



The University Of Sheffield.

Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from The University of Sheffield

Programme Details

1. Programme title	Psychology and Education (Conversion)
2. Programme code	EDUT234
3. QAA FHEQ level	7
4. Faculty	Social Sciences
5. Department	School of Education
6. Other departments providing credit bearing modules for the programme	None
7. Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	The British Psychological Society (BPS)
8. Date of production/revision	January 2019, November 2023

Awards	Type of award	Duration
9. Final award	MSc Psychology and Education	1 year
10. Intermediate awards	PGDip Psychology and Education	1 year
	PGCert Psychology and Education	1 year

Programme Codes

11. JACS code(s) <i>Select between one and three codes from the HESA website.</i>	C800 / X300		
12. HECoS code(s) <i>Select between one and three codes from the HECoS vocabulary.</i>			

Programme Delivery

13. Mode of study	Full-time
14. Mode of delivery	Face to face on campus

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The MSc in Psychology and Education is a one-year, full-time programme designed to provide intensive study in the field of Psychology and Education; specifically designed to build specialist skills, knowledge, and research methods needed for students to begin their career journey in psychology.

This MSc is designed for students who do not have an accredited undergraduate degree in Psychology and as such will enable students to meet the requirements for the Graduate Basis for Chartered membership (GBC) to the British Psychological Society (BPS). Successful completion will provide a basis for progression to postgraduate training in psychology, and therefore eligibility for Chartered membership of the Society (CPsychol) in due course.

As an accredited programme, this MSc follows the GBC curriculum, and as such covers the following Psychology related content:

- a. Biological Psychology
- b. Cognitive Psychology
- c. Developmental Psychology
- d. Individual Differences
- e. Social Psychology
- f. Conceptual and Historical Issues in Psychology
- g. Research Methods
- h. Empirical Project

In addition to the delivery of the core GBC curriculum as outlined above, the programme is unique as it adopts the culture and ethos of the School of Education through utilising the research, theoretical and practical orientation of the Psychology and Education team. Additionally, in line with the Sheffield Graduate Attributes this MSc provides students with the opportunity to develop and enhance their personal attributes and ability to secure the outcomes they seek, and to manage their onward careers with confidence.

The MSc has a dedicated in-house lab space in The Wave building (supported by our dedicated MSc Psychology Technician), which is for the purpose of conducting Psychology experiments and research; as well as equipment, including psychometric and standardised tests, portable electroencephalogram (EEG) to gather, analyse, and experiment with brain data, ActiGraph Watches which provide accurate and reliable in-home sleep assessment, and Gorila Science Software, which provides easy-to-use online research tools for the behavioural science for the purpose of practical lab teaching and research.

This MSc comprises four taught modules and a Dissertation module:

Semester 1

1. Research Methods in Psychology (30 credits)
2. Introduction to Psychology and Development Across the Lifespan (30 credits)

Semester 2

3. Cognition and Neuroscience (30 credits)
4. Social and Health Psychology (30 credits)

Academic Year:

5. Empirical project (Research Dissertation) (60 credits) to be submitted at the end of the academic year in the Autumn.

16. Programme aims

This MSc Psychology and Education (Conversion) aims to:	
A1	Critically integrate and apply multiple perspectives to Psychology and Education, recognising that Psychology is constituted by a range of theories, research methods, forms of evidence, and applications, all of which have been culturally, historically, biologically and socially influenced.
A2	Develop conceptual understanding from across different paradigms, critically evaluate current scholarship and research methodologies and employ critical, evidence-based and original thinking on theoretical, practical, ethical and socio-cultural issues associated with the use of different methods and perspectives in psychology and education.
A3	Analyse, present and critically evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and use psychological tools including specialist software and psychometric instruments to identify and evaluate patterns in behaviour, psychological functioning and experience.
A4	Generate and explore original hypotheses and research questions and understand the role of empirical evidence in the creation and constraint of theory, how theory guides the collection and interpretation of empirical data, and conduct an extensive piece of empirical research ethically and independently through a variety of research methods-
A5	Apply and explore contemporary psychological knowledge and research on the mind, brain and human behaviour to explore timely “real life” problems at the forefront of practice & research, whilst accounting for wider cultural and institutional contexts and to develop a practical understanding of how established techniques of research methods and enquiry lead to the creation and interpretation of new knowledge.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding		
On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to demonstrate the following:		
		Links to Aim(s)
K1	A systematic understanding of knowledge and how fields of psychology and education influence how this understanding and knowledge is created.	A1, A5
K2	The ability to critically evaluate current research, methodologies, research tools and techniques, and, where appropriate, identify limitations and propose new hypotheses.	A1, A2, A3
K3	A systematic understanding of methods of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis as well as of relevant psychological tools including specialist software and psychometric instruments employed in identifying and evaluating patterns in behaviour, psychological functioning, and experience.	A1, A3
K4	A critical understanding of the role of empirical evidence in the creation and constraint of theory, and also in how theory guides the collection and interpretation of empirical data.	A1
K5	A systematic understanding of contemporary research on mind, brain and human behaviour within wider cultural, societal and institutional contexts.	A1, A5

