

BSc (Hons) Psychology

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose:

Course management, monitoring and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose:

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer:

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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Contents

Programme Specification

1. Named Awards	2
2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable).....	2
3. Awarding Body.....	2
4. Teaching Institution.....	2
5. Accrediting Body.....	2
6. QAA Benchmark Groups.....	2
7. Document Control Information.....	2
8. Effective Session.....	2
9. Author.....	2
10. Faculty.....	2
11. Department.....	2
12. Educational Aims	2
A. General Aims.....	2
B. Subject Specific Aims.....	3
13. Reference Points.....	3
14. General Learning Outcomes.....	3
15. Learning Outcomes.....	5
A. Knowledge and Understanding of.....	5
B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to.....	6
C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to.....	6
D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to.....	6
16. Learning Teaching and Teaching Strategies and Methods.....	6
17. Assessment Strategy	10
18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements.....	15
19. Employability Statement.....	16
20. Support for Student Learning.....	18
21. Admissions Criteria	19
A. Academic Admissions Criteria.....	19
B. Disability.....	19
22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching.....	19
A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation.....	19
B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation	19
C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback.....	20
D. Staff Development Priorities.....	20
23. Assessment Regulations.....	20
24. Role of Externals.....	20
25. Indicators of Standards and Quality	21
A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition.....	21
B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)	21
C. Quality Assurance Agency.....	21
D. Others	21
26. Other Sources of Information.....	21

Programme Specification

1. Named Awards

BSc (Hons) Psychology

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

University of Portsmouth Course Codes: C0256S; C0256P.
UCAS course code: C800.

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

British Psychological Society (BPS). The programme is accredited as conferring eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered (GBC) Membership, provided the minimum standard of a Second Class Honours Degree is achieved.

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

QAA Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) for Psychology (2010)

7. Document Control Information

Version 5.0. Revised July 2016

8. Effective Session

2016-17

9. Author

Dr. Roger Moore.

10. Faculty

Science

11. Department

Department of Psychology

12. Educational Aims

A. General Aims.

- To provide a challenging and stimulating study environment.
- To provide a framework allowing students to follow a flexible, coherent programme of study.
- To provide students with the opportunity to develop key transferable skills for lifelong learning, employability and flexibility in the context of changing labour markets.
- To provide students with the skills and knowledge required to maximise career and postgraduate study opportunities.

B. Subject Specific Aims.

- To produce a scientific understanding of the mind, brain, behaviour and experience, and the interactions between these (2.1a SBS).
- To provide a broad education presenting multiple perspectives of psychology and its contexts in a way that fosters critical evaluation and engagement with its specialised subject areas (2.1b SBS).
- To enable an understanding of real life applications of theory to the full range of experience and behaviour (2.1c SBS).
- To develop 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 (2.1d SBS).
- To facilitate students' knowledge and competence in a range of research skills and methods for investigating experience and behaviour, culminating in an ability to conduct research independently (2.1e SBS).
- To provide the opportunity to develop knowledge and specialist interests related to psychology, leading to an ability to appreciate and critically evaluate theory, research findings, and applications (2.1f SBS).
- To provide students with an educational environment that integrates academic knowledge and practical skills through scientific research.
- To provide students with knowledge and experience of the practical and ethical issues involved in conducting research and the application of ethical codes and procedures.
- To provide an opportunity for students to gain experience and skills relevant to employment (or further study) within psychology or related subject areas by choosing relevant work placement/work based learning/study options and/or completion of an optional sandwich year.

13. Reference Points

- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document (2014).
- University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-Based and Placement Learning (2015)
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff.
- QAA The UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
- QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ, 2008)
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) for Psychology (2010).
- British Psychological Society Standards for the accreditation of undergraduate, conversion and integrated Masters programmes in Psychology (2015).
- Health and Care Professions Council's Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists (HCPC, 2015).

14. General Learning Outcomes

General Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to demonstrate, at threshold level, the ability to:

- Understand the key aspects of psychology
- Apply appropriate techniques of analysis to their study with appropriate ethical consideration
- Research topics and devise and sustain arguments related to psychology
- Discuss current research and scholarship related to psychology
- Discuss the current limits of knowledge in psychology
- Take responsibility for their own learning
- Carry out an extended piece of independent enquiry in psychology
- Communicate information in a manner appropriate to the subject and the intended audience
- Show initiative and be able to make and justify decisions.

Level 4

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility

Level 5

Diplomas in Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

Level 6

Bachelor's degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
 - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline)

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem
- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature

15. Learning Outcomes

Where indicated below, the specific Programme Learning Outcomes relate to Section 4 (Subject Knowledge and Understanding), Section 5 (Skills) and Section 7 (Benchmark Standards) of the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) for Psychology (2010).

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- A1. Core aspects of psychology including research methods, biological psychology, cognitive psychology, individual differences, developmental psychology and social psychology, conceptual and historical perspectives in psychology (4.6 SBS).
- A2. Specialised areas and/or applications of psychology, with reference to the cutting edge of psychology research and theory (7.3d SBS).
- A3. A range of psychological research paradigms, methods, ethics and measurement techniques (7.3e SBS).
- A4. The inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning (7.3b SBS).
- A5. The range of approaches to understand psychological phenomena (4.1 SBS).
- A6. The relationship between empirical analysis and critical analysis (5.1 SBS).
- A7. The style of conventions of writing scientific reports and academic essays (5.5a SBS).
- A8. Statistical analysis, including computer based programmes, such as SPSS (4.8c SBS).
- A9. The professions relating to psychology (5.3 SBS).

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B1. Generate and explore creative and original ideas (5.4b SBS)
- B2. Apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues (5.4a SBS)
- B3. Gather, retrieve and synthesise information (5.5d SBS)
- B4. Think analytically and critically about psychological publications, appreciating differing opinions (7.6a SBS)
- B5. Select appropriate theories in developing research methodologies to support projects and written work (5.4k SBS)
- B6. Evaluate evidence and make judgements (5.5h SBS).
- B7. Develop and sustain reasoned argument (5.5a SBS).
- B8. Identify and focus on pertinent issues (5.5g SBS).
- B9. Identify and evaluate general patterns of human behaviour (7.6c SBS).
- B10. Use evidence-based reasoning, to reflect on practical, theoretical and ethical issues involved in psychological research (5.4i SBS).

