Programme Specification
MSc Psychology

This document applies to Academic Year 2020/21 onwards

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	Master of Science in Psychology (MSc)
5.	Programme titles	MSc Psychology
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Block teaching and lectures across semesters (University of Worcester campus)
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Full and Part-time (normal period of study: 1 year full-time; part-time flexible but typically 2-4 years). Block Delivery (some weekends) and lectures across each 12 week semester (1 and 2).
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	This programme of study meets the QAA descriptor at Master's level (QAA Master's Degree Characteristics), the descriptor for a higher education qualification at Level 7 (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)) and the The BPS Quality Assurance Policies and Practice for First Qualifications in Psychology (2019).
11.	Date of Programme Specification Preparation/ revision	May 2020 Re-approval to 15/30 credit modules Approved ASQEC June 2020 August 2020 – AQU amendments

12. Educational aims of the programme

The MSc Psychology is a conversion programme which aims to convert graduates from other disciplines, or those with non-accredited psychology degrees, into GBC-recognised Psychology graduates. GBC is the graduate basis for chartership with the British Psychological Society, required for professional training as a psychologist. The course therefore aims to recruit students who wish to obtain a GBC recognised qualification to pursue a career in psychology. Hence the programme attracts those who wish to further their interest in psychology, and those that wish to change their career path to one with a psychology focus. The programme provides a springboard for students to progress onto further professional training in Psychology (e.g., academic/research; clinical, occupational, educational, forensic, counselling psychology).

Aims and outcomes for the programme were specified with regard to the requirements of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ); and the syllabus of the British Psychological Society (BPS) Graduate Basis for Chartership.

Programme Aims:

1. To provide a flexible, student-centered forum for the advanced study of core subject areas in psychology, enabling students to achieve Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) with the BPS (on completion of the full Masters programme only).

2. To prepare students for the next stage of a career in Psychology by developing a set of core transferable skills relevant to graduate employment opportunities in psychology, and/or the next stage of training for a professional Psychology career (e.g., critical reflection, citizenship, personal responsibility).

3. To provide students with an understanding of the core professional and research ethics relevant to the discipline of psychology.

4. To create opportunities for the systematic development of skills in critical analysis, evaluation and communication, to enable students to develop confidence in effectively locate, interpret and appraise core subject material in psychology.

5. To develop competence in research methodology and data analysis and understand their application.

6. To independently design and conduct a piece of empirical research in psychology, known as the 'dissertation' (on completion of the full Masters programme only).

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

The programme's subject specific learning outcomes have been developed in accordance with the University's Curriculum Design Policy, Assessment Policy and the QAA's Revised UK Quality Code

Knowledge and Understanding		

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s	Award
1.	Demonstrate a comprehensive and critical understanding of current knowledge, theory and research evidence relevant to core areas of psychology	All taught modules	PGCert PGDip MSc
2.	Show critical awareness of contemporary developments in Psychology as a discipline	All taught modules	PGCert PGDip MSc
3.	Demonstrate a critical understanding of quantitative and qualitative research methods and how to apply these appropriately within research design	MPSY4182 MPSY4253 MPSY4000	PGDip MSc
4.	Demonstrate critical understanding and application of professional standards relevant to the discipline of psychology (e.g., ethical and professional codes of conduct).	MPSY4182 MPSY4167 MPSY4253 MPSY4000	PGcert PGDip MSc

Cognitive and Intellectual skills

5.	Critically synthesise information from a range of sources in order to demonstrate a coherent understanding of links between theory and practice.	MPSY4251 MPSY4250 MPSY4000	PGDip MSc
6.	Analyse and evaluate evidence from multiple psychological perspectives to develop an appreciation of cross-cutting debates within the field	MPSY4250 MPSY4252	PGDip MSc
7.	Independently design and conduct a piece of empirical research in psychology (known as the 'dissertation'), and communicate this to professional standards	MPSY4000	MSc

Skills and capabilities related to employability

8.	Engage in critical reflection to facilitate personal and academic development	MPSY4167	PGDip MSc
9.	Take responsibility for personal and professional learning and development, and demonstrate an awareness of future career opportunities and challenges.	MPSY4167 MPSY4000	PGDip MSc

Transferable/key skills

10.	Communicate complex ideas effectively and coherently, in a variety of formats, to different audiences.	MPSY4250 MPSY4167	PGDip MSc
11.	Work effectively with others to share ideas, problem-solve, and convey information with clarity	MPSY4250 MPSY4253	PGDip MSc
12.	Demonstrate high standards of digital information literacy being able to identify, retrieve, critically appraise and synthesise relevant sources	MPSY4250 MPSY4251 MPSY4254	PGDip MSc
13.	Demonstrate autonomous learning and project planning skills	MPSY4000	MSc

Learning, teaching and assessment

The programmes adopt a student-centred approach to teaching and learning that utilises theoretical knowledge and practical skills, building on the student's strengths, interests and experiences.

