# Assessment Explainer

*Understanding your assessment with Gateway Psychology*



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If you've been referred to us for a psychological assessment or we have recommended this type of work, we know that it is not always clear what 'psychological assessment' means.

This short guide is designed to help you understand what to expect and what the process has been to get to this point.

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# Who is Gateway Psychology?

- We are an independent private psychology company. We are contracted by Local Authorities, private individuals, insurance companies and other organisations to provide psychological services, including assessments and therapy.

- We are not part of Social Services or the Local Authority.




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# We have had a lot of delay getting to this point. Why is that?



- We understand that it can be very frustrating to experience delays when help is badly needed. We try to respond as rapidly as we can.
- Unfortunately, we are one link in a lengthy chain of events that can include Social Worker assessments, Local Authority funding applications etc. It is best to follow up with your Social Worker who has a pivotal role in all this.

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# What is a psychological assessment?

We undertake psychological assessments, which we sometimes also call ‘assessments of therapeutic need’, to help us understand more about your child or young person and their needs. This includes how they fit in and interact with you and the family in general. The assessments also help to inform the direction of therapy we plan to take.



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# What happens in a psychological assessment?

- We will usually meet with you (the parents/carers) first to discuss your situation and to find out more about your child or young person.
- After that, your assessment may involve completing questionnaires, undertaking different activities and discussion (talking) between the clinician and you/your child or young person.
- We may also observe your child/young person at home or at school.
- We usually talk to your social worker or other professionals involved too. Other professionals, like your child's teacher, will be asked to fill in questionnaires about your child.
- Your clinician will explain the process at the start of the assessment. If you have any questions, please let us know.

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# Video and audio recording

## Assessment sessions usually need to be video and audio recorded.

We will ask for your verbal and written consent before recording any of your sessions. Your clinician will use these for analysis purposes and to prepare for feedback sessions with you.

Your video recordings will be stored in accordance with our Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy.

## Can I view my video recordings?

Your clinician will share sections of the videos with you but will not give you a copy of the videos.

## Will my videos be shared anywhere else?

Your clinician may share your videos confidentially with their supervisor. We will ask for your consent before doing this. We will not share your videos anywhere else, unless required to by law.

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# What happens if I can't attend an appointment?

