

Programme Specification

Award and title: Psychology Foundation Year

<i>School:</i>	Education, Language and Psychology
<i>Subject area:</i>	Psychology
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2025-26
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	British Psychological Society (BPS)
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Foundation Certificate Psychology
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	C800
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	None
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	Psychology 2023
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Undergraduate periods of study ¹ for full time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	Yes
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	Yes
<i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i>	Yes

Introduction and special features

Psychology is the study of the human brain and behaviour and, as such, is of interest to people from a wide range of backgrounds. The Psychology Foundation Year is designed as an alternative entry route to undergraduate study in Psychology for prospective students who may not be ready to start their university career at Level 4. The programme is suitable for students who have little or no prior experience of the academic study of Psychology and is designed to help you develop the relevant foundational knowledge and skills to enable you to progress to undergraduate-level study. The Foundation Year forms part of a four-year undergraduate programme; students who successfully complete the Foundation Year progress to on to subsequent years of our BSc (Hons) undergraduate study in Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Psychology with Counselling, or Psychology with Child Development. No matter which option you are signed up to, your programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society.

As a student on one of our BSc with Foundation Year programmes, you will join a thriving academic community in Psychology at York St John University. You will be taught by a team of research-active academic staff, whose work spans the breadth of the discipline, and supported by an excellent team of technicians and teaching assistants. On commencement of the programme, you will be assigned a

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

personal academic tutor from among the academic staff, who will provide personalised support as you progress through your studies.

You will have access to two well-resourced psychology laboratories, which contain a range of continually updated equipment and resources. You will also have the opportunity to extend your learning by acting as a participant in psychological studies run by staff and students through the Psychology Research Participation Scheme.

The Psychology Foundation Year programme will equip you with a range of academic skills that are the basis for becoming a successful student in higher education. You will be supported to develop key study skills and will be supported throughout with dedicated services designed to ensure success for all students, whatever their background and existing skills. Your confidence in communicating, both verbally and in writing, will be improved through practice in assessments and in-class activities. The research-informed teaching approach aims to inspire a lasting curiosity for the scientific study of people. As such, we hope that the foundation year is just the beginning of your journal in psychology at York St John University.

Work-related Experiential Learning (WREL)

The psychology programme at York St John University incorporates work-related experiential learning at all levels, providing you with invaluable real-world experience and career-related skills. This hands-on approach, integral to your timetable, allows you to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, and enhance your psychological literacy in real-life contexts. You will also acquire essential transferable skills such as problem-solving, communication, and teamwork, which are critical for professional success. Additionally, these experiences facilitate networking opportunities and can often lead to future employment prospects. By engaging directly with employers, you will gain a deeper appreciation of the relevance and application of your studies, boosting your confidence and preparedness for future employment. This blend of academic learning and practical experience ensures that you are not only knowledgeable but also well prepared to apply your skills in diverse professional settings.

Diversity of Assessment and Scaffolded Learning

The variety of assessments on the psychology programme at York St John University offers you significant benefits, both academically and personally. This diversity in assessment types – encompassing essays, research reports, reflections, case studies, career pathway plans, presentations, and creative artefacts – caters to the varied strengths and learning styles of students, ensuring a more inclusive and equitable educational experience. Such a range allows you to demonstrate your understanding and skills in multiple formats, thus more accurately reflecting your learning and capabilities. This approach not only assesses academic knowledge but also fosters critical thinking, creativity, and practical application skills, crucial for real-world problem-solving beyond your degree programme. Furthermore, the scaffolded approach to learning, where concepts and skills are built progressively, enhances your academic confidence and allows you to grow and develop as the course progresses. It provides a structured yet flexible learning pathway, enabling you to gradually develop and deepen your understanding, while simultaneously acquiring and refining skills essential for your academic and professional growth. This methodical progression through increasingly complex and challenging assessments ensures that you are well-prepared for the demands of both higher education, further study, and your future careers, thus aligning your academic development with your professional preparedness.

Research Support and Resources

Research is a key component of BPS accredited Psychology programmes and one which makes Psychology graduates highly valued and sought after. Developing your research skills in the psychology programme at York St John University helps to develop your psychological literacy and equips you with the ability to critically analyse, interpret, and apply psychological theories and concepts. It helps you to foster a deeper understanding of evidence and ethical thinking, enhances your problem-solving and analytical abilities, and prepares you for professional roles, beyond those labelled as a 'psychologist', which require

evidence-based decision making. Moreover, research proficiency promotes intellectual curiosity and lifelong learning, essential traits for success in an ever-changing world with unanticipated challenges and opportunities.

