Programme Specification

1	**Awarding body**	University of London
2	**Teaching Institution**	**Birkbeck College**
3	**Programme Title(s)**	**Cert HE Applied Psychology**
4	**Programme Code(s)**	PSYCA-H
5	**UCAS code**	N/A
6	**Home Department**	Psychological Sciences
7	**Exit Award(s)**	Certificate of Continuing Education
8	**Duration of Study (number of years)**	2-4 years
9	**Mode of Study**	Part-time
10	**Level of Award (FHEQ)**	Level 4
11	**Other teaching depts or institution**	N/A
12	**Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details**	N/A
13	**QAA Benchmark Group**	Psychology

14	**Programme Rationale & Aims**

Main Aims:
- To offer students an opportunity to explore the range of ways in which psychology may be applied.

Distinctive Features:
- All modules are 'open access' with no formal entry requirements.
- Modules are largely offered in the evenings with some daytime provision.
- Students are taught in small interactive classes, alongside fellow students who are keen to learn and who bring to the class a wide range of experience.
- Students who discover a passion and ability in the study of psychology have the opportunity to apply for acceptance onto the first year of the part-time BSc Psychology run by the Department of Psychological Sciences at Birkbeck. Applications are encouraged from those who successfully complete Psychology of Learning, Problem Solving and Decision Making and Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction).
- Students working, or wishing to work, with children and young people in education may be considered for direct entry into Year 2 of Birkbeck's Foundation Degree in Psychology for Education Professionals or BA Psychology for Education. To be considered students should successfully complete the following modules: The Developing Child: A Psychological Perspective, Psychology of Learning, Problem Solving and Decision Making, Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction) and *either* Critical Approaches to Attachment or Understanding Human Personality or Critical Approaches to Positive Psychology.
- Students may also be able to use their Certificate to gain exemption when transferring to undergraduate study at other institutions of Higher Education.

15	**Entry Criteria**
	There are no formal entry requirements and the study for the award is open to all who apply and who feel that they may benefit. Students are advised that modules are taught and assessed at first year undergraduate level and an appropriate level of spoken and written English is required. Although proof is not required that a student is operating at this level, student are advised that inadequate English will not be compensated for when marking assessments.

16	**Learning Outcomes**
	Subject Specific:

1) ***Understanding of the discipline of psychology and its potential relevance to a variety of settings:***

Students will be able to:
- Compare and contrast key perspectives within psychology.
- Explain how psychology may be applied to one or more areas
- Understand the potential relevance of psychology in various settings such as at home, in the community, at work etc.

2) ***Understanding of scientific practice:***

Students will be able to:
- Explain how a range of key research methodologies may be applied.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different research paradigms and methods.
- Describe the ways in which concepts and theories etc may be evaluated.

Intellectual:

3) ***The ability to compare, contrast and organise approaches / theories within psychology***
Students will be able to:
- Describe how the different approaches address specific topics.
- Identify the similarities, differences, contradictions and complementary elements of key theories within psychology as they apply to various topics within applied psychology.

4) ***Formulating arguments***
Students will be able to:
- Present a coherent argument on a range of important topics in applied psychology.
- Restate key arguments in psychology relating to various topics within applied psychology.
- Present a coherent and structured line of argument on relevant topics.

5) ***Formulating research questions:***
Students will be able to:
- Propose simple research questions.
- Suggest appropriate ways of answering research questions, taking into account relevant ethical issues.

6) ***The ability to evaluate research findings:***
Students will be able to:
- Describe and discuss qualitative and quantitative data.

- Describe basic principles that may be applied in the interpretation and evaluation of research findings.
- Use basic statistical and numerical methods in relation to quantitative data.

Practical:

7) *Ability to manage information*
- Recognise and employ the skills necessary to work in depth on specific topics, either independently or as part of a team.
- Recognise and employ the skills necessary to complete assignments.

8) *Ability to employ research skills*
- Collect simple data and conduct a simple analysis of that data.
- Present basic qualitative and/or quantitative data in an appropriate format.

Personal and Social:

9) *Ability to act as a self-directed, reflective learner*
- Recognise, practice and employ a range of strategies to support personal learning, including the ability to reflect on the success of strategies and to effectively solve problems.
- Recognise and use a range of sources of learning support.

10) *The ability to work in groups.*
- Recognise the benefits of working in groups.
- Recognise ways of relating in groups that improves the effectiveness of group work.

11) *Ability to communicate effectively:*
- Participate in small group discussion/debate/exercises by both listening and communicating own ideas effectively.
- The ability to present own ideas on issues addressed on the course in an appropriate and effective manner.
- The ability to communicate the results of study accurately and reliably in writing and/or in person.

12) *Understanding of how the award has relevance to the student's current and future career / life:*
- Identify courses of interest and of use in long term plans.
- Understand possible routes of progression from award onto further study.

