

QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA3 – PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1. Programme Code						
2. Programme Title	MSc Psychology					
3. Target Award Title	MSc					
4. Exit Award Title(s)	PGCert in Psychology (60 credits) PG Dip in Psychology (120 credits)					
5. Subject area	Psychology					
6. School	School of Psychology					
7. Programme Team Leader(s)	Lisa Pepper					
8. Programme Type	Specialist					
9. Delivery Model	DL F/T		BL F/T		Apprenticeship	
	DL P/T	x	BL P/T		Other	
Where delivery model identified as 'Other' please provide details	NA					
10. Location of delivery	Online					
11. Proposed Start date	January 2026					
12. Reference points	QAA Psychology Subject Benchmark Statements (2023) Subject Benchmark Statement: Psychology BPS Accreditation Standards (2024) Standards for the accreditation of undergraduate, conversion and integrated MSc.pdf					
13. Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)	<i>Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) from the British Psychological Society (BPS) on successful completion of the graduate programme (average mark of 50% or above). The alternate exit routes (PG Diploma and PG Certificate) will not confer students with GBC.</i>					

14. Programme aims

The aim of this MSc Psychology Conversion is to provide students with knowledge and understanding of key issues in each of the core areas in psychology, so that they may obtain Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) from the British Psychological Society (BPS). This membership is essential for pursuing a career in one of the recognised psychology professions.

Online teaching materials are derived from established academic research in the core areas of psychology to develop specialist knowledge, critical powers of analysis, reflection and the further development of interpersonal skills in preparation for further training in one of the recognised professional pathways.

By the end of this programme, students will be able to carry out quantitative and qualitative data analyses and use statistical software to analyse data. They will be able to design and run

psychology experiments with detailed understanding of ethical issues, and to gather and interpret data. This will culminate with an advanced research project on an agreed topic. On graduation, they will have gained the necessary knowledge and understanding in the core areas of psychology and be able to apply their research skills across these core areas with an understanding of the ethical guidelines around human participation in research.

In particular, the purpose of the programme is to provide graduate students with:

- The opportunity to obtain a degree award that would make them eligible for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) of the British Psychological Society (BPS);
- Knowledge and understanding of the core psychology subject areas: Social psychology, cognitive psychology, biological psychology, neuroscience, developmental psychology, individual differences, mental health, and research methods (quantitative and qualitative), including applied fields;
- A scientific understanding of mind, brain, behaviour and experience and of the complex interactions between these;
- Multiple perspectives on the discipline in a way that fosters critical evaluation;
- An 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;
- An opportunity to conduct research independently;
- An opportunity to develop knowledge leading to an ability to appreciate and critically evaluate theory and research findings

The subject benchmarking places a particular emphasis on conceptual and historical issues in psychology and these will be taught in every module, so that each module is introduced with the main history of the approach, key issues that have driven it, key studies and research approaches, and contemporary issues.

Applications of psychology will be introduced into the syllabus on all modules, making the content both potent and of more interest to students. As students consider topics for their Advanced Research Project, they will be encouraged to consider issues related to prospective careers they may wish to pursue.

We will also introduce global themes into lessons and this will achieve two things: Firstly, it will avoid a Western-centrism in content which is important given that our students will be studying from all over the world and secondly it places an additional of focus on how psychology can be and is being applied to problems in different regions and cultures of the world.

15. Programme Entry Requirements

Please adapt standard/typical entry requirements as necessary.

Arden University is keen to ensure that the programme is available to all those who can benefit from it.

Students will enter from one of several routes where they were not eligible for GBC from the BPS:

- An Honours degree in any subject other than psychology at 2:2 or above
- An Honours degree in psychology not accredited by the BPS at 2:2 or above
- An Honours degree in psychology 3rd class – if the applicant also possesses a masters level degree
- An Honours degree on an accredited psychology programme but where the empirical component of the course was failed and the applicant can evidence completion of an empirical project on a subsequent masters level degree
- An international student who has the equivalent to an Honours degree (as determined by NARIC).
- Where the honours component is not evidenced (ordinary degree) evidence of an empirical research project/dissertation at either UG or MSc Level

These entry requirements are consistent with the BPS's recommendations for an MSc Psychology Conversion programme.

In addition, a maths qualification equivalent to at least a Grade C at GCSE; with mini maths module available.

English language competence equivalent to IELTS 6.5 (no less than 6.0 in any element), where the medium of undergraduate study was not English.

Applications for admission with advanced standing on the basis of the accreditation of prior certificated learning will be considered on an individual basis up to a maximum of 60 credits.

