

Student Counsellor

Job Description and Personal Specification

Hours	Minimum 6 hours per week (4 clients)
Responsible to	Counselling Manager and Counselling Coordinator
Based	Bristol or Taunton

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

Equal opportunities statement

SARSAS values diversity and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community; especially from minority groups/groups with a protected characteristic such as People of Colour, who are currently under-represented. We are a Disability Confident Committed Employer. Our current premises are wheelchair accessible.

About the role

We are pleased to announce that we now have placements available to counselling and psychotherapy students in Bristol and Taunton starting in September 2025!

Volunteers are an integral part of the services we offer victim-survivors of rape and sexual abuse, so thank you for considering SARSAS for your potential counselling / placement.

“SARSAS has been a great holding environment for a placement, supporting me to work with a range of clients. The team are always welcoming and interested in my training/progression and there’s such a wealth of expertise and knowledge in the organisation with people always happy to share it. I’d definitely recommend!” Current Placement Student”

About you

You are a counselling or psychotherapy student in your second or third year of accredited training, with a genuine commitment to supporting survivors of sexual violence. Ideally, you have experience working or volunteering in healthcare, mental health, domestic abuse, or related settings, and are familiar with safeguarding practices. You've undertaken personal therapy and may have some experience of clinical supervision.

You will be passionate supporting people who have experienced sexual violence and committed to promoting the values and ethos of SARSAS.

What we would like from you:

A commitment of at least one year in placement.

To be registered as a student with a professional counselling or psychotherapy body such as BACP, or equivalent.

To see 4 clients a week during a 6-hour block (Monday to Friday only)

What we can offer you:

4 counselling clients a week

Up to 2 hours of supervision a month (depending on course requirements)

Monthly line management with the Counselling Manager / Counselling Coordinator.

Mandatory training on safeguarding, GDPR, FGM, Prevent, Child Sexual Abuse (CSA), and working with clients in distress.

A supportive, caring and friendly working environment.

About SARSAS

SARSAS exists to relieve the trauma and distress and help rebuild the lives of survivors who live in Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and BANES, who have experienced any form of sexual violence, at any point in their lives. We campaign

and educate to raise awareness and bring an end to sexual violence. Partnership work with a variety of agencies locally and nationally is a priority to enable social change.

Our work is guided by a trauma-informed approach which understands how traumatic experiences can impact on survivors and keeps an awareness of the effects of trauma at the forefront of our approach to support.

This video developed as part of the 2021 [GSK Impact Awards](#) will give you a taster of the work we do.

Key Responsibilities:

Operational

- Deliver a counselling service that is responsive, safe, ethical, and effective as part of the SARSAS team.
- Provide support in a person-centred manner, using appropriate therapeutic tools to meet the individual needs of clients affected by sexual violence.
- Work in accordance with the SARSAS Counselling Framework and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.
- Maintain professional boundaries in all client and team interactions.
- Maintain accurate, confidential, and up-to-date records of all counselling sessions, particularly with regard to pre-trial therapy and statutory procedures.
- Ensure that all service activity is accurately recorded on the SARSAS database.
- Facilitate the contribution of service user feedback to inform and improve service delivery.
- Liaise with external professionals and referrers as appropriate.
- Represent SARSAS positively and professionally in line with the organisation's values and mission.
- Undertake counselling work under appropriate clinical supervision in line with training requirements.
- Adhere to placement learning objectives and any academic institution reporting requirements.

Supervision and Professional Development

- Attend SARSAS induction and all mandatory training relevant to the role.

- Engage regularly in clinical supervision and reflective practice, in line with BACP guidelines and SARSAS expectations.
- Stay informed of relevant legislation, clinical best practices, and safeguarding procedures related to sexual violence and therapeutic work.
- Attend academic supervision and submit placement-related documentation as required by your course provider.
- Seek regular feedback and act on learning goals to develop counselling competency.

Policy and Procedure

- Ensure all work is in line with SARSAS's policies and procedures, including safeguarding, confidentiality, GDPR, and data protection.
- Uphold SARSAS's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Contribute to a safe and inclusive working environment by following internal protocols such as the Health and Safety Policy and Lone Working Policy.
- Maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct as defined by SARSAS and relevant professional bodies.
- Work only within the limits of your competence, training level, and placement agreement.

General

- Commit to ongoing self-care and reflective practice.
- Attend SARSAS meetings, team check-ins, and learning events as required.
- Work in a way that promotes the ethos and values of SARSAS.
- Take a positive and proactive approach to problem solving and contribute to a supportive team environment.
- Communicate regularly with your placement supervisor and course tutor to ensure alignment between placement and academic learning.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the role. Some evening work may be required.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and training	<p>Hold a student membership with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), or other recognised professional body</p> <p>Be working towards a counselling or equivalent qualification accredited by BACP or another recognised professional body</p> <p>Be approved as 'ready to practise' by your training provider</p>	
Experience	<p>Experience of working with people who have experienced rape or sexual abuse</p> <p>Experience of working or volunteering within healthcare, mental health, domestic abuse, substance misuse, or a similar setting</p> <p>Knowledge of safeguarding legislation and experience of following organisational safeguarding procedures</p> <p>Experience of building positive and empathic relationships with service users/clients</p>	<p>Experience of working with other agencies, signposting, or making referrals</p> <p>Experience of participating in clinical supervision</p>

Knowledge and skills	<p>Knowledge of the impact of rape and sexual abuse</p> <p>Knowledge of safeguarding principles and procedures</p> <p>Commitment to equality and diversity with regards to age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation</p> <p>A sensitive, holistic approach to working within a specialist service</p> <p>Clear and effective verbal and written communication skills</p> <p>Knowledge of confidentiality, GDPR guidelines, and record keeping</p> <p>Ability to keep up-to-date and accurate records, including monitoring and evaluation data for organisational reporting</p>	<p>Knowledge of other key agencies and services</p>
Personal effectiveness	<p>Good IT skills and willingness to use SARSAS's database and remote platforms</p> <p>A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion</p> <p>Understanding and commitment to SARSAS's feminist ethos</p> <p>Commitment to continuing professional development</p> <p>Enthusiasm and passion for the nature of this work</p> <p>Self-awareness and a commitment to looking after your own personal wellbeing</p>	