



University

Placement Year

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OUR VISION AND VALUES

Eating disorders can be prevented, and recovery is always possible.

We help those affected now, and work to stop others being affected in the future.

Our strategic priorities are:

Answer the Call: Too many of those facing eating disorders feel they have nowhere to turn. When they ask for help, we are there. Through our Helpline, our range of support services and our online information and resources, we offer accessible support and guidance directly to those who need them. Whether that's for those with an eating disorder or those who support them, we are there for people when they need us most, empowering them to take the steps they need.

Spread the Word: Too many people living with an eating disorder tell us they feel alone. We will support those around them to know what to do to help. If people can recognise and respond to the earliest signs of an eating disorder, more will get the help they need earlier. Through awareness raising, training for professionals, and supporting research, we will continue to build a community that understands eating disorders and how to help.

Change the Story: Too often those with eating disorders are failed by the system. We will influence those with power to change this. We need policy makers to understand eating disorders and how to stop them. By influencing Government, the NHS and industry through the voices of those with lived experience and evidence led campaigns we can create long lasting change for everyone affected.

Our values are:

Be yourself: Be open and try to make it easy for others to be open too. We're all human: if things go wrong be honest, take responsibility and we'll work together to put things right.

Be kind: Treat everyone with respect, empathy and compassion. Diversity makes us stronger, appreciate these differences so everyone feels welcome, included, and valued.

Be curious: Keep an open mind and try new things. Ask questions, constructively challenge what isn't working and help find solutions to problems.

Grow together: Work collaboratively, build trust and learn from each other and from people with lived experience. Share and reflect what you know to make Beat stronger.

ABOUT THE ROLE

Beat offer psychology placement students the opportunity to gain direct experience of supporting people impacted by eating disorders through a variety of support services as a student Support Officer. This includes people with an eating disorders, their family, friends and professionals.

The direct support can include:

- Support by phone, email and webchat on our helpline
- Facilitating and moderating text based peer support in our online groups
- Provided evidence based guided self help on our support programmes

Along with this direct 1:1 client contact, we offer the opportunity to shadow and learn from Beat colleagues including:

- Shadowing our Clinical Associates facilitating workshops and peer groups to carers
- Shadowing Training to a range of education and health professionals
- Attending our quarterly events on eating disorders and emerging evidence
- Shadowing Lived Experience presentations and co-production engagements

As well as direct work students will have the opportunity to undertake small scale research projects. These could include qualitative and quantitative research on our services impact, as well as research to inform our policy and campaigns.

All students receive regular external supervision from an experienced eating disorder clinician, team training with colleagues within services, and additional training and development opportunities both internally and externally.

Students will be on placement for four days per week and can expect to spend half of that time providing direct support, and half of their time, undertaking research and/or project work and focusing on learning and development.

THE KEY DETAILS / FAQ

When is it?

The placement will begin in September 2027 (exact date tbc) and will finish in June 2028. (For students with specific dates just before or beyond the June finish, adjustments can be made)

You would work a 34-hour week, usually Monday-Friday. 2 of these days would involve working 1pm-9pm. See page 7 for more info.

Where is it?

It is home-based; most of the Beat team work remotely. There may be opportunities to attend in person events with colleagues, where this would further your learning and role.

Payment

The placement is unpaid but out of pocket expenses such as travel and subsistence would be covered in line with our expenses policy and agreed with your placement supervisor.

What does it involve?

Over the following pages we unpack what you would do on the placement, so please read on!

Why should I consider this placement?

As the UK's eating disorder charity, Beat offers great opportunities for placement students to be involved in the delivery of a range of support services and undertake research into eating disorders, with access to great learning opportunities, training, resources and networks. We want to equip future clinicians and researchers with an interest and knowledge base to build the support community of the future.

Why 9 months? Do you offer shorter placements?

We have just launched our first year running a placement in 26/27 and we are continuing with the 9 month programme as we feel this would give the best opportunity for students to gain and apply the training, skills and experience they will receive in their role.

We know sandwich-year placements are very popular with psychology students and feel we have something exciting we can offer with this opportunity.

This is currently the only university placement programme at Beat, but we may look to develop other types of opportunities in the future.

Could it lead to a job at Beat?

If you'd be interested in working at Beat in the future, this is a great opportunity to build your knowledge and experience in this field. Many of our paid staff started life as volunteers with Beat.

WHAT WOULD I BE DOING?

Thanks for asking! Hopefully the information on these next couple of pages will answer some of your key questions.

Responsibilities may include...

- Responding to individuals who contact us through our helpline via email, webchat and phone. Identifying individual needs and providing tailored advice, emotional support, signposting and/or onward referral, in line with Beat's helpline service training, protocols and templates.
- Delivering guided self-help on zoom for people who have been affected by an eating disorder, normally on a weekly basis, under the supervision of a qualified clinician.
- Facilitating and moderating Beat's online text based peer support group, alongside Helpline staff & volunteers.
- Supporting clinicians and Beat staff in the provision of carer workshops and peer support groups
- Shadowing and supporting training, co-production and lived experience presentations and engagements.
- Attending training and events to further your knowledge and experience.
- Participating fully in training and supervision.

What might a day look like?

Here are some of the things involved in a typical day on the placement programme

- Support provision on our webchat, email or online groups
- Debriefs
- Team meetings (with others delivering same service)
- Supervision
- Call preparation & Calls with allocated caseload
- Notes, reporting and follow-up after calls
- Team catch-ups
- Shadowing, training & self-focused learning
- Research/project work
- Break

What could a week look like?

You would be working for 34 hours over the week (usually Monday-Friday) with 2 evenings a week.

This will be split to provide time for the following:

- Direct service delivery
- Other projects such as research, audits or working with wider areas of the charity such as supporting our clinical team or campaigns
- Keeping up-to-date with further requirements of your university

Example of possible hours

Monday 9-6pm
Tuesday 11.30-8.30
Wednesday 11.30-8.30
Thursday 9-6

The time can be split to suit Beat's and your needs

For example...

MONDAY and TUESDAY could be providing some 1:1 support for people with an eating disorder and then some time providing support on our helpline.

WEDNESDAY could be for other projects such as research relevant to Beat's services or our wider research, campaigns and policy work.

THURSDAY could be a self-focus learning day where you utilise the time to complete any assessment or learning requirements from your university, shadow colleagues in other areas or to expand on an area or topic you have come across on your placement which you would like to learn more about.

TRAINING & SUPERVISION

01. Induction

You will be provided with a full induction where you will receive online and live training about Beat, our services, eating disorders, coaching, safeguarding and much more. This will also include time to listen to calls, reviewing webchats and shadowing services you will be delivering and to read and increase your knowledge of the content of the services we offer. You will be introduced to the wider services team at Beat and get to build workplace peer relationships from the beginning of your induction.

03. Placement Supervisor

You will have an allocated placement supervisor, who will meet you, set your objectives and help support you with your placement needs and requirements.

02. Supervision

You will have access to monthly group clinical supervision with some of our experienced clinicians. There are regular team meetings for each of the services that you will be delivering to help ensure you are fully immersed into our services team.

There are also daily debriefs to help support learning and consistency with contacts and a supervisor on shift and safeguarding on call manager at all times to support you with safeguarding queries.

04. Learning & Development

We are committed to supporting the learning and development of our team. There is an expectation for 10% of the working week to be spent on learning and development. There will be many opportunities for further training, shadowing and self-planned study.

HOW TO APPLY

If you would like to apply for a place on our placement programme as a student Support Officer, please go to <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/vacancies/> where you can complete an application form.

If you have any questions, please email talent@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

If you are invited to interview for a place on the scheme, this will be held remotely.

Diversity

Beat is firmly committed to equity and diversity in all areas of our work. We actively welcome applications from under represented communities and we are dedicated to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds, and needs are fostered and valued, and those with diverse backgrounds and experiences can participate and contribute equitably.

We value all members of our team and celebrate their diverse and unique identity and background, including (but not exclusively) religious belief, social background, ethnic and national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age. We will regularly evaluate and monitor our progress towards equity and diversity.

If you have any concerns or would like to discuss a reasonable adjustment to participate in this programme please contact us to discuss.

Lived experience

If you have personal experience of eating disorders, we ask that you meet our recovery criteria to safeguard your own wellbeing. We ask that you are well, have not displayed any symptoms of eating distress, nor received any treatment or therapeutic support for eating related concerns for a minimum period of two years.

To ensure the wellbeing of staff, students and volunteers, all applicants need to be no longer negatively impacted by the eating disorder and have resilience in order to do this type of work. We ask that you reflect on whether working at Beat at this time is right for you. Our key concern is that working at Beat does not impact you negatively. This will be discussed during your initial discussion of the role and interview, and your wellbeing will be an ongoing focus of the support in this role.

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