16. Learning, teaching and assessment methods and strategies

Learning and Teaching

Online teaching materials are derived from established academic research in the core areas of psychology to develop specialist knowledge, critical powers of analysis, reflection and the further development of interpersonal skills in preparation for further training in one of the recognised professional pathways. By the end of this programme, students will be able to carry out quantitative and qualitative data analyses and use statistical software to analyse data. They will be able to design and run psychology experiments with detailed understanding of ethical issues, and to gather and interpret data. This will culminate with an advanced research project on an agreed topic. On graduation, they will have gained the necessary knowledge and understanding in the core areas of psychology and be able to apply their research skills across these core areas with an understanding of the ethical guidelines around human participation in research.

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approaches, and contemporary issues. Applications of psychology will be introduced into the syllabus on all modules, making the content both potent and of more interest to students. As students consider topics for their Advanced Research Project, they will be encouraged to consider issues related to prospective careers they may wish to pursue. We will also introduce global themes into lessons, and this will achieve two

There will be a minimum of seven taught online lessons for each module. There will be a combination of asynchronous and synchronous learning activities throughout the programme.

Asynchronous

- Independent and directed student study.
- Targeted online learning resources (iLearn lessons)
- Individual and/or group activities available through our Virtual Learning Environment (ilearn).
- Discussion forums (on ilearn) where discussion and critical engagement with each week's themes (relevant to the online materials for each week) is encouraged and supported.
- Centralised provision of academic resources through the Learning Success Hub, for example library
- Extra-curricular activities, including but not limited to professional development opportunities, special interest groups, and networking events.

Synchronous

- Interactive live sessions online including lectures, workshops and seminar style sessions
- One to one student support

Assessment Methods and Strategies

The assessment process involves both formative and summative elements and is continuous in nature.

There will be a focus on encouraging students to apply their knowledge to practical situations, especially those involving personal and social issues. To put issues in a contemporary context, we focus on issues arising from provocative or ground-breaking journal articles, and issues that arise in the news from time to time (e.g., the experiences of migrants). A significant component of the programme is the Advanced Research Project, and here students will be required to identify a topic of interest to them, which falls within the field of psychology. Students will explore this, and will apply their research to the topic, identify how to evaluate issues using an evidence-based approach, modify theory in the light of new evidence, and put forward recommendations for further research.

The approach to coursework assignments will be to encourage students to apply their knowledge to theoretical and methodological issues in the core areas. Modules offer some

form of formative assessment, and this usually involves the student submitting a draft of the work they present as their summative assessment if the work is emailed to the tutor two weeks before the final submission deadline. However, there will be a variety of formative checks throughout the taught lessons for students to check their progress throughout each module.

Students will have the opportunity to submit a research proposal which raises awareness of ethical issues and is assessed formatively and adheres to the ethical guidelines in human research participation. Formative feedback is given to help guide students on ethical issues, and progression is not allowed until such a proposal is deemed ethically sound.

Summative submissions will all be made via the 'Turnitin' platform. This is one method for plagiarism detection and automatically checks for text copied from other sources, including published articles, websites, and other student assignments previously submitted through this platform.

The assessment designed for each module reflects the intentions of that module and will measure the identified learning outcomes. A variety of assessment strategies will be used to reflect and test the achievement of the learning outcomes. These are detailed within each module and mapped in the table below. Assessment questions are seen to be dynamic and are reviewed quarterly in order to maintain rigour and reflect changes in professional focus and practice.

There is a requirement for written work including reports, essays, developed plans, reviews of the literature and critiques of individual research articles, and so on, and our assessment policy informs how feedback is supplied by tutors at the formative and summative assessment stage. Critical analysis is encouraged at all levels culminating in an Advanced Research Project.

Module Mapping

Module	Assessment	Formative Feedback
Research methods	Coursework (Portfolio) 3500 words	1200 words of their draft assignment
Social psychology	Coursework (Report) 4000 words	1200 words of their draft assignment
Behavioural neuroscience	Coursework Choice Either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 3500-word literature review. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral task (15 minutes) 	1200 words of their draft assignment
Individual differences and mental health	Case Study Choice Either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 3500-word case study report 	1200 words on their draft assignment

	OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral Presentation (15 minutes) 		
Lifespan development	Coursework Poster with 15-minute narration Transcription 3000-3500 words	Feedback on the poster only	
Cognitive psychology	Coursework (Quantitative Research Report) 3500 words	1200 words on their draft assignment	
Advanced research project	Major Project Choice <i>Either</i> 12,000 words on a dissertation OR 7000 words for a journal article	Research proposal Ethics One full draft of either dissertation OR journal article	

