



COGNITION IN ACTION

**CAREER CONSIDERATION –
PSYCHOLOGIST AS AN
EXPERT WITNESS**

AN EXPERT WITNESS IS....



- Someone able to provide courts, tribunals or oral hearings with scientific or technical information and opinion, likely outside experience and knowledge of judge, magistrate, or jury.
- By virtue of knowledge, training or experience, they can comment on aspects within their field of expertise
 - Professional opinions must be objective and unbiased.

PSYCHOLOGISTS AS EXPERT WITNESSES



**BPS
GUIDELINES**



PROCEDURES



**CAREER
PATHWAYS**

PSYCHOLOGISTS AS EXPERT WITNESSES

Psychologists can be appointed expert witness through variety of routes:

Forensic

Clinical

Educational



However, unlike the titles above, Psychology Expert Witness is not a legally protected title

It is not formally recognised as a qualification

PSYCHOLOGISTS AS EXPERT WITNESSES



- Instead, suitable criteria for validating competence of Psychology Expert Witness may include:
 - Relevant graduate/post-graduate qualifications specific to client/case in question
 - Several years relevant professional experience after initial qualification
 - Articles published in recognised journals or publications relevant to issue in hand
 - Recent professional experience in specialist area required for the case

PSYCHOLOGISTS AS EXPERT WITNESSES

- As well relevant qualifications and experience, they should be registered with relevant professional body – e.g.,
 - Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC)
 - British Psychological Society (BPS)
- See links below to access further information on BPS careers
 - [BPS Careers](#)
 - [BPS Careers Guide](#)
 - [BPS Career YouTube channel](#)

PSYCHOLOGISTS AS EXPERT WITNESSES

- Click the links below to access further information on being an expert witness from the BPS
 - [BPS Journal Links](#)
 - [BPS Day in the Life of an Expert Witness](#)

LINKS TO BPS PSYCHOLOGISTS AS EXPERT WITNESSES:



- [Psychologists As Expert Witnesses - Guidelines and Procedures for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland](#)
- [Guidance on the Use of Psychologists as Expert Witnesses in the Family Courts in England and Wales](#)
- [Guidance for Expert Witnesses undertaking Remote Psychological Assessments](#)

BPS EXPERT WITNESS ADVISORY GROUP

- Expert Witness Advisory Group (EWAG) launched member's survey of psychologists who work, or wished to work, as expert witnesses in civil and criminal courts (January 2018).
- Aim:
 - Gain understanding of experiences of psychologists working as expert witnesses or wishing to become one.
 - Identify areas EWAG and society can support.

BPS EXPERT WITNESS ADVISORY GROUP – KEY FINDINGS

- Less than 2/3 reported receiving specific training.
- New civil and family procedure rules resulted in changes to instruction, including capped fees and revised timescales.
- ½ admitted occasions they were asked to change opinion/conclusions by person instructing them.
- ½ indicated never/seldom receive feedback on work
- See: [Psychologists As Expert Witnesses: EWAG Survey Results](#)

