

## Programme Specification (PG)

Awarding body / institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Name of final award and title:	MSc Psychology (Conversion)
Name of interim award(s):	PGDip PGCert
Duration of study / period of registration:	12 months
Queen Mary programme code(s):	PMSF-QMBIOL1/PSPSX
QAA Benchmark Group:	Psychology
FHEQ Level of Award:	Level 7
Programme accredited by:	We will seek accreditation from BPS.
Date Programme Specification approved:	1 Mar 2023
Responsible School / Institute:	School of Biological and Behavioural Studies

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences

Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

None

### Programme outline

Psychology, the scientific study of mental processes and behaviour, is recognised as one of the most influential “hub sciences” known in scholarly inquiry and feeds directly into a wide range of basic and applied disciplines (including biology, neuroscience, medicine, psychiatry, public health, sociology, management sciences; Boyack et al. ‘Mapping the backbone of science.’ *Scientometrics*, 64: 351-374, 2005). Psychology is also recognised as a natural and experimental science as evidenced by cutting edge research developments in the discipline (for example in evolutionary psychology, cognitive and developmental science, behaviour genetics, social and cognitive neurosciences). The academic rationale for Queen Mary’s programmes in Psychology is that “biological psychology” (that is, how ultimate and proximate biological mechanisms deliver cognitive and behavioural outcomes) is an area of significant world-class research activity. Here, the School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences has marked strengths in the evolution of cognition, sensory neuroscience, neurobiology and behaviour, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, human social behaviour, and and perceptual psychology. In terms of our philosophy, we see psychology as natural and experimental science, thus falling appropriately under the good auspices of the Faculty of Science & Engineering. Psychology also happens to be in the top two most popular subjects being studied in the United Kingdom. However, the integration of psychology within the natural sciences (notably biology) is the domain of only a handful of institutions across the country and none in London, thus providing the College with a unique niche in which to draw upon this popular market. This postgraduate programme in Psychology will allow students with an undergraduate degree in a different field than psychology to study psychology in its proper natural science and

ecological context. The programme will provide a thorough grounding in core principles, concepts and practical research skills of psychology through the acquisition of generic and subject-specific scientific, communication and evaluative competencies. A unique subject-specific competency of psychology will be the ability to detect meaningful patterns in the behaviour of individuals and groups and to evaluate their significance. This will enable students not only to pursue research in the behavioural sciences but also professional psychology training. Vitality, it opens a wide range of non-science careers in the public services (such as teacher training), careers allied to medicine, industry and commerce (especially marketing, finance, personnel and organisation management).

In summary, the central rationale and philosophy is to provide a degree programme which integrates psychology as a natural science consistent with the cutting edge research developments in the School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences and in the field as a whole. The programme also has a unique advantage over many science subjects by providing highly attractive transferable skills characteristic of psychology-specific training. This provides vital "added value" in terms of an employability criterion so that students may become recognised leaders in diverse (and not just science-based) workplaces.

## Aims of the programme

- To provide a thorough foundation in psychology, with significant contributions from cognitive biologists and psychologists that will enable an understanding of core principles, theories and issues in psychology.
- By a combination of lectures, practical classes and workshops to provide a thorough scientific and natural sciences approach to the study of the subject giving a broad understanding of psychological theory and research.
- To provide an impressive range of transferable skills in preparation for scientific and non-science career paths.

Furthermore:

- To provide a rational, flexibly structured and coherent programme of study which is relevant to the needs of employers, facilitate the professional development of the student and lay the foundations for a successful career to the benefit of the economy and society.
- To provide a sound knowledge base in the fields studied and develop key transferable skills in the areas of communication, numeracy, information technology, leadership, working with others, problem solving, time and task management.
- To foster the development of an enquiring, open-minded and creative attitude, tempered with scientific discipline and social awareness, which encourages lifelong learning

## What will you be expected to achieve?

Students who successfully complete the programme are expected to possess the following knowledge/skills/attributes:

Academic Content:	
A 1	knowledge of empirical and theoretical psychology and wider issues of the development of psychology as a science, the role of empirical data, and how to make critical judgements about arguments in psychology within an experimental and biological context.
A 2	systematic knowledge of multiple perspectives in psychology and understanding of the relation between psychology and other cognate disciplines (such as biology, cognitive science, sociology and psychiatry).
A 3	competence in the design, conduct, statistical analysis and reporting of empirical research in human and animal psychology.
A 4	theoretical, practical and methodological limitations and consequences of research designs and statistical analysis in psychology.
A 5	practical skills and understanding of the use of psychological tools including specialist software, laboratory equipment, task design, psychometric testing, and general measurement techniques.

