Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

For students starting in Academic Year 2023/24

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	MSc Psychology (Conversion)
Award type	Taught Masters
Mode of study	Full-time Modular Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Normal length of the programme	One year full time / two years part time / up to five years modular
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Online
Accreditation (if applicable)	British Psychological Society
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	**UK students:** Full-time fee for 2023/24 is £10,000 Part-time fee for 2023/24 is £5,500 per year* **International students:** Full-time fee for 2023/24 is £18,800

How this information might change: *Please read the important information at* http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/. *This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.*

* We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/

2. Overview of the Programme

The MSc in Psychology conversion programme is a masters level degree programme and was designed to confer Graduate Basis for Chartership of the British Psychological Society based on the innovative and diverse curriculum of our undergraduate programmes. The core goal of the programme is to provide you with a substantive foundational education in psychological theory and practice to further any career aspirations you may have.

We recognise that students on this programme are likely to be changing career after having already completed an undergraduate degree in another subject. The course is designed with flexibility in mind to work around any existing personal or work commitments you may have. The content is delivered online for you to engage with in your own time supported by small group sessions led by our expert staff via the internet. Across the modules you will learn how to apply psychological knowledge through a range of

authentic assessments - there are no exams. Our assessments will help you develop valuable skills by working on problems modelled on situations found in professional settings such as designing interventions, writing research proposals, or critically reflecting on psychological practice.

3. Aims of the programme

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- develop systematic and scientific understanding of the core areas of psychology and to afford competence in subject-specific and graduate level intellectual skills that will enable you to achieve accreditation by the British Psychological Society within the context of a Single Honours degree;
- facilitate the development of your critical thinking and independent learning and to systematically apply these skills to specialist subject areas within the discipline of psychology and in devising and answering empirical research questions;
- develop a range of graduate attributes that transfer across different disciplines and provide a solid foundation for both further study after graduation and a range of careers.

4. What you will learn

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the scientific basis for the discipline of psychology;
- the core areas of biological psychology, cognitive psychology, personality and individual differences, developmental psychology, social psychology and research methods;
- the inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning;
- a range of influences on psychological functioning and a critical understanding of these influences along with their significance;
- several specialised areas of psychology;
- application of psychological concepts to selected authentic problems a range of research paradigms, methods, and analyses;
- the ethical responsibilities of psychologists.

Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- reason scientifically and critically about psychological theories, findings, and research hypotheses;
- critically evaluate research literature in psychology and relate research issues to authentic problems;
- detect meaningful patterns in behaviour and experience through the use of suitable research methods;
- pose, operationalise, and critique psychological research questions;
- demonstrate an ability to use established techniques of analysis and enquiry accurately within psychology;
- communicate information to a specialist audience;
- produce a dissertation that follows the conventions of scientific report writing used by psychologists.

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- abstract information from a variety of primary and secondary sources and synthesise this information into a coherent understanding of the topic and practice within that topic area;
- assess the merit of contrasting theories and opinions making critical interpretations of data and text; critique the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of psychological knowledge;
- develop a sufficient level of conceptual understanding to enable the development of arguments and analysis that comment on advanced scholarship at the forefront of some areas of psychology;
- apply their knowledge of a topic to identify a research question, initiate and carry out a project effectively communicate ideas and research findings by written, oral and visual means;

- comprehend and use data effectively by interpreting complex sets of numerical, statistical and qualitative data;
- confidently demonstrate computer literacy by being able to word process, use email, the Internet, use databases and statistical software;
- solve problems by clarifying questions, considering alternatives and evaluating outcomes;
- work effectively within a group setting to achieve an end goal through pooled effort which involves recognizing and using appropriate material from others;
- undertake self-directed study and project management;
- apply psychology to a range of professional contexts;
- take responsibility for their own learning by reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses, and identifying appropriate courses of action, in order to fulfil long-term ambitions.

Keele Graduate attributes

Engagement with this programme will enable you to develop your intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and activities. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to become a well-rounded graduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in after your studies are completed.

Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/

5. How is the programme taught?

Across the programme, you will experience a range of different learning and teaching methods. Each module has different prescribed learning activities delivered via the Keele Learning Environment, our online platform through which we run our programmes. You can expect the majority of the work to be asynchronous (online) which means you can access the course materials at a time that suits you. This asynchronous learning will be supported with weekly live (online) sessions in small groups hosted by our expert tutors. These sessions will either consolidate or extend your learning from that week, prepare you for the next session, and allow opportunities for you to ask questions on areas you need support with.