Teaching
The programmes utilise face to face delivery with modules being supported with the use of online reading materials. There is an emphasis on self-directed autonomous learning with students applying learning outcomes and content to their own areas of interest or practice which is evidenced through a variety of module assessments.

Teaching within the course aims to be engaging for students with formal approaches such as lectures being interspersed with discussion, debates, analysis of cases, and examples from organisational settings. Learning approaches may include the use of Blackboard Collaborate, online discussion forums and flipped classrooms which expect students to complete independent work in preparation for teaching sessions to reinforce learning.

Sessions take a variety of formats and are intended to enable the application of learning through discussion and small group activities. Seminars enable the discussion and development of understanding of topics covered in lectures, and are focused on developing subject specific skills and applied individual and group project work. Tutorials are a key aspect of the learning strategy with students being encouraged to share their assessment plans with tutors and peers, allowing structured questions and feedback. Tutorials can be face-to-face or utilise technologies such as Skype.

When undertaking the dissertation module, a supervisor will be allocated towards the start of the module. Timetabled group support sessions as well as individual tutorials will be used for supervision of the independent research dissertation.

Contact time
The programme comprises seven taught modules with teaching and learning activities running across three semesters. Five modules are taught weekly across semesters 1 and 2, and two modules are block taught (a 15 credit module taught in 2 x 2 day (09:15-17:15) blocks; a 30 credit module taught in 4 x 2 day (09:15-17:15) blocks). Full time students (starting in September) complete all seven taught modules across two semesters, plus the dissertation within a third semester in one academic year (12 months). Full time students, starting in January, can complete the same programme over 18 months. Part time students select which modules and how many they want to complete in each year, with their dissertation in the final year.

It is expected that a full-time student will be spending 37 hours per week engaged in study which will, in a normal week, include a combination of taught sessions and independent study.

Independent self-study
In addition to the contact time, full time students are expected to undertake around 24 hours of personal self-study per week. Part time students are expected to undertake around 6 hours of personal self-study per module per week. Typically, this will involve completing online activities, reading journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library and online, preparing coursework assignments and presentations, and preparing for examinations.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

Teaching staff
Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes staff from a variety of Psychology backgrounds including educational, development, cognitive and social psychology.

Teaching is informed by research and practice, and as at January 2018, with the course leader and the majority of course lecturers holding a higher education teaching qualification or being Fellows of Advance HE.

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formal or 'summative' assessment which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade.

Assessment methods include a range of coursework assessments such as critical reviews, laboratory reports, exams, project plan, presentations and a dissertation. Submission of assignments and feedback is managed electronically through Blackboard.

The precise assessment requirements for an individual student in an academic year will vary according to the mandatory and optional modules taken, but a typical formal summative assessment pattern, for a full-time student, for each year of the course is:

Semester 1
  1 Research proposal
  1 Analysis of statistical data
  1 Critical Review
  1 Group presentation
  1 Practical report
  1 Reflective workbook

Semester 2
  1 Systematic review
  1 Hybrid exam
  1 Position paper
  1 Reflective workbook

Semester 3
  Dissertation

The precise assessment requirements for part time students will vary according to the modules selected.

All assignments, will be internally marked and moderated as well as being externally examined as per the UW assessment policy. All assignments are submitted electronically, with feedback focusing on areas of strength and development needs, with advice for feeding forward to future assignments. Feedback takes a range of formats, including written comments, peer feedback, discussions with staff and audio recorded comments.

14. Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategies adopted in the MSc Psychology reflect the aims of the course and the QAA Master's Degree Characteristics Statement (February 2020). The assessment strategies are designed to develop skills and knowledge in psychology and provide evidence of the students' progress and achievement throughout the course and prepare the students for careers in psychology. Both formal (summative) and informal, developmental, (formative) approaches are used.

In order to develop the skills of advanced study identified within the course aims and the BPS 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. Online learning through the University Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard) will be utilised to support student learning.

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)

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)		
			PG Cert	PG Dip	MSc
MPSY4182	Advanced Research Analysis 1	15	M	M	M
MPSY4250	Social Psychology	15	O	M	M
MPSY4251	Developmental Psychology	15	O	M	M
MPSY4252	Biopsychology	15	O	M	M
MPSY4253	Cognitive Psychology	15	O	M	M
MPSY4254	Individual Differences	15	O	M	M
MPSY4167	Professional Skills Development	30		M	M
MPSY4000	Dissertation	60			M
Total Credits		180			

PG Certificate
To be awarded the PG Cert Psychology students must successfully complete 60 credits at level 7, including MPSY4182 plus any three taught modules.

PG Diploma
To be awarded the PG Dip Psychology students must successfully complete the PG Cert plus MPSY4167 Professional Skills and a further 30 credits of taught modules from the award map above.

Masters MSc
On successful completion of **all 7 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.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

The MSc Psychology is modular and part of the University of the Worcester (UW) TCRF (Taught Courses Regulatory Framework). These programmes have been developed in line with the QAA Master's Degree Characteristics Statement (February 2020).

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

17. Support for Students

During the application process all students are advised that they are welcome to visit the programme leader where possible to discuss the course or contact them via email or skype if not able to attend the university. All new entrants to the course are sent 'joining information' prior to starting in the Autumn which includes key information such as a preliminary timetable; preparatory reading list; registration details.

Students are invited to attend a course-specific induction to build familiarity with the University, the School and the course. They will also attend a School of Psychology post-graduate induction event where they can meet representatives from Student Services, Registry Services, Library Services and ICT and hear more about their services as well as meeting the programme team.

Once enrolled onto the course, each student will be allocated a Personal Academic Tutor for the duration of their studies who maintains regular contact with their tutee. The role of the personal and academic tutor is to provide academic and pastoral support, in line with the University's Personal Academic Tutoring Scheme. In addition to their personal academic tutor, students will also be allocated a dissertation supervisor when they enrol on the dissertation module, who normally is a specialist in, or has a research interest their dissertation topic.

Additional support:

- A dedicated induction programme prior to commencement of the course.
- A course handbook.
- Module outlines for each module which provides details relating to each module being covered.
- Dedicated sites on the University's VLE (Blackboard) for the programme and each module being taught across the course.
- Module leaders who will guide students through each of the modules being studied on the course.
- Support meetings/seminars held with personal academic tutors/module tutors to discuss a range of pastoral, career and study skills issues.
- Student representation on the Course Management Committee.
- A dedicated programme director for the course who is responsible for the overall management and delivery of the programme.
- Access to learning support services (including dedicated subject librarians based in the Hive University Library, IT Services, and Media and Print services).
- Access to the University of Worcester 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.

University based support is available from Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service:

18. Admissions

Admissions policy

The course recruits applicants who wish to obtain a GBC recognised qualification to pursue a career in psychology. Hence the programme attracts those who wish to further their interest in psychology, and those that wish to change their career path to one with a psychology focus. The course seeks to recruit International and home applicants who meet the entry criteria. All applicants are interviewed by the Course Leader and their qualifications verified.

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 2019) requirements for admission to conversion programmes, students must have one of the following (route A or route B):

Entry route A
Students must have all of the following

- at least a 2i honours degree in a subject other than Psychology
- possession of GCSEs in Maths and English (Grade C/4 or above) or equivalent qualification in line with University Admissions Policy
- IELTS 6.5 or better (overseas students for whom English is not their first language)

Or

Entry route B
Students must have all of the following

- 2ii honours degree in a subject other than Psychology
- 60 credits of Psychology at level 4 or above
- possession of GCSEs in Maths and English (Grade C/4 or above) or equivalent qualification in line with University Admissions Policy IELTS 6.5 or better (overseas students for whom English us not their first language)

Students can achieve 60 credits in Psychology by completing the Foundation modules 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

Prospective students can apply for the course through the University Registry department. See: https://www.worcester.ac.uk/journey/postgraduate-applications.html

- All applications will be via the Admissions office.
- All application forms are viewed by Programme Leader.
- If applicants meet the initial entry requirements then applicants are invited for interview. This will be either as face to face or via video conferencing/skype. The interview is a two way process to ensure that the applicant understands and meets the requirements for postgraduate study and also for the applicant to ensure the course is the right one for their needs. 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 (see below).*
- Potential applicants are welcome to attend the University to meet the Programme Leader for informal discussion.

