



## POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

<b>Programme Title:</b>	MSc Psychology (Conversion Course)
<b>Awarding Body:</b>	Staffordshire University
<b>Teaching Institution:</b>	Staffordshire University
<b>Final Awards:</b>	MSc Psychology
<b>Intermediate Awards:</b>	PgCert, PgDip Psychology (exit awards)
<b>Mode of Study:</b>	Full-time and Part-time
<b>UCAS Codes:</b>	N/A
<b>QAA Subject Benchmarks:</b>	Psychology
<b>JACS Code:</b>	C800
<b>Professional/Statutory Body:</b>	British Psychological Society (successful completion of MSc will enable graduates to apply for Graduate Basis for Chartership, subject to accreditation)
<b>Date of Production:</b>	February 2016
<b>Date of Revision:</b>	

**If you require this document in a larger text or a different medium please contact us.**

## EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

The aims of this programme are to:

- Provide a firm foundation in the core areas of Psychology, along with opportunities for diversification into one specialised area.
- Develop your skills in the scientific and ethical evaluation of theory, empirical research and debates in Psychology.
- Enable you to develop transferable skills, including the Staffordshire Graduate Attributes, which will enhance your employability both in the Psychology profession and in other employment.
- Use a range of high quality learning, teaching and assessment methods, in a supportive and responsive environment.
- Provide opportunities for you to engage with enthusiastic and well-qualified staff who engage in research, enterprise and/or scholarship that informs learning and teaching at all levels.
- Meet the requirements of the professional body (BPS), and enable you to (upon successful completion of the course), register with the BPS for Graduate Basis for Chartership.
- The course can be completed within one academic year to enable you to apply to BPS accredited postgraduate training courses starting the following academic year.

### **What is distinctive about this programme?**

The MSc Psychology is designed for students who are considering a change in direction and who wish to pursue a career in psychology. This award allows graduates with an honours degree in any discipline to 'convert' this to an accredited psychology degree (accreditation pending), in order to pursue further training or study at the postgraduate level. Entry to professional applied psychology training courses (including our own MSc Health Psychology and Doctorate in Clinical Psychology), and eventual achievement of Chartered Status, requires applicants to have the Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC). This is a means by which the British Psychological Society (BPS) ensures that those working towards Chartered Status have studied psychology at the appropriate breadth and standard to equip them for postgraduate training. So at the end of this conversion course, if you do intend to follow a career as a professional psychologist, you will need to apply for further postgraduate training, which (depending on the route you are considering) may be at either masters or doctoral level, or both. This may have implications for your funding, which you will need to investigate for yourself.

The MSc Psychology is therefore designed to cover core areas of psychology as defined by BPS criteria associated with, and equivalent to, their Qualifying Examination i.e. research design and methodology, practical work, cognitive psychology, biological bases of behaviour, developmental psychology, social psychology, personality and intelligence. Students will be taught alongside undergraduate psychology students, taking a combination of taught modules corresponding to a core undergraduate programme, but assessed at Masters level. Bespoke seminar sessions will be delivered to provide the necessary challenge and support required, as well as providing a peer support network for students on the

programme. A thorough induction programme will also be provided, and students will have regular contact with the course leader. For those wishing a more in-depth preparation for the course we may be able to offer some online materials which provides an induction into the main psychology topics including psychological research methods.

Unlike a number of alternative conversion courses, the MSc is completed in one academic year, running from September with the final piece of work, the dissertation, being submitted the following July, enabling graduates to apply for further postgraduate study (such as our own accredited postgraduate psychology courses), or employment in the September following enrolment.

Additionally students have the choice of undertaking one option module at level 6, allowing them to learn more about a specialist area within psychology, as well as the core GBC content.

## PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

What will this programme teach me to do?