K6	An understanding of how to construct and conduct research ethically and independently by employing a variety of methods, techniques and psychometric tools applicable to research and practice in Psychology and Education.	A1, A3, A4
K7	A critical awareness of current “real life” problems and/or new insights, informed by current psychological research and theory.	A1, A2, A5
K8	Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and inquiry lead to the creation and interpretation of new knowledge in the disciplines.	A1, A4
Skills and other attributes		
On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to demonstrate the following:		
S1	Ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively to solve problems, to retrieve and organise information effectively and make sound judgements by evaluating complex data.	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5
S2	Ability to communicate effectively to translate knowledge to specialist and non-specialist audiences relating to Psychology and Education.	A4, A5
S3	Self-direction, responsibility and originality in tackling and solving problems, and autonomous planning and implementation of tasks at a professional or equivalent level. This includes effective and confident communication and recognising their own and others emotions to guide thinking and behaviour.	A2
S4	Ability to reflect upon contextual and interpersonal factors in analysis as well as awareness of equality, inclusivity and diversity issues.	A5
S5	Ability to work cooperatively and to maximise the effectiveness of individual skills through group work and team building.	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5
S6	Numerical reasoning skills and digital literacy skills in word processing, use of databases, statistical analysis software and online behavioural science platforms for research and information sourcing.	A3
S7	Ability in the effective use of personal planning and project management skills as well as in independent learning. Taking responsibility for one's own learning and skill development.	A4

18. Learning and teaching methods

There are a total of four taught modules on this MSc, with two taught modules delivered each semester as follows:

- **Semester 1:**
 - a. *Research Methods in Psychology*
 - b. *Introduction to Psychology and Development Across the Lifespan*
- **Semester 2:**
 - a. *Cognition and Neuroscience*
 - b. *Social and Health Psychology*

Each taught module will be delivered in an 11-week teaching block, with a reading week part way through the semester (i.e. consolidation of learning week).

The Research Dissertation spans the entire academic year and includes support sessions covering

topics such as those listed below. Students complete writing up the dissertation during the summer period.

- Introduction to the dissertation module
- Ethical issues in psychological and educational research
- Dissertation writing up skills

Teaching delivery will take the form of Seminars and Laboratory Practical sessions. For each module students will receive 40 hours of seminar time and 20 hours of practical time spread throughout the relevant semester.

1. **Seminars.** These ensure full coverage of all aspects of the BPS curriculum through supporting the acquisition of essential knowledge. The aim of the seminars is to enable students to gain a systematic understanding of Psychology. They also integrate the use of question and answer techniques to stimulate discussion and develop problem-solving skills (A1-A5; S1-S4, S7).
2. **Laboratory Practical Sessions.** These will enable students to gain “hands-on” experience in research methods, statistical analysis software, Psychology based research tools and instruments (K1-8; S1-7). This will enable students to build confidence in communication (S2), evaluation, group work (S3, S5) and research methods skills (A1, A3, A4; S6).
3. **Group work.** Throughout the MSc students are encouraged to work together and support one another both within and outside the classroom. Everyone is expected to share knowledge and experience in a constructive and creative way in order to develop support networks which they may be able to draw on in their future studies or career activities. (S4, S5).
4. **Independent study.** This is an important part of the learning process for students and the nature of its prescription will depend on the learning outcomes for each module. The emphasis will often entail the location, reading and analysis of suitable primary or secondary sources, in preparation for seminars, laboratory practical sessions and assessments; (K1-8; S1, S3, S6-7). Independent reading will be a vital prerequisite to seminars and laboratory practicals (K1-8; S1, S6).
5. **Personal tutorials.** Students will be assigned a personal tutor for the duration of their studies with whom they are encouraged to discuss their achievement, possible progression pathways and any pastoral issues that may impact their studies (K6-8; S1; S6).
6. **On-line activities.** All School of Education modules make use of Blackboard to develop familiarity with the use and potential of virtual learning environments to enhance and structure learning. Furthermore, students will have access to relevant software and online behavioural science platforms (i.e. SPSS and Gorilla Science) (K1-8, S1; S6) to facilitate the development of their research and Psychology practical skills. Online support sessions (hosted via Blackboard Collaborate) are also provided by the University of Sheffield’s English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC) for each module where students will gain writing skills support which are linked to each assessment (A2-A3, S2). Additionally, online assessment drop-in clinics will be hosted via Blackboard Collaborate (S6). For the research dissertation module, students also receive an online introductory session and five support sessions.

19. Assessment and feedback methods

The MSc provides experience of different assessment methods. These methods help to build students’ confidence in their ability to succeed, identify any specific study skills difficulties and develop strategies for continued success.