**Please be advised that you must let us know at least 24 hours in advance if you cannot attend an appointment.**

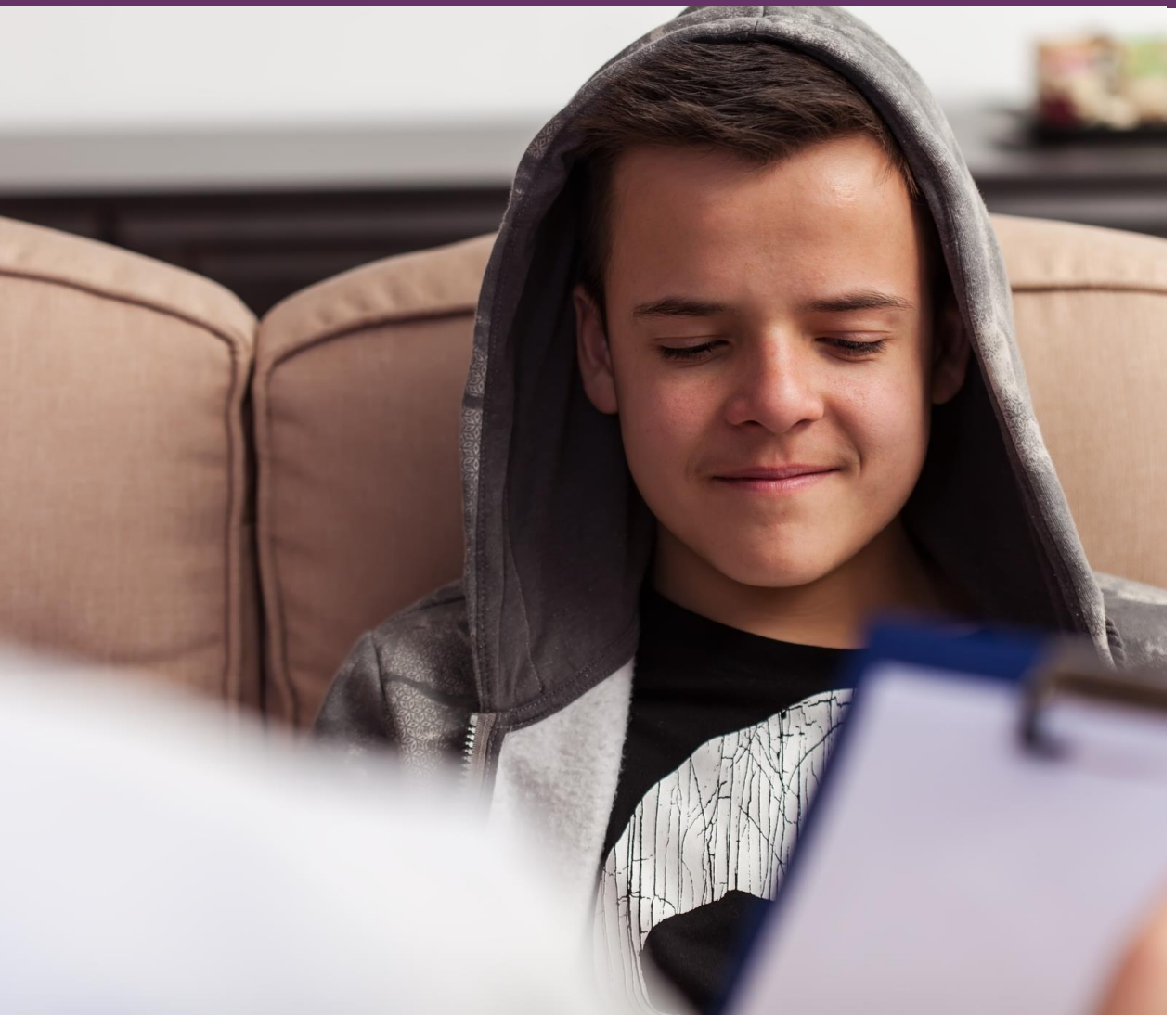
Missed sessions without notice or short notice cancellations will need to be charged. Because assessments are usually a fixed number of hours, missed sessions without notice have a serious impact on our ability to complete the work.

Please see our terms and conditions for more information.



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# Are assessments different to therapy?



**Yes, psychological assessments are quite different to therapy.**

The goal of assessments is to find out more about your situation and to understand the needs of your child or young person.

On the other hand, therapy is designed to help your child or young person (and your family) work through the difficulties they may be experiencing, usually identified as a result of the assessment.

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# Why does your child/young person need an assessment?

**Psychological assessments are really important, and we try to make sure that most of the children or young people we see are given this service.**

That's because they help to ensure that we put the most appropriate therapeutic plan in place and give us an in-depth understanding of your situation.

**If our work with you is being funded by the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund, a psychological assessment may be required as a part of the agreed package of work.**

If you intend to fund the work privately or through a different avenue, we may recommend an assessment, or you can ask us to undertake one if you feel it is needed.

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# How long do psychological assessments take?

**We aim to complete assessments within 3 months from the time we receive funding agreement. This depends on the scope of the assessment.**

Your assessment includes observations, liaising with professionals and report writing, as well as the time spent ‘in the room’ with your clinician. Timings can be impacted by funding delays, difficulties with making appointments with third parties (like schools) and how regularly we see you.



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# What happens after a psychological assessment?



After your assessment has been completed, you and your Local Authority/Regional Adoption Agency (as applicable) will decide how best to proceed.

We may move on to one-to-one therapy work with your child/young person (and possibly with you as parents/carers too) if that is what is agreed.