A6	ethical context of psychology as a discipline, the ethical principles/procedures in dealing with research participants and to demonstrate these in personal study, particularly with regard to the final year psychology research project.
A7	demonstrating transferable skills including quantitative and qualitative research and statistical analysis through laboratory reports and a substantive research project, communication of ideas and research findings through written, oral and visual modalities, project and time management, information retrieval and management, detect meaningful patterns in behaviour and evaluate their significance, self-directed learning, problem solving and solution generation, and team work.

Disciplinary Skills - able to:	
B1	reason critically.
B2	integrate theory and practice; use advanced theories and concepts to explain psychological phenomena.
B3	identify and formulate problems; apply psychological principles to the solution of problems.
B4	analyse and evaluate/interpret the results of controlled experiments.
B5	devise and implement strategies for the retrieval and selection of relevant information from a wide range of sources.
B6	conduct practical work efficiently and with due regard for safety
B7	use a range of laboratory and analytical equipment (including psychometric testing equipment)
B8	prepare scientific/technical reports.
B9	use a range of computational tools and packages.

Attributes:	
C1	communicate effectively by written and/or verbal means.
C2	manage time, prioritise workloads and work to deadlines.
C3	capacity for independent learning.
C4	ability to work independently, with minimal or no supervision.
C5	participate constructively as a member of a group/team.
C6	apply psychological knowledge and problem solving skills in a wide range of theoretical and practical situations.
C7	ability to assess the relevance, importance and reliability of the ideas of others.
C8	ability to locate information and be competent in the use of computer-based technology.

C9	awareness of the role and impact of science in society.
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### How will you learn?

Acquisition of knowledge is achieved mainly through lectures and directed independent learning. Understanding is reinforced through a combination of tutorial workshops, problem classes and laboratory classes (depending upon the module concerned), including regular feedback on submitted work. Additional learning support is provided through Queen Mary's online learning environments.

### How will you be assessed?

Testing of the knowledge base is generally through a combination of unseen written examinations and assessed coursework. The exact nature of the coursework varies from module to module and may include work in the form of laboratory experiment write-ups, essays and/or problem sheets. The coursework mark may also include a contribution from computer-based assessments, presentations (oral/posters etc) and in-class tests. Some modules include oral presentations and extended reports/dissertations.

### How is the programme structured?

Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

The programme is studied full-time over one year. Students will take eight modules to a value of 120 credits (60 credits (four modules) in each semester) and carry out a research project in semesters 2-3 (60 credits).

In semester 1  
4 x 15 credits (comp)

In semester 2  
4 x 15 credits (comp)

Over semester 2-3  
1 x 60 credit (comp project).

To be eligible for BPS accreditation students must take and pass the Psychology Research Project.

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 1

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Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: An Introduction	PSY722P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Research Methods and Statistics I	PSY727P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Cognitive Psychology	PSY723P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Social Psychology	PSY726P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Research Methods and Statistics II	PSY728P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Developmental Psychology	PSY724P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Individual Differences	PSY725P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Basics of Biopsychology	PSY721P	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Psychology Research Project	PSY720P	60	7	Core	1	Semesters 2 & 3

### What are the entry requirements?

This MSc is designed for students who have undertaken a degree in another subject and are interested in getting a British Psychological Society (BPS) accredited qualification in psychology (please note that we are still in the process of seeking accreditation for this new MSc programme) It is also suitable for those whose degree in psychology was not accredited by the BPS as conferring BPS Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the BPS, allowing graduates to work as a psychologist in a variety of fields, including education, clinical, forensic and organizational psychology. We welcome students who want to learn about psychology. Candidates must be able to satisfy the general admissions requirements of the University and meet the requirements for this specific programme of study. For UK students a 2:1 or above at any undergraduate level programmes. For candidates where English is not the language of instruction of their first degree, IELTS scores of 6.5 overall with at least 6.5 written will be required. All applicants need to have mathematics at GCSE grade C or grade 4 or equivalent qualification.

### How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?

The quality of the programme is managed through annual review process, which includes the review of all sources of student feedback (incl., reports from Student Staff Liaison Committee meetings, module evaluations) as well as student attainment and progression. The programme quality is also assessed through periodic reviews by the accrediting body, the British Psychological Society.