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C1. Communicate psychological ideas and research findings by written, oral and visual means (7.7a SBS).
- C2. Problem solve and reason scientifically (5.5g SBS).
- C3. Retrieve and organise information effectively (5.5d SBS).
- C4. Work flexibly and under pressure (5.5i SBS).
- C5. Work effectively in a team, being sensitive to environmental and interpersonal aspects (5.5f SBS).
- C6. Manage projects, including time management, design, experimental work, analyse data (both qualitative and quantitative), and report writing (5.4g, 5.4h, 7.8f SBS)
- C7. Conduct independent psychological research, under appropriate supervision (5.4k SBS).

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D1. Communicate through a range of media, visually, orally, written (5.5a SBS)
- D2. Demonstrate a knowledge of IT, including word-processing, spreadsheets, SPSS and electronic bibliographic databases (7.8c SBS).
- D3. Demonstrate effective team-working skills (5.5f SBS).
- D4. Manage projects (7.8f SBS).
- D5. Analyse numerical problems (7.7b SBS).
- D6. Take charge of one's own learning, reflecting and evaluating personal strengths and weaknesses for future learning (7.8g SBS).

16. Learning Teaching and Teaching Strategies and Methods

A. Knowledge and Understanding

The Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) curriculum of the British Psychological Society (BPS) requires coverage of 6 core (cognate) areas of the discipline including research methods, biological psychology, cognitive psychology, individual differences, developmental psychology and social psychology, although it is expected that students will be exposed to other areas of psychology as well. Pedagogically, a foundation in these core areas is required before more specialised areas of psychology (that integrate across core domains) can be introduced to students. In addition to these core areas, it is expected that students will also gain knowledge of the conceptual and historical issues relevant to each core domain. The central teaching and learning strategy embedded in the programme design is therefore to provide a base of core domain knowledge at FHEQ Levels 4 and 5 **[A1]** and coverage of more advanced, specialist areas at FHEQ Level 6 **[A2]**. Additionally, students may choose to take an optional sandwich year between FHEQ Levels 5 and 6 to develop work-related experience and skills relevant to employment (or further study) within psychology or related subject areas **[A9]**.

At Level 4,

- (i) Students are introduced to different psychological paradigms, research methods, measurement techniques and ethical procedures through one analysis-based and two research-

based units; research skills and knowledge are delivered through lectures and practical workshops taken by all students involving the conduct of psychological investigations, analysis and interpretation of data, and use of different scientific presentation and reporting conventions **[A3, A7]**.

(ii) Two further lecture-based Level 4 units introduce students to the history of psychology and its relationship with broader philosophical, scientific and cultural developments and provide an initial basis for studying psychological processes and concepts from different perspectives **[A1, A5]**.

(iii) An additional Level 4 unit provides students with support and tuition in the development of key skills important in the transition to university life such as information literacy, critical thinking, etc.; key IT skills introduced in computer workshops during student induction are also supported in this unit (as well as in research based units also covered in Level 4 and mentioned above in item i). The delivery of the unit incorporates lectures and computer workshops to provide a grounding in these key graduate skills, and regular small group tutorial meetings designed around the in-depth exploration of a psychological topic negotiated with the personal tutor. These sessions support the development of written, verbal, critical thinking and communication skills, and the development of scientific reasoning skills **[A6]**. Students are expected to contribute to tutor group discussions, present short talks to their tutor group, and complete additional formative activities set by their tutor. Individual tutorials are also used for discussion of feedback and reflection on learning. This unit integrates the requirements at Level 4 of the University's Personal Tutor Framework and Framework for Personal Development Planning.

(iv) During the end of year consolidation and examination period, students undertake preparatory assessment workshops and surgeries for units with examination-type assessments. Practice assessments for which formative feedback is provided are also completed (including in-class essays, a mock examination, online self-tests, etc.). A 'presentation day' is held where each student completes an assessed oral presentation associated with a practical assignment they have completed.

At Level 5,

(i) All students study 'core' (i.e. non-optional) units providing coverage of all 'core' aspects of the BPS (GBC) curriculum **[A1]**. Three of these units comprise tuition in the cognate areas of biological psychology, cognitive psychology, individual differences, developmental psychology and social psychology with the consideration of conceptual and historical perspectives, relevant to each cognate area embedded within each unit. Delivery is predominantly through lectures with workshops also being used in some units to support learning on specific topics. Cognate area units are designed to provide an appreciation of the different perspectives from which human and non-human animal behaviour may be viewed; to examine the debates, controversies and diversity of knowledge that surround psychological phenomena; and demonstrate links between research and theoretical development within the discipline **[A4, A5, A6]**.

(ii) Two further Level 5 units provide coverage of more advanced research methods building on the research methods training received at Level 4. These units are delivered through workshops involving the conduct and reporting of practical work, lectures on data analysis, and computer-based workshops on the use of statistical analysis software (SPSS) for interpreting and presenting data **[A3, A7, A8]**.

(iii) Career development and knowledge of professions related to psychology are considered in an additional Level 5 core unit. This unit is delivered via a combination of lectures providing coverage of career management skills and graduate employability issues, supported by small group tutorial meetings with the student's personal tutor. Tutorial meetings provide a focus for thinking about future prospects and integrate the requirements at Level 5 of the University's Personal Tutor Framework and Framework for Personal Development Planning. Students can also choose to follow one of four different work-related learning streams within the unit: (A) "Research-based learning" where students apply for and undertake a research-based employment position, working in collaboration with a member of departmental staff; (B) "Work-based learning" where students undertake an external work experience or voluntary position relevant to the study of psychology; (C) "Social Enterprise" where students work to reach a resolution to a real problem posed by a local organisation; (D) "Careers in Psychology" which provides an in-depth examination of specific vocations available to psychology graduates.

Students who elect to follow stream (A) or (B) are expected to complete the equivalent of 40 hours work practice. Students electing to follow stream (C) work, in a small team, towards the resolution of a human-centred problem posed by a local organisation (such as Portsmouth Deaf Association). Students following stream (D) receive lectures from professionals actively engaged in different fields within psychology and related disciplines, and are required to undertake further reading and investigation into different career pathways. The unit therefore provides an opportunity for experiential learning via hands-on practical experience and/or detailed exploration of different professional work roles allied to psychology **[A9]**.

(iv) During the end of year consolidation and examination period, students undertake preparatory assessment workshops and/or revision lectures covering core aspects of the BPS (GBC) curriculum. Drop-in surgeries are also provided by unit coordinators. Preparatory work for Level 6 is undertaken through the selection of a supervisor for the final year project and one or more preparatory meetings with the allocated supervisor. Additionally, a 'presentation day' is held where each student completes an assessed oral presentation associated with a practical assignment they have completed. Prior to this period, several sessions are held in which information on areas of staff research expertise and other specialised/applied areas of psychology are presented - this provides a foundation for students' selection of final year optional units and projects, and gives further opportunities to consider potential career pathways and undertake Personal Development Planning within the context of each student's future study choices.

