Introduction and special features

The MSc in Branding and Psychology offered by York Business School is a distinctive programme, designed to support your career progression as well as personal and professional development. The programme brings together industry and academic expertise, sharing practical and theoretical insights. This will allow you to gain the specialist knowledge and strategic skills necessary to utilise a range of psychological theory and practice in brand development and design. The programme aims to address key cognitive and developmental processes that underpin an individual’s perception, understanding and decision making in relation to purchasing, brand recognition and loyalty. This programme is intended to allow you to develop an in-depth and critical understanding of key psychological theory, research methods and design associated with brand perception and key processes associated with branding in a technologically changing world, with a particular focus on the effects of social media, and new technologies on brand perception and consumer behaviour. The programme will examine cross cultural difference in brand perception and will critically consider ethical issues associated with the psychology of branding.

Our approach is to guide you through both research and practice-based activities to evolve your own creative and critical thinking, whilst developing the skills and expertise required to apply psychological research to branding. You will have creative autonomy to research, develop and explore in a stimulating interdisciplinary environment using our modern facilities and laboratory space. A diverse range of academic tutors and industry practitioners will supervise the whole delivery process, providing key links to industry networks for future employability.
Much of the learning is developed through the establishment of collaborative learning communities of programme participants, tutors and industry experts and you will become part of that community of learning. Your understanding is developed around the key skills, processes and practices of branding psychology. Solutions to real problems are suggested, discussed and analysed within the learning community with the support of tutors and fellow learners. The programme involves you in a demanding process of personal and professional development, leading to an integrated and critically aware understanding of the application of psychological techniques to the branding industry. It is designed to develop the skills and experiences required to develop a career in branding or research.

You will study at our YSU London campus and benefit from our industry connections and extensive expertise, knowledge, skills and understanding of the design sector. The curriculum provides a career-focused overview of the industry, ensuring you will have the up-to-date knowledge and applicable skills required. The bespoke and contemporary modules will assist you in preparing for your future career plans. Integral to the philosophy of the programme is the opportunity to combine and connect theory and practice, with opportunities to engage in industry placements, consultancy projects and live business research commissions.

Special features of the programme include:

- Enhance and develop your own skill base to apply key theoretical and experimental approaches to branding problems.
- The potential to develop specialist knowledge and strategic skills necessary to lead and manage creative and technical project teams.
- A supportive platform for critical reflection, through the application of academic theories to your real world branding issues.
- The opportunity to gain industry experience and engage in project work.
- A range of assessment methods used to mirror organisational based activities.
- The potential to develop and engage with a network of industry experts and professional in your field of study.
- To enhance your employability through participation in a wide-range of teaching and learning experiences.
- Participation in active and supportive forums drawing on practical expertise.
- Class free Fridays in order to allow you to gain industry experience.

Admissions criteria
You must meet the University's general entry criteria for postgraduate study.

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 Accredited Prior (Experiential) Learning (APL/APEL). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aims
The overall aim of the programme is to develop your knowledge and critical understanding of key constructs in the psychology of branding. You will develop your understanding of key psychological theories and how these inform and develop branding theory and practice. You will apply your learning to further develop your leadership and strategic branding skills and understanding. The programme will support you to develop a range of practical laboratory and
research skills to investigate, examine and critique a range of psychological techniques used to inform and develop brands. Throughout the programme, you will consider the ethical and cross-cultural issues associated with the psychology of branding. You will be supported as you:

- develop critical awareness and understanding of the key psychological theories and how they relate to branding research, knowledge and practice;
- develop the ability to connect theory with practice in creative and innovative ways and reflect upon the learning involved as well as the outcomes;
- develop critical awareness and understanding of the impact that strategic branding leadership and psychological research have on the development and maintenance of brands and brand consultancy;
- develop and enhance life-long learning skills and personal development in order to work with self-direction and originality.