The modules utilise multiple assessments, providing students with the opportunity to pass a module based on a weighted average of grades across assessments for the module. This is with the exception of the Research Methods modules where all individual assignments need to be passed to pass the module to ensure students have a good understanding of both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

The particular modes of assessment are designed to meet those learning outcomes and skills

demanded:

- a) By the QAA Framework for HE Qualifications: Level 7 descriptors and levels (October 2014)
- b) BPS Standards for the accreditation of undergraduate, conversion and integrated Masters' programmes in Psychology (October 2016).

All assessments on the MSc are Summative Assessments:

- **Essays & a blog post.** In writing essays and a longer blog post, students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of K1-K5; S1-S4.
- **Psychological lab reports** This is a specific requirement stipulated by the BPS and gives students the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of K3, K6; S1-S3, S6.
- **Multiple Choice Questionnaires (MCQs).** The MCQs assess Biological Psychology content and inferential statistics content which are a BPS requirement (K2; S6).
- Note that all three of the assessments in the Research Methods module (semester 1) must be passed to pass the module to ensure students demonstrate an understanding of both qualitative and quantitative research methods in psychology.
- **Research dissertation/empirical project.** This is a specific requirement stipulated by the BPS, where students carry out a substantial piece of research which involves the collection of original empirical data from participants. The research dissertation requires students to individually demonstrate a range of research skills including planning, considering and resolving ethical issues, analysis and dissemination of findings (K1-K5; S1-7).
- *In order to be eligible for the GBC, students must pass the research dissertation, and gain at least a Lower Second-Class Honours degree, or its equivalent (i.e. an overall pass mark of at least 50% for conversion programmes). That is, MSc students must pass all modules to be eligible for GBC.*

Feedback

- Written feedback on assessed work on the taught modules will include both points for students to work on/develop and strengths of their work. This feedback will also acknowledge any penalties the students incur such as late submissions or going over the word count, as per the School of Education Policy.
- Students will gain informal feedback in seminars and laboratory practical sessions from both their peers and the staff member(s) leading the session for the group work they carry out to support their learning.
- Students will receive written feedback from their dissertation supervisor on one draft of their dissertation. This will either be one full draft or feedback on each chapter across the year.
- Students will have one online drop-in session for each module where they can ask questions to module leads about the assignment and gain verbal feedback on verbal information provided by the students, in relation to their assignments during the session.

20. Programme structure and student development

Programme Structure

There are a total of four taught modules on this MSc, with two taught modules delivered each semester, and a Dissertation module (see points and figure below). Each taught module will involve 40 hours of seminar delivery and 20 hours of laboratory practical sessions spread throughout the semester.

Semester 1	Semester 2
Research Methods in Psychology (30 credits)	Cognition and Neuroscience (30 credits)
Introduction to Psychology and Development Across the Lifespan (30 credits)	Social and Health Psychology (30 credits)
Academic year: Research Dissertation (60 credits)	

Each taught module will be delivered in a 11-week teaching block, with a reading week part way into the semester (i.e., consolidation of learning week).

The Research Dissertation spans the entire academic year and includes support sessions covering topics such as those listed below. Students complete writing up the dissertation during the summer period, with submission at the end of August.

- Introduction to the dissertation module
- Ethical issues in psychological and educational research
- Dissertation writing up skills

Student Development

The programme is at Masters' level and students' knowledge and understanding is developed in relation to the focus of each module. The programme is mostly addressed to students relatively new to the disciplines of Education and/or Psychology. The students are supported in the gradual development of skills, knowledge and understanding through carefully staged tasks, which lead to and enhance independent learning. Teaching and learning approaches involve a change from initially supported and guided study to more independent and self-directed study, enabling graduates to take a critical stance to theories, findings and approaches of the discipline.

The progression built into the programme relates to the development of critical awareness, the ability to synthesise knowledge and research and to write critically and is reflected during each module and between the modules. The development of key skills runs throughout the year and students are taught critical reading and writing skills, how to conduct a literature review and how to write assignments through an inquiry-based framework. Students work independently on their dissertation study supported by individual dissertation supervisors.

Students will also be supported with potential career paths that the MSc could lead to. This will include online resources on Blackboard signposting them to relevant websites and resources as well as having access to bespoke lectures for the MSc cohort from external speakers about career paths and programmes they can apply for relating to Psychology disciplines.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available online at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/>.

21. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to programmes is available from the University's Online Prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/courses/>.

Candidates are normally expected to hold an honours degree (first class or 2.1) with demonstrable evidence of interest or experience relating to Psychology and/or Education.

For students whose first language is not English, the School of Education requires a score of at least 6.5 IELTS with at least 6.0 in each component.

22. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

Subject Benchmark Statements

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2014)

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>

University Vision and Strategic Plan

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/vision>

23. Additional information

The programme achieved BPS accreditation in 2019 and will be subject to a full BPS re-accreditation in 2024.

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.