At Level 5 (Optional Sandwich Year),

(i) After completing all FHEQ Level 5 taught units, at the end of stage 2 of the course, students may elect to: (i) proceed straight into the final year of the current course structure as Stage 3 of their degree; or undertake either (ii) a year abroad with one of our ERASMUS partnership institutions, or (iii) complete a year-long work placement with an external organisation. Work and Study Abroad placement students then return to campus-based study to complete the final year as Stage 4 of their degree. The sandwich year compliments and builds on other employability related opportunities in taught units at FHEQ Level 5 through the opportunity to undertake more varied and extensive placements within and beyond the University's catchment area **[A9]**. The sandwich year is consistent with the aims of the University's Career Management Strategy of increasing graduates' specific employment related skills as well as their intercultural awareness, language skills, and global organisational awareness.

At Level 6,

(i) Students study a range of optional units providing coverage of different specialised and applied areas of psychology, as determined by the diverse range of skills and expertise of staff **[A2]**. Units at this level are delivered by a combination of lectures, seminars and workshops supporting a shift in focus from didactic tuition to learning through discussion and critical evaluation of psychological concepts, theories and findings **[A6]**.

(ii) Students also complete an empirical project unit in which they carry out an in-depth and original piece of independent research. The project unit comprises independent study supported by regular individual meetings with project supervisors. These tutorial meetings are centred on providing support for the student's development of their research idea; the design and ethical review of their study; and the analysis and reporting of the empirical work undertaken. The project unit builds on the knowledge and understanding of research methods gained earlier within the programme and provides a further opportunity to specialise in specific areas of psychology either derived from or across different cognate or applied areas of the discipline **[A2, A3, A7, A8]**. Tutorial meetings within the project unit also incorporate the requirements at Level 6 of the University's Personal Tutor Framework and Framework for Personal Development Planning.

(iii) During the end of year consolidation and examination period, revision workshops and/or drop-in surgeries are held to assist with assessment preparation for units with examination-type and/or coursework-type assessments. During this period, students also complete an assessed panel interview as part of the final year project unit which is supported by preparatory sessions with students' personal tutors, designed to assist the development of personal interview skills.

In addition to tutorial support at all levels, all staff have published office hours each week where

Programme Specification for BSc (Hons) Psychology Page 8

students can arrange appointments to discuss specific issues and receive support relating to the content of units. For all units, independent learning is progressively encouraged through the forms of assessment and marking criteria used (see below). Independent learning is also promoted via the use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) covering all taught programme units that incorporates online learning materials, student discussion boards and sources of additional information.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills

Psychology has an established tradition of theoretical and conceptual development derived through empirical enquiry. This application of scientific reasoning spans the full range of the discipline from the study of simple neural processes to the analysis of complex social interactions and human relationships. The ability to think scientifically, examine empirical evidence on which psychological knowledge is based and evaluate academic arguments in a critical manner therefore represents an important set of cognitive skills for psychology graduates that underpin the delivery and content of most units on the degree programme.

Tuition in the scientific approach begins at Level 4 where students are introduced to basic information literacy skills for finding and evaluating academic literature **[B3, B4, B6]** and basic research and analysis skills that enable them to evaluate research questions, examine trends in human behaviour and extrapolate conclusions from findings **[B6, B9, B10]**. Lectures in the cognate areas and specialised units provide further illustrations of how scientific reasoning is applied to different psychological issues **[B2, B10]**.

The teaching and learning strategy to support the development of cognitive skills evolves as the student moves through the three FHEQ levels. For example, more advanced research methods and methodological issues are considered to expand the student's understanding of the limitations of research findings; greater emphasis is also placed on small group discussion through seminars and tutorials to encourage debate and critical evaluation of academic ideas **[B4, B7, B8]**; the examination of primary sources is emphasised when undertaking academic work; and more complex practical and/or theoretical work is undertaken where students are expected to generate their own arguments or ideas for research and derive rationales for investigations based on existing literature **[B1, B4, B5, B10]**.

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills

Programme Learning outcomes specific to the development of professional (psychology specific) skills are primarily demonstrated through units providing coverage of methodological and analytical techniques that enable students to practice the application of research skills (see 16A and 16B above). During Level 4 and 5, students work on practical assignments completed periodically throughout the academic year. These assignments involve the design of experimental work and application of non-experimental methods; project planning; data collection; data management; and the interpretation and presentation of findings in a range of different professional formats **[C1, C2, C3, C6]**. Practical work may be conducted individually, conducted within student groups where design and data collection tasks are shared between the group but work is individually presented, or conducted within student groups where members collaborate on all stages of the project and presentation of the work, producing one joint assignment **[C4, C5]**. Practical work becomes increasingly self-directed as the student progresses through the programme, which provides a greater emphasis on the development of scientific reasoning skills **[C2]**. This culminates with the completion of an original and independently conducted research project at Level 6 **[C7]**.

Further opportunities to develop subject specific practical skills are also provided by optional work-based and placement learning opportunities at Levels 5 and 6.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills

Given the nature of psychology as a discipline, the development of generic transferable skills can be underpinned by formal knowledge of psychological processes drawn from the cognate areas. For example, communication skills can be enhanced by knowledge of theories of communication; team-working can be supported by knowledge of group processes. **[D1, D3]**. Core research methods and quantitative analysis units in Levels 4 and 5 also provide students with training in key number and

problem solving skills relevant to psychology and a broad range of other disciplines and career pathways. Through these units, the development of project design and project management (both individually and collectively), data interpretation, presentation and reporting skills are supported, enabling students to demonstrate a range of team-working, number and communication skills **[D1, D3, D4, D5]**.

Key graduate level IT skills introduced in computer workshops during student induction (and also developed in research based units covered in Level 4 – see 16A above) are further developed, together with other graduate level skills in communication and information literacy **[D1, D2]**, in the Level 4 *Exploring Psychology* unit. This incorporates study skills lectures and regular small group tutorial meetings (see 16A above). This Exploring Psychology unit is designed to support the development within students of an independent approach to learning, and provide opportunities for discussion, feedback and reflection on learning **[D6]**. Further opportunities for reflective learning in the context of employability and careers management skills are provided through the Level 5 *Employability Skills for Psychologists* unit and Level 6 *Psychology Work Placement* unit where students undertake activities designed to identify and evaluate their own personal strengths and weaknesses, motivations and interests and are required to reflect on the experiential learning achieved through optional work-based, research-based or social enterprise based activities **[D6]**. Similarly, there is also the opportunity to undertake a sandwich year work placement or sandwich year study abroad placement for students interested in further development opportunities over a longer period of engagement.

