



UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH

COURSE SPECIFICATION

MSc Health Psychology

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

August 2021

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COURSE SPECIFICATION

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

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| Course Title | <i>MSc Health Psychology</i> |
| Final Award | <i>MSc</i> |
| Exit Awards | <i>PGDip, PGCert</i> |
| Course Code / UCAS code (if applicable) | <i>P2702FTC, P2702PTC</i> |
| Mode of study | <i>Full time; Part time</i> |
| Mode of delivery | <i>Campus</i> |
| Normal length of course | <i>1 year Full Time; 2 years Part Time</i> |
| Cohort(s) to which this course specification applies | <i>From September 2019 intake onwards</i> |
| Awarding Body | <i>University of Portsmouth</i> |
| Teaching Institution | <i>University of Portsmouth</i> |
| Faculty | <i>Faculty of Science & Health</i> |
| School/Department/Subject Group | <i>Department of Psychology</i> |
| School/Department/Subject Group webpage | http://www.port.ac.uk/department-of-psychology/ |
| Course webpage including entry criteria | https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/msc-health-psychology |
| Professional and/or Statutory Regulatory Body accreditations | British Psychological Society (BPS) |
| <u>Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level</u> | <i>Level 7</i> |

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 Specifications and the Course Moodle Site available to students from enrolment.

Please refer to the Course and Module Catalogue 2021/22 for further information on the course structure and modules.

Educational aims of the course

1. *To provide students with a systematic knowledge and understanding of health psychology in accordance with the academic requirements of the Division of Health Psychology (DHP) of the British Psychological Society (BPS) for accredited courses and eventual progression to autonomous practice.*
2. *To encourage an appreciation of the relevance to health psychology of theories, techniques and findings from a range of other areas of psychology in order to provide a basis for creative synthesis in the development of the discipline.*
3. *To provide a conceptual and practical understanding of processes, methods and analytical techniques employed in research in order to enable research relevant to health psychology to be evaluated and conducted.*
4. *To provide a conceptual and practical understanding of the scientist-practitioner (empirical, analytical and rational) approach to the often complex and challenging problems encountered in health psychology.*
5. *To emphasise aspects of the communicative, interpersonal and organisational contexts of practice in health psychology necessary to effective engagement and influence within the scientist-practitioner approach.*
6. *To enable students to adopt an independent, responsible and reflective approach to learning and practice as a basis for continuous development both within and outside of the course.*
7. *To provide a conceptual and practical understanding of ethical issues in relation to research and practice in health psychology*

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 | <i>Critically evaluate and synthesise the nature and application of theory and findings in research and practice in health psychology ('knowing why'; e.g. historical, psychobiological perspectives, interventions).</i> | <i>Lectures and workshops provide an orientation towards key areas of knowledge and understanding,</i> | <i>Summative assignments (e.g. portfolios, presentations) require assimilating,</i> |
| A2 | <i>Critically evaluate principles and techniques in health psychology research and practice ('knowing how'; including measurement issues).</i> | <i>supported by the Moodle virtual learning environment and</i> | <i>utilising and presenting psychological and systemic</i> |

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| A3 | <i>Critically analyse and evaluate professional issues within health psychology, including ethics, legal issues, inter-professional relations and European and international perspectives ('knowing that').</i> | <i>contact with tutors.</i> | <i>knowledge to recipients at a professional level.</i> <i>Formative assignments are used to prepare students for summative work.</i> |
| A4 | <i>Synthesise knowledge to select, design and apply in-depth research within health psychology.</i> | | |
| A5 | <i>Apply professional codes of conduct for a health psychologist to their own learning and reflective practice.</i> | | |

