

# THE ADVOCACY ACADEMY



## Counsellor or Psychotherapist Placement Information for Applicants

### CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES

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# WELCOME

The Advocacy Academy (TAA) is a youth movement working to unleash the power of young Londoners to create a more just and equal society. Across a transformational six-month Fellowship programme, we give these young leaders the knowledge, skills and confidence to make a real difference in their communities.

Unsurprisingly, working with these impressive Advocates over the past four years has revealed the difficult circumstances many of them are living with and the enduring impact on their everyday lives and capacity as change-makers. We consider the Fellowship programme to have profound benefits to the psychological wellbeing of our young leaders. Primarily we see these benefits through theoretical positions and practices consistent with liberation psychology. We recognise, however, the limits to what TAA can achieve and the need for some Advocates to benefit from a more focused and personalised therapeutic approach. The waiting lists for existing NHS and community services are too long for those who are in immediate need.

This spring we began piloting short-term (12-16 sessions) one-to-one psychotherapy to a selection of Advocates. This was delivered by an honorary psychotherapist and our clinical supervisor. Our evaluation showed the pilot was valued by Advocates and the organisation. We have therefore decided to continue and expand the service. For this we need to recruit approximately two more honorary therapists to begin working with our Advocates from early November 2019.

We are seeking counsellors/psychotherapists who share our positions and values on social justice. We firmly believe that there is nothing inevitable about injustice and inequality, and that young people have the power to drive social change. We are seeking those who are actively committed to fighting inequality and sharing their skills and training in creative ways with communities for whom psychological services are often less accessible.

This is a fantastic opportunity for both experienced and trainee counsellors/psychotherapists to work at the heart of a fast growing, community-based and values-driven social justice charity. We are honoured to be supported by some of the sectors leading Foundations and Trusts, including: Comic Relief; The Paul Hamlyn Foundation; The Tudor Trust; and Esmée Fairbairn.

## What the placement offers:

- An opportunity to gain experience and / or supervised hours for professional accreditation
- Counselling contracts with clients for up to sixteen week's duration
- Group supervision, **Mondays each fortnight for two hours (maximum ratio of 1:3)**
- Recording of sessions permitted with written permission of the client.

Therapeutic sessions will take place on weekdays between 4:00pm and 8:00pm, or weekends, at The Advocacy Academy Campus on Vining Street in Brixton town centre. At the Campus we have a dedicated therapy space. Candidates would need to commit to seeing two to three clients each week for 32 weeks (each client would be seen for a maximum of 16 sessions).

Successful candidates will be provided with fortnightly, two-hour, mandatory group supervision by an experienced counsellor who has been our clinical supervisor throughout the pilot. The therapist to supervisor ratio will be approximately 1:3. You will also be supported by our Liberation Psychology Director to integrate community psychology and liberation practices into your work.

Candidates who are currently in training must be in personal therapy, have accrued a minimum of 50 client hours and will be asked to provide an approval letter from their training course. All candidates will require their own professional indemnity insurance.

Candidates will need to be comfortable working in a small, community based environment where we are constantly evolving and improving our programme and individual psychotherapy service. Successful candidates will have the opportunity to work with our Liberation Psychology Director to help develop the service to enable us to support our young people as they grow into inspiring social leaders.

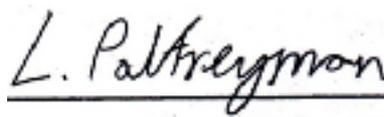
We encourage applicants with social justice experience and from people of colour, LGBTQ+ folk and those with disabilities. Please let us know if you have any special requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process. Any requests will be taken into account and will not affect your equal opportunity in the selection process.

We very much look forward to working with you to build this invaluable resource for young people.

With excitement,



**Amelia Viney**  
Founder & CEO



**Laurence Palfreyman**  
Liberation Psychology Director

# ABOUT US

## WHAT

The Advocacy Academy is a youth movement working to unleash the power of young Londoners to create a more just and equal society. Across a transformational six-month Fellowship programme, we provide a holistic education in social activism, giving these young leaders the knowledge, skills and confidence to act together to achieve long-term, systemic change. Our participants learn how to take action on issues that are personal to them, because movements against injustice and inequality are best led by those who are directly affected.

## WHO

Our beneficiaries are all young people aged 16-18 from across several London boroughs. 75% are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, 70% are women, 80% identify as working class. None have a history of civic participation. Since 2014, we have been building our capacity, and now offer a class of 20 places on the Fellowship, with four applicants for every space.

More than 250 expert campaigners, academics, politicians and creatives from across the UK come to pass on what they know to our Advocates. We also have youth workers who provide pastoral support to our participants across the retreat and throughout our programme.

## OUR WORK

We want young people to have the power to influence decisions about their lives, but right now 88% feel like their voices are completely unheard in society (*Sky Survation Poll, 2014*). We are hugely proud of how we have responded to this need over the past two years. Our first big achievement was to grow our 30-hour pilot programme into a 300-hour curriculum, fully co-created with our beneficiaries. Our method of education is absolutely unique - carefully crafted to give our Fellows the power to envision the society they want to be part of, and develop the skills to make it a reality.

