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Dr Shaun Parsons

**Consultant Forensic Psychologist, Registered Psychologist,
Chartered Psychologist, Chartered Scientist, Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society,
Fellow of the Higher Education Academy**

Academic Qualifications

BSc (Hons), Health Studies, 1993, University of Sunderland.

Graduate Diploma in Psychology, 1995, University of Sunderland.

Certificate of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, University of Newcastle, 1998

PhD The DSM Cluster B Personality Disorders: Validity of the concept and effects on primary care, 1998, University of Newcastle.

MSc in Applied Forensic Psychology, University of Leicester, 2002.

Professional Qualifications

Forensic Psychologist registered with the Health and Care Professions Council, registration number PYL18252

Associate Fellow British Psychological Society (AFBPS), Chartered Psychologist and full member of the Division of Forensic Psychology, BPS number 92322, Chartered Scientist.

Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Recognition Reference 17432.

Professional Experience

My recent professional practice has concentrated on applying a risk assessment model to parenting assessment. I particularly focus on the association between personality structure and adult attachment style as a method of explaining past difficulties and parenting and the use of this information to provide a risk assessment that is robust and based upon sound scientific theoretical underpinnings.

I have also received specialist training on working and assessing sexual offenders and their families including partners' ability to protect. I have run and led Sex Offender treatment programs (SOTP) and also undertaken research in the use of polygraphy in the management of sex offenders in the community, this work led to publications in peer reviewed journals (references 1, 4, 5 below). I have undertaken therapy with the survivors of childhood sexual abuse including assessment and treatment of adult psychopathology resulting from childhood sexual abuse.



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In general Forensic Psychology practice, I have extensive experience of mental health screening and personality assessment. In my PhD I worked in three primary health care centres screening for mental health issues and personality disorder on a sample of over 1000 people attending their general practitioner (references 6 and 7 below). I continued this interest in detecting mental health problems, particularly those that are commonly missed, by working with my colleague Professor Don Grubin and others in first of all exploring the epidemiology of mental health difficulties among new receptions to prisons in England and Wales. Based upon this work we developed a new reception screening instrument which was adopted throughout HM Prison Service and I was then a trainer in the roll out of this instrument. Finally, we concluded this work with a large scale study to examine the effectiveness of the screen and the training we had given. This work led to a number of publications in peer reviewed journals and official reports (references 2, 3, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13 below).

I have worked with both perpetrators and victims of domestic violence since 1998. This has included anger management and teaching enhanced thinking skills to perpetrators and individual work for post traumatic symptoms with victims. In terms of assessing domestic violence I am trained to use structured risk assessments such as the HCR-20 and the SARA to provide a firm reliable evidence based risk assessment of future violence. I am also able to assess a partner's ability to protect both themselves and children from the effects of emotional, physical and sexual violence.

I have treated trauma victims including sexual abuse survivors using cognitive behavioural therapy and I have received training in Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR). I have also used brief therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy to treat anxiety and depression and behavioural therapy in the treatment of phobias.

I undertook the bulk of my Forensic Psychology training in a medium secure unit in Newcastle upon Tyne undertaking psychological assessment and treatment of individuals with severe and enduring mental health and personality difficulties which had caused them to have contact with the criminal justice system. This work included cognitive behavioural programs for survivors of childhood sexual abuse, severe personality difficulties and violent and self-harming behaviours.

I have received specific training in the use of structured and semi structured clinical interviews for mental health problems during my PhD and my forensic training and research and I have also acted as a trainer myself. I have received formal PCL-R assessment of Psychopathy training from the Darkstone Organisation and Robert Hare achieving the Gold Standard of competency. In addition, I have received training in use of the HCR-20 Risk Assessment of Violence matrix.

I have worked with service users with maladaptive substance use difficulties and addictions and I am able to assess a range of substance use issues including risk of relapse.

I have undertaken training in assessing Adult Attachment both from the Anna Freud Centre which had a 'psychodynamic' focus and from Middlesex University in using the Attachment Style Interview.

Current Clinical Practice

All psychologists our company are engaged in current clinical practice and/or research, in addition to the expert witness work we undertake. Our company offers individual and group therapy for a range of psychological difficulties including anger management and the treatment of trauma related symptoms and PTSD.

I am an active researcher in the field of Forensic Psychology. I am currently engaged in research exploring the use of polygraphy for managing internet sexual offenders in the community.

All Registered Psychologists working for our company undertake regular external training events contributing towards our Continued Professional Development. Reports are regularly peer reviewed and the accuracy of all psychometric test results undergo rigorous quality assurance procedures.



