

**BSc Psychology
programmes
Year 3/Level 6 (2011/12)**

Student Handbook

This handbook contains an assortment of information that is relevant to you as a student entering your third year/level 6. It is designed to complement handbooks that you had in your first and second years (levels 4 and 5) and so doesn't reproduce all of the information that appeared in those. It's worth also having a look at

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/faculties/sciences/student_information/essentials.jsp

where you should find a Sciences Faculty student handbook which has lots of additional information.

Here are some things that you might particularly want to note:

- Double check that you are taking the right modules this year. Have a look at the Module Choices and Changes section below.
- This year, **personal tutors** (your project supervisor if you are doing the psychology project) will only make two appointments to see you, one at the start of the year, and another when your first semester results are out. It's in your interest to keep these appointments and generally to keep your tutor informed of your progress. As ever, you should also tell them if you are experiencing any difficulties. If you keep your tutor informed then they will be able to support you and be in a much better position to provide you with a reference.
- Please **check your university email** regularly. This is our main means of communication with you. All general third-year notices and all notices to do with projects will appear by email first, and will only sometimes be posted on notice boards. Email is also by far the best way to communicate with your supervisor/personal tutor.
- **Seventy percent of your final degree classification** is based upon work this year. It is, therefore, very important that you do your best.
- We will treat all forms of **academic misconduct**, such as **plagiarism** (copying work from other sources and claiming it as your own) and **data-fabrication** (passing off invented 'data' as data from real participants) very seriously. In the case of the latter, it is your responsibility to collect the necessary information to demonstrate that your data are genuine, rather than our responsibility to demonstrate they are not.
- **Student representatives** provide a useful way of feeding back issues that affect a number of students to relevant staff. We will tell you who they are when they've been elected. If you would like to be one, we will be recruiting in lectures.

Rules, regulations and warnings aside, we hope that your third year is a really positive experience. If something does go wrong and you think we might be able to help, please don't hesitate to email your personal tutor/project supervisor.

Useful contacts

Third year tutor	Cressida Minister	c.m.minister@staffs.ac.uk
Deputy third-year tutor	Dr Mark Forshaw	m.j.forshaw@staffs.ac.uk
Field Leader	Dr Emily Buckley	e.j.buckley@staffs.ac.uk
Head of Department	Judy David	j.j.david@staffs.ac.uk
Project Tutor	Anja Rutten	a.h.rutten@staffs.ac.uk
Student counselling service		01782 294977
Nursery		01782 294981
Student accommodation		01782 294217/4218/4219
Accommodation_stoke@staffs.ac.uk		
Careers service		

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/services/careers/careersweb/home.htm>

Module choices and changes

Although you will have already made your module choices, it is worth just checking that the modules you have chosen are still running and that you have passed the necessary modules to proceed with your third-year choices. Please see your personal tutor/project supervisor for advice if needed.

Module changes

If you want to or need to make any changes to your earlier choice, please do this as soon as possible. To make changes, obtain (from the Faculty office in Mellor) and complete a module change form, and then bring it to the Level 6 tutor or another member of academic staff, for signing. You also need to check (with staff in the Faculty office) whether any new modules you have chosen have seminars associated with them, and sign up for these.

Prerequisites

In order to take the Psychology Project you need to have passed both Research Methods 3 and Social Psychology at Level 5. If you have not done so but have enrolled for the Project then please see the Project Tutor to discuss what steps to take.

Attendance and illness

Section 1.3 of the University regulations for undergraduate modules, which can be found here...

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/images/ugrad_mod_fram_tcm68-12695.pdf

... outlines our expectations concerning attendance, and what happens if you fail to attend seminars and lectures. Our interpretation in Psychology is more or less as follows:

If you miss more than four consecutive sessions, and we know that this is the case (i.e. these are sessions for which we take a register) then we may assume that you are no longer taking the module and deregister you. If you are ill, of course, then this doesn't apply. If you miss a session due to illness, therefore, email the relevant tutor (i.e. the tutor who keeps the register for that session) and explain.