### MSc

At the end of your studies you should be able to:

Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge which is at the forefront of the Psychology discipline <b>(Knowledge and Understanding)</b> .
Demonstrate the independent learning ability required to advance your knowledge and understanding of psychology, and to develop new skills to a high level for continuing professional development <b>(Learning)</b>
Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding and critical evaluation of methodologies and techniques, including Information Literacy, applicable to psychology research or advanced scholarship and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses <b>(Enquiry)</b> .
Demonstrate a critical awareness and evaluation of current psychological research, advanced scholarship, contemporary problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline <b>(Analysis)</b> .
Evaluate complex psychological issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and employ appropriate decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations <b>(Problem Solving)</b> .
Communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences <b>(Communication)</b> .
Demonstrate originality in the application of psychological knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of psychological research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline <b>(Application)</b> .
Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment or further training in psychology, requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level <b>(Reflection)</b> .
Demonstrate the ability to independently select an appropriate research question at the cutting edge of contemporary psychology, show an in depth critical understanding and evaluation of the research literature, investigate using appropriate research techniques and methodologies and communicate results in a professional manner. <b>(Subject Specific Skills)</b>

## PgDiploma

At the end of your studies you should be able to:

Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge which is at the forefront of the Psychology discipline <b>(Knowledge and Understanding)</b> .
Demonstrate the independent learning ability required to advance your knowledge and understanding of psychology, and to develop new skills to a high level for continuing professional development <b>(Learning)</b>
Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding and critical evaluation of methodologies and techniques, including Information Literacy, applicable to psychology research or advanced scholarship and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses <b>(Enquiry)</b> .
Demonstrate a critical awareness and evaluation of current psychological research, advanced scholarship, contemporary problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline <b>(Analysis)</b> .
Evaluate complex psychological issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and employ appropriate decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations <b>(Problem Solving)</b> .
Communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences <b>(Communication)</b> .
Demonstrate originality in the application of psychological knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of psychological research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline <b>(Application)</b> .
Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment or further training in psychology, requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level <b>(Reflection)</b> .

## PgCert

At the end of your studies you should be able to:

Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge which is at the forefront of the Psychology discipline ( <b>Knowledge and Understanding</b> ).
Demonstrate the independent learning ability required to advance your knowledge and understanding of psychology, and to develop new skills to a high level for continuing professional development ( <b>Learning</b> ).
Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding and critical evaluation of methodologies and techniques, including Information Literacy, applicable to psychology research or advanced scholarship and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses ( <b>Enquiry</b> ).
Demonstrate a critical awareness and evaluation of current psychological research, advanced scholarship, contemporary problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline ( <b>Analysis</b> ).
Communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences ( <b>Communication</b> ).
Demonstrate originality in the application of psychological knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of psychological research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline ( <b>Application</b> ).

Plus a subset of other learning outcomes, dependent upon the modules successfully completed:

Evaluate complex psychological issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and employ appropriate decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations ( <b>Problem Solving</b> ).
Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment or further training in psychology, requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level ( <b>Reflection</b> ).

# PROGRAMME STRUCTURE, MODULES AND CREDITS

## MSc Psychology (Conversion Course)

Full Time - Potential award = Masters Degree 180 credits passed

L E V E L 7	Teaching Block 1	PSYC70791 Cognitive & Biological Determinants of Behaviour (30 credits)	PSYC70794 Understanding the Social World (30 credits)	PSYC70793 Typical & Atypical Development (30 credits)	PSYC6xxx Option module (15 credits)	PSYC70795 MSc Psychology Dissertation (60 credits)
	Teaching Block 2				PSYC70792 Further Research Methods in Psychology (15 credits)	
	Teaching Block 3					

### Illustrations of Options (subject to availability):

Teaching Block 1: Behavioural Medicine PSYC60647 (15), Psychological Interventions PSYC60648 (15), Psychology of Empowerment and Oppression PSYC60789 (15), Voluntary Work Experience-Applications of Psychology\* (15)

\*subject to validation

Teaching Block 2 (you can chose these options but it will mean a heavier programme in semester 2): Health Psychology PSYC60653 (15), Children and Pictures PSYC60652 (15).

### **Potential Awards:**

Postgraduate Certificate\* (60 credits) – comprises any 60 credits (except the Dissertation).

