



Dance movement psychotherapist

Dance movement psychotherapists use dance and movement to help people deal with emotional, psychological and physical issues.

What does the job involve?

- working with people who have emotional problems, learning difficulties, or physical or mental illness
- watching the movements of clients to assess their current state
- planning a routine of movements based on the clients' needs
- choosing the right interaction techniques, such as role play
- selecting music and props for sessions
- giving therapy sessions and helping clients work through their issues
- monitoring clients' progress and updating records
- working with colleagues and other health professionals.

Routes and choices while at school:

You will need to try to get at least five GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent qualifications. These should include English, maths and dance. Other relevant subjects include performing arts, psychology, medicine or nursing.



Skills You'll need:

- counselling skills including active listening and a non-judgemental approach
- knowledge of psychology
- patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations
- sensitivity and understanding
- knowledge of dance or movement forms
- the ability to accept criticism and work well under pressure
- to be flexible and open to change
- the ability to understand people's reactions
- to be able to use a computer and the main software packages competently



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How to get into this role:

You can get into this job through:

- a university course

University

You'll need a postgraduate master's degree (MA) in dance movement psychotherapy recognised by the [Association for Dance Movement Psychotherapy UK](#).

To do an MA you'll need:

- a degree in a relevant subject like dance, performing arts, psychology, medicine or nursing, or an equivalent professional qualification
- 2 years' background in at least one dance as well as experience of other forms of dance and movement
- the ability to improvise and use movement as a form of expression year.

Volunteering

You'll need paid or voluntary experience of working with vulnerable people. You could get this through youth work or volunteering to support people with disabilities or mental health issues.

You can find volunteering opportunities through [The National Council for Voluntary Organisations](#) and [Do IT](#).

Further information

Career tips

Dance movement therapists offering sessions outside the NHS, or who are self-employed, may charge between £40 and £60 an hour, depending on their experience.

You can [get more advice about careers in dance movement psychotherapy](#) from the Association for Dance Movement Psychotherapy UK.



Career path and progression

With experience you could:

- teach dance movement psychotherapy
- provide clinical supervision to less experienced colleagues
- become a consultant
- set up in private practice
- work on a self-employed or freelance basis

Rates of Pay

If you are a Dance movement psychotherapist working with the NHS, the salary is usually based on the NHS Agenda for Change pay rates. You would start on Band 6, £37,831 to £46,100 a year.

With experience this can rise to Band 7, £46,244 to £53,789 a year. The current pay scales are from April 2023.

Outside the NHS your income would vary according to whether you were freelance or employed. This can range from £40 to £60 an hour.