If you are ill for an extended period of time then it is in your best interests to get a doctor's note. You may find that you need this if we are planning to remove you from a module. More importantly, however, this will be essential if you want to claim extenuating circumstances for failing to submit work, or submitting work of a standard below that of which you are capable.

Level and Year Nomenclature

We now officially use a national standard of labelling which means that year three of a three-year degree is now called Level 6. We will still refer to year three as year three, and some documents will still mention 'level 3' but in time this will completely change to 'Level 6'.

Learning resources

Blackboard

In addition to the module sites on Blackboard, which you will already be familiar with, we now have a general site for each year on the course, with generic information. You'll find it in the list of micro-sites available to you when you log in.

Finding psychology publications

The **Staffordshire University Library Catalogue** for books and journals that are held in one of the University libraries can be found on-line at

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/infoservices/library/>

You may use, but not borrow, resources from the University of Keele library
<http://opac.keele.ac.uk/>

Electronic journals

Instead of finding a journal in the library, it is often possible for you to download the article you want by going to an online version of the journal. The University Library's stock of online journals (for all subjects) is listed here

<http://metalib.staffs.ac.uk:8332/V/>

Other library information

You will probably be familiar with the following, but if not...

Books

The main classification numbers for Psychology are 150-159 inclusive, but remember that relevant books will also be found in many other sections, e.g. Language (400s), social sciences (300-307), geography (910-919 – environmental psychology can be found here as well as 155.9), management (658-658.4 – and at 302.35 for some aspects of organisational behaviour). You can borrow up to 17 books at any one time, of which two can be from Short Loan. The loan periods for the main stock are 3 week and 1 week loan. You can renew books as long as they are not required by another user; remember that fines are charged for overdue items.

There are now three separate loan periods for those key texts held in Short Loan, which are 4-hour, 24-hour and 48-hour. You cannot renew Short Loan material. The library provides regular 'new books' lists which will be displayed for you to look at. Printed bookmarks and subject guides are available to assist you in locating all Psychology texts. There is a psychology-specific guide to resources at

www.staffs.ac.uk/services/library_and_info/psycpage.htm

and

<http://crwnwiki1.staffs.ac.uk/subjectwiki/index.php/Psychology>

It is not possible for the library to hold sufficient copies of each book from each course so that students will automatically be able to borrow every book that they require for an extended period. Copies of popular books have been placed on the three different loan periods so that it is possible to get access to them for at least a short period. There is an assumption that you will buy at least one book for each module; the relevant member of staff will recommend which is the best book for his or her course. Use the recall system if you want a book and it is out on loan and if you receive a request to return a book please respond to it promptly. It is possible to have the loan period of a book reclassified, so that if students are experiencing difficulty getting a book it could be placed on the short loan collection. See the lecturer for the relevant module about getting books reclassified.

Offprints collection

Staff have placed photocopies of key articles from journals that are not stocked by the library in the Offprints collection. This can be searched using

the online catalogue. The Offprints collection is housed in Short Loan and items are available for 4 hours. The vast majority can be photocopied, those items which cannot be photocopied will be marked accordingly.

Periodicals/Journals

The LLRS currently has subscriptions to approximately 80 journals with major or related psychology input. They are arranged alphabetically by title, for example, *Journal of Environmental Psychology* will be filed under 'J' and similarly *British Journal of Psychology* will be filed under 'B'. You should ignore 'the', 'an', 'a' etc., therefore, *The Psychologist* will be filed under 'P'. Individual tutors will recommend specific journals for their module(s).

E-books

In addition to the books on the shelves the library has a collection of e-books that can be downloaded and read on your computer. Go to

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/infoservices/library/online/ebooks/index.php>

for instructions and follow the net library to search through them.

Subject librarian

Your subject librarian is Geoff Walton (e-mail g.l.walton@staffs.ac.uk tel 29448). He can give advice on which Psychology information resources are available and how to use these resources effectively.

