

Programme Specification

MSc Psychology

This document applies to students who commence the programme in 2016/17

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	MSc Psychology accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS)
4.	Final award or Awards	MSc
5.	Programme titles	MSc Psychology
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Taught UW campus, Block Delivery
8.	Mode of attendance	Full and Part-time Block Delivery (Weekends) and lectures across the 12 weeks of the semester
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement	The BPS Quality Assurance Policies and Practice for First Qualifications in Psychology (2009).
11.	Date of Programme Specification Preparation/ Revision	Programme reaccredited by BPS April 2015, September 2015, August 2016 (Regulations amended - Section 20) November 2016 Minor updating

12. Educational aims of the programme

Aims and outcomes for the programme were specified with regard to the aims of the TCRF (Taught Courses Regulatory Framework); the requirements of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ); and the syllabus of the BPS Graduate Basis for Chartership.

Programme Aims:

The programme aims to provide:

- a conversion programme that is a preparation for the next stage in a career in Psychology by enabling students to achieve Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) with the BPS (on completion of the full masters programme only);

- a flexible, student-centered forum for the advanced study of core subject areas in psychology;
- opportunities for the systematic development of the skills of objective analysis, evaluation, and presentation to enable students to further develop confidence in effectively appraising or researching core subject areas in psychology;
- a stimulating academic environment which is based on the values of academic openness and critical appraisal;
- a critical understanding of the historical context of psychology, a critical understanding and application of different research methods, and the ability to design and conduct an independent original project in psychology (on completion of the full masters programme only).

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

The programme subject specific learning outcomes have also been developed in accordance with the UW Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Demonstrate a systematic and critical understanding of the core subject areas in Psychology, and a critical awareness of their cutting edge issues;
2. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and understanding of appropriate theory, empirical research and scholarly techniques in Psychology; and their application to the critical analysis of the disciplines core subject areas, methods of inquiry and new insights in the discipline;
3. Apply systematically and with originality, advanced knowledge and understanding of the core subject areas and research methodologies in Psychology, and deal with complex issues;

Cognitive and intellectual skills

4. Communicate to specialist and non-specialist audiences a systematic understanding and a critical analysis of issues and new insights in Psychology;
5. Independently design and conduct an original research project using theory and empirical research from Psychology through a process of advanced scholarship;

Practical Skills and Transferable Skills

6. Demonstrate initiative and personal responsibility when working alone or with others on applied problems or tasks.

7. Develop the ability to learn independently, including carrying out a significant research/ fieldwork project and to complete this within set time constraints.

The table below indicates on successful completion of each award, which learning outcomes students will achieve:

Learning Outcome	PGCert	PGDip	MSc
1		✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓
5			✓
6	✓	✓	✓
7	✓	✓	✓

On successful completion of **all 6 taught modules plus the 60 credit Dissertation module**, students will be awarded the MSc Psychology. Please note that only students completing the full MSc programme (180 credits) will be eligible for GBC with the BPS.

On successful completion of **all 6 taught modules**, students will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology.

On successful completion of **any 3 taught modules including MPSY4002**, students will be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate in Psychology. Students may choose from any of the remaining five taught modules, as none of the areas is more important than another.

The table below indicates which learning outcomes are relevant to each module:

Module	Learning Outcomes						
	Theory, Knowledge and Understanding			Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		Practical Skills and Transferable Skills	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MPSY4002		x	x	x			
MPSY4150	x	x	x	x	x		x
MPSY4151	x	x	x	x	x	x	
MPSY4152	x	x	x			x	x
MPSY4153	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
MPSY4154	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
MPSY4000	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

14. Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategies adopted in the MSc Psychology reflect the aims of the course and the Master's Degree Characteristics - QAA Guidance on Writing Masters Courses and make a significant contribution to learning. The assessment strategies are designed to develop skills and knowledge in business/occupational psychology and provide evidence of the students' progress and achievement throughout the course and prepare the students for careers in business/occupational psychology. Both formal (summative) and informal, developmental, (formative) approaches will be used. In order to develop the skills of advanced study identified within the course aims and the DOPTC syllabus, students will experience a variety of assessment strategies. These include case studies, essays, fieldwork studies and presentations (individual and group), and reports. The opportunity for

students to demonstrate independence in a sustained piece of work is provided in the completion of the Dissertation. E-learning through the use of Blackboard will be utilised to support student learning between lectures, including the use of tests and knowledge checks.

Each assessment has been designed to reflect both the learning outcomes therefore each assessment is fundamentally different and therefore appears individually on the mapping grid.

Students are assessed by a combination of course work and examinations. Each module must be passed individually at a D- minimum.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The syllabus of the course is designed to cover the BPS requirements for Graduate Basis for Chartership. A full version of the BPS requirements can be found [here](#)

The Award Map for the programme is shown below. Students register for the *MSc Psychology (with eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartership with the BPS)*. The interim awards of *Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology (non-conversion)* or *Postgraduate Certificate in Psychology (non-conversion)* are only available as exit awards to students who are unable to complete the full MSc.