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Areas of Expertise

Family and Capacity

- Parenting assessment including risk assessment of physical and sexual abuse, violence (including domestic violence) and partners' ability to protect.
- Assessment of the effects of childhood physical or sexual abuse on adult functioning.
- All aspects of Care proceedings
- Assessment of adult attachment and related difficulties.
- Assessment of capacity as defined by the Mental Capacity Act 2005 particularly in cases of sensory impaired clients.
- Psychological aspects of child physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- Family assessments
- Substance abuse and dependence in a forensic context
- Psychological effects of matrimonial / relationship breakdown and abusive relationships

Criminal

- False confessions and assessment of suggestibility in police interviews
- Offender risk assessment (including sex offenders)
- Fitness to plead (including intellectual ability)
- Management of sex offenders in the community
- Detection and management of psychiatric disorders by the police and prison services
- Criminal responsibility suggestibility and compliance in people with learning disability
- False confessions and assessment of suggestibility in police interviews Defences of Automatism
- Strength of eye witness testimony / evidence
- Police practice and procedure
- Assessment and diagnosis of Psychopathy (PCL-R)

Employment, Personal Injury and immigration

- Psychological assessment of fitness to work/suspicion of malingering
- Assessment of stress related symptoms in the workplace symptoms
- Anxiety, depression, phobias and other psychological problems
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the assessment of psychological consequences of trauma
- Assessment of fitness to work / suspicion of malingering and exaggeration of symptoms

Membership of professional bodies

Associate Fellow and Chartered Member of the British Psychological Society (full member of the division of Forensic Psychology).

Registered Forensic Psychologist with the Health and Care Professions Council



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Employment

Present Employment:

Director of Parsons Marshall Psychology Limited (employed as Consultant Forensic Psychologist)

Significant Past Appointments:

Clinical Lecturer in Clinical Psychology University of Newcastle and Honorary Forensic Psychologist Newcastle Northumberland and North Tyneside NHS Trust, August 2001 - September 2005

Lecturer department of Psychiatry University of Newcastle, November 1995 - August 2001

Research Associate, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Newcastle, June 1995 - November 1995

Visiting lecturer School of Health Sciences University of Sunderland, October 1993 - November 1995

Relevant Publications:

Madsen, L; Parsons, S; Grubin, D (2006); The Relationship Between The Five Factor Model And DSM Personality Disorder In A Sample Of Child Molesters Personality and Individual Differences. Vol 40 (2), Jan, pp.227-236

Parsons S, Walker L, Grubin D (2001) Prevalence of Mental Disorder in Female Remand Prisoners. Journal of Forensic Psychiatry 12. 1. 194-202

Gavin N, Parsons S and Grubin D (2003) Reception Screening and Mental Health Needs Assessment in a Male Remand Prison. Psychiatric Bulletin 27, 251-253

Grubin, D; Madsen, L; Parsons, S (2004) A Preliminary Study Of The Contribution Of Periodic Polygraph Testing To The Treatment And Supervision Of Sex Offenders. Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology; 15 (4), pp.682-695

Grubin, D Madsen, L; Parsons S; Sosnowski, D; Warberg, B (2004) A Prospective Study Of The Impact Of Polygraphy On High-Risk Behaviors In Adult Sex Offenders. Sexual Abuse: Journal of Research and Treatment. Vol 16(3) pp. 209-222

Parsons. S. (1997) The Epidemiology And Effects Of Borderline Personality Disorder In Primary' Health Care. Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing (4) pp 145-146.

Parsons. S, Walker. L. (1998). The Treatment Of People With A Personality Disorder In Primary' Healthcare Settings. Mental Health Practice . (1) 7, pp 16-20.

Dodds F, Rebar-Brown A, Parsons S, (2000) A Systematic Review Of Randomised Trials That Attempt To Identify Interventions That Improve Patient Compliance With Prescribed Anti-Psychotic Medication. Clinical Effectiveness in Nursing, (4) 2 pp 47-53.

Invited Papers:

Parsons S. Working with Depression. Mental Health Practice. 3. 4, 32-36. 1999

Official Reports (Unpublished but Public):

Grubin D, Parsons S, and Hopkins C, Report On The Evaluation Of A New Reception Health Questionnaire And Associated Training. Report for Her Majesty's Prison Service (1999).

Grubin D, Parsons S, and Walker L, Mental Health Screening in Female Remand Prisoners. Report for the NHS National Programme on Forensic Mental Health Rand D/ HM Prison Service. (2000)

Grubin D, Parsons S and Gavin N, HMP Holme House; Post Reception Screening Mental Health. (2001)

Grubin D, Parsons S and Gavin, Mental Health Needs Assessment In A Male Remand Prison. Report for South Tees Health Authority. (2000)



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