Learning resource centre

The Learning Resource Centre is situated on the fourth floor of the Mellor building in S426, and is a specialist library for the Faculty of Sciences. Resources include books, videos, and offprints, all of which can be borrowed for 24 hours.

In addition to the books available on loan, the centre also sells second-hand textbooks. These are sold at 2/3 of the original price.

Resources can be accessed between 9am and 5pm Monday – Thursday, and 9am and 4.30pm on Friday, but the main room remains open until later in the evening. The latter has seating for 40 students and adjoins two smaller rooms that can be booked for seminars or for viewing our videos.

Test material for projects

The department holds copies of a number of psychometric tests (for personality traits, intelligence, etc.). Ask Carol Austin (c.a.austin@staffs.ac.uk) about these.

Laboratories and access to computers

There are four Psychology laboratories which contain computers. A timetable will be on the door of each laboratory to show when they are in use for teaching/research, firstly, so that you will know when they can be used for statistical analysis and word processing and secondly so that you know when to vacate them for the next teaching session is due. The Faculty of Sciences

provides additional computer support within the Learning Resource Centre on the 4th floor of Mellor (S426). The University has other computer laboratories in the Library and the Mellor building for more general access. Printing facilities are available.

Departmental seminar programme

The Psychology Department holds a programme of seminars on Thursdays (4-5 pm) through the year with speakers who are researchers within their particular areas of psychology. The topics are wide ranging and usually very interesting and informative. Students who attend find the content and nature of the subsequent discussion valuable – so do use this as a further resource; you will be very welcome. Details can be found here:

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/sciences/psychology/psyseminars/index.php>

Submitting work

Please submit one copy of your assignments (with the exception of the Psychology project. You will need to submit TWO copies of this, and it has its own formatting guidelines, which you can find in the Project handbook).

Formats

To help us handle and mark your work as quickly as possible it would be a great help to us if you could adopt the guidelines stated below (unless you have been given alternative specific instructions for particular modules).

- Please type your work in a 12-point typeface using either 1½ or double spacing (this gives us more space to write comments on your work). Pages should be numbered (in case they become loose) and have your student number in the header or footer. Hand-written assignments are not acceptable.
- Please staple your pages together in the top left corner. Please don't use paperclips because they are not secure enough.
- On the front sheet of your assignment (pick up from reception), please include the following:
 - Your student number
 - The title of your assignment
 - The module for which it is being submitted
 - Your module/seminar tutor's name
 - The word count (everything excluding tables, figures (and captions), appendices and references)
- To ensure that our policy of blind marking can be successfully carried out, please **do not include your name**. Your student number should appear on all other pages in your assignment.
- Please do not use ring binders, files or plastic folders. They make accessing your work time-consuming and could slow down the marking process. Folders may be removed and not returned. The only exceptions to this are the project, and work that is too bulky for staples. In this case, you should submit work in a card folder or suitable equivalent.

Length limits

Word limits must not be exceeded or a penalty could be incurred, and assignments claiming an inaccurate word count might be failed. This is important to ensure parity between students. Assignments which do not state the word count might not be marked. We need to be able to check that you have met the assessment requirements, and this includes staying within the word limits.

Late work

To ensure fairness for everyone, work handed in late without upheld claims for extenuating circumstances will be awarded a zero.

Academic Misconduct

One common form of academic misconduct is plagiarism. This refers to passing off someone else's writing as your own without acknowledging the source. You will naturally, in the process of writing course essays, make notes from and paraphrase the content of a variety of primary and secondary sources. This is perfectly acceptable in relatively small doses. What you must not do is copy out chunks of material word for word without acknowledgement. If you do feel it necessary to use direct quotations then you must place them in quotation marks and provide the appropriate reference, including the page number.

Where we detect plagiarism, we are likely to give no marks for that piece of work, and there is the possibility of more serious consequences, depending on the extent to which the work is plagiarised.

The University has regulations concerning cheating and plagiarism in any form of assessment. These are detailed in the University's Academic Award Regulations. You should have been given a copy of these when you enrolled, and there are links for them on the university's website. Please read them carefully and ask for clarification if necessary.

