruction of current interactional patterns of behaviour and meaning around mental health issues and complex relationships, creating methods for client centred analysis of change, using live team observations, videotape analysis, and other systemic assessment tools.
    - To provide highly specialist psychological assessment including issues of risk.
    - To create and deliver, participate in and sustain highly specialised therapeutic interventions with groups of children/families and professionals which will necessitate drawing from a broad spectrum of systemic models and highly complex factors concerning historical and developmental processes that have shaped the individual, family or group.
    - The delivery of an agreed package of care, to children and families, with complex problems across the developmental spectrum, and managing these within the context of multidisciplinary working
    - The design, development, and provision of assessment and treatment interventions, which are delivered as appropriate by other staff (e.g. nurses, social workers, occupational therapy, educational workers, psychologists, other child health workers) under the post-holder's supervision.
    - Drawing upon complex assessment material to provide verbal and written systemic formulations that aid evidence based clinical interventions for children, families and other professionals presenting with highly complex problems. This will involve integrating and interpreting a range of highly complex material, across different contexts and at different levels of meaning.
    - Exercising autonomous professional responsibility for the assessment, treatment and discharge of clients whose problems are managed by systemic and family therapy-based intervention plans



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- The provision of highly specialist one-to-one clinical consultations to other clinical staff and thereby contribute directly to the formulation, diagnosis and intervention plans for families.
  - The provision of highly specialist one-to-one clinical consultations to other clinical staff on the use of family therapy and systemic psychotherapy techniques, and where appropriate, for working jointly with other team members in the provision of individual and group-based programmes.
  - Contribute towards the provision of advice and consultancy to local teams / services for members to incorporate informed systemic practice within their day-to-day work with clients. In this respect, to advise on the development and integration within the team of systemically based assessment and intervention techniques that might at a systems level be incorporated within the team's operational policy and be applied on a routine basis by other team members.
  - Initiate and participate in evaluating systemic approaches within particular areas of the service, so that the effects go beyond individual cases and improve the effective running for everyone accessing the service.
  - Contribute to the requirements of CPD provision and support the learning of multi-disciplinary staff team at all levels of expertise.
  - Participating in multidisciplinary meetings, safeguarding case conferences and reviews, etc. providing professional advice on individual care programme planning and other clinical matters as necessary.
  - As required lead, and chair when appropriate, multidisciplinary meetings, and participate in child protection case conferences and reviews, etc. providing professional advice on individual care programme planning and other clinical matters as necessary.
5. In particular, as part of multidisciplinary, complex care team working, to provide casework for people experiencing severe psychological difficulties. To prioritise workload to ensure that skills are used to address the more severe and complex psychological presentations including depression, ASD, ADHD, sexual abuse, eating disorders, conduct disorder, disability, and child protection; and maintain a position of curiosity and self-reflexivity throughout.
  6. To supply services within the context of existing multi professional teamwork. To negotiate appropriate professional relationships with both statutory and voluntary agencies to both ensure the referral of appropriate casework and communicate highly complex clinical information in a manner that is relevant and appropriate to each family and their specific circumstances.
  7. To maintain the records of service in line with the policies of the agency/trust.
  8. To provide input to health, social care and community-based services to enable best practice and service user choice in line with local service accessibility. This may



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include inpatient environments, specialist departments, general practices, health centres, local day centres, and residential and nursing homes.

9. To manage frequent exposure to highly distressing and emotionally charged circumstances and maintain substantial mental effort through frequent and intense levels of concentration and attention. It will also include relating to and maintaining systemic rapport with a large group of people across an age range and with often multiple and conflicting requests, views and abilities. This will necessitate managing sessions/meetings in which there is high expressed emotion, between family members and towards the therapist, managing systemic rapport as well as psychological interventions and team/live supervisory interventions, (time out, telephone, etc.) in order to maximise the relationship between team and family.
10. To deliver and complete clinical work whilst engaging in a range of often constraining physical postures, including sitting in constrained positions and working with persons on the floor.
11. To participate, when appropriate, in an area of a special clinical interest, clinical group or clinical problem of relevance to the service.
12. To communicate and present information, including using a computer, manipulating data, writing reports, and preparing/editing videotapes, for presentation to other professionals.
13. To participate in developing in-house professional development meetings within the Trust including discussion regarding in-house policies and service development.

### **MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP:**

1. To participate in the formulation and implementation of clinical and operational practices and procedures as appropriate.
2. To participate in the implementation, monitoring and updating of an operational policy and philosophy for the clinical area.
3. To prioritise workload to ensure that skills are used to address the more severe and complex psychological presentations within this area of work.
4. To ensure the principles of clinical governance are incorporated in service delivery by maintaining a high-quality service based on agreed clinical standards.
5. To participate in supervision of newly qualified systemic psychotherapists and trainees.
6. To facilitate the training of Trainee Systemic Psychotherapy students and trainees from other disciplines.
7. With support to participate in and establish own priorities for non-clinical activities e.g. projects, audits and research.



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### CONSULTATION, CLINICAL SUPERVISION, AND TRAINING:

1. To contribute to the provision of a systemic psychotherapy service.
2. To provide all professionals with access to systemic consultation, supervision, teaching and training, which supports them in working with emotional and behavioural problems.
3. To deliver in-service training workshops and seminars on systemic topics for practitioners (e.g. nurses, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, paediatric staff etc.), and to contribute to multidisciplinary training events which may be organised by other staff within the Trust.
4. To participate in developing department training initiatives, within the Trust or outside.
5. To participate in developing psychological, systemic and family therapy approaches to ensure that high quality placements for trainees are available, in line with University, Association for Family and Systemic Psychotherapy, UKCP and Department standards.

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

1. To receive regular clinical supervision from an appropriately qualified systemic clinical supervisor to ensure quality of professional practice.
2. Through the personal appraisal process, to engage in professional development that ensures that Continuing Professional Development requirements are met and that UKCP registration requirements are maintained.
3. To participate in annual personal development/appraisal reviews with relevant professional line manager.
4. To meet the competency requirements of the post's core dimensions under the Knowledge and Skills Framework.
5. To have access to professional development following agreement with service manager/professional lead in accordance with the AFSP CPD guidelines.



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### RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:

1. To participate in planning, designing and undertaking appropriate service audits. To assist the research and development agenda by proposing areas of research appropriate to advancing the nature of family and systemic work within the service specialty.
2. To participate in research of benefit to the designated service area and the service as a whole, including where appropriate work evaluating current systemic practice, work related to the development of innovative systemic assessment and intervention procedures, and work related to the improve the delivery of treatment. As appropriate, to co-ordinate and supervise the work of students undertaking research on a delegated basis.
3. To participate in developing and completion of service reviews, audit, and research activity, including collecting and recording data, completing data analysis, report writing, and completing research proposals.
4. To initiate and conduct rigorous reviews of service user.