Please note that we will need funding agreements in place before starting any new piece of work.

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# Where are appointments held?

- Most appointments will take place at our specialist therapeutic venue in Stoke-on-Trent.
- We do not see clients in their home or elsewhere.
- We may offer virtual sessions if required or appropriate for the assessment.



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# Our contact information

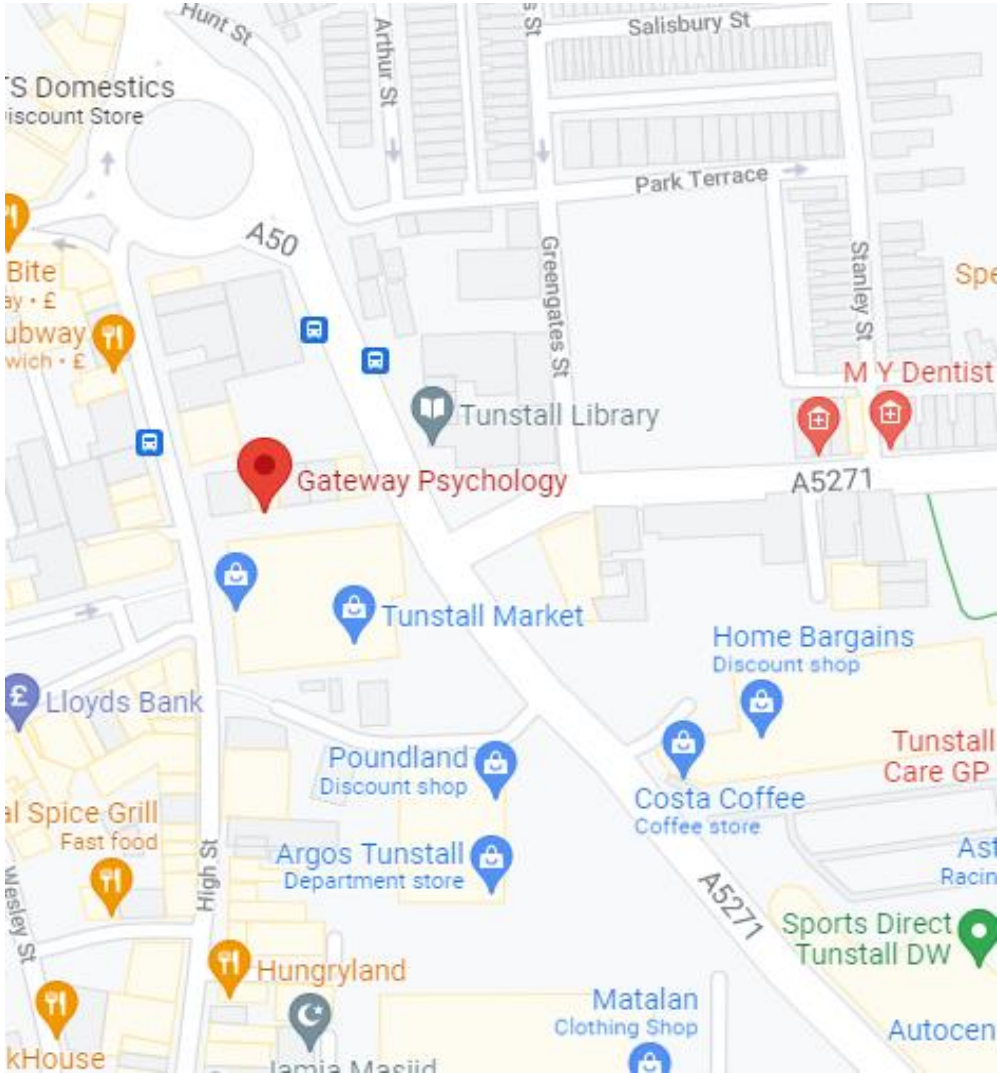
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