PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – 2023/4

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	**MSc Psychology**
	(Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PGDip Psychology
	PG Cert Psychology
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s	Birkbeck, University of London
Home School/other teaching departments	School of Psychological Sciences
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year)
	Part-time (2 years)
	September, January
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	British Psychological Society
	http://www1.bps.org.uk
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMSPSYGY_C
HECoS Code	100497 (psychology)
Start date of programme	Autumn 2009
Date of programme approval	November 2008
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2022
Valid for academic year	2023-24
Programme Director	Edward Davelaar
Date of last revision to document	26.09.2023

Admissions requirements

Candidates are normally expected to have a second-class honours degree (2:2) or above from a UK university, or overseas equivalent. Mathematics at GCSE grade C or grade 4 or equivalent qualification. English proficiency (e.g., IELTS 6.5).

Applications are reviewed on their individual merits and your professional qualifications and/or relevant work experience will be taken into consideration positively. We actively support and encourage applications from mature learners.

(Please note: international students who will require a Tier 4 student visa are only eligible to be considered for the full time MSc Psychology route.)

Course aims

The course is designed for candidates who do not have an undergraduate degree in psychology and who desire to enter the psychology discipline. This course offers a comprehensive coverage of psychological theory and research. The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

- Key principles of psychological theory, including neuroscience, social psychology, cognitive psychology, developmental sciences, and individual differences.
- Develop practical skills in: research methodology including the formulation of hypotheses, designing and reporting experiments using a range of research methodologies, and subject-specific IT skills.
- Design and execute an independent research project, under supervision.
- Transferable skills in critical thinking; learning how to evaluate hypotheses, presentation of research, writing and delivery, report writing, essay writing, discussing research in groups.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Status	Teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year, October start					
7	SCPS208H7	Neuroscience (P)	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS211H7	Statistics for Psychologists	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS205H7	Developmental Science	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS207H7	Learning, Memory, and Cognition	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS210H7	Social Psychology (P)	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS212H7	Principles of Experimental Psychology	15	Core	T2
7	SCPS206H7	The Psychology of Individual Differences	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS209H7	Perception and Awareness	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS222D7	MSc Psychology Dissertation	60	Core	T1-3

Part-time – 2 years, October start					
Year 1					
7	SCPS208H7	Neuroscience (P)	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS211H7	Statistics for Psychologists	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS210H7	Social Psychology (P)	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS212H7	Principles of Experimental Psychology	15	Core	T2
Year 2					
7	SCPS205H7	Developmental Science	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS207H7	Learning, Memory, and Cognition	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS206H7	The Psychology of Individual Differences	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS209H7	Perception and Awareness	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS222D7	MSc Psychology Dissertation	60	Core	T1-3

Although the MSc Psychology Dissertation module does not appear in the structure until Year 2, part-time students are expected to undertake some activities toward it in Year 1 through the virtual learning environment, Moodle. Allocation of supervisor and selection of the project will take place in Year 2.

Full-time – 1 year, January start					
7	SCPS211H7	Statistics for Psychologists	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS208H7	Neuroscience (P)	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS210H7	Social Psychology (P)	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS209H7	Perception and Awareness	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS212H7	Principles of Experimental Psychology	15	Core	T3
7	SCPS206H7	The Psychology of Individual Differences	15	Comp	T3
7	SCPS205H7	Developmental Science	15	Comp	T3
7	SCPS207H7	Learning, Memory, and Cognition	15	Comp	T3
7	SCPS222D7	MSc Psychology Dissertation	60	Core	T2,3,1

Part-time, Jan 24 start					
Year 1: Spring and Summer Term 2024					
7	SCPS211H7	Statistics for Psychologists	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS210H7	Social Psychology (P)	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS212H7	Principles of Experimental Psychology	15	Core	T3
7	SCPS205H7	Developmental Science	15	Comp	T3
Year 1: Autumn Term 2024					
7	SCPS208H7	Neuroscience (P)	15	Comp	T1
7	SCPS207H7	Learning, Memory, and Cognition	15	Comp	T1
Year 2: Spring Summer and Autumn Term 2025					
7	SCPS206H7	The Psychology of Individual Differences	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS209H7	Perception and Awareness	15	Comp	T2
7	SCPS222D7	MSc Psychology Dissertation	60	Core	2,3,1

> Although the MSc Psychology Dissertation module does not appear officially until Year 2, part-time students are expected to undertake some activities toward it in Year 1 through the virtual learning environment, Moodle. Allocation of supervisor and selection of the project will take place in Year 2.