Programme learning outcomes
Upon successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

Level 7/FHEG L7

7.1 demonstrate in-depth, specialist knowledge and mastery of techniques relevant to the study, research and practice of psychological concepts within the branding industry;

7.2 demonstrate an advanced and critical understanding of concepts, information and techniques informed by knowledge at the forefront of the study of contemporary psychological branding research;

7.3 demonstrate a systematic, integrated and critically aware understanding of the application of research to the global branding industry;

7.4 critically reflect and evaluate management, leadership and team working skills and take a proactive, independent and self-reflective role in working and developing professional relationships with others;

7.5 formulate a critical awareness of current issues in business management informed by contemporary research and practice;

7.6 demonstrate a deep knowledge and critical understanding of the influence of advanced psychological theory, global context and response to changes in the global business environment;

7.7 design, conduct, analyse and disseminate an extended independent piece of research or branding related project from inception to completion.
# Programme Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Status of Module*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MLB021</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>The Psychology of Branding</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLB022</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Psychology of Consumer Behaviour</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Strategic Brand Management</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>MLB024</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Psychology of Marketing Communications</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>MLB005</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>Industry Experience</td>
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<td>The Psychology of Consumption</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Branding Lab</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLB028</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Branding and Psychology Capstone Project</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>C</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*C: Compulsory, CA: Compulsory for award, O: option or E: elective.

## Learning, teaching and assessment

The programme delivery is based on principles of adult learning, recognising that participants are likely to bring a large amount of experience and knowledge to the group, and can share this with each other. The style of the programme is participative and resources for learning explicitly include the knowledge, experience and skills of all participants and staff. Some participants may not have been engaged in formal education for some time, and may never have studied social sciences at postgraduate level. As such, support with study skills, conventions of academic analysis and writing will be available for you from the first module, and will continue throughout the programme. The programme begins with intensive core 4 week module, followed by three 8 week modules each term. You will also have the opportunity to gain industry experience.

A key part of the philosophy of the programme is that by bringing together relevant academic theory and practical experience, you can enhance your deep understanding of these elements,
and develop yourself as an individual and as a leader. All modules are delivered utilising a range of teaching, learning and assessment strategies including lectures, seminars, a guest speaker programme, tutorials, workshops, use of online materials, and global café style learning activities. Class activities, online discussions and problem solving exercises will enable you to gain feedback about your knowledge and understanding, prior to any formal summative assessments.

All modules are assessed through a programme of work undertaken whilst studying for the award. A range of assessment tools are used including presentations, critical essays, portfolios and reflective journals and case study work. Each module tutor will provide opportunities for formative assessment feedback to inform your work prior to submission. You will receive detailed feedback on assessment to help you develop and continuously improve your performance whilst on the programme. Advice will be provided in relation to development, further areas for research and guidance on how to enhance your subject knowledge.

Students of York St John University will receive the opportunity for study support including academic writing and research skills to enhance employability and career development in the field of business management.

The Industry Experience module is an essential and distinguishing part of your preparation for successful industry employment or own business management. Understanding and experiencing industry dynamics will support your assessment of your own capabilities and ambitions as well as assessment of working environments which you would like to contribute to and create. You can choose between three modes of completion: industry placement, industry research project or industry consultancy project.

In addition to the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, Industry Experience module allows you to enhance your awareness and critical analysis of your own competitiveness in the industry and a critical examination of workplace environment as well as best practices and opportunities for improving the working environment and/or practices.

Field trips to businesses, industry partners and events are a regular feature throughout the programme. There will be some subsidy of these but you may be expected to make a financial contribution.

The University will use its wide network of industry relationships and partnerships to provide opportunities for students to engage in work placements, business consultancies or business research however this cannot be guaranteed.

**Progression and graduation requirements**
The University's [general regulations for][1] postgraduate awards apply to this programme.

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

**Internal and external reference points**
This programme specification was formulated with reference to:
- [University Mission Statement][2]  [see page two]
- [Strategic Plan 2015-20][3]  [see page four]
- [QAA subject benchmark statement][4]
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- York St John University “General Regulations for Postgraduate Awards”
- QAA Master’s degree characteristics (September 2015)

Date written / revised: click here to enter a date
Programme originally approved: click here to enter a date