17	**Learning, teaching and assessment methods**
	A full module (30 credits) usually lasts for two terms. Each term is usually 11 weeks long. Students attend the module once a week, usually for two hours. The total amount of time spent in class is usually 44 hours.
	A half module (15 credits) lasts for one term. Again, students attend the module once a week, usually for two hours. The total amount of time spent in class is usually 22 hours. The only exceptions are Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction) and Research Methods in Practice which have 42 hours of classroom time and Approaches to Applied Research which has 33 hours of classroom time.

Teaching takes a variety of forms. These may include lectures, seminars, in class and out of class exercises, demonstrations, class visits to exhibitions or class presentations by students, in groups or individually.

For each course taken, students are expected to allow additional study time per week for their own reading and coursework. For each credit, students are expected to undertake 10 hours of study, including that in class.

Classes are offered mostly in the evening although some are also available in the daytime.

Study Skills:
As all modules within the programme are open access, study skills are incorporated into the learning outcomes of every module. The precise manner in which these learning outcomes are met will depend on the composition and therefore the needs of the class. However, teaching resources are made available to lecturers to help them incorporate study skills into their modules and handouts are available for students who are interested in developing these skills. In addition students are offered a half day module on 'Preparing to Study Psychology' which enables them among other things to identify the study skills they already have and those they may need to develop. Students are also offered half day and one day workshops free of charge to help them prepare for study and to develop the necessary study skills. These may include for example study skills, essay writing skills, report writing, revising and mathematics.

The central aims of assessment are to help students learn and to provide the opportunity for feedback from the lecturer. It is a chance for students to see how they are progressing towards their goals. Also to study a particular area of interest in more detail or to spend time thinking about the real life applications of what they have learnt. Overall, the assignments completed for a particular course should address all the learning outcomes for that course.

The amount of assessment:
For a **half module** there are usually two pieces of work to complete. Both pieces of work are completed at home.

For a **full module** there are usually four pieces of work to complete. On Psychology of Learning, Problem Solving and Decision Making and The Developing Child: A Psychological Perspective, two of these pieces of work are written in the classroom under timed conditions. On all other full modules all four pieces of work are completed at home.

The exceptions are Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction), Research Methods in Practice and Approaches to Applied Research.

For Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction) students are required to complete a report of 1500 words based upon a laboratory experiment carried out in class as a group and written up individually, one scenario-based timed test with a specific focus on methodology and ethics and another timed test that assesses the practical use of SPSS. Students are also required to submit a portfolio of worksheets completed during the module.

For Research Methods in Practice students are required to complete two lab reports: one of 1500 words and one of 2000 words and a scenario-based timed test. They are also required to submit a portfolio of worksheets completed during the module.

For Approaches to Applied Research students are required to complete one lab report and one critical analysis (1500 words each) and one SPSS test.

Work completed at home:
The pieces of work completed at home are usually 1,500 words in length (or the equivalent). Students will be penalised for submitting work that is significantly over or under this word limit. There will be no penalty for work that is 10% (that is 150 words) too long or too short. However, for work that is between 150-500 words too long or too short, 5 marks will be deducted. For work that is more than 500 words too long or too short 10 marks will be deducted.

Subject to the agreement of the course lecturer, it may be acceptable for students to complete 1 double length piece of work instead of the two pieces of coursework completed at home. The course lecturer must agree the question/task. This work must be 3000 words in length (or the equivalent) and students will, again, be penalised for submitting work that is significantly over or under this word limit. There will be no penalty for work that is 10% (that is 300 words) too long or too short. However, for work that is between 300 - 1000 words too long or too short, 5 marks will be deducted. For work that is more than 1000 words too long or too short 10 marks will be deducted.

The amount students learn should increase if interested in the topic, therefore we strongly encourage students to discuss with their lecturer if there are particular subjects they would like to focus on in their assessment. Obviously, the topic of assessment does have to be entirely relevant to the module but it may be possible to negotiate something of particular interest. The work completed at home may take a variety of forms, depending on the module and on the lecturer. So, if there is some form of assessment students would find particularly useful or interesting [such as a case study etc], they must discuss the possibilities with their lecturer. We may not be able to accommodate every request but we do try to be flexible. Students are reminded in discussions with the lecturer it may be useful to let them know what grade students are aiming for as some types of assessment increase the likelihood of a high mark. This may be relevant to students aiming to progress onto other courses.

A lecturer may offer to give students feedback on an essay plan but they are not required to do this.

Timed essays:
Each time students have to complete a timed essay they will be given an hour during class to write an essay, without referring to their books or to anyone else.

Timed essays provide students the opportunity to apply their knowledge to a novel problem within a limited amount of time. They also help students to assess how much of the material they are able to remember. They are designed to provide students who want to progress onto further study adequate preparation for sitting formal exams in the future.

Although writing under timed conditions may seem daunting, some students prefer timed essays as they find that they take less time to prepare than coursework completed at home.

Students will not be penalised for the length of timed essays although pieces that are too short may not be of sufficient quality to receive the higher grades. Student do not have to

provide a reference list at the end of their essay but do need to include references in the body of their essay if they refer to the work or ideas or others.

A lecturer may choose to give the class a 'mock' timed essay – an opportunity to sit an essay under timed conditions and to receive feedback. However, lecturers are not required to do this.