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, attaining a 2:2, 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 Psychology 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
Students are required to successfully complete 60 credits of foundation modules before they commence the MSc Psychology. All Foundation modules are worth 15 credits and are taken from the existing BSc Psychology undergraduate programme. Students *must pass all* Foundation modules before progressing on to the MSc Psychology programme. The modules provide students with the opportunity to develop the necessary foundation research skills required at M-level, and ensure students engage with the discipline at Levels 4, 5 and 6 *before* commencing the MSc Psychology.

Due to the course structure of the MSc Psychology students are required to start these in semester 1 to ensure they take the mandatory module PSYC2532 Psychological Research Methods 2. The remaining 45 credits can be chosen from available BSc Psychology modules. Students can choose to complete these foundation modules on a part-time (across 2 semesters) or full-time basis (across semester 1). If all 60 credits of foundation modules are passed in semester 1, students can choose to start the MSc Psychology programme in January. Part-time completion of foundation modules (i.e., over 2 semesters), will necessitate a September start on the MSc Psychology.

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's [TCRF (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 7 days (one week) 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 7 days (one week) 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
- A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped 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.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

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Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, including MPSY4182 plus any three taught modules.
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7, including MPSY4182 plus remaining six taught modules.
Masters (MSc)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including MPSY4182 plus remaining six 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.

Classification of Masters
The classification will be determined by whichever of the following two methods results in the higher classification.

Method 1

a) Candidates will be awarded a Distinction where they have attained an average of A- (PD) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award.
b) Candidates will be awarded a Merit where they have attained an average of C+ (PM) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award.

   Method 2

a) Candidates will be awarded a Distinction, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade A- (PD) or higher
b) Candidates will be awarded a Merit, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade C+ (PM) or higher

Candidates will be awarded a Pass where they have not fulfilled the rules for Method 1 or Method 2, but are eligible for the award of a Masters.

For further information on honours degree classification, see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

20.   Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations
This course is designed to permit students to study key components of Psychology whilst obtaining eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartered membership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society (BPS). Although the degree prepares students for employment and further study in psychology, (through acquisition of the first step in a career in psychology- a GBC degree); it should be noted that **this is not a professional qualification in Psychology**. Further postgraduate study would be necessary for students to become eligible to apply for Chartership with the British Psychological Society and this programme provides students with the necessary foundations to pursue such training, including the GBC requirement.

The course is therefore designed to meet a number of different needs:

- To enable students to develop the graduate knowledge, skills and attitudes to critically evaluate the contested and multi-dimensional nature of Psychology
- To prepare students for a number of diverse roles, for example, further training in clinical or counselling psychology, management, health education, human resource management and other careers in psychology-related fields.

This programme has been designed with employability in mind. The degree is designed for those with both an interest in the application of psychological theory to practice and for those wishing to contribute their knowledge and skills to other general and/or specific settings. This programme hopes to attract those who wish to develop their career in Psychology whilst furthering their interest in other areas of Psychology.

The MSc Psychology course will allow students membership of the BPS and therefore to engage with the psychological community of applied psychologists through the BPS and other professional bodies. In terms of employability, these students will have 'added value' for any

organisation seeking graduates with interpersonal and communication skills because of their basic grounding in counselling and relationship formation as well as Psychology. They would also be particularly suited to further professional training in Psychology.

Students are encouraged to consider their potential career pathways at the earliest opportunity through progress reviews with their PAT's and in their Professional Skills module. Psychology liaises with the University's Careers service to keep it informed of changes within professional areas of the discipline, and to communicate to potential employers the knowledge and skills acquired by students taking psychology. The Careers Service runs a series of workshops especially for Psychology Students. The course prepares students for careers in many areas such as:

- Apply for postgraduate psychology training required to become a professional (Chartered) psychologist (e.g. counselling, clinical, educational, occupational);
- Health-related disciplines (e.g. Assistant Psychologist; mental health worker)
- Research;
- Other postgraduate study (e.g. PGCE);
- Police force at graduate level;
- A range of caring professions (e.g. nursing, social work);
- General graduate careers

Student employability
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-centred 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. Students are encouraged to tailor their Dissertation to an applied area of Psychology which fits with the student's career goals.
The MSc Psychology is delivered by a research-active teaching team who provide students with contemporary expertise and practical skills used by Chartered Psychologists. There are opportunities for students to apply to work as voluntary research assistants to support staff research projects and gain valuable research experience.

Links with employers
Our established partnerships enable us to advertise paid and voluntary work opportunities to psychology students on a regular basis. The school 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.

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 associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.