Throughout your degree you will have access to a suite of dedicated Psychology laboratories that you will use to develop your research skills, participate in cutting-edge research, and conduct your own original research.

Our laboratories comprise:

- A large 48-computer lab used for research methods training;
- Three group labs, each equipped with wall-mounted HD cameras, microphones and a screen capture device, for recording focus groups, interviews and behavioural observation studies;
- An adjacent video control room for storing and analysing video recordings;
- An electroencephalography (EEG) lab, for recording electrical activity in the brain;
- An eye-tracking lab, for recording precise gaze locations and durations;
- A virtual reality (VR) and pain perception lab, for exploring immersion within VR and whether this modulates pain perception;
- Six further test labs for running experiments, conducting interviews, and analysing data.

In addition to the specialist equipment housed within our laboratories, you will also have access to psychophysiological measures for recording heart rate and electrodermal activity; an extensive test library including measures of language ability, memory, personality, and mental health; and specialist software to support both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. You will be supported in using our research facilities by a dedicated team of specialist technical staff.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

This programme aims to prepare students for the study of Psychology at undergraduate level, by providing you with the opportunity to develop foundational knowledge of the discipline, relevant academic skills and the ability to think and learn independently.

1. To provide a solid basis in the scientific foundations of psychology and an introduction to how such knowledge can be applied in real life settings.
2. To begin the process of developing students as independent and self-aware individuals who are socially responsible, confident, effective in communication, and curious learners.
3. To enable students to show their knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles relating to psychology, specifically, and scientific inquiry more broadly.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 3

3.1 Demonstrate knowledge of facts about a broad range of key theories and concepts in psychological science.

3.2 Describe and apply key methods of enquiry in psychological science.

3.3 Communicate factual and critical information in a variety of forms for different audiences.

3.4 Use a range of information technology for academic purposes, including being able to find and interpret reliable sources of information.

3.5 Work independently and as part of a team, using a range of skills to complete tasks.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensatable (NC) or compensatable (X)
PSY3007M	3	1	Core Academic Skills	20	C	X
PSY3008M	3	1	Core Research Skills	20	C	X
PSY3009M	3	1	Understanding Evidence: Science, Myth and Fake News	20	C	X
PSY3010M	3	2	Contemporary Issues in Psychology	20	C	X
PSY3011M	3	2	Classic Studies in Psychology	20	C	X
PSY3012M	3	2	Extended Project	20	C	X

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensatable. A non-compensatable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 40) in order to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

The Psychology Foundation Year provides you with an introduction to the key questions, theoretical approaches and empirical methods of psychological science. You will work with our team of academic psychologists to explore the foundations of the discipline and develop core academic, research and independent thinking skills in preparation for the study of Psychology at undergraduate level.

Modules within the Foundation programme align to three key strands of learning. First, to develop your foundational skills for university-level study, you are taught through discipline-specific modules in academic and research skills in Semester 1. Second, you will develop your independent thinking skills through a module designed to help you understand how to interpret evidence and differentiate it from fake news in Semester 1. In Semester 2, this will be solidified in an extended project, which you will undertake in groups with a dedicated member of the academic team. Third, to provide knowledge of Psychology as an academic discipline, you will explore classic studies through the history of psychological science and contemporary debates issues in psychology in Semester 2.

Modules are delivered through three-hour workshops, which allow flexibility for a variety of teaching methods and learning activities. Lecture-style delivery introduces you to key theoretical approaches, concepts and empirical studies, while structured independent and group activities allow you to consolidate and apply your learning. In preparation for taught workshops, you will be assigned reading and preparatory activities via Moodle, our virtual learning environment. Alongside the formal content of the programme, you will have the opportunity to learn more about psychological research by acting as a participant for undergraduate, postgraduate and staff research studies through the Psychology Research Participation

Scheme, and focus on your own personal, professional and academic development in regular meetings with your academic tutor.

A range of assessment methods are used to consolidate and appraise your learning. Multiple-choice examinations assess the breadth of your knowledge, while written coursework allows you to explore specific topics in depth. For skills modules, timed tests and portfolio assessments, in which you can demonstrate the range of your developing academic and research skills, are utilised. Oral presentation assessments allow you to practise and develop your verbal communication skills. The extended project report enables you to bring together learning from across the Foundation modules in a substantial piece of written work. The variety of assessment techniques embedded in the programme is designed to meet the needs of students with a range of individual strengths and preferences, while also effectively preparing all students for the demands of undergraduate study in Psychology.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [general regulations](#) for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensatable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University mission and values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Date written / revised: February 2024

Programme originally approved: 19 April 2024