T1=Autumn term, T2=Spring term, T3=Summer term.

Note the same modules are taken on the January start route, although the terms they are taken in may differ from the October route.

Core: *Module must be taken and passed by student*

Compulsory: *Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)*

Option: *Student can choose to take this module*

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

The course includes lecture-based theory modules, practical laboratory modules, and a supervised project. Two modules (Statistics for Psychologists, and Principles of Experimental Psychology) feature lectures with laboratory/practical sessions. These provide students with hands-on experience of using statistical software.

Six modules (Neuroscience (P), Developmental Science, Learning, Memory, and Cognition, Social Psychology (P), The Psychology of Individual Differences, and Perception and Awareness) feature lectures with in-class discussion, and a mid-term seminar that is dedicated the contents and/or assessment of the module.

All modules involve self-directed learning in the form of self-paced reading and preparation for each of the sessions.

The supervised research project is carried out under the supervision of a member of academic staff with research interests in the area of the project. This provides students with access to a specialist in their project area who can provide expert advice on all aspects of the research. The project also ensures that taught skills are exercised within a constructive environment during the course.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through coursework, in the form of essays. You will only complete multiple-choice tests, laboratory reports, research reports, presentation, and the dissertation.

Assessment procedures will ensure that students develop a portfolio of work over the duration of the programme, and feedback on coursework required for some of the modules will encourage personal development.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

Subject-specific knowledge:

- understand the scientific underpinnings of psychology as a discipline, its historical origins, development and limitations
- recognise the inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning and its significance
- demonstrate systematic knowledge and critical understanding of a range of influences on psychological functioning, how they are conceptualised across biological psychology, cognitive psychology, individual differences, developmental psychology, and social psychology, and how they interrelate
- demonstrate detailed knowledge of several specialised areas and/or applications, some of which are at the cutting edge of research in the discipline
- demonstrate a systematic knowledge of a range of research paradigms, research methods and measurement techniques, including statistical analysis, quantitative and qualitative methodology, psychometrics and measurement techniques, and be aware of their limitations

Subject-specific skills:

- reason scientifically, understand the role of evidence and make critical judgements about arguments in psychology
- adopt multiple perspectives and systematically analyse the relationships between them
- detect meaningful patterns in behaviour and experience and evaluate their significance
- pose, operationalise and critique research questions
- demonstrate substantial competence in research skills through practical activities
- reason statistically and use a range of statistical methods with confidence
- competently initiate, design, conduct and report an empirically-based research project under appropriate supervision, and recognise its theoretical, practical and methodological implications and limitations
- be aware of ethical principles and approval procedures and demonstrate these in relation to personal study, particularly with regard to the research project, and be aware of the ethical context of psychology as a discipline.

Generic skills:

- communicate ideas and research findings, both effectively and fluently, by written, oral and visual means
- comprehend and use numerical, statistical and other forms of data, particularly in the context of presenting and analysing complex data sets
- be computer literate and confident in using word processing, database and statistical software

- solve problems by clarifying questions, considering alternative solutions and evaluating outcomes
- be sensitive to, and react appropriately to, contextual and interpersonal factors in groups and teams
- undertake self-directed study and project management, in order to meet desired objectives
- take charge of their own learning, and reflect and evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses for the purposes of future learning

Careers and further study

Birkbeck's MSc Psychology graduates will complete with a set of valuable attributes, for example:

- The ability to work as part of a team
- High-level oral and written communication skills in English
- Research skills
- Skills in evaluating and assessing types of information
- Quantitative and qualitative analytical skills
- Planning and organisational skills

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on the careers pages of our website.

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its Common Award Scheme Regulations and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

Please check our website for more information about student support services. This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Students have access to a Postgraduate Psychological Sciences Learning Support Officer and to learning resources developed by the Learning Support Officer team of the Department of Psychological Sciences.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is available online.

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