MSc Psychology (with eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartership with the BPS)

LEVEL 7		Credits (Number)	
MPSY4000	Dissertation	60	M
MPSY4002	Advanced research methods	20	M
MPSY4150	Social psychology	20	M
MPSY4151	Developmental psychology	20	M
MPSY4152	BioPsychology	20	M
MPSY4153	Cognitive psychology	20	M
MPSY4152	Individual differences	20	M

On successful completion of **all 6 taught modules plus the 60 credit Dissertation module**, students will be awarded the MSc in Psychology with eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society. Please note that only students completing the full MSc programme (180 credits) will be eligible for GBC with the BPS.

On successful completion of **all 6 taught modules**, students will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology.

On successful completion of **any 3 taught modules including MPSY4002**, students will be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate in Psychology. Students may choose from any of the remaining five taught modules, as none of the areas is more important than another.

16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

The MSc Psychology is modular and part of the University's [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#). This programme has been developed to reflect the [QAA Framework for Higher](#)

[Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland \(2008\)](#) and reflects the [Masters Degree Characteristics - QAA \(2015\)](#)

This award is located at Level 7 of the FHEQ. The MSc Psychology is accredited by the British Psychological Society.

17. Support for Students

In common with other UW courses, all students have a Personal Academic Tutor who will offer support when requested by the student. Students experience a wide range of learning and teaching methods. For example, lectures, seminars, practical classes, computer workshops, tutorials, visiting speakers, case studies, focussed discussions, field work, reflective practice, role-plays and directed study. Blackboard resources are available to provide support for students whilst off campus. Students will be encouraged to use discussion facilities on Blackboard and knowledge checks and tests will be supported by personal academic tutors.

A Course Handbook is provided to all students and is updated annually. Further subject leaflets and guides, most of which are available on the web, will be provided to students. An induction programme is provided for all new entrants. The subject team provide study skills and additional support can be provided and learning support services (Library, IT, and Media and Print). **Personal academic tutors for the students on this course will be the tutors responsible for the running of the course. Their role will be to ensure the needs of the students entering the two courses with different qualifications and levels of experience are met.** The support available will include measure to promote a distinctive course culture for students on this programme.

For example:

- A dedicated induction session.
- Encouragement of exchange of personal information to promote self-help groups and mutual study support.
- Sessions on creating research proposals and presentation skills.
- A session for Occupational Psychology Students on the Chartership process.
- Support meetings/seminars to discuss a range of pastoral, career and study skills issues.
- The UW SOLE (Student On-Line Environment) page which provides guidance on learning support and equal opportunities, individual module profiles and selection, academic regulations, communication of grades, resubmission opportunities and activities, etc.

The University has an Equal Opportunity Policy Statement, together with equality schemes and action plans promoting equality in relation to race, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation. Progress in implementation is monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee. The Disability and Dyslexia Service within Student Services provides specialist academic and other support on a one to one basis, makes recommendations for reasonable adjustments to teaching and assessment based on individual need and works with disabled students to allow them to manage their own learning development.

International Students

The MSc Psychology Programme has been completed by International students. The course seeks to use examples and research from a global perspective and the mixture of cultures and backgrounds adds to the learning outcomes for all students on the course. The University provides support for international students in both their academic work and

general needs whilst they study at the University, information regarding this can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

18. Admissions policy, criteria and procedures

The MSc Psychology aims to *convert* graduates from other disciplines and those with unrecognised psychology degrees into GBC recognised Psychology graduates. It hopes to recruit from those students who wish to obtain a GBC recognised qualification, which will enable them to progress into a career in psychology. Hence it hopes to attract those who wish to further their interest in psychology along with those that wish to change their career path to a specific area in psychology. The course allows graduates to apply for a large range of professional training in psychology for example, clinical, occupational, educational, forensic, and counselling psychology.

Entry requirements

Admission to the MSc Psychology is either in Semester 1 or Semester 2 of the academic year. Admissions are considered from applicants that can demonstrate the ability to successfully study at an advanced level (M level 7) and, consistent with British Psychological Society Quality Assurance Policies and Practice for First Qualifications in Psychology (October 2009) requirements for admission to conversion programmes, students must have one of the following:

An honours degree 2.i or above, which has not been accredited by the British Psychological Society; *and* studied the equivalent of at least 60 credits of Psychology at level 4 or above (as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, 2008, or equivalent frameworks)

or:

where students do not have prior Psychology experience but have a first degree 2.i. or above with honours in another subject, they must complete the Foundation modules (typically 60 credits see below) to ensure they meet the above requirements prior to entry to the conversion programme (see below *Foundation modules* in **Admissions/selection criteria**).