Students must pass at least one timed essay in order to pass the module.

For Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction) and Research Methods in Practice, students must pass the scenario-based timed test in order to pass the module.

For Approaches to Applied Research students must pass all elements in order to pass the module.

Number of attempts:
Students are permitted a maximum of three attempts at each module. Students failing a module with an overall mark of between 30-39% will usually be given an opportunity to undertake reassessment in the failed element. Reassessment counts as an attempt. Students failing with a module with an overall mark of less than 30% will usually be required to retake the module i.e. re-enrol and re-attend the module.

For Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction) and Research Methods in Practice, students failing the scenario test with a mark of less than 30% where their overall module mark is 30% or more will usually be required to retake the module.

Pre-requisites:
Successful completion of Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction) is a pre-requisite for Research Methods in Practice or Approaches to Applied Research.

How results are calculated:
These follow the standard form presently used in the College as detailed in the 'College Regulations for Internal Students and Regulations for Degrees' document. This can be found at: Regulations — Birkbeck, University of London (bbk.ac.uk). The marking criteria are available upon request.

The final mark for each module will usually be an average of the marks received (i.e. an average of 2 marks for half modules and an average of four marks for full modules). The marks for double essays are doubled to calculate the average. Students may still pass the module even if they have failed a piece of coursework but they will be required to pass at least one timed essay where these are a part of the assessment process. Therefore, if taking a half module that includes a timed essay the student will have to pass that part of the assessment.

For Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction) the lab report is worth 50% of the total mark; the scenario-based timed assessment is worth 30% and the SPSS assessment is worth 10%. The final 10% is awarded for completion and submission of the worksheet portfolio. The scenario test must be passed in order for students to pass the module.

For Research Methods in Practice the first lab report is worth 20% of the total mark; the second lab report is worth 25%; the scenario-based timed assessment is worth 50%. The

final 10% is awarded for completion and submission of the worksheet portfolio. The scenario test must be passed in order for students to pass the module.

For Approaches to Applied Research the lab report and critical analysis are worth 25% each and the SPSS test is worth 50%. All elements except participation must be passed in order for students to pass the module.

Marks given by lecturers are provisional. A sample of the work completed by students on the Applied Psychology Programme will be seen by an Internal and an External Examiner at the end of the module. Marks may be changed - up or down - at this stage.

18	**Programme Desciption**

To gain the Certificate of Higher Education, students must successfully complete modules worth a total of 120 credit points. Students take the two core modules (worth a total of 45 credits) and choose option modules worth 75 credits.

All modules may be taken in any order, except for Research Methods in Practice or Approaches to Applied Research, which are normally taken last.

Students may consider enrolling on the 'Choosing your Course' workshop for advice on choosing a programme of study. Students wishing to take modules totalling more than 60 credits during one academic year should first seek approval from the psychology subject team.

Students may be awarded a Certificate of Continuing Education as an intermediate award on completion of modules worth 60 credits. Students may not register for the Certificate of Continuing Education as an entry qualification, as it is only awarded as an intermediate award to those unable to complete their Certificate of Higher Education during the normal period of registration.

Core Modules:
- Psychology of Learning, Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction)

Optional Modules:
A selection of options will be offered each year and may for example include:

- Critical Approaches to Attachment
- Critical Approaches to Positive Psychology
- Health Psychology
- Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Psychology of Mental Health
- *Either* Research Methods in Practice *or* Approaches to Applied Research
- The Developing Child: A Psychological Perspective
- Understanding Applied Social Psychology
- Understanding Human Personality
- Understanding Lifespan Psychology

19	**Programme Structure**			
Modular programme				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	SCPS002S4	Psychology of Learning, Problem Solving and Decision Making	30	Core
4	SCPS168H4	Research Methods for Psychology (Introduction)	15	Core
4		Options	75	Options
Indicative List of Options				
4	SCPS090H4	Critical Approaches to Attachment	15	Option
4	FFPS127H4	Critical Approaches to Positive Psychology	15	Option
4	SCPS174H4	Health Psychology	15	Option
4	FFPS072H4	Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	15	Option
4	FFPS025S4	Psychology of Mental Health	30	Option
4	SCPS169H4 OR SCPS200H5	Research Methods in Practice OR Approached to Applied Research	15	Option OR Option
4	SCPS113S4	The Developing Child: A Psychological Perspective	30	Option
4	SCPS188H4	Understanding Applied Social Psychology	15	Option
4	FFPS123H4	Understanding Human Personality	15	Option
4	SCPS190H4	Understanding Lifespan Psychology	15	Option
Note: To gain the Certificate of Higher Education, students must successfully complete modules worth a total of 120 credit points. Students take the 2 core modules (worth a total of 45 credits) and choose option modules worth 75 credits.				

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

20	**Programme Director**	Dr Michael Mallaghan
21	**Start Date** *(term/year)*	Early 1990s
22	**Date approved by TQEC**	Early 1990s
23	**Date approved by Academic Board**	Early 1990s
24	**Date(s) updated/amended**	April 2020