17. Intended programme learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated		
Learning outcomes	The means by which these outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are assessed
At the end of this course you, the student, will be able to: (No more than 10 programme learning outcomes are permitted per programme.)		
1. Have a critical and scientific understanding of the mind, brain, behaviour and experience, and socio-cultural contexts.	Within each module a historical and contemporary view will be outlined. Each of the modules will adopt a global approach, outlining socio-cultural differences in both research undertaken and behaviour and attitudes across cultures	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module
2. Reason scientifically, consider multiple perspectives, consider ethical issues and make critical judgments about arguments in the core areas of Psychology (social, developmental, biological, cognitive, individual differences, research methods (quantitative and qualitative)	Each module will take a critical approach to the theories and research that it introduces students to. Through synchronous and asynchronous activities, students will be supported in developing academic skills including literature reviewing and analysis. Ethical considerations are considered throughout each module, with connections made to BPS and HCPC guidelines	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module
3. Demonstrate knowledge and critical thinking in the core domains of psychology - social, developmental, biological, cognitive, individual differences, research methods (quantitative and qualitative)	Through synchronous and asynchronous activities, students will build upon their knowledge module by module developing their critical thinking skills	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module
4. Demonstrate a systematic knowledge of a range of research paradigms, research methods, including both quantitative and qualitative data analysis and be aware of their strengths and limitations	Research paradigms and research methods are discussed in terms of academic research studies within each module as well as directly assessed within the research methods and design and data analysis modules as well as the final advanced research project.	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module

5. Initiate, design, conduct and report on empirically based research under appropriate supervision.	Students will begin to understand the design and ethical issues involved in conducting research in the Research methods and design and data analysis modules and will conduct supervised research that allows students to pose, operationalise, and critically evaluate research questions as well as recognise ethical, theoretical practical and methodological strengths and limitations in conducting research	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module
6. Communicate psychological findings in written, visual, and oral form using numerical, textual and other forms of data.	Students are required to contribute to group discussions, online forums and complete activities where they develop their communication skills.	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module - reports, essays, portfolios, posters and oral presentations
7. Demonstrate an understanding of real-life applications of theory to the full range of experience and behaviour and the application of psychological understanding to real world questions	Throughout each module there will be use of case studies, descriptions of societal issues or specific situations where theory and research can be applied to show real world application. This will be supplemented in discussion forums and online activities with students using psychological principles to problem solve/critically evaluate real world issues such as those outlined by the UN Sustainable development goals.	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module
8. Develop and evaluate understanding of working ethically and legally and develop students' awareness of historical and contemporary issues (e.g. marginalisation and the abuse of power) that has impacted on research practice and engagement	Throughout each module students will be introduced to historical and contemporary issues and will critically review such issues taking into account not both ethical and legal considerations. There will also be ethical dilemmas posted within discussion forums which will facilitate discussion and debate to stretch a student's learning.	Formative tasks and assessments throughout the module and a summative assessment at the end of the module

18. Graduate Attributes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated <i>Attributes must be covered and assessed in every level of study on a programme.</i>		
Graduate Attribute	The means by which these attributes are achieved	The means by which these attributes are assessed
1. Digitally literate		
2. Contextually innovative		
3. Socially intelligent and proactively inclusive		
4. Professional knowledgeable in their subject area		

19. Summary of modules and mapped programme learning outcomes

N.B. Agreed module release of one module per semester in order listed below. (PT DL)

Level	Module Code and Module Title	Module type <i>Compulsory (C) or Optional (O)</i>	Pinned/paired Modules	LO 1	LO 2	LO 3	LO 4	LO 5	LO 6	LO 7	LO 8
7	RES7002 Research Methods	C			x	x	x	x	x	x	x
7	PSY7002 Social Psychology	C		x	x	x	x		x	x	x
7	PSY7005 Behavioural Neuroscience	C		x	x	x	x		x	x	x
7	PSY7003 Individual Differences and Mental Health	C		x	x	x	x		x	x	x
7	PSY7004 Lifespan Development	C		x	x	x	x		x	x	x
7	PSY7001 Cognitive Psychology	c		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
7	RES7003 Advanced Research Project	C			x	x	x	x	x		
Master's (MA/MSc/MBA) To be awarded the Masters, students must complete a total of 180 credits at Level 7 including 60 credits from the final project/dissertation.											
Master's Top-Up											

Master's top-up programmes must include 60 credits from the final project/dissertation.
PG Cert To be awarded the PG Cert Psychology students must successfully complete 60 credits at Level 7.
PG Diploma To be awarded the PG Dip Psychology students must successfully complete the PG Certificate a total of 120 credits at Level 7.