### What academic support is available?

Each student is provided with a personal academic guidance tutor (or "advisor") who remains their main point of contact regarding academic matters and pastoral concerns throughout the programme. Students can see their advisors in their office hours or arrange an appointment via email. Moreover, if and when advisors are unavailable or cannot help with a specific

problem, the School has several Senior Tutors (one for each department) to facilitate student concerns. Academic advisors also offer support for career readiness.

### Programme-specific rules and facts

### How inclusive is the programme for all students, including those with disabilities?

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
- Ensuring access to programme materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum.

Students will join a program that takes equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) issues seriously.

1. The School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences has an Athena Swan Silver award (awarded 2020) in recognition of its commitment to (EDI) across its departments. The school has been a vanguard of EDI activity within the university, spearheading initiatives and policy changes with respect to menopause, flexible working, and shared parental leave.

The School's EDI committee includes a dedicated postgraduate (PG) working groups (PG student recruitment & career development) to address the needs of postgraduate taught and post-graduate research students. The PG representative on this working group gives feedback on the experiences of PG students across the school's departments (Biology, Psychology) and proposes actions to address any concerns raised. The PG representative and working group liaise with the faculty's Women In Science & Engineering (WISE) post-graduate group to advertise and offer science related talks and career development opportunities (<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/doctoralcollege/phd-students/wise/>).

Data from the school's last self-assessment exercise in 2019 indicated that we exceeded gender parity on our post-graduate taught (PGT) programmes\* with 58% female students (\*At the time this comprised 6 PGT programmes in Biology and 1 PGT programme in Chemistry; Chemistry has since left the school). Psychology is currently in the second year of its first PGT programme in Mental Health Sciences.

### Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

Expert external bodies such as the British Psychological Psychology (BPS) and Higher Education Academy Psychology Network, plus analyses in top science journals (such as Science, 18th May 2007), confirmed that behavioural sciences/psychology training confers significantly marketable skills and knowledge outside of academia. This is supported by the fact that approximately 70% of UK psychology graduates choose careers outside of science/psychology. Thus, our programme in psychology will prepare graduates for wide ranging careers including the first steps towards professional psychology training as well as higher degrees by

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research (MSc/MPhil/PhD) in biology, psychology, neuroscience, philosophy and several social sciences. In terms of professional psychology training, the psychology programme will be accredited with the BPS (we are currently still seeking accreditation of this programme) which confers eligibility to train on professional doctoral training programmes in clinical, health, forensic, educational and occupational psychology. The wide variety of non-science careers includes high profile options such as banking and finance, marketing, personnel/organisation management and consultancy, teaching, social work and the media. These prospects will be achieved by providing graduates of this programme with impressive transferable competencies typical of psychology training including quantitative research skills, critical evaluation (underpinned by knowledge of cognitive biases from psychology), communication (enhanced by knowledge of theories of communication from psychology) and the understanding of individual and group behaviour (supported by knowledge of group processes from psychology).

The proposed programme consists of modules that foster the development of graduate attributes via applied and active learning, guided instruction, and feedback on assessment (e.g., critical evaluation skills are developed in all modules via interactive lectures, in-class group tasks and support for academic writing; research and problem solving skills and digital fluency are developed in the Psychology Research Project and Research Methods modules; skills for communicating effectively in a diverse range of formats are developed in all modules via diversified assignments including essays, lab reports, posters and oral presentations; application of disciplinary knowledge in real life via scenario based assignments in Developmental and Social Psychology; awareness of career options in clinical psychology is raised in the CBT module).

Our School and Department has a designated Director of Employability who leads the provision of customisable/tailored activities to our psychology students. This includes (a) monthly sessions in semester 1 preparing students for future steps (e.g., how to apply for further training and graduate jobs) and (b) an annual career symposium in semester 2 open to all students where alumni and professionals discuss with them career prospects.

The University's Careers and Enterprise Service has a key role in further supporting students via bespoke online and on campus resources, training and events delivered by career educators, alumni and professionals (e.g., Careers Fair; Employability and Skills week), one-to-one appointments for application and interview preparation, opportunities to gain work-experience through partnerships with organisations across a diverse range of sectors (e.g., SKETCH).

Finally, the Students' Union contributes to enhancing the student experience and employability development via participation in clubs, societies (including an active Psychology Society), volunteering opportunities and peer support.

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## Programme Specification Approval

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**Person completing Programme Specification:**

Michael Pluess

**Person responsible for management of programme:**

Michael Pluess

**Date Programme Specification produced / amended by School / Institute Education Committee:**

16.12.2022

**Date Programme Specification approved by Taught Programmes Board:**

1 Mar 2023