Whilst each module uses a variety of the most relevant teaching methods for the subject matter, across the programme you will find asynchronous material such as online lectures in the form of videos, articles to read, practical tasks to complete, and self-directed study time. To help keep you on target and to check your learning you will also complete short tasks such as quizzes or short-response formative assessments.

The philosophy of the programme is to provide you with a comprehensive education in psychology delivered in a format that will allow you to maintain any existing work or family commitments you may have. The programme has been structured so that you are introduced to the essential knowledge and skills which allow you to consider research design in the first modules, e.g., 'quantitative methods in psychology' and 'qualitative methods in psychology'. In parallel you will also engage in cognitive and biological, and social and developmental topics. In the second semester you will also learn about the grand challenges in psychology and applied psychology, these modules run in tandem to place your developing knowledge in context of the field and where psychology is placed in the wider world. You will also reflect on the skills you have developed throughout the programme and how to articulate those skills to future employers or education providers. Throughout the programme, as you gain relevant research methods and core topic experience you will undertake a dissertation project of your own choosing with a personal supervisor, the taught content in semester one and two will inform your project and how you would like to carry it out.

You will gain valuable hands-on expertise of research design, critical reviewing, planning, analysis and interpretation with a combination of online content, small group sessions, practical activities, and individual feedback. For example, in 'Quantitative research methods' you will learn about data handling and analysis, whereas in 'Applying Psychology' you apply psychology to real world contexts. You will engage with both specialist theory and research in this programme. We see students as a valuable resource for one another so teaching and learning involves discussing, working closely with and listening to other students in many modules facilitated via the internet. You will also be involved in independent study involving identifying and reading literature and published research from textbooks, academic journals and other relevant sources.

You are expected to have access to a computer that meets the required software specifications to engage in study from home and are expected to have a working internet connection to engage in their studies. The software we use in the programme is either freely available or provided by the University.

6. Teaching Staff

The programme is taught by highly qualified staff with specialist qualifications in Psychology, and Academic

Skills Tutors who provide learning support. All current members of academic staff have doctorates (PhDs or the equivalent) in psychology or closely related areas (or are working towards). Most hold (or are working towards) qualifications in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Membership of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) is encouraged in the School; most members of staff are currently either Fellows or Senior Fellows of the HEA and are working towards higher levels of membership.

All Psychology staff are active researchers and scholars whose work has been widely published in books, research monographs and leading international journals. This research and scholarship informs the teaching that takes place in the School. More information about Psychology Staff Members is available on the School website http://www.keele.ac.uk/psychology/people/

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

7. What is the structure of the programme?

The programme follows a modular structure. Part-time and full-time students will complete the same modules but over a different time period. The full-time modules are listed below with tables showing how these modules are split across the two years of the part-time route shown afterwards. Modular registration is also available over a maximum registration period of 5 years with students taking modules as and when availability permits. The modules on this programme are only taken by students enrolled on this programme.

Year	Compulsory	Optional		Electives	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
Level 7	180	0	0	0	0

Module Lists

Level 7

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Qualitative Research Methods	PSY-40129	15	Semester 1
Quantitative research methods	PSY-40131	15	Semester 1
Social and Developmental Psychology	PSY-40125	30	Semester 1-2
Cognitive and Biological Psychology	PSY-40127	30	Semester 1-2
Dissertation - conversion	PSY-40137	60	Semester 1-3
Grand Challenges in Psychology	PSY-40133	15	Semester 2
Applying Psychology	PSY-40135	15	Semester 2

Part-time module structure:

Year 1

Code	Module	Credits
PSY-40125	Social and Developmental Psychology	30
PSY-40127	Cognitive and Biological Psychology	30
PSY-40129	Qualitative Research Methods	15
PSY-40131	Quantitative Research Methods	15

Year 2

Code	Module	Credits
PSY-40133	Grand Challenges in Psychology	15
PSY-40135	Applying Psychology	15
PSY-40137	Dissertation - conversion	60

Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

Level 7

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	**Module in which this is delivered**
the scientific basis for the discipline of psychology	All modules
the core areas of biological psychology, cognitive psychology, personality and individual differences, developmental psychology, social psychology and research methods;	All modules
the inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning;	All modules
a range of influences on psychological functioning and a critical understanding of these influences along with their significance;	All modules, in particular Applying Psychology
application of psychological concepts to selected real-life problems;	Applying Psychology - PSY-40135 Social and Developmental Psychology - PSY-40125 Cognitive and Biological Psychology - PSY-40127
a range of research paradigms, methods and analyses;	Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137 Grand Challenges in Psychology - PSY-40133 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129 Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131
the ethical responsibilities of psychologists and counsellors.	Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129 Applying Psychology - PSY-40135 Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	**Module in which this is delivered**
reason scientifically and critically about psychological theories, findings and research hypotheses;	All modules
critically evaluate research literature in psychology and relate research issues to real life problems;	All modules
detect meaningful patterns in behaviour and experience through the use of suitable research methods;	Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129
pose, operationalise and critique psychological research questions;	Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129
reason statistically and demonstrate competence using a range of statistical techniques;	Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131
apply knowledge of ethical requirements to investigations;	Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129 Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131
demonstrate an ability to use established techniques of analysis and enquiry accurately within psychology;	Grand Challenges in Psychology - PSY-40133 Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137 Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129
communicate information to a specialist audience;	All modules
produce a dissertation that follows the conventions of scientific report writing used by psychologists	Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	**Module in which this is delivered**
abstract information from a variety of primary and secondary sources and synthesise this information into a coherent understanding of the topic and practice within that topic area;	All modules
assess the merit of contrasting theories and opinions making critical interpretations of data and text;	All modules
critique the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of psychological knowledge;	All modules
develop a sufficient level of conceptual understanding to enable the development of arguments and analysis that comment on advanced scholarship at the forefront of some areas of psychology ;	All modules
apply their knowledge of a topic to identify a research question, initiate and carry out a project;	Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131 Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129
effectively communicate ideas and research findings by written, oral and visual means;	All modules
comprehend and use data effectively by interpreting complex sets of numerical, statistical and qualitative data;	Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129 Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131
confidently demonstrate computer literacy by being able to word process, use email, the internet, use databases and statistical software;	All modules
solve problems by clarifying questions, considering alternatives and evaluating outcomes;	Grand Challenges in Psychology - PSY-40133 Dissertation - conversion - PSY-40137 Qualitative Research Methods - PSY-40129 Quantitative research methods - PSY-40131
work effectively within a group setting to achieve an end goal through pooled effort which involves recognising and using appropriate material from others;	All modules
undertake self-directed study and project management;	All modules
take responsibility for their own learning by reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses, and identifying appropriate courses of action, in order to fulfil long-term ambitions.	All modules

8. Final and intermediate awards

Master's Degree	180 credits	You will require at least 150 credits at Level 7
Postgraduate Diploma	120 credits	You will require at least 90 credits at Level 7
Postgraduate Certificate	60 credits	You will require at least 40 credits at Level 7

N.B. - only the full MSc Psychology (conversion) programme can confer Graduate Basis for Chartership from the British Psychological Society

9. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

- Critical evaluations of practice or understanding (e.g., Applying Psychology)
- Blogs (e.g., Cognitive and Biological Psychology)
- Student led assessment (e.g., Cognitive and Biological Psychology)
- Presentations (e.g., Dissertation)
- Research reports (e.g., Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods, Dissertation)
- Research proposals (e.g., Qualitative Research Methods)
- Reflexive portfolio (e.g., Applying Psychology)

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

10. Accreditation

This programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society.

11. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at: http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

This course is open to graduates with a second-class degree in any unrelated subject. There is an English language entry requirement for international students of IELTS 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component.

For more details please see the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme: https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here: https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/

13. How are students supported on the programme?

The Programme Director is responsible for the following:

- Representing the programme at other School committees such as the School Education Committee;
- Strategic issues to do with the programme, resources, facilities and so on;
- Giving general advice on problems or personal difficulties at any point during the programme;
- Approving extension and exceptional circumstances requests;
- Advice on future academic and career options;
- Handling admissions and enquiries;
- The overall operation and coherence of the MSc in Psychology (Conversion) programme;
- Giving guidance and general advice on any aspect of the programme overall (with the exception of module-specific information where the module leader should be consulted).

The module leaders are responsible for:

- Organisation, delivery and assessment of the module;
- Ensuring that feedback is given on assessed work (and informal verbal feedback if required);
- Being available for student consultations.

