COURSE SPECIFICATION

MSc Child Forensic Studies: Psychology and Law

Academic Standards, Quality and Partnerships
Department of Student and Academic Administration

March 2018

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COURSE SPECIFICATION

Please refer to the [Course Specification Guidance Notes](#) for guidance on completing this document.

Course Title	MSc Child Forensic Studies: Psychology and Law PGDip Child Forensic Studies: Psychology and Law PGCert Child Forensic Studies: Psychology and Law
Final Award	MSc
Exit Awards	PGDip Child Forensic Studies: Psychology and Law PGCert Child Forensic Studies: Psychology and Law
Course Code / UCAS code (if applicable)	C2442
Mode of study	Part time
Mode of delivery	Distance Learning
Normal length of course	2 Years
Cohort(s) to which this course specification applies	From September 2019 intake onwards
Awarding Body	University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution	University of Portsmouth
Faculty	Faculty of Science & Health
School/Department/Subject Group	Department of Psychology
School/Department/Subject Group webpage	http://www.port.ac.uk/department-of-psychology/
Course webpage including entry criteria	http://www.port.ac.uk/courses/psychology/msc-child-forensic-studies-psychology-and-law/
Professional and/or Statutory Regulatory Body accreditations	None
Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	Level 7

This course specification provides a summary of the main features of the course, identifies the aims and learning outcomes of the course, the teaching, learning and assessment methods used by teaching staff, and the reference points used to inform the curriculum.

This information is therefore useful to potential students to help them choose the right course of study, to current students on the course and to staff teaching and administering the course.

Further detailed information on the individual modules within the course may be found in the relevant module descriptors and the Course Handbook provided to students on enrolment.

Please refer to the [Module Web Search](#) for further information on the course structure and modules.

Educational aims of the course

The educational aims of the course are to:
1. provide a challenging and stimulating study environment that allows students to follow a flexible coherent programme of study
2. equip students with the necessary transferable skills for lifelong learning, employability and flexibility in the context of changing labour markets
3. enable students to develop a deep understanding of topics related to children that are caught up in different aspects of the criminal or civil justice systems
4. develop students' in-depth appreciation of child development matters as they relate to abuse and judicial proceedings for children as(alleged) witnesses, victims and suspects
5. enable practitioners that work with child witnesses and suspects to be effective in their work role.

Course Learning Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) sets out a national framework of qualification levels, and the associated standards of achievement are found in their Framework for Higher Education Qualifications document.

The Course Learning Outcomes for this course are outlined in the tables below.

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
A1	the nature and application of theory and findings in research and practice in child forensic studies.	The two psychology distance learning course teams make strategic decisions relevant to both courses concerning teaching and learning methods. All modules have bespoke distance learning materials that contain embedded tasks, and additional activities (which can include online lectures, quizzes, and forum discussions) aimed at engaging students with their learning. All materials are presented via the Moodle virtual learning environment. A tutorial system is also in place where each student is supported by a personal and academic tutor for the duration of the course.	There are both practitioner based assessments such as professional reports, information leaflets and evaluations, as well as the more typical academic assessments such as essays and critical reviews. This balance of assessment enables the students to demonstrate deeper level learning since they require students to apply theory to practice. All modules have formative assessments to help to prepare students for summative assessments.
A2	information in relation to the contexts, concerns and operation of the investigative and judicial systems involving children.		
A3	current issues and practice techniques related to children caught up in the criminal justice system.		
A4	principles and techniques in research concerning children and the criminal justice system [MSc Stage].		

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

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
B1	gather, synthesise and apply multiple perspectives to information concerning child forensic issues.	The specially developed distance learning materials and embedded tasks require students to reflect on and apply their learning. Students are challenged to examine and critically evaluate previously held views concerning children that are caught up in the legal system whether as an alleged offender, witness or victim.	Professional reports, essays, critical reviews, and evaluations all encourage development of critical thinking skills. In these assessments students practise writing in styles that differ according to the target audience. These assessments, and the Research Project enable students to demonstrate their development of these cognitive skills.
B2	critically evaluate evidence from psychological and legal sources to sustain a reasoned argument and communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.		
B3	think analytically and critically to analyse complex issues concerning children caught up in the Criminal Justice System.		
B4	select appropriate themes and methodologies to research the topics related to children in a forensic situation [MSc stage].		

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

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
C1	plan work and manage time effectively in the face of competing and complex demands.	Assignments have been designed to include work similar to essential aspects of the practitioner role (e.g. professional reports and evaluations of investigative interviews). This enables students to be able to transfer their learning directly to their practice. Further, students are required to access both psychological literature, laws, court transcripts and to critically appraise laws and procedures.	Essays that require students to suggest (and critically evaluate the efficacy of) a new law; evaluation and feedback for 'a newly trained interviewer'; and Professional reports enable students to enmesh theory and practice. The research project enables students to demonstrate MSc stage research skills
C2	utilise style and formats for written communications that are appropriate to the task.		
C3	select, implement and evaluate research methodology [MSc Stage].		
C4	appraise current issues and policy relevant to child involvement in the criminal justice system to support the enhancement of professional practice.		

D. Transferrable (Graduate and Employability) skills, able to:

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
D1	communicate effectively in writing for different audiences.	The learning methods, such as professional reports, provide students with experience that they can use in practice. Students are referred to the online resources available via the VLE to help them to take control of their own learning and to set and monitor their individual progress. Personal tutors discuss careers and employability, and students have access to specific Psychology Moodle site to support this. Project supervisors encourage students to 'own' their project. Students provide an agenda for the regular supervisory meetings.	Professional reports, critical reviews of the literature and of practice, information leaflets. There are multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate these transferable skills (especially since the research project also assesses these skills).
D2	show good decision-making when faced with complex and developing situations such as when evaluating real-world information.		
D3	analyse data and undertake primary and/or secondary research work {MSc stage]		
D4	evaluate and reflect on their own skills development to support continuing professional development		

Academic Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth Academic Regulations will apply to this course.

Support for Student Learning

The University of Portsmouth provides a comprehensive range of support services for students throughout their course, details of which are available at the MyPort student portal.

In addition to these University support services the course also provides each student with a personal and academic tutor who is available for telephone/ video meetings throughout their studies. An on-line induction is provided to help students to engage with both the technological and teaching aspects of this distance learning course.

Student learning is supported via the use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) covering all taught modules that incorporates online learning materials, student discussion boards and sources of additional information.

Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

The University of Portsmouth undertakes comprehensive monitoring, review and evaluation of courses within clearly assigned staff responsibilities. Student feedback is a key feature in these evaluations, as represented in our Policy for Listening to and Responding to the Student Voice where you can also find further information.

Reference Points

The course and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Specification
- University of Portsmouth Education Strategy 2016 - 2020
- Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Quality Assurance Agency Qualification Characteristic Statements

- [Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statement](#) for Psychology
- [Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- Vocational and professional experience, scholarship and research expertise of the University of Portsmouth's academic members of staff

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information provided in this Course Specification and will endeavour to deliver this course in keeping with this Course Specification. However, changes to the course may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, and the review and update of modules and courses.

Where this activity leads to significant changes to modules and courses there will be prior consultation with students and others, wherever possible, and the University of Portsmouth will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption to students.

It is also possible that the University of Portsmouth may not be able to offer a module or course for reasons outside of its control, for example, due to the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University of Portsmouth will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible, and where appropriate, will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Document details

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