Data fabrication

This is another form of academic misconduct, whereby you claim that you have collected data from real participants when instead you have made it up. This will also be treated as a serious academic offence. The onus is on you to provide evidence of data collection. There are clear guidelines concerning this in your Project handbook, and there is a procedure built in to the ethical approval process that requires that you show your supervisor data collection evidence. If you are not taking the Project module, but are taking a module that involves data collection, and if your module leader does not give you a copy of the guidelines, then you can view them here:

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/sciences/psychology/coursematerials/datacollection/index.php>

Support and welfare

Personal tutors

In year 3, your personal tutor is the same person as your project supervisor. Students who are not doing a project in psychology should look at the Level 6 notice board to find out who will be their tutor for the year.

What are they for?

We hope that by your third year you have appreciated the usefulness of having a personal tutor. They are there for a number of reasons:

- To give general advice about your studies
- To provide a listening ear and, if necessary, point you towards further support if you run into difficulties with your course
- To help you take stock of the skills you have developed during your studies and how to use these in planning for your future ('Personal Development Planning')
- To write employment references for you when you start applying for jobs.

When will they see you?

Your tutor will arrange to see you early in the new academic year, and after first semester results come out. It is in your interest to keep these appointments. However, if you fail to do so your tutor will **not** chase you. You can of course see your tutor at other times (by appointment and respecting their office hours). If your tutor is your project supervisor then you will be seeing them regularly anyway, but it would be worth specifically emailing in advance of one of your regular appointments with them if you want to use some of the time for tutor-related rather than project-related matters.

What if you don't get along?

In the very unlikely event that you have a serious personality clash with your tutor, or if for some other reason you feel that they are not an appropriate person to talk to, then get in touch with the Level 6 tutors.

University policy

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/personaltutoring>

Personal Development Planning

There is a Personal Development Planning workbook for you to complete this year. It is not assessed, but you will find it useful. It will form the basis of your discussion with your tutor at your meeting in the Spring. There is also a University scheme called 'My Portfolio' that you might find helpful.

Student Counselling Service

Although your personal tutor is there to help it is important to realise that it is not their role to give extensive personal counselling. We have the student counselling service for students who need help beyond that given by their personal tutor.

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/ess/counselling/index.php>

Extenuating Circumstances

If you have medical or family circumstances that mean you cannot submit some coursework on time, or attend an exam, it is sensible if you can tell your personal tutor about what has happened. Then get a copy of the Extenuating Circumstances Claim Form from the Faculty of Sciences Office from the ground floor of the Mellor Building. Complete it and get the endorsement of an appropriate corroborator (nurse/doctor/counsellor/personal tutor). Make sure that the completed form is returned to the Faculty Office by the due dates. This claim form will then be considered by a Panel which meets at regular times throughout the year. Rest assured that the information which you supply is regarded as confidential by the Chair of the Panel. If your claim is upheld by the Panel, Assessment and Award Boards will take decisions on the affected pieces of assessment which ensure that you are not penalised – for example, you will be offered a 'sit as if for the first time' rather than 'resit' if you failed a module. It is not up to any individual member of staff to decide whether or not you should have an extension for assessed work; in each case, the panel assesses your claim.

If your extenuating circumstances are continuing, you must submit a new claim form for each period of assessment which has been affected, including resubmissions if circumstances carry over into the next semester.

Applying for references

Most students will be making plans for their future career during their final year at University and this often means that formal applications for jobs/courses need to be made. It is usual for potential employers to request a reference from an academic member of staff who knows you on a professional and personal level. Often this is your project tutor, but if you have not done a project or if you feel another member of staff knows you better, it could be another person in the department. It is very important (and common courtesy) to approach the person you wish to be your referee and ask them if they are prepared to provide a reference for you *before* you write their name on an application form. It will also be helpful if you provide your referee with a copy of your current CV and a description of the job or course you are applying for. Please note it is not compulsory for academic staff to give references.