17. Assessment Strategy

General Knowledge and Understanding Assessment Strategy

To ensure that the full range of skills and knowledge being developed by the programme can be demonstrated, a variety of forms of summative assessment are used including: essays; portfolios; practical reports; the final year research project; presentations (oral and poster); interview; examinations incorporating multiple choice, short answer and essay type questions; problem-based examinations requiring analysis, interpretation and application of statistical techniques.

In line with professional body requirements, all core areas of the BPS (GBC) curriculum are delivered at FHEQ Levels 5 and 6 and non-optional such that achievement in these units can contribute to the final award classification. Additionally, these core areas are separately assessed (either via different assessment artefacts or through the use of two-part examinations consisting of compulsory sections addressing different core domains) **[A1, A2, A4, A5, A6]**.

Students of psychology should complete a series of practical reports throughout their programme (6.11 SBS). Research work is therefore used as a key form of continuous assessment across the programme allowing learning outcomes related to research and analysis techniques to be evaluated **[A2, A3, A7, A8]**. The timing and completion of practical assessments are staged and designed to enable students to receive feedback on research work before further similar types of assessment are submitted. This allows the progressive development of research skills and knowledge across the programme to be both supported and demonstrated, culminating in the completion of the independent and substantial empirical research project at Level 6. Research work is also assessed using a range of assessment types including group or individual assessment; written reports, poster or oral presentations, and panel interview. Thus a range of transferable skills are also integrated into the assessment pattern.

General Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills Assessment Strategy

Written feedback is provided to students for all coursework-type and examination-type assessments undertaken. Comments on student performance are made on a standard coversheet showing departmental undergraduate marking criteria. These criteria are aligned to the programme learning outcomes, and in particular emphasise the importance of different cognitive skills including quality of argumentation, use of literature and evidence to support argument development, and application of critical thinking **[B2, B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, B9]**. Further marking criteria specific to research work are also included emphasising the generation of ideas, effective justification of research questions and appropriate interpretation of findings **[B1, B5, B6, B10]**.

Generally, the scope (e.g. duration or word count) and complexity of assessed work required to

achieve unit learning outcomes increases through Levels 4 to 6, providing a greater focus on the development of critical reasoning and evaluative skills as the student progresses through the programme. The feedback coversheet specifically requires markers to identify the major strengths and weaknesses of the student's performance, and outline priorities for improving their future work. In this manner, summative feedback is provided that links to the assessment criteria used and which 'feeds forward' to future assessments.

General Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills Assessment Strategy

A total of 2 formative tasks, aimed at developing students' skills and ability on practical assignments, together with and 8 summative practical assignments are completed during Levels 4 and 5. These include a combination of poster and oral presentations, individual and group research reports [**C1 to C6**]. In addition, a series of short tests (with immediate feedback) spanning the whole of one of the core research units form another major formative development route at Level 5. For all summative group assignments, a proportion of the individual grade achieved by each group member is determined through peer evaluation of each student's contribution to the group. The process for judging individual contributions is made clear to students by Unit Coordinators prior to undertaking any summative group work assignments.

Final-year project work is assessed by (i) the completion of an extended research report which provides relevant background literature that informs the research conducted, and which explains the conduct and findings of the study;(ii) the completion of a panel interview in which the student is required to defend the project work undertaken, explaining its scope, outcomes and implications [**C1, C4, C6, C7**].

General Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills Assessment Strategy

Core research methods and quantitative analysis units provide both examination-based and coursework-based assessment of numeracy skills [**D5**]. Practical assignments completed at Levels 4 and 5 and project work at Level 6 (See 16C above) provide assessment of the ability to manage projects, communicate effectively in different formats, demonstrate IT skills, and evaluate team-working skills [**D1 to D4**]. More generally, examination and coursework assessments in specific cognate areas of psychology (e.g. cognitive psychology, social psychology, individual differences) allow students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the psychological processes that underpin several core graduate skills such as problem-solving, team-work and communication.

Portfolio assessments used in the Level 4 graduate skills unit (*Exploring Psychology*) and Level 5 career management skills unit (*Employability Skills for Psychologists*) also allow the development of independent and reflexive learning skills to be evaluated. For example, the skills audit component of the career management portfolio includes reflection and action planning for future personal development, whilst the optional work, enterprise and research experience components of this unit, and the optional Level 6 unit (*Psychology Work Placement*) also integrate self-appraisal into their assessment [**D6**].

Additionally, students taking the optional work placement sandwich year complete a portfolio assessment detailing the nature of work tasks undertaken within their chosen organisation [**D3, D4**] and reflection on the contribution in the workplace [**D6**], as well as an oral presentation about their placement year following the completion of the sandwich year [**D1**]. Students taking the optional study abroad sandwich year complete the equivalent of 60 ECTS credits at their host institution.

Level specific assessment strategy

To ensure that the full range of skills and knowledge being developed by the programme can be demonstrated, a variety of forms of summative assessment are used including: essays; portfolios; practical reports; final year research dissertation; presentations (oral and poster); interview; examinations incorporating multiple choice, short answer and essay type questions; problem-based examinations requiring analysis, interpretation and application of statistical techniques. This variety of assessment artefacts anticipates the changing employment arena our graduates enter. We endeavour to maintain a balance between challenging students and consistency in the form of assessments used, such that students can demonstrate new skills whilst also learning from previous assignments. Feedback is provided to students for all coursework-type and examination-type assessments. As well as demonstrating knowledge of psychological issues and theories specific to

different units, assessed work at all levels is expected to show evidence of basic skills such as good referencing, accuracy in reporting and presentation, evidence-based argumentation and evaluation. These values are reflected in the published marking criteria against which students are assessed. Standard coversheets showing these marking criteria are used to give feedback on assessed work that requires markers to identify the major strengths and weaknesses of the work and specifically outline the student's main priorities for improving their future work. In this manner, feedback is provided that links to the assessment criteria used and which 'feeds forward' to performance in future assessments.

All units within the programme include opportunities for students to receive formative feedback. These may include, for example; verbal discussion of work with personal tutors, comments on essay plans, feedback on written drafts of project work, peer assessment of work, completion and discussion of in-class timed essays linked to summative assessments, completion of automated online self-tests linked to summative assessments, portfolio components submitted as staged assessments on which formative feedback is provided.

