

## MSc Psychology Programme Specification

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/psychology/>

Academic Year:	2023/24
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Accrediting Body:	British Psychological Society (BPS)
Target awards:	Master's Degree of Science in Psychology; Postgraduate Diploma Psychology [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Level 7]
Interim/exit awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Psychological Studies; Postgraduate Certificate Psychological Studies [FHEQ Level 7]
Mode of Study:	1 year full time
Faculty Board approvals:	April 2018; April 2019; February 2020; September 2020, June 2022

**Please note:** This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. The curriculum may change, subject to the University's programme monitoring and review processes. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

## Introduction

The scientific and empirical study of psychology at undergraduate and postgraduate levels allows the development of skills and knowledge relevant to a wide variety of careers and professions. Whilst many students study psychology as part of their undergraduate programmes, not all of these provide eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership with the British Psychological Society.

This qualification is currently necessary for most postgraduate training in professional psychology, for example, clinical psychology, educational psychology, forensic psychology, health psychology, counselling psychology. If students have not taken an accredited award in psychology, they may undertake what is commonly referred to as a 'Conversion Award'. Such conversion awards are normally defined as Postgraduate Diploma, Graduate Diploma or Master. As such these are not 'traditional' postgraduate programmes in psychology but mean that students will follow a core syllabus in psychology. If successful, students will be eligible for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership with the British Psychological Society. In order for this eligibility the empirical project must be passed and a minimum overall mark of 50% must be achieved.

The Division of Psychology is located within the Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences and offers a number of programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Teaching excellence is a priority for the Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences (FMLSS), and several divisions hold QAA subject review scores at the top of the ranking scales. Teaching is informed and supported by a commitment to research; the departmental staff consists of researchers who bring expertise from their ongoing academic studies to the lectures and laboratory classes.

## **Programme Aims**

The programme is intended to:

- apply scientific principles generally, though specifically in understanding the mind, brain, behaviour and experience and the complex interactions between these.
- present multiple perspectives and consider the inter-relationship of psychological knowledge in a way that fosters critical evaluation.
- evaluate of the role of empirical evidence in the creation and constraint of theory as well as how theory guides the collection and interpretation of data.
- apply ethical principles and a range of research skills and methods to the investigation of experience and behaviour, culminating in the ability to conduct research independently.
- critically evaluate theory, research findings and recognise the transformative nature of psychology as well as its real-life applications.
- apply employability-related and personal transferable knowledge and skills to be able to progress to further advanced study in psychology, psychology-related employment or to move into employment or further study that do not require psychology subject specific skills.
- apply the principles of psychological literacy by demonstrating an awareness of self and others and developing the potential to become ethical, socially and environmentally responsible participants in their communities/society, beyond university and employment.

## **Programme Learning Outcomes**

**To be eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 award of Postgraduate Certificate in Psychological Studies, students will be able to:**

1. Present a systematic and critical understanding of the scientific underpinnings of certain areas of psychology, showing an understanding that there are multiple perspectives, and that psychology involves a range of research methods, theories and evidence.
2. Draw on knowledge at the forefront of contemporary psychology, synthesise and apply knowledge originally when commenting on a range of influences on psychological behaviour, functioning and experience.
3. Critically evaluate the conceptual contribution of certain core domains of psychology including application, perspectives and theories, and integrate into new contexts.
4. Critically interpret and systematically evaluate quantitative and/or qualitative data.
5. Critically consider ethical issues in psychology in specific contexts.
6. Communicate effectively using a range of written, oral and visual means in order to present structured, coherent and evidence-based arguments.
7. Be computer literate for the purposes of furthering their own learning including an understanding and application of specialist psychological software.

8. Work individually and autonomously, showing a critical awareness of contextual and interpersonal factors.
9. Reflect critically and act autonomously in relation to academic and professional self-development.
10. Present critical and conceptual understanding of multiple perspectives when problem solving within appropriate psychological domains.
11. Demonstrate a critical awareness of the reciprocal relationship between environment and behaviour.

**Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 award of Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Studies, students will be able to:**

12. Present a systematic and critical understanding of the scientific underpinnings of psychology as a discipline, showing a comprehensive understanding that there are multiple perspectives, and that psychology involves a range of research methods, theories and evidence.
13. Critically evaluate the conceptual contribution of the core domains of psychology including application, perspectives and theories, and integrate into new contexts.

**Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 award of Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology, students will be able to:**

14. Present a critically evaluative review of contemporary psychological literature within at least one of the core domains of psychology.
15. Initiate, design, conduct and report an original empirically based research project under appropriate supervision including the generation of research hypotheses/research questions in relation to theories and concepts.

**Additionally, to be eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 Degree award of Master of Science in Psychology, students will be able to:**

16. Present a systematic and critically evaluative review of contemporary psychological literature within at least one of the core domains of psychology.
17. Initiate, design, conduct and report an original empirically based research project under appropriate supervision including the generation of research hypotheses/research questions in relation to theories and concepts, and to demonstrate the ability to make decisions in complex situations.

## **Curriculum**

Students may choose to study a general academic pathway towards a Psychological Studies certificate or diploma, or may choose a research oriented pathway towards an accredited Psychology diploma or Master's degree which grant eligibility for Graduate Membership of BPS (the British Psychological Society).

**Please note:** The curriculum may change, subject to the requirements of BPS and the University's programme approval, modification and review procedures.

## Postgraduate Certificate in Psychological Studies

### Stage 1

Module Code	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Study Period	FHEQ Level
PSY7010-B	Cognitive Psychology	Core	20	1	7
PSY7011-B	Social Psychology	Core	20	1	7
PSY7004-B	Research Methods in psychology	Core	20	1	7

If students accumulate 60 credits they will be eligible for a Postgraduate Certificate in Psychological studies. This award does not confer eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership with the British Psychological Society.

## Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Studies

If they are not seeking BPS membership, students study an additional 60 credits towards the PG Diploma in Psychological Studies and may select 1 of 4 options from the following:

### Stage 2

Module Code	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Study Period	FHEQ Level
PSY7012-B	Psychobiology and Neuroscience	Core	20	2	7
PSY7026-B	Lifespan psychology & Individual Differences	Core	20	2	7
PSY6005-B	The Psychology of Health and Eating	Option	20	2	7
PSY6001-B	Forensic Psychology	Option	20	2	7
PSY7017-B	Putting Health in Context	Option	20	2	7
PSY7014-B	Topics and Theoretical Issues in Clinical Psychology	Option	20	2	7

If students accumulate 120 credits, they will be eligible for the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Studies. Students eligible for this award will not have passed the empirical project. This award, therefore, does not confer eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership with the British Psychological Society.

## Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology

If students choose to study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology they will undertake a total of 120 credits, including the 20 credit Psychology Project module (PSY7007-B).

Module Code	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Study Period	FHEQ Level 7
PSY7012-B	Psychobiology and Neuroscience	Core	20	2	7
PSY7026-B	Lifespan psychology & Individual Differences	Core	20	2	7
PSY7007-B	Research Project in Psychology	Core	20	2	7

The Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology confers eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership with the British Psychological Society provided the empirical project is passed and a minimum overall mark of 50% is achieved. If students do not pass the 20 credit Psychology Project (PSY7007-B) with a pass mark of 50% they will be eligible for the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Studies.

## Degree of Master of Science in Psychology

### Stage 3

Module Code	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Study Period	FHEQ Level
PSY7008-E	Dissertation - Psychology	Core	60	3	7

If students choose to study for the MSc in Psychology they will undertake a total of 180 credits. Students will not undertake the 20 credit Psychology Project module but will study one 20 credit optional module and a 60 credit Psychology Masters Dissertation module (PSY7008-E). The MSc in Psychology confers eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership with the British Psychological Society provided the Dissertation is passed and a minimum overall mark of 50% is achieved.

## Learning and Teaching Strategy

The teaching, learning and assessment strategies are based on the programme and module learning outcomes and the need for appropriate independent study at this level. Teaching on the programme will comprise of online lectures, seminars, and supporting activities and a combination of online and face-to-face workshops and laboratory-based practicals.

Students will explore theories in current debates and develop experience and confidence to make a considered contribution to an argument. Students will develop discipline skills that can be applied to either their personal or professional expertise. Throughout the programme, students will acquire skills in knowledge acquisition, presentation, discussion and debate that will be useful in their career progression. Assessment will usually be a written expression of their skills, through essays or journal writing. Students will also develop skills in presenting research findings and in the production of laboratory reports. Assessment criteria are transparent and published.

Transferable skills and employability skills are assessed, some examples being (but not limited to): handling data in research methods and other modules; presenting and

communicating in many modules; using case studies to explore issues; reflection and independence.

## **Assessment Strategy**

Modules are assessed by a variety of means including essays, practical assessments, laboratory reports, case studies and presentations. Formative assessment in every module will give students the opportunity to reflect upon and develop academic skills. For example, in PSY7011-B Social Psychology, they will have a number of structured sets of questions in the laboratory classes to enable feedback to be provided. In PSY7004-B Research Methods in Psychology, feedback will be provided to students as they complete their work over the first semester. In conjunction with their personal tutor, the module tutor and the programme leader students will be encouraged to reflect on assignment feedback and improve their techniques.

The Psychology Project module, or the Psychology Master Dissertation, offers students the opportunity to carry out an empirical piece of research investigating one area in depth, using the skills developed during the programme. This study will help to further develop their skills to work independently and rigorously, whilst benefiting from the support of a member of staff with experience in a similar area.

In terms of the Psychology Project or MSc Dissertation students will be able to choose an area of psychology they wish to research. This will reflect the diversity of the core psychology curriculum and staff expertise.

## **Assessment Regulations**

This Programme conforms to the standard University Postgraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at the link: [www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations](http://www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations)

## **Admission Requirements**

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make decisions based on your potential to thrive at university and beyond. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

The standard entry requirements for the programme are as follows:

- A degree (2:2 or above) which has not been accredited by the BPS (for the MSc)
- Or a degree (2:2 or above) with at least 60 credits in Psychology or equivalent (for the PG Diploma)
- GCSE maths and English at grade 4 (national grade C) or above (or equivalent)

This qualification is specifically designed for students if they have not gained a British Psychological Society (BPS) accredited Psychology undergraduate degree. This conversion award enables students to demonstrate the core competencies required by the BPS and allows students upon graduation to access a career path in further professional psychology.

However, the BPS is a British organisation, so this accredited conversion qualification is not usually relevant for international students unless students intend to gain employment in a

relevant field in the UK. The Psychological Studies pathway in this programme provides an excellent postgraduate experience for students who do not require BPS accreditation.

Applications are welcome from students with non-standard qualifications or returners to study (those over 21 years of age on entry) with significant relevant experience.

Admissions information is likely to be most up to date on the course webpage:

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/psychology/>

**Please note:** This link provides admission information relevant to the current recruitment cycle and therefore may be different to when this document was originally published.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme.

## Placement and Study Abroad

This programme is not currently eligible for placement or study abroad opportunities.

## Minor Modification Schedule

Version Number	Brief description of Modification	Date of Approval
2	Specification reformatted and made accessible.	November 2020
3	Annual changes for 2021 academic year	June 2021
4	Corrected module offer and table formatting	August 2021
5	Annual review and formatting.	May 2023