Student Representatives

As a department we are keen to hear of any problems or difficulties (and also any joys and pleasures) that students in general are experiencing while studying for their degree. If you have particular comments or complaints about a module, about administration, library provision or anything else that you think might affect a number of students and be of general concern then we'd like to hear about it. Student Representatives meet with the level tutors once per semester, and are also represented at important departmental meetings. If you want your voice to be heard, have a chat with one of them and they'll pass your comments on.

If you would like to be a Student Representative and are prepared to commit to attending the meetings, then please let us know. We appoint representatives, by election if necessary, in the first few weeks of the Autumn Term.

Rules and Regulations

There is a clear, if lengthy, guide to how the university now organises its undergraduate degrees and associated rules and regulations at

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/about_us/publications/policies_and_regulations/academic.jsp

All regulations are given in documents linked from here:

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/current/regulations/>

Regulations that deal specifically with your degree, and how it is assessed, are here:

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/current/regulations/academic/index.php>

We occasionally (fortunately rarely) need to refer students to regulations concerning academic misconduct. You can find these here:

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/assets/academic_dishonesty_tcm44-26770.pdf

Individual members of staff

You can find members of staff here:

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/sciences/psychology/stafflist/index.php>

Alternatively, you can put their name in 'search' box on the university home page.

Money Doctors

Money Doctors is a facility within the Students' Union Student Advice Centre. It provides free, independent, impartial and confidential advice to help you to keep your finances healthy. They can:

- *provide up to date and relevant information on student finance.*
- *check you're receiving everything you're entitled to financially.*
- *assess if you can reduce your expenditure or increase your income.*
- *show you key skills to help avoid pitfalls and keep track with cash.*
- *assist you with looking at how your attitudes and beliefs about money can affect how you use it.*
- *generally help you to become smarter with your money.*

Visit www.staffsunion.com/moneydoctors; email moneydoctors@staffs.ac.uk or call in to the SAC above the Ember Lounge.

Student Behaviour

Staffordshire University has a Student Behaviour Policy which outlines the behaviours considered unacceptable by the University. These include any forms of bullying or harassment, or anything that disturbs the learning experience for other students, including turning up late for meetings and classes, talking in classes (unless as part of a staff instigated discussion!), using mobiles and MP3 players in class. Breaches of the student behaviour policy may mean you are asked to leave a class, and ultimately can mean disciplinary action being taken against you. You can see the full policy, and associated Disciplinary Procedure on the University website at www.staffs.ac.uk.

Extenuating Circumstances for group work

If during assessed group work, some members of the group have been affected by illness or other extenuating circumstances then **all** members of the group would need to make a claim for the assessments which have been affected (should they wish to do so). If two out of three members of a group have had extenuating circumstances upheld, this decision will not automatically be extended to the other member of the group without them submitting their own claim. They will not be offered a further assessment opportunity (or referral as if for the first time) without their own extenuating circumstances claim being upheld.

Draft Assessments

At University, you are expected to be able to demonstrate your ability to produce work independently. **We are therefore unable to comment on full drafts of assessed coursework in advance of a deadline date.** The only exception to this is in the Project module, where we read and provide feedback on ONE full draft of your project. However, all modules provide opportunities for formative learning and often you will be invited to submit plans or outlines of coursework for comment. The vast majority of modules will also allocate class time specifically to discuss the assessments and assessment criteria. Although we can't read full drafts of your work, we will, wherever possible, be happy to discuss your assignment with you in advance of the deadline.

Disagreements about marks for assessed work

The mark you receive for your assessed work comes at the end of a rigorous marking and moderation system. Some of you, but not all of you, will notice that your

work has been marked by more than one person. This is because, in accordance with University policy, we double mark a proportion of all assessments to ensure that the standard is consistent across the module. In assessment boards, we also compare marks across modules to make sure that no one module is seriously out of line in terms of marks with others. Samples of all marked work from Level 5 and Level 6 are also sent to a team of external examiners (senior, experienced academics in other Universities) who will confirm that marking and standards are appropriate and comparable to those in other Universities.