Recognition of Prior Learning

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

Admissions procedures

All candidates who meet the entry requirements will be interviewed by the Course Leader and their qualifications verified. At interview, and subsequently, each candidate's qualifications will be considered in accordance with UW RPL procedures. The interview is essentially diagnostic in its purpose – to identify the student's eligibility to be admitted to the MSc Psychology programme directly or whether they are required to complete the *Foundation modules*.

Admissions/selection criteria

Offers are made to candidates based on whether they meet the programmes entry requirements. Candidates who do not have prior Psychology experience but have a first degree with honours in another subject, will be offered a place to complete the Foundation modules. They must complete in full and pass these before starting the MSc Psychology programme. Candidates who are graduates of the University of Worcester who have completed some PSYC modules will be considered on an individual basis for any exemptions they are eligible for. In such instances an individual CPD package will be offered to enable them to take advantage of any recognition for prior learning they are eligible for.

Foundation modules

Due to the course structure of the MSc Psychology students required to complete and pass the Foundation modules are usually required to start these in semester 1 to ensure they take the mandatory module PSYC2532 Psychological Research Methods 2. Students are required to complete and pass these modules before they commence the MSc Psychology full-time or part-time in either semester 1 or 2.

All Foundation modules are worth 15 credits each and are taken from the existing BSc Psychology undergraduate programme. Students *must pass all* their Foundation modules. The Foundation modules provide students with the opportunity to develop the necessary foundation research skills required at M-level (students must take PSYC2532 semester 1 as part of their foundation modules). It is also designed to ensure students engage with the discipline at Levels 4, 5 and 6 *before* commencing the MSc Psychology.

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

There are a number of methods used by the course team in order to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality and standards of teaching and learning:

- Annual evaluation of the course.
- External Examiners reports. The external examiner for this course will be a Registered Occupational Psychologist.
- Mid and end of module evaluations by students.
- Module comments slips allowing anonymous feedback from students about modules.
- Subject staff/student/student forum committee considers student and staff feedback on modules.
- UW Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee promotes learning and teaching across the institution.
- Peer assessment of teaching.
- A teacher accredited course (PG Cert in Learning and Teaching for HE/SEDA) for new staff, and the Higher Education Academy Membership.
- Regular staff meetings have a standing item on sharing good practices, including teaching and learning.
- Institute of Health and Society Learning and Teaching Working Group.
- Accreditation by the BPS Division of Occupational Psychology Training Committee.

20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, including MPSY4002 plus any two taught modules.
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7, including MPSY4002 plus remaining five taught modules.
Masters (MSc)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including including MPSY4002 plus remaining five taught modules and 60 credits from the Dissertation.

PG Cert and PG Dip awards are unclassified. The awards of Masters may be made with Pass, Merit or Distinction.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

The MSc Psychology achieved re-accreditation by the British Psychological Society in 2015 for five years. Since the course commenced, our External Examiner has consistently judged the course as meeting the academic standards of an accredited psychology postgraduate degree course, and commended the learning opportunities and confirmed that the quality enhancement of the provision meets required standards. In particular, our External Examiner

has commended Psychology for providing a course that not only meets both internal and external criteria for a BPS accredited provision, but that students on the course have a high quality learning experience that supports their achievement of the key skills required for achieving Graduate Basis for Chartership. Course Committee feedback consistently indicates that students are highly satisfied with the quality of the course in terms of teaching, learning and assessment.

22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Embedding employability is integral to the culture of psychology at University of Worcester. The BSc and MSc Psychology programmes enable students to develop skills and attributes including self-reflection, problem solving, communication, critical thinking, professional context skills, leadership, team working, analytical skills and interpersonal awareness. The programmes provide a student-centered approach to support and guidance, an innovative approach to learning, teaching and assessment and a collaborative approach to curriculum design and delivery utilising relationships with the UW careers and employability service and external partnerships.

Our established partnerships enable us to advertise paid and voluntary work opportunities to psychology students on a regular basis. The department has excellent links with both local and national organisations including the NHS, Alive! Charity, the BPS, West Mercia Police Constabulary, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Worcestershire County Council and HMP Aylesbury. There are regular opportunities for students to attend CPD workshops tailored for supporting CV writing, interview skills, recruitment and assessment techniques, Chartership with the BPS, and registration with the HCPC. As well as interactive sessions with guest speakers, visit days to external organisations and guidance on applying for work or further study. Students are able to complete their Dissertations with a range of established partners, including West Mercia Constabulary, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Consulting Tools Ltd.

The MSc Psychology is delivered by a research-active teaching team who provide students with contemporary expertise and practical skills used by practitioners in the area of occupational psychology.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module study guide and course handbook. Key sources of information about the Course can be found in the Course Handbook and Module Specifications.