Postgraduate Diploma\* (120 credits) – comprises PG Cert plus additional 60 credits (except the Dissertation).

[\*intermediate awards are not BPS accredited]

Part-Time Route  
Year 1

L E V E L 7	Teaching Block 1	PSYC70791 Cognitive & Biological Determinants of Behaviour ^(30 credits)	PSYC70794 Understanding the Social World^ (30 credits)	PSYC6xxx Option module^ (15 credits)
	Teaching Block 2			PSYC70792 Further Research Methods in Psychology^ (15 credits)

Year 2

L E V E L 7	Teaching Block 1	PSYC70793 Typical & Atypical Development^ (30 credits)	PSYC70795 MSc Psychology Dissertation (60 credits)
	Teaching Block 2		
	Teaching Block 3		

**Illustrations of Options (subject to availability):**

Teaching Block 1 - Behavioural Medicine PSYC60647 (15), Psychological Interventions PSYC60648 (15), Psychology of Empowerment and Oppression PSYC60789 (15), Voluntary Work Experience-Applications of Psychology\* (15)

\*subject to validation

Teaching Block 2 (you can chose these options but it will mean a heavier programme in semester 2): Health Psychology PSYC60653 (15), Children and Pictures PSYC60652 (15).

**Note:** Students seeking the part-time route will be expected to attend two days a week. Exact days will be notified in early September.

## HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT AND ASSESSED?

### Teaching and Learning

We aim for you to be responsible, reflective and progressive learners. Our teaching and learning methods reflect this, encouraging you, as you move through your studies, to become more evaluative and more independent in your learning.

We recognise that not all people learn in the same way, so we use a range of different methods including group work, individual work, lectures, tutorials, laboratory classes and workshops. We combine the more innovative methods (eg. problem based learning) with the more traditional methods (eg. lectures). All Psychology modules have explicit learning outcomes which we aim to enable you to achieve, and each Psychology module is supported through the University's Virtual Learning Environment, Blackboard. This allows you to access a range of materials via the internet to support your scheduled classes.

The majority of psychological content will be taught alongside undergraduate psychology students, but you will also have small group sessions as an MSc group which will focus upon M-level skills, and dissertation preparation. You will have a dissertation supervisor who will support you on an individual basis through your research project.

### Assessment

The variety in learning and teaching strategies is also reflected in the variety of methods used to assess your work. Assessment methods are linked explicitly to methods of teaching and learning, and to a module's aims and learning outcomes. These links are made clear in the module descriptors that summarise each module and in the individual module handbooks that you receive at the start of each semester. The forms of assessment you are likely to meet most often are essays and seen or unseen examinations. All 30 credit modules which run across two semesters have an assessment at the end of semester 1 and the end of semester 2.

Depending on your option choice you may also be required to do case-study analyses, short-answer study packs or submit material over the Web. These are based on enquiry-based learning, based on the investigation of questions, scenarios or problems, which you will be guided through by tutors, where issues are identified and researched to develop knowledge and solutions.

In line with other postgraduate programmes accredited by the British Psychological Society, there are three specific assessment regulations for this programme:

1. Core modules must be passed (achieve a grade of 50% overall) with a minimum of 40% on each element of assessment.
2. Core modules are not compensable.
3. At the discretion of the award board, option modules may be

considered for compensation where they achieve an overall mark of between 40-49%, and a minimum of 40% on each element of assessment.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Entry Requirements (including IELTS score)

#### What qualifications would I need to join this programme?

The entry requirements for the award are normally:

- i) an Honours degree in Psychology (at least Second Class) not accredited by the BPS;  
OR
- iii) a first degree (at least Second Class Honours) in a discipline other than psychology.

Students whose first language is not English must have achieved Level 7 on all components of IELTS (or equivalent).

### Disability Statement

Staffordshire University operates a policy of inclusive teaching and learning to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to fulfil their educational potential. Details about how to apply to have your needs assessed can be found at: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/study/disabled/index.jsp>

## AWARD SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. Core modules are not compensable.

**Further information about the award can be found in the relevant Student Handbook and on the University Website. This includes information about optional modules, student support, and academic regulations.**

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