Level 4

Assessment of cognate areas of psychology at this level primarily focuses on the identification, description, application and rudimentary evaluation of relevant psychological knowledge and material **[A1, A3, A4, A5, A8]**. To achieve this, the assessment approach adopted in the three core cognate units is to use examinations; through these students are able to individually demonstrate their engagement with and understanding of the basic psychological processes and principles that will provide an important foundation for later programme levels. This is done through use of a combination of multiple-choice and long answer questions allowing the breadth and depth of knowledge accrued by students of important historical and conceptual issues in psychology to be evaluated **[B4, B6, B8, B9, C1, C2, C4]**. Open-format examinations are also favoured at this level to avoid an over reliance on straightforward recall of material, reduce student anxiety, and encourage the application of knowledge through problem-focused questions. In units where examination assessments are used, prior formative assessments focus on the acquisition and rehearsal of relevant knowledge and the preparation of students (e.g. use of in-class practice examination questions, online self-tests).

To balance the use of examination assessments, research work is used as a key form of continuous assessment across the programme beginning at Level 4; students complete a series of practical assignments, the timing and completion of which is staged to enable students to receive feedback on research work before further similar types of assessment are submitted **[A1, A3, A6, A7, A8, B3, B4, B6, B9, B10]**. At level 4, the student typically will not be expected to self-generate research questions or decide on the statistical or analytical techniques to apply. Practical work set at this level is guided, supported and constrained to allow students to develop key skills within clear parameters. Practical support workshops are used as a means to develop a coherent set of standards for the application of research methods, analysis and reporting of data. Formative assessment consists of the completion and submission of practical work of a similar format and style to future summative practical assessments, such that students can practice and receive feedback on their development of core psychological reporting skills.

Variety in practical work is developed through the research topics and methodologies utilised, and via the means by which practical work is assessed which includes group or individual assessment; written reports, poster or oral presentations **[C1, C4, C5, C6, C7, D1, D3, D5]**. A group poster assignment and presentation day is used as the first summative assessment to facilitate social interaction between students, build academic confidence, and help foster a collegiate environment within the department. Formative group practical work is also used to support student engagement and peer-learning in preparation for future summative reports. Where summative group assignments are used, a proportion of the individual grade achieved by each group member is determined through peer evaluation of each student's contribution to the group, to encourage and reward the development of team-working skills.

An assessed oral presentation on research work is used towards the end of Level 4 by which stage students will also have had the opportunity to engage with the discussion and presentation of

research in other units (e.g. in personal tutorials). An additional practice-based summative assessment component is also included at this level where by students are able to gain course credit for taking part in real psychological research studies. This allows students to gain insight and experience of studies from the perspective of participants, to further augment their understanding of the research process **[A3]**.

A further form of coursework assessment used at Level 4 is the literature review. This is undertaken as part of the tutorial unit, *Exploring Psychology* and written in an essay format on a psychological topic negotiated and researched under the guidance of the student's personal tutor. A literature review was selected to enable students to start developing the style of essay-writing skills that will be required at subsequent levels of the programme, in a supported small-group environment. The assessment type requires the summary and explanation of the current state of knowledge on a defined topic and constructive analysis of the field explored **[A2, C3]**. Moreover, students are expected to shape their evaluation of the literature to form a central thesis or viewpoint concerning the area reviewed, allowing their ability to form written arguments to be demonstrated **[B3, B4, B6, B7, B8]**. Formative assessments are staged throughout the tutorial programme including the presentation and discussion of selected research articles, short reaction papers, and feedback on review plans to support students and provide a framework for the preparation of the summative assessment **[C5]**.

Level 5

In line with professional body requirements, the assessment patterns employed at FHEQ levels 5 and 6 are designed so that all BPS (GBC) core curriculum areas are assessed and taught in non-optional units that are able to contribute to the final award classification. At Level 5, where two BPS cognate areas are combined within a unit (e.g. *Biological & Cognitive Psychology; Social & Development Psychology*), multi-part examinations are used. These consist of compulsory sections that address each core domain, enabling students to demonstrate breadth of knowledge across different aspects of the professional body curriculum. More substantive essays questions are also introduced within examinations at this level, with a smaller contribution from multiple-choice and short answer questions. Students are expected to construct arguments and focus on the illustration, analysis and evaluation of psychological issues within their answers, and demonstrate a range of independent reading that goes beyond basic lecture material **[A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B4, B6, B7, B8, C1-C4]**. A short exam is also used as part of the assessment in a third Level 5 unit in which BPS (GBC) core material is delivered – *Individual Differences and Psychometrics*. This exam based assessment is in addition to a more substantial portfolio assessment (which has a more specific focus - see details below) and allows further demonstration of breadth of basic knowledge across different aspects of the professional body curriculum **[A1, A2, A3, A4, B4, B8, C3, C4]**.

The assessment model for research work used at Level 4, involving serially completed practical assessments is also followed at Level 5 **[A1, A3, A6, A7, A8, D1, D3, D5]**. However both the scope and complexity of the studies undertaken is increased and each is contextualised within one of the core BPS (GBC) curriculum areas **[B2]**. At Level 5, research work provides more opportunity for creativity in study planning. For example, while the main aim of a psychology practical may be outlined, the specific research questions will not and decisions about study design, what data to collect and how to analyse it are more openly determined by students. This allows the progressive development of research skills, the application of more advanced analytical techniques and growth in student autonomy and research knowledge to be supported at an individual level, in preparation for the completion of the independent and substantial empirical research project undertaken at Level 6. Formative assignments within core research-based units include the completion of a series of in class tests designed to develop knowledge of research and statistics **[A8, D5]**. These assignments were selected to provide a focus on one of the more difficult aspects of psychological report writing (the interpretation and discursive evaluation of findings) and to assist students in the development of research ideas for final year project work undertaken at Level 6 **[C7]**. Formative assessments for research work are also completed at this Level – these are designed to feed into summative work and also provide a basis from which an improved attempt can be made on the summative assessments as described above.

Portfolio assessments further provide a balance of continuous assessment at Level 5. For the

Individual Differences & Psychometrics cognate area, a short exam (see details above) and a portfolio comprising of an academic essay and several further documents relating to the psychological assessment of a test candidate are completed [A9]. This portfolio assessment was selected to further build academic essay-writing skills in preparation for coursework assessments within the final year; to allow students an opportunity to develop an applied skill of relevance to employability; and to highlight differences between and facilitate practice in writing styles required for different audiences. At level 5, it is expected that essay work should go beyond describing theories or particular empirical studies, placing these within a conceptual framework; the student should show they appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of particular approaches to a topic and should have developed sufficient knowledge such that they are in a position to discuss methodological issues associated with empirical research and how these may impact on academic theory and certainty regarding psychological issues [B10, C1-C4].