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

| LO number | Learning outcome | Learning and Teaching methods | Assessment methods |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| B1 | <i>Critically evaluate and synthesise concepts, theories, research, policy and advances scholarship relevant to health psychology from published and unpublished sources.</i> | <i>Considerable prominence is given to problem-solving and discussion within lectures and workshops and a reflective approach more generally, not least in independent study.</i> | <i>Summative Assessments (systematic review, essay, research report, portfolio including a self-reflection section)</i> |
| B2 | <i>Demonstrate the creative synthesis of evidence and ideas from a range of perspectives, levels of analysis, methods and areas of study.</i> | | |
| B3 | <i>Devise questions and design and implement strategies for exploratory and hypothesis-centred research and evaluate findings within appropriate frameworks.</i> | | |
| B4 | <i>Analyse complex issues and problems and operationalise relevant solutions in a systematic and informed manner.</i> | | |
| B5 | <i>Employ skills of critical self-reflection</i> | | |

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

| LO number | Learning outcome | Learning and Teaching methods | Assessment methods |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C1 | <i>Identify complex problems within the health domain and select, implement and evaluate use of a range of research methods and theoretical approaches with accurate understanding and a professional rigour.</i> | <i>Students are given considerable latitude in choosing the topic of their research project; this is the start of a process that emphasises active engagement, creativity and</i> | <i>Essays, Portfolios, oral presentations, empirical project. In addition to an empirical research project, students complete a project proposal written from an ethical and methodological perspective and a</i> |
| C2 | <i>Demonstrate creativity, clarity and flexibility in the use of principles and methods of problem-solving</i> | | |
| C3 | <i>Utilise styles and formats for spoken and written communication which are</i> | | |

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| | <i>appropriate to the occasion and the recipient.</i> | <i>responsibility. This takes place within a supportive supervisory context also aimed at cultivating further a reflective approach to navigating and negotiating demands.</i> | <i>report based upon analysis (involving a series of decisions) of a supplied data set.</i> |
| C4 | <i>Identify and explore multidisciplinary approaches to teaching, research, and consultancy and reflect on and appraise the social, political and organisational contexts in which psychologists work and the main effect that these have on service delivery</i> | | |
| C5 | <i>Utilise styles and formats for spoken and written communication which are appropriate to the occasion and the recipient.</i> | | |
| | | <i>Practical learning experience of applied problem solving and exposure to multi-disciplinary approaches is also provided through placement learning opportunities.</i> | |

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

| LO number | Learning outcome | Learning and Teaching methods | Assessment methods |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| D1 | <i>Participate constructively in a group situation using appropriate interpersonal skills and maintaining a focus on group goals, the effective functioning of the group and the well-being of its members.</i> | <i>There is a high degree of continuity between problem-solving, reflection and communication in lectures, workshops and in assignments (accompanied by taught inputs as well as practise in the skills indicated by the learning outcomes.</i> | <i>Summative Assessment: Essays, portfolios, oral presentations</i> |
| D2 | <i>Interact with colleagues, programme staff, other professionals and research participants in a responsible, empathic and self-regulated manner.</i> | | |
| D3 | <i>Reflect upon learning and personal and professional development needs and exercise initiative and personal responsibility in meeting these in order both to meet the demands of the course and to establish a foundation for continuous professional development.</i> | | |
| D4 | <i>Demonstrate skills in the use of information technology (IT) (word processing, the application of statistical software and the accessing of electronic information sources).</i> | | |
| | | <i>Learning is also supported by the reflective element of the placement module.</i> | |

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| D5 | <i>Demonstrate a facility in written and spoken English appropriate to professional applications and the ability to present and support a reasoned argument while using the appropriate reference system</i> | | |
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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 this course also provides students with a personal tutor and a project supervisor, whilst learning is also supported by the Moodle virtual learning environment.

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 Vision 2030 and Strategy 2025](#)
- [University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning](#)
- [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](#)
- [British Psychological Society Standards for the Accreditation of Masters & Doctoral Programmes in Health Psychology \(October 2019\)](#)
- [Health and Care Professions Council's Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists \(September 2018\)](#)
- 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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