Students will be allocated an Academic Mentor. The Academic Mentor is available to discuss academic progress in the programme and to deal with matters of general welfare advice and guidance. The School of Psychology also has a Student Support and Experience Officer (SESO), who provides general pastoral support, guidance around university procedures, and referrals to additional support.

All academic staff are available to see students during advertised weekly student appointment slots.

All modules are supported by learning materials that are accessible to students online via the Keele Learning Environment (KLE). In addition, the School Academic Skills Tutors design and run workshops designed to develop core academic skills (e.g., referencing and writing), these are available as recorded sessions. Additionally, they are available to students by appointment for one-to-one advice.

To facilitate peer support and guidance dedicated spaces on MS Teams are provided and students encouraged to utilise them. We encourage all students to engage with the School community and actively seek to bring all of our students together.

In addition to the University's central careers service there is a designated School of Psychology careers tutor. Students are encouraged to consult with the careers tutor for any assistance in deciding upon career options and for assistance in applying for jobs. The Psychology Noticeboard on the KLE also contains a 'Careers' folder with a range of resources for students.

Students with disabilities or medical problems will meet with a member of the University's Disability and Dyslexia Services and the School of Psychology Disability Liaison Officer where appropriate, at the start of the programme to discuss any special requirements they may have. Procedures will then be implemented according to the nature of the student's disability or medical problem. These procedures can range, for example, from allowing extra time in examinations to allocating additional support staff in classes.

14. Learning Resources

The Programme Handbook and Module Guides will provide you with the key information and guidance on structure, content, and assessments. You will also have access to the University's library and associated resources.

Other learning resources available to students on the MSc Psychology (conversion) programme include:

- Academic Skills Tutors who run learning support workshops (e.g. essay-writing, literature searching, APA referencing sessions) outside of the planned curriculum these are both live and recorded so students may access the information when they require it or benefit from a live session. The Academic Skills Tutors are also available by appointment to provide students with one-to-one support.
- Technical support is available from technicians and university IT services in terms of access to equipment that might be required for research and access to software.
- The Keele Learning Environment (KLE) which provides easy access to a wide range of learning resources and support materials in electronic format.

15. Other Learning Opportunities

The School of Psychology hosts the Psychology Society and Research Society which are student-led societies focussed on the academic discipline of psychology. These are excellent social learning opportunities for apprentices and a great way of developing informal leadership skills.

All MSc Psychology students have extensive opportunities to engage with the research life of the School of Psychology. For example, many staff research projects are also offered as extra-curricular volunteering opportunities, students can attend research groups meetings relevant to their interests, and staff are always keen to support students to write the research up for publication where appropriate.

16. Additional Costs

There are no additional costs to facilitate study on this programme.

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

17. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual

programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.

- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:
http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/

18. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

a. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
b. QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-psychology.pdf?sfvrsn=6935c881_15
c. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations
d. British Psychological Society Standards for Accreditation of Undergraduate, and Integrated MSc programmes: https://cms.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/Undergraduate%20Accreditation%20Handbook%202019.pdf

19. Annex - Programme-specific regulations

Programme Regulations: MSc Psychology (Conversion)

Final Award and Award Titles	MSc Psychology (Conversion)
Intermediate Award(s)	PGCert
Last modified	November 2022
Programme Specification	https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmespecifications

The University's Academic Regulations which can be found on the Keele University website (https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/)[1] apply to and regulate the programme, other than in instances where the specific programme regulations listed below over-ride them. These programme regulations list:

- *Exemptions* which are characterised by the omission of the relevant regulation.
- *Variations* which are characterised by the replacement of part of the regulation with alternative wording.
- *Additional Requirements* which set out what additional rules that apply to students in relation to this programme.

The following **exemptions, variations** and **additional requirements** to the University regulations have been checked by Academic Services and have been approved by the Faculty Education Committee.

A) EXEMPTIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where an exemption from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

For the whole duration of their studies, students on this Programme are exempt from the following regulations:

- **No exemptions apply.**

B) VARIATIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where a variation from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

Variation 1: Dissertation length

This programme varies from Regulation C7, 8.1, (d) "for a Masters degree, a dissertation in the range 15,000 to 20,000 words, or the equivalent"

The module PSY-40137 - the dissertation length is 8,000 to 12,000 words.

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[1] References to University Regulations in this document apply to the content of the University's Regulatory Framework as set out on the University website here https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/.

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 18 April 2023

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes