

Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

For Academic Year 2025/26

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	MSc Health Psychology
Award type	Taught Masters
Mode of study	Full-time Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Normal length of the programme	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	Pending accreditation from the British Psychological Society (BPS), Division of Health Psychology
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	<p>UK students:</p> <p>Full-time fee for 2025/26 is £10,100</p> <p>Part-time fee for 2025/26 is £5,600*</p> <p>International students:</p> <p>Full-time fee for 2025/26 is £17,700</p>

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.

* These fees are for new students. 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

Are you passionate about understanding the psychology of health and making a real impact on people's lives? Our MSc in Health Psychology at Keele University is designed for ambitious graduates looking to deepen their expertise and open doors to exciting career opportunities in healthcare, research, and beyond.

This programme provides a strong foundation in the major theories, approaches, and professional skills essential for a career in health psychology. The MSc in Health Psychology aligns closely with the British Psychological Society and includes teaching of the core competencies required as part of a stage one degree. At Keele, you'll be taught by expert academics who will help you develop a deep understanding of health behaviour, psychological interventions, and the psychological processes of illness, recovery, and wellbeing. You'll gain hands-on experience in research methods and data analysis, equipping you with the critical skills needed to work in both academic and applied health settings. Our programme also offers a future-focused curriculum, integrating Keele's strengths in Critical Health Psychology and mixed-methods research, ensuring that you graduate with a broad and adaptable skillset.

We know that real-world experience is key to career success, which is why we offer placement opportunities, allowing you to apply your knowledge in professional health contexts. Whether you're interested in research, policy, or frontline health psychology practice, this MSc will help you build the expertise and confidence to make a real impact. For many students, this MSc is the first step toward becoming a Chartered Health Psychologist, working in both NHS and private healthcare settings to improve patient wellbeing. However, this MSc also opens doors to a variety of career paths beyond health psychology. For example, graduates could go on to work as:

- **Health Analysts** for the Civil Service or private industry
- **Public Health Researchers** in charities and NGOs
- **Health Service Designers** shaping the future of healthcare

Whether your goal is to become an accredited Health Psychologist or to influence health policy, research, or service design, our MSc in Health Psychology provides the knowledge, skills, and experience to help you succeed.

3. Aims of the programme

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

1. Develop critical thinking and evaluation skills

- Critically evaluate existing theories, research, and practices in Health Psychology. This includes developing skills to identify gaps in knowledge, assess the strengths and limitations of different methodologies, and make informed, evidence-based decisions in both academic and applied settings.
- Encourage independent and reflective thinking that challenges assumptions and fosters innovative approaches to solving problems in health-related contexts.

2. Apply statistics and research methods

- Provide students with a solid grounding in advanced quantitative and qualitative research methods, including the use of statistical software, design of robust research studies, data analysis, and interpretation of results.
- Emphasize the application of these methods to real-world health psychology issues, ensuring students can adapt research designs to diverse populations, settings, and health-related challenges.
- Enable students to critically assess and apply research findings within the specific contexts of public health, health behaviour change, and healthcare environments.

3. Enhance communication skills for diverse formats and audiences

- Develop students' ability to communicate complex psychological concepts and research findings effectively to varied audiences, including academic peers, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and the general public.
- Train students to present information in multiple formats (e.g., written reports, academic papers, oral presentations, digital media)

4. Strengthen problem-solving abilities

- Develop advanced problem-solving skills by encouraging students to approach health psychology issues systematically, using evidence-based methods to develop and evaluate solutions.
- Empower students to work autonomously and collaboratively to address complex, multifaceted health problems, considering psychological, social, and environmental factors in their approaches.

5. Develop leadership and organisational skills in individual and team contexts

- Provide students with the tools to lead and manage health psychology projects, both individually and within multidisciplinary teams, ensuring effective project planning, execution, and evaluation.
- Encourage students to develop strong organisational and time-management skills that enable them to balance competing priorities.

6. Promote reflective practice

- Encourage a culture of continuous professional development through reflective practice, enabling students to evaluate their own performance, learning, and growth as future health psychologists.
- Integrate reflective techniques, such as journaling, supervision, and peer feedback, to facilitate self-awareness, personal growth, and professional competence in health psychology practice.

7. Enhance research skills

- Develop students' advanced research skills in health psychology, including designing, conducting, analysing, and disseminating high-quality research projects.
- Prepare students to contribute to the field through original research, fostering an understanding of the

research process and the ability to generate impactful knowledge in health psychology.

8. Promote ethical and professional practice

- Instil a strong understanding of ethical principles, professional conduct, and the legal frameworks that govern health psychology practice in the UK and internationally.
- Ensure students are prepared to work within multidisciplinary teams while upholding ethical standards in clinical, research, and applied settings.

9. Deepen understanding of historical and contemporary theories in health psychology

- Provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of health psychology, from its historical roots to current theories, models, and approaches.
- Encourage students to critically engage with key theories in areas such as health behaviour change, critical theory, stress and coping, illness prevention, and health promotion, and apply these frameworks to contemporary health challenges and interventions.

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:

- Historical and current evidence, theories, and concepts relevant to the field of Health Psychology
- The roles and responsibilities of Health Psychologists in practice, as well as the professional skills and competencies required

Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- Appraise the psychological aspects of health and illness, including health-related behaviours, cognitions, and beliefs.
- Apply health related research methodologies and analysis techniques in contemporary real-world contexts.
- Apply evidence-based behaviour change intervention, including how to develop, plan, and deliver behaviour change interventions in specific contexts.
- Practice within the legal and ethical frameworks that govern Health Psychology practice.

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- Develop reflective practice and apply reflective thinking strategies to enhance personal development, self-awareness, and continuous improvement.
- Demonstrate core employability skills in problem-solving, leadership and organisation whilst working as both an individual and as part of a team.
- Communicate complex information in written and verbal formats to a range of stakeholders including academic, clinical, and lay audiences, and people from varied cultural backgrounds.
- Critically evaluate research evidence, theory, and practice in Health Psychology.
- Use systematic search techniques to find and appraise research evidence
- Develop digital skills that align with the Jisc digital capabilities framework. Specifically, skills in ICT proficiency, information and data literacy, digital communication, digital learning and development, digital wellbeing, and digital creation, problem-solving, and innovation.

Keele Graduate attributes

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and

societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

5. How is the programme taught?

Learning and teaching methods used on the programme vary according to the subject matter and level of the module. They include the following:

- Lectures and recorded lectures using both traditional and flipped classrooms.
- Seminars, interactive problems, and discussions.
- Class-based discussion with students and tutors.
- Technology-enhanced learning.
- Practical work and laboratory classes.
- One-to-one project supervision.
- Work-based and/or academic-based placement.
- Directed asynchronous learning (for example, directed reading, a quiz, video content).
- Reading scientific articles.
- Personalised written and face-to-face feedback.
- Electronic submission and return of marked coursework with feedback.
- IT instruction (e.g., analytical software).
- Use of the Keele Learning Environment (KLE).

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Academic Mentors or module lecturers on a one-to-one basis.

6. Teaching Staff

The health programme draws on the wide range of experience within the department so that we can offer research-led teaching.

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 academic year runs from September to September and is divided into three semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from course to course, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between the end of September and mid-December, and from mid-January to the end of April. Our degree courses are organised into modules. Each module is usually a self-contained unit of study, and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits based on 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided in the tables below.

All modules are compulsory on this programme.

A summary of the credit requirements is as follows.

Year	Compulsory	Optional	
		Min	Max
Level 7	180	0	0

Module Lists

Level 7

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Applied Psychological Research Methods	PSY-40163	30	Semester 1
Becoming and being ill	PSY-40173	30	Semester 1
Applied Research Dissertation	PSY-40169	60	Semester 1-3
Health promotion, prevention, and behaviour change	PSY-40175	30	Semester 2
Professional Practice in Health Psychology	PSY-40177	30	Semester 2

Part-time structure

For part-time study, the following table outlines which modules will be studied in each academic year. The dissertation module and the Applied Psychological Research Methods module will be completed in the second academic year, whereas all other modules will be taught in the first year. The semester in which they are taught follows that shown in the above table. This structure allows two groupings of related content; (i) core health psychology theory and practice in year 1; followed by (ii) research methods and analysis training with the applied research dissertation in year 2.

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Year of study
Becoming and Being Ill	PSY-40173	30	Year 1
Health Promotion, Prevention, and Behaviour Change	PSY-40175	30	Year 1
Prof Practice Health Psychology	PSY-40177	30	Year 1
Applied Psychological Research Methods	PSY-40163	30	Year 2
Applied Research Dissertation	PSY-40169	60	Year 2

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
Critically evaluate historical and current evidence, theories, and concepts relevant to the field of Health Psychology	Applied Research Dissertation - PSY-40169 Health promotion, prevention, and behaviour change - PSY-40175 Becoming and being ill - PSY-40173
Understand the role of the British Psychological Society and the Health and Care Professions Council in regulating psychologists and practitioners.	Professional Practice in Health Psychology - PSY-40177

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Appraise the psychological aspects of health and illness, including health-related behaviours, cognitions, and beliefs	Health promotion, prevention, and behaviour change - PSY-40175 Becoming and being ill - PSY-40173 Applied Research Dissertation - PSY-40169
Apply health related research methodologies and analysis techniques in contemporary real-world contexts.	Applied Psychological Research Methods - PSY-40163 Applied Research Dissertation - PSY-40169
Apply evidence-based behaviour change intervention, including how to develop, plan, and deliver behaviour change interventions in specific contexts.	Health promotion, prevention, and behaviour change - PSY-40175
Practice within the legal and ethical frameworks that govern Health Psychology practice.	Professional Practice in Health Psychology - PSY-40177

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Develop reflective practice and apply reflective thinking strategies to enhance personal development, self-awareness, and continuous improvement.	Becoming and being ill - PSY-40173 Professional Practice in Health Psychology - PSY-40177
Demonstrate core employability skills in problem-solving, leadership and organisation whilst working as both an individual and as part of a team	All modules
Communicate complex information in written and verbal formats to a range of stakeholders including academic, clinical, and lay audiences, and people from varied cultural backgrounds.	Applied Research Dissertation - PSY-40169 Becoming and being ill - PSY-40173 Health promotion, prevention, and behaviour change - PSY-40175 Professional Practice in Health Psychology - PSY-40177
Critically evaluate research evidence, theory, and practice in Health Psychology	Health promotion, prevention, and behaviour change - PSY-40175 Applied Research Dissertation - PSY-40169 Becoming and being ill - PSY-40173
Use systematic search techniques to find and appraise research evidence	Applied Research Dissertation - PSY-40169 Becoming and being ill - PSY-40173

8. Final and intermediate awards

Master's Degree MSc Health Psychology	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 45 credits at Level 7

9. How is the Programme Assessed?

We want students to develop a wide range of skills so that they are prepared for life beyond the classroom.

Consequently, the MSc Health Psychology programme has been designed to use a wide variety of assessment approaches that are centred around problem-solving and authentic assessment. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on the MSc Health Psychology programme:

- Reflective structured diaries
- Oral poster presentations
- Systematic literature review
- Research lab report
- Research proposal
- Dissertation
- Recorded podcast
- Essay report
- In class MCQ tests
- Formative and summative assessment throughout

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

The programme is actively seeking accreditation 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?

A minimum of a 2:2 in a BPS-accredited psychology or joint-Psychology degree conferring Graduate Basis for Chartered (GBC) membership or equivalent qualification eligible to confer GBC membership with the BPS, or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard.

Please note, Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society (BPS) is required if you wish to pursue stage 2 training after your MSc. Applicants are advised to check whether there undergraduate training confers GBC by visiting the [BPS website for more information](#).

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/>

13. How are students supported on the programme?

Support for student learning on the programme is provided in the following ways:

- **Academic Staff:** All academic staff are available to see students during advertised weekly student appointment slots.
- **Module Leaders:** Any questions or concerns you may have in relation to the content taught and assessed on a given module on the MSc Health Psychology course are to be directed towards the module leader who will offer support and guidance.
- **Academic Mentors:** You are allocated an academic mentor for the duration of your studies as part of the University's Academic Mentor system and in accordance with the University Code of Practice on Academic Mentoring. The role of the academic mentor is to meet formally with you periodically to discuss your progress and performance and to offer support and advice. You can make arrangements to see your academic mentor at any time.
- **Programme Lead:** The MSc Health Psychology course is led by an academic member of staff who takes responsibility for operation of the course. Should you find yourself unable to reach out to your academic mentor, your programme lead is the next point of contact.
- **Postgraduate Taught Director:** Should you find yourself in a position where neither the module leader, academic mentor nor programme lead are appropriate contact options, the Postgraduate Taught Director is available to help support you.
- **Student Experience and Support Officer (SESO):** If you need to talk to someone, whether it is about

your studies or life outside of them, you can access advice, guidance, and one-to-one support from their Student SESO based within the School of Psychology.

- **Use of e-learning/the Keele Learning Environment (KLE):** All modules belonging to the MSc Health Psychology programme are supported by learning resources that are accessible to students via the KLE.
- **Students with disabilities, medical conditions, or dyslexia:** Students admitted to the MSc Health Psychology programme with disabilities or medical problems are asked to disclose their condition to Student Services via the SESO (above) and the Disability and Inclusion Tutor nominated within the School. Students will meet with a member of the University's Disability Support & Inclusion team. Academic mentors and module leaders are responsible for ensuring reasonable adjustments are made.
- **School Academic Skills Tutor:** The academic skills tutor designs and runs study support workshops in each semester and are available to you by appointment for one-to-one advice.
- **Keele Careers and Employability Support:** The university offers you an opportunity to gain support and advice regarding your career options. In addition, the School of Psychology careers tutor can also offer guidance. You are encouraged to consult with the careers tutor for any assistance in deciding upon postgraduate research, funding opportunities, career options and for assistance in applying for jobs and placements. Briefing sessions are organised for students interested in continuing to postgraduate research or continuation with further training to become a practicing Health psychologist. The Psychology Notice Board on the KLE also contains a 'Careers' folder with a range of resources for students.

14. Learning Resources

Almost all the teaching in Psychology is carried out in the same building, which contains three lecture rooms, two teaching laboratories and several seminar rooms. These rooms may be arranged either in traditional lecture format or more informally to allow students to work together in small groups. All the rooms are equipped with computers, internet access and electronic whiteboards or projection equipment. There is a psychology Learning Resources room with computers and internet access which is available to postgraduate students for independent study and also a number of student project rooms and research laboratories that are available to be used to carry out project work.

15. Other Learning Opportunities

- Academic Skills Tutors who run learning support workshops (e.g. essay-writing, literature searching, APA referencing sessions) outside of the planned curriculum. 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 (e.g. audio and video recording) and access to software.
- Students can access the undergraduate Research Participation (RPT) Scheme if they need undergraduate student participants for their research (for research-based modules such as the dissertation). This is a scheme where all undergraduates are required to participate in a certain amount of research to gain experience of different approaches. There is an RPT co-ordinator who approves access to the scheme, and full information is provided on how to access this in the Programmes Handbook.
- The Keele Learning Environment (KLE), which provides easy access to a wide range of learning resources and support materials in electronic format. In accordance with the Keele Education Principles, students will be provided with asynchronous materials (such as short videos, quizzes, reading, etc.) for them to engage with in their own time in order to enhance learning that takes place in the classroom.
- Microsoft Teams is used to complement teaching and facilitating the development of a learning community, with online sessions, question and answer threads, peer-to-peer communication and resource sharing.
- MSc Health Psychology students will also be invited to the Health Research Group meetings as well as the monthly Psychology seminar series.

16. Additional Costs

There may also be costs associated with DBS applications where they are relevant for the placement module. Current costs per DBS check are detailed on the additional costs webpage:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/postgraduatestudy/tuitionfeesandfunding/postgraduatefees/additionalcosts>.

However, not all placements will require a DBS check (e.g., those not working directly with confidential data, vulnerable populations etc.).

Additional costs may be incurred where a student elects to conduct a dissertation project that requires off-campus travel, or where their placement requirements travel. The costs associated with travel will depend on the chosen mode of travel and the frequency of travel arranged between the student and the supervisor.

These costs have been forecast by the University as accurately as possible but may be subject to change as a result of factors outside of our control (for example, increase in costs for external services). Forecast costs are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain representative. Where additional costs are in direct control of the University we will ensure increases do not exceed 5%.

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/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-psychology>

c. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

d. The British Psychological Society Standards for the Accreditation of Masters & Doctoral Programmes in Forensic Psychology:

<https://cms.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/Health%20Accreditation%20Handbook%202019.pdf>

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 17 June 2025

Previous documents

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