Two employability assessments comprising an employability portfolio are also completed at this level comprising a diverse range of elements including a personal skills audit, job application, and reflexive account of the student's own career planning [A9]. In addition, where work-based or research-based learning is undertaken as part of this unit, documents related to the learning contract undertaken, analysis of the role performed, and evaluation of the students' own performance during the work experience (e.g. via an employer pro-forma) are also included in the portfolio. Formative assessment for this unit is provided through tutorial sessions (e.g. tutors will provide feedback on students' CVs). In addition, formative feedback to support work-based experience elements of the portfolio is provided through workshops and one-to-one discussions with research mentors (for research-based learning) and placement mentors (for work-based learning). Departmental assessment criteria are applied to portfolios where appropriate, although given the unique nature of the assessment students are advised of any additional criteria that may apply to their employability portfolio in advance. A similar assessment and support strategy is also adopted for the optional sandwich year and work-based placement unit offered at Level 6 [A9].

Level 6

Further to the characteristics of assessments described above, Level 6 encourages and rewards greater critical analysis of psychological material [A6]. Optional units at this level provide both coursework-type and examination-based assessment opportunities in a range of specialist and applied areas of psychology [A2, A4, A5]. Regardless of the form of assessment undertaken, the expectation is that more of the academic material identified as relevant by students will be organised into coherent themes and developed into arguments based on their own interpretation of material that goes beyond ideas presented in lectures.

By Level 6, it is expected that argumentation skills will be better developed such that arguments supported by evidence rather than unsupported assertions are the norm and evident throughout student work [B7]. Work is expected to be original rather than purely derivative and show that the student writer has an independent intellectual voice [B1]. In order to support the development of these skills, some third year options incorporate 'online conferencing' as part of their formative assessment where students can debate topical issues from a psychological perspective and there is wider use of coursework essays where students are given scope to decide on the nature of a topic or how they choose to interpret and approach specific essay titles. By virtue of encouraging greater autonomy in identifying essay topics and framing arguments, psychological topics assessed at this level are less likely to be mainstream and serviceable by basic textbooks, such that effective assessment performance will also demonstrate the extent to which students' literature search skills are developed [B3, B4].

Independent learning through research work is demonstrated by the final year research dissertation which builds on practical skills at earlier levels of the programme. The student is expected to devise and test their own original research question; decide on a relevant and ethical methodology to address this; use appropriate advanced forms of analysis; and evaluate and present their findings in an extended report [A2, B1-B10, C6, C7, D4]. Student project work is also assessed using a panel interview completed at the end of the academic year. This assessment type was selected given its relevance to employability, and to evaluate the student's ability to articulate and engage in a dialogue about their project. By the end of the programme students therefore become competent in conducting research and presenting their findings in a range of different written, visual and oral

formats that are integrated into the assessment pattern.

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#) for full details on the course structure and units.

The BSc (Hons) Psychology degree programme is delivered on a full-time basis over three years (or four years, where students select the optional sandwich year).

Each level of the programme comprises a minimum of 120 credits. It is also possible to study the three-year programme through a specified part-time route where students are required to complete 60 credits in each academic year, thus students complete the part-time route over six years. The optional sandwich year is not available in part-time study mode.

One credit is equivalent to 10 hours of learning. Units are offered as 20 credits, with the final year research project being 40 credits. A total of 360 credits are required for the achievement of an Honours degree. The following Exit Awards are also available:

- Certificate in Higher Education: Providing a minimum of 120 credits have been achieved at FHEQ Level 4 or above.
- Diploma in Higher Education: Providing a minimum of 240 credits have been achieved including no more than 120 credits at FHEQ Level 4.
- Ordinary Degree: Providing a minimum of 300 credits have been achieved, of which no more than 120 credits are at FHEQ Level 4 and at least 60 credits are at FHEQ Level 6.

Standard University rules apply. The regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.

At FHEQ Level 4, students study cognate psychology-based units (40 credits), practical/psychological research methods and analysis units (60 credits) and one graduate skills based unit (20 credits). All units are compulsory at this level.

At FHEQ Level 5, students study cognate psychology-based units (60 credits), practical/psychological research methods and analysis units (40 credits) and one career management skills based unit (20 credits). All units are compulsory at this level.

At FHEQ Level 5, the optional sandwich year is non-credit bearing. All assessment artefacts are assessed on a pass/fail basis. Successful completion of the sandwich year will be recognised on the transcript of achievement and the student's degree certificate will state in 'sandwich mode'.

At FHEQ Level 6, students select any four from a total of fifteen specialised and/or applied optional units examining different areas of psychology (80 credits), and undertake a compulsory empirical research project completed through independent study (40 credits).

A half-year exchange programme (60 credits) is available to incoming exchange students at Level 6. Exchange students complete the 'Psychology Research Project' unit (40 credits) and a 'Psychology Portfolio' unit (20 credits). To complete the portfolio unit, exchange students attend specified lectures selected from the range of Level 6 specialised and applied psychology units, during weeks 1-12 of the academic year and complete a portfolio assessment to assess their learning on the sessions attended. The sessions attended are agreed in advance with the Exchange Student (Erasmus) Coordinator. The Psychology Portfolio unit acts as a 'shadow' unit and is available only to exchange students entering the Department of Psychology in September and outgoing in January who meet the entry requirements for this level.

A full-year exchange programme (120 credits) is also available to incoming exchange students at Level 6. Exchange students complete 120 credits by either (i) completing the 'Psychology Research Project' unit (40 credits) and 4 Level 6 units (80 credits) from a choice of units which are options on the undergraduate Psychology and Forensic Psychology programmes (for available units see: www.port.ac.uk/departments-of-psychology/courses/erasmus-and-exchange-

[programmes/](#)); or (ii) complete 120 credits worth of units from a choice of units which are options on the undergraduate Psychology and Forensic Psychology programmes (for available units see: www.port.ac.uk/departments-of-psychology/courses/erasmus-and-exchange-programmes/). The sessions attended are agreed in advance with the Exchange Student (Erasmus) Coordinator.

19. Employability Statement

Studying for an honours degree in psychology fosters the development of a diversity of skills that prepares students not only to pursue postgraduate studies in psychology (which may lead to careers as professional or academic psychologists) but also to enter a range of other employment areas. As well as subject specific knowledge, psychology graduates develop skills in communication, numeracy, teamwork, critical thinking, computing, and independent learning; all of which are valued by employers. Many of the subject-specific skills such as research design, methods, data measurement and use of statistics also have direct application in professions outside of psychology.

A. From Entry.

During induction (and in student handbooks) students are introduced to their professional body, the British Psychological Society. The nature of their degree accreditation by this body is explained, as is the process for joining the BPS as an undergraduate member and the implications of professional body accreditation for their future careers.

All students have access to Careers Tutor within the Department of Psychology who provides individual support and careers advice for students, liaises with external agencies on employability issues (e.g. Purple Door, Higher Education Academy, British Psychological Society), and promotes external careers events and opportunities to students (e.g. Graduate Careers Fairs, regional professional body careers conferences).

All students also have access to careers support via central university services (Purple Door) and university events. These are publicised within the department by the Careers Tutor, via our Careers and Employability notice board, via Personal Development Planning (PDP) activities within Level 4 and 5 tutorial sessions and through integration with the core Level 5 career management skills unit, *Employability Skills for Psychologists* which is partially delivered by University Careers Service staff. Careers resources are also publicised in student handbooks with further information and resources made available through a dedicated *Psychology Careers Guidance* website (available to all students via the University's Virtual Learning Environment). This website is updated regularly by the Careers Tutor throughout the year.

B. Throughout the Degree Programme.

Level 4, 5 and 6 undergraduates have regular contact with their personal tutor, part of the remit for which is to help students develop as effective learners, enhance their employability skills and plan for life after university. Personal Development Planning (PDP) is incorporated throughout the three years of the undergraduate programme through this tutorial system, in line with the University's Personal Tutor Framework and Framework for Personal Development Planning.

Graduate Academic and Employability Skills are introduced through the core Level 4 unit, *Exploring Psychology*. This unit is designed to provide tuition and support for the development of graduate skills important in the transition to university life including: *Study and Self-Management Skills, Information Literacy and Research Skills, Problem Solving Skills, IT Skills & Information Literacy Skills, Critical Thinking and Reading Skills, and Communication Skills*. These are achieved through a combination of study skills lectures exploring how academic knowledge is acquired and how it can be researched; computing workshops to introduce the university network, library, and other online resources; and tutorial work to support and provide feedback on the development of study skills. More specifically, the unit provides students with an opportunity to build and put into practice graduate skills through the in-depth study of a psychological topic which is negotiated with the personal tutor and developed through tutorial work.

Coverage of other key transferable skills desired in graduates are also provided and assessed through the core practical-based, research and analysis units at Levels 4 and 5. These skills

include team work, communication skills, numeracy skills and research skills where students work together on the conduct, analysis and reporting of psychological investigations which are communicated through written reports, posters and oral presentations. These skills are rehearsed and developed by the completion of multiple practical investigations of increasing complexity throughout the programme, culminating in the completion of an original and independently produced empirical research project at Level 6.

Coverage of career management and awareness skills, postgraduate study and professional development related to psychology, and alternative career pathways for psychology graduates are provided by the core Level 5 unit, *Employability Skills for Psychologists*. This unit incorporates the generic graduate employment syllabus designed by the Department of Employability specifically tailored for psychology students (Route A as defined in Annex 8, Section 4.1 of the University's Curriculum Framework Document 2014). This unit is delivered via lectures and workshops to support student career planning, raise awareness of issues relevant to recruitment and selection, and encourage students to develop and reflect on their skills and interests to enable them to make a successful transition to employment, voluntary work or further study. The delivery of the unit is also supported by small group tutorial meetings that provide a focus for thinking about future prospects and undertaking further career management activities (e.g. feedback on CVs, completion of mock interviews).

As part of the *Employability Skills for Psychologists* unit, students can also choose to follow one of four optional work-related learning streams within the unit: (A) "Research-based learning" where students apply for and undertake a research-based employment position, working in collaboration with a member of departmental staff; (B) "Work-based learning" where students undertake an external work experience or voluntary position relevant to the study of psychology; (C) "Social Enterprise" where students work to reach a resolution to a real problem posed by a local organization; (D) "Careers in Psychology" which provides an in-depth examination of specific vocations available to psychology graduates. Students who elect to follow stream (A) or (B) are expected to complete the equivalent of 40 hours work practice, supported by a Placement Tutor. Students electing to follow stream (C) work, in a small team, towards the resolution of a human-centred problem posed by a local organisation (such as Portsmouth Deaf Association). Students who elect to follow stream (D) receive lectures from professionals actively engaged in different fields within psychology and related disciplines and are required to undertake further reading and investigation into different career pathways. The unit therefore provides an opportunity for experiential learning via hands-on practical experience and/or detailed exploration of different professional work roles allied to psychology.

Several other cognate units throughout the course also provide a strong focus for activities that simulate the real world working practices of psychologists. As well as the conduct and reporting of research, students undertake field work; observation and diagnosis exercises; appraisal of forensic processes in real world settings; the application of investigative techniques; and psychological testing and evaluation exercises during the degree programme. An assessed panel interview is also undertaken as part of the final year project unit.

In addition, the Level 6 unit, *Psychology Work Placement* provides an opportunity to undertake a professional work practice organised by the student in an area relevant to psychology. The placement may include time spent in an environment (e.g. a hospital, school, or clinical practice) that enables essential professional competences defined in the Health and Care Professionals Council's *Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists* (HCPC, 2012) to be demonstrated and developed. Placements may also be undertaken in a wide range of organisations designed to broaden experience and put into practice psychological specific graduate skills. Placement support is provided through a Departmental Placement Tutor who will advise on the suitability of work opportunities and liaise with students and employers throughout the unit.

In addition, completion of the optional sandwich year provides students with the opportunity to develop specific employment related skills and global, cultural and/or organisational awareness by undertaking a relevant placement with a UK (or overseas) organisation, or through an additional year of study abroad. The sandwich year provides a more extensive and varied range of placements

to be undertaken by the student, away from the university campus. Sandwich year students are allocated a Departmental Placement Tutor who verifies the suitability of the work or study abroad placement for psychology undergraduates, and who liaises with the student during the placement, conducts site visits and/or online tutorials where appropriate, and assists the student in identifying and evaluating the learning activities undertaken as well as attending to any welfare issues arising.

Lastly, throughout the degree, data is populated onto each student's Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). This is an electronic document providing a comprehensive record of student achievement during their period of study. As well as marks awarded on the course, the HEAR also provides the opportunity to include student activities undertaken during their time at the University. These activities are listed under one of the following headings: Committee Positions, Course Representative, Faculty Representative, Volunteering, University, Professional and Departmental Prizes, University Paid Employment and Placements. The University of Portsmouth publishes HEAR data for each student on its secure publishing site but the site enables each student to share their HEAR document with potential employers and other third parties to showcase their achievements.

C. After Graduation

All students are supported beyond graduation via reference writing from personal tutors and access to the Departmental Careers Tutor and University's Careers Service for support. Tutors also continue to provide informal support and advice to ex-students where requested. Graduates of the Department are also able to keep in touch through the university Alumni service. Alumni members are often invited to return to the department to support activities aimed at fulfilling our employability strategy (e.g. by giving talks to current undergraduates).

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- An extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course, the University campus, as well as staff and other students (e.g. their personal tutor and tutor group).
- Student course and department handbooks are provided containing information about the course structure, university regulations and details of course units.
- The academic year consists of two 12-week teaching blocks and a 6-week consolidation and examination period. Support activities undertaken in different units during the consolidation period include preparatory assessment workshops, mock assessments (e.g. practice essays, mock exams and/or online self-tests) and support for personal development planning (e.g. final year project preparation at Level 5; preparatory interview tutorials and completion of an assessed interview at Level 6).
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for their pastoral support and guidance. Tutors meet with their tutor group (of typically 6 to 8 students) regularly throughout the academic year.
- During term time, members of academic staff and personal tutors have weekly fixed 'office hours' when they are available to meet students and provide one-to-one support.
- Feedback is provided for all types of assessments completed by students in the Department (including coursework, examinations, presentations and ethical submissions). Feedback is provided within 20 working days of work being submitted.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling, the Academic Skills Unit (ASK), and the Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) designed to support the development of graduate, employability and career management skills are integrated into Level 4, 5 and 6 tutorial units.
- The University has excellent Library Resources and facilities with access to over 8000 books, journals and electronic media related to psychology. Tuition and support on how to begin using library resources is provided during Level 4 of the programme.
- The Department has extensive experimental laboratories, observation suites, research cubicles and other specialist technical resources and equipment which are used during teaching and

made available to students engaged in practical work at all levels of the programme.

- Students undertaking optional work-based experience or work placement learning units or sandwich placements are allocated a Placement Tutor who provides advice on all aspects of the learning to be undertaken, and the responsibilities and entitlements of students and employers in accordance with the University's Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning.

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

Admission to the course is governed by the current Academic Regulations of the University of Portsmouth and Faculty of Science. Entry requirements currently include:

- A/AS levels: 300 points from 3 A levels or equivalent, with 100 points from a Science subject (Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Physics, Mathematics, Psychology or Statistics).
- GCSEs: 7 GCSEs at grade C or above to include Mathematics, English and Science.
- International Baccalaureate: 29 points including a minimum of 16 points from Higher Level subjects, to include 5 points from a Higher Level Science subject, 4 points from Standard Level English and Mathematics (if not passed at GCSE grade C or above). Acceptable Science subjects include Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Physics, Mathematics, Psychology or Statistics.
- Access Courses: Pass Access to Science with 60 credits, including 45 credits at level 3. All level 3 units must be passed at merit or above.
- International Students: English language proficiency at a minimum of IELTS band 6.0 or equivalent with no component score below 5.5.
- Students with formal qualifications different to those listed above or other prior experiential learning are welcome to apply if they can demonstrate suitable experience, motivation and evidence of potential to succeed. If appropriate, prior learning may be assessed and accredited.
- Students undertaking some forms of practical work, research-based, work-based or placement learning during the programme may also be required to undergo Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks. Some placement opportunities may not be appropriate for all students.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- National Student Survey.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.

- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Course Management Team.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners
- Assessment Tutor and Assessment Scrutiny Subcommittee.
- Placement Tutor for work-based and placement learning.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participation in external student surveys, e.g. National Student Survey (NSS) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff may undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- All staff have a departmental mentor.
- Staff have access to development funds for teaching and research developments.
- All staff supported to attend professional conferences.
- New academic staff required to undertake appropriate University of Portsmouth learning and teaching programmes
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Academic staff new to teaching required to undertake Initial Professional Development Programme (iPROF).
- Postgraduate students involved in teaching activity and work as demonstrators and tutors required to undertake Graduate Students Professional Development programme (gPROF).
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

23. Assessment Regulations

Standard university rules apply (see [Assessment and Regulations](#)).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards;
- approve unit assessment strategy;
- sample assessment artefacts;
- present reports to Unit Assessment Boards.

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards;
- scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment;

- ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

Professional Accreditation/Recognition

The programme is accredited as conferring eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) of the British Psychological Society, provided the minimum standard of a Second Class Honours is achieved.

The programme was last submitted for 5-year review and re-accreditation by the British Psychological Society (BPS) in April 2012. The BPS Graduate Qualifications Accreditation Committee recommended that the BSc (Hons) Psychology programme be accredited for a further five cohorts, with further accreditation and a site visit required in the academic session 2018/19. No specific conditions were placed on the re-accreditation of the programme. In confirming their approval, the Accreditation Committee commented that they: 'were very pleased to see the focus on research-led teaching and employment skills across several modules. For example in the core level 5 module, Employability Skills for Psychologists, not only gives excellent career development, but also has a range of streams to choose from depending on the student's career aspirations. In terms of research, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of research throughout the programme and there is an extensive amount of equipment for the students to learn and to conduct research to produce well balanced psychology graduates'. [Source: British Psychological Society Undergraduate Accreditation Committee (Kavanagh, G., 2012); not available online].

Following the 2012 review and re-accreditation, the programme was also subjected to an interim (paper-based) BPS partnership review in July 2015. This achieved the formal approval of the BPS Undergraduate Education Committee, who made 2 recommendations for further enhancement - these were concerned with staff student ratio and supporting graduate teaching staff. The recommendations were implemented early in 2016, a measure which was formally welcomed by the BPS Undergraduate Education Committee.

A. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

The Department underwent Periodic Programme review of its structures and degree programmes by the University in February 2012. The review panels noted the excellent external examiner comments about staff and courses, the good set of progression statistics from undergraduate courses, and the responsiveness of the department in dealing with matters relating to academic standards. The review panel raised no substantive issues with respect to the standards or quality of undergraduate programmes.

B. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015\[1\]](#)*).

[1]www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

C. Others

None

26. Other Sources of Information

Other sources of information may be found in
Course Approval Document.
Student Handbook.

University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework.

University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning

University of Portsmouth Undergraduate Prospectus.

Assessment Regulations.

University of Portsmouth (<http://www.port.ac.uk/>) and Department of Psychology (<http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/academic/psychology/>) websites.