

FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

What is it?

Forensic psychology is a highly specialized area which involves the application of clinical psychology to the legal system in order to understand, analyze and prevent criminal behavior.

Who needs it?

Patients are often referred for forensic evaluation when they are involved in legal proceedings either as a victim or an offender.

What is involved?

The referred patient will meet with a forensic psychologist for a comprehensive psychiatric evaluation and psychometric assessment including:

- relevant psychosocial history
- mental health history
- current mental state and functioning
- impact of the offence/injury/trauma on psychological wellbeing
- diagnostic consideration
- risk of reoffending (offenders only)
- recommendations for management, treatment and sentencing (if applicable)

A comprehensive report is then compiled to provide an overview of factors relevant to the matter which a Court should take into consideration.



Types of Forensic Assessment

- Criminal responsibility and fitness to stand trial
- Pre- sentence and mitigation reports
 - provide clinical evaluations to assist the Court in sentencing decisions
 - identify any mitigating factors relevant to offending behavior which may impact sentencing
- Medico-legal
 - provide an independent opinion regarding claims and disputes relating to accident/injury, WorkCover, work related stress, medical negligence, psychological trauma
 - consider the impact of the accident/injury on the short and long-term functioning and mental health of an individual, as well as identifying any pre-existing psychological issues which may contribute to recovery
- Child custody disputes and Family Court matters
- Sex Offender Risk Assessment
- Violence Risk Assessment
- Personality and cognitive functioning