Each Fellow is given the opportunity to:

- Attend over 150 workshops, delivered by expert campaigners, academics and politicians
- Write and deliver a lobbying speech to Helen Hayes MP in the House of Commons
- Host a roundtable on local issues with their Councillors in the Town Hall
- Plan and run a grassroots campaign together in their community
- Deliver their own creative campaigns, supported by one-to-one coaching

Our evaluation shows that the programme is having a transformative impact - of our Class of 2015-16, 86% felt better able to articulate their opinions in public with clarity and impact, 93% felt more confident to improve their communities, and 100% have taken action on an issue that matters to them because of the Fellowship. Read more about our work - and the values that inform it - on our [website](#). You might also enjoy our [videos](#) and our recent piece in [The Guardian](#).

# COUNSELLOR OR PSYCHOTHERAPIST PLACEMENT

We want all our young people to be passionate and powerful, but traumatic experiences have exhausted and worn-down many of our participants. Such experiences include: repeated exposure to violence; neglect; abuse; being a young carer; being queer in a religious or conservative household; not feeling seen or encouraged to grow into their potential; exposure to youth violence and gangs; and dealing with daily microaggressions, othering and being oppressed by systemic inequality. On occasion some have emotionally collapsed, dropping out of school, or thought about or attempted suicide. We feel they need a space to be seen, held, nurtured, believed in, supported and enabled. Whilst we frequently signpost our young people to NHS and other service providers we have identified a small group for whom these services are inaccessible or the waiting times are unacceptable. For them, TAA may be the first time they have opened up about their distress and are only willing to explore this within the context of TAA.

We know that short-term counselling or psychotherapy is not long enough to work through the complex challenges these young people face. However, the previous experiences of the members of our wellbeing team have demonstrated that excellent short-term counselling or psychotherapy can provide meaningful change. This includes: a supportive space in a time of need - reducing harm and risk; an opportunity to do deep work on a focused issue; a chance to provide a stop gap experience whilst they are on a waiting list for another service; and provide a positive experience of help-seeking which can build confidence and trust for longer-term engagement with NHS and other services. For some young people this service will serve as crisis management, for others we hope this service will be preventative.

The counsellor or psychotherapist placement will be in a dedicated room at our campus:

*The Advocacy Academy Campus for Young Activists, 7 Vining Street, London, SW9 8QA*

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title</b>	Honorary Counsellor/Psychotherapist
<b>Salary/Contract</b>	Honorary - this is a volunteer role
<b>Hours</b>	2-4 hours per week depending on agreed client load + 2 hrs supervision fortnightly
<b>Location</b>	The Advocacy Academy Campus for Young Activists, 7 Vining Street, London, SW9 8QA
<b>Reports to</b>	Liberation Psychology Director

## KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- To provide short-term weekly therapy (50 min sessions) for between two and three clients using a model or approach rooted in a recognised and ethical training
- To write summary session notes following each session and to keep notes in accordance with TAA data protection and GDPR policies
- To attend fortnightly supervision provided by TAA (two hours on Mondays)
- To prepare for supervision sessions by having an agenda/notes and bringing appropriate issues to supervision
- To be willing to learn, to develop your skills, to be open to receiving support and be challenged by your supervisor and fellow counsellor/therapists
- To collect client evaluation forms and to participate in the evaluation process
- To participate in shaping TAA's therapeutic approach including attending a workshop and focus group.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

- Qualified from or in a recognised and ethical training
- A minimum of 50 client hours (not including befriending)
- Experience facilitating short-term therapy
- If a trainee, currently in personal therapy
- A thorough understanding of social justice identity issues including race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, class, immigration status and more
- Awareness of safeguarding and data protection issues
- Experience of using supervision
- Able to commit to at least 32 weeks of providing counselling / psychotherapy to clients
- Uses a non-pathologising approach and language and understands defenses and 'problematic' behaviours as an intelligent response to coping with distress
- Work collaboratively, understanding therapy as a relationship between two equals on a journey together
- Welcome and work with difference with respect, curiosity and non-judgment
- Critically reflect on their power, privilege and oppression and how this may influence their client work
- Understand the impact of societal/community/familial intergenerational trauma on individuals and systems
- Understand and treat people holistically

### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

These are values expected of all TAA staff and associates:

- You are passionate about, and committed to, creating a more fair, just and equal world
- You're authentic and live with integrity - you're open, honest and brave
- You're compassionate, respectful and value others peoples' views
- You are reliable and have follow through - you do what you say you'll do, when you say you will
- You pursue growth and display humility - you value feedback and being outside your comfort zone
- You see and believe in the potential of The Advocacy Academy and want to help us get there

## HOW TO APPLY

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact: Laurence Palfreyman on **07508001260** or at **LiberationPsychologyDirector@TheAdvocacyAcademy.com**

To apply, candidates will need to complete the '[Counsellor or Psychotherapist Placement Application Form](#)'.

Candidates are welcome to present their supporting statement in an alternative format, such as a video or audio recording.

Closing date for applications is **9:00am Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

**Interviews:** Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Induction:** Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 5:00pm - 7:00pm

**Start:** Week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 subject to reference checks