If you are not happy with the mark you receive for assessed work, you should first ensure that you read the feedback for that work. If you then want to talk more about it, you should contact the module tutor and request an appointment. **Because of the rigorous system we have in place to ensure standards, unfortunately it is not possible for you to appeal against the academic judgement that has led to you being awarded a particular mark.** If however, you believe a genuine error has been made with your mark, you should contact the module leader in the first instance.

How your degree result is worked out

All the regulations about assessment are in the Undergraduate Modular Framework document which you can access in full from the University website (see web address below) but some important information is reproduced here:

*Having checked that you have passed all the modules and satisfied all the requirements of your award the **Award Board will consider your overall score in Level 5 and 6 modules.***

*This overall score will be determined by taking into account **all your Level 5 module results** and giving them a **30% weighting**, and **all your Level 6 module results** and giving them a **70% weighting**. **You must ensure that you have completed at least the minimum number of specific credits required for your award.** Any Additional modules you have taken must be recorded as "Additional" rather than Core, Specific Option or General Option modules. This must be done at the point of module enrolment - it cannot be done once you have completed the module. You should note that additional modules will not be taken into account when determining your degree classification. You should read the sections on Module Enrolment and Student Workload very carefully for more details on this issue.*

*In order to ensure equity for students who have studied different numbers of credits at each of Levels 5 and 6, the **Award Board will calculate the average grade point achieved per 15 credits at each of Levels 5 and 6.** This figure will then be used in calculating honours classification.*

Where compensation is awarded by a Level H Award Board (to either Level 5 or Level 6 modules) the original Grade Point achieved will contribute to the overall score.

In summary then:

Overall Score = 30% of average grade points per 15 credits at Level 5 + 70% of average grade points per 15 credits at Level 6.

For more/more detailed information, please see the Undergraduate Modular Framework document in the University Policies and Regulations section of the University website:

Earning British Psychological Society recognition

Most of you will be following awards/routes on awards that entitle you to claim Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) with the BPS when you graduate. This means you will have completed an undergraduate degree that is recognised as being the first step towards a professional career in Psychology. However, you need to know that training in professional areas of Psychology is acquired through postgraduate education and supervised practice, not through an undergraduate degree. On completion of your undergraduate degree, you will not be qualified to practise as a Psychologist without further training. You also won't be considered for postgraduate training courses in Psychology without GBC accreditation (although conversion courses do exist for people if they want to achieve this after they graduate). To claim GBC you must do two things:

- **get a 2:2 or above on your degree**
- **follow a prescribed set of modules-** at Level 5 these are Research Methods 3, Biological Bases of Behaviour, Cognitive Psychology, and Social Psychology, and at level 6 they are Developmental Psychology, Dealing with Difference and the Psychology Project.

(You won't be able to proceed from Level 5 into Level 6 on an accredited route unless you pass Research Methods 3 and Social Psychology as they are pre-requisites for the Level 3 Project)

If you are undertaking BSc Psychology, BSc Forensic Psychology or BSc Health Psychology, and you don't want to follow a GBC accredited route, just get in touch with the Level tutors or Award leader and we can transfer you to a similar but non-accredited version of your degree.

Academic Misconduct

Where academic misconduct (including plagiarism) is detected in students' work and can be proved, very serious penalties can be applied. You were helped to understand what academic misconduct is, and how to avoid it, during a workshop held in Exploring Psychology 1 in your first year. There you were referred to the University policy and you had explained to you what the different sorts of academic misconduct were, how to recognize them and how to avoid them.

We take attempts to cheat very seriously indeed, and you should note particularly that, from this year, the University will be using software to assess a sample of all coursework. This software is capable of detecting similarities between students' work as well as finding the original print or internet sources of copied text.

The University has regulations concerning cheating in any form of assessment. **IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO FAMILIARISE YOURSELVES WITH THESE.** These are detailed in the University's Academic Award Regulations. These University regulations can be found under the Student Information section of the University Web site.