Introduction and Special Features

Introduction

The MSc Psychology is intended to enable students to tailor their MSc studies to their own interests by choosing from our suite of MSc modules in development psychology, applied cognitive psychology, community psychology and critical social psychology. The programme is intended for students wishing to pursue three types of career trajectory: 1. As a stepping stone to PhD study, either at YSJ or elsewhere; 2. As a stepping stone to professional doctorate programmes in psychology; 3. As a way of enabling students to 'stand out from the crowd' in making themselves attractive to employers. Transferable skills include data collection and analysis; research design; presentation skills; decision making; critical thinking; the ability to learn autonomously; and (depending on optional module selection) may also include an understanding of the social context of behaviour; intervention design and evaluation; an understanding of the social context of development; an understanding of the applicability of developmental psychology to educational issues; and an understanding of the applications of cognitive psychology.

Admissions Criteria

In addition to the University's general entry criteria for postgraduate study, you must have:

- a 2(i) in Psychology or a related discipline (e.g. education; sociology; computer science), although in cases where exceptional performance on the final year project, mitigating circumstances or relevant professional experience can be demonstrated, applicants may be considered who have a 2(ii). Applicants whose first degree is not in psychology will be welcomed, and these will be accepted on a case-by-case basis to ensure that they have covered psychology, research methods and statistics during their first degree (this will be assessed by viewing the degree transcript). Applicants whose first language is not English should have IELTS at grade 6.5 or above (with no component less than 5.5), or another YSJ approved English Language qualification.
Programme Aims

1. To develop students’ advanced knowledge and understanding of selected areas of psychology.
2. To develop students’ advanced knowledge and understanding of research methods and current issues in psychological science.
3. To develop students’ abilities as autonomous learners and independent researchers, including the completion of a substantial independent research project (with supervision).
4. To develop students’ awareness of future directions (in both employment and further study) available to them, and to facilitate their progression to their next stage of employment and/or further study.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Level M / FHEQ L7

Students who gain the award of MSc Psychology will have demonstrated:

Knowledge and understanding

1. A sustained and systematic understanding and critical awareness of key themes and recent developments in selected areas of psychology.
2. A comprehensive understanding of a range of theoretical and methodological techniques in selected areas of psychology.
3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create, interpret and critique knowledge in selected areas of psychology.
4. Comprehensive conceptual understanding that enables the student to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in selected areas of psychology.
5. Comprehensive conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new avenues of enquiry in selected areas of psychology.
6. Sustained understanding of the significance of alternative epistemological positions that provide the context for theory construction, research design, and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques in selected areas of psychology.

Cognitive skills

7. The ability to deal comprehensively with complex issues in selected areas of psychology both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and to communicate their conclusions clearly.
8. Self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems in selected areas of psychology, and the ability to act autonomously over a prolonged period of time when planning and implementing tasks.
9. The capacity to continue advancing their knowledge and understanding of selected areas of psychology, and to develop and sustain new skills to a high level.

Practical/professional skills

10. Comprehensive understanding of advanced principles of psychological research design and strategy, including an understanding of how to formulate researchable problems and an appreciation of alternative approaches to research.
11. Sustained competence in undertaking and applying a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods and tools including mixed methods approaches.
12. Capabilities for comprehensive management of research, including managing data, and
conducting and disseminating research in a way that is consistent with both professional practice and the normal principles of research ethics

**Key transferable skills**

13. The ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in a sustained and comprehensive fashion.
14. Decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations, sustained over a prolonged period of time.
15. The comprehensive independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Interim awards can be made as follows: Postgraduate Certificate in Psychology (candidate successfully passes 60 taught credits); Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology (candidate successfully passes 120 taught credits). Programme outcomes for these interim awards are as follows:

Students who gain the award of PG Dip. Psychology (120 credits) will have demonstrated:

**Knowledge and understanding**

1. A systematic understanding and critical awareness of key themes and recent developments in selected areas of psychology.
2. A comprehensive understanding of a range of theoretical and methodological techniques in selected areas of psychology.
3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create, interpret and critique knowledge in selected areas of psychology.
4. Comprehensive conceptual understanding that enables the student to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in selected areas of psychology.
5. Comprehensive conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new avenues of enquiry in selected areas of psychology.
6. Understanding of the significance of alternative epistemological positions that provide the context for theory construction, research design, and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques in selected areas of psychology.

**Cognitive skills**

7. The ability to deal comprehensively with complex issues in selected areas of psychology both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and to communicate their conclusions clearly.
8. Self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems in selected areas of psychology, and the ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks.
9. The capacity to continue advancing their knowledge and understanding of selected areas of psychology, and to develop new skills to a high level.

**Practical/professional skills**

10. Comprehensive understanding of advanced principles of psychological research design and strategy, including an understanding of how to formulate researchable problems and an appreciation of alternative approaches to research.
11. Competence in undertaking and applying a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods and tools including mixed methods approaches.
12. Capabilities for comprehensive management of research, including managing data, and conducting and disseminating research in a way that is consistent with both professional practice and the normal principles of research ethics.
Key transferable skills

13. The ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in a comprehensive fashion.
14. Decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
15. The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Students who gain the award of PG Cert. Psychology (60 credits) will have demonstrated:

Knowledge and understanding

1. A systematic understanding and critical awareness of key themes and recent developments in selected areas of psychology.
2. An understanding of a range of theoretical and methodological techniques in selected areas of psychology.
3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create, interpret and critique knowledge in selected areas of psychology.
4. Conceptual understanding that enables the student to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in selected areas of psychology.
5. Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new avenues of enquiry in selected areas of psychology.
6. Understanding of the significance of alternative epistemological positions that provide the context for theory construction, research design, and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques in selected areas of psychology.

Cognitive skills

7. The ability to deal with complex issues in selected areas of psychology both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and to communicate their conclusions clearly.
8. Self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems in selected areas of psychology, and the ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks.
9. The capacity to continue advancing their knowledge and understanding of selected areas of psychology, and to develop new skills to a high level.

Practical/professional skills

10. Comprehension of advanced principles of psychological research design and strategy, including an understanding of how to formulate researchable problems and an appreciation of alternative approaches to research.
11. Competence in undertaking and applying a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods and tools including mixed methods approaches.
12. Capabilities for managing research, including managing data, and conducting and disseminating research in a way that is consistent with both professional practice and the normal principles of research ethics.

Key transferable skills

13. The ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility
14. Decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
15. The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.
## Programme Structure

### Modules for the Programme

#### Full-time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>MSc Psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MID182</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP021</td>
<td>Critical Social Psychology</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>O²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP023</td>
<td>The Psychology of Child Development</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>O¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP024</td>
<td>Everyday Applications of Cognitive Psychology</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>O³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP020</td>
<td>The Psychology of Adolescent Development</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>O¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP025</td>
<td>Applying Cognitive Psychology in Professional Contexts</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>O³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP022</td>
<td>Psychological Science: Perspectives &amp; Practicalities</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH170</td>
<td>Community Psychology: Principles &amp; Practice</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>O²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID183</td>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Status of Module will be either: C: Compulsory, CP: Compulsory for progression to the next level, CA: Compulsory for award, O: option or E: elective. A maximum of 30CR to be chosen from each of O¹, O² and O³*

#### Part-time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Status of Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MID182</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP021</td>
<td>Critical Social Psychology</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>O²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP023</td>
<td>The Psychology of Child Development</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>O¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP024</td>
<td>Everyday Applications of Cognitive Psychology</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>O³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP020</td>
<td>The Psychology of Adolescent Development</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>O¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP025</td>
<td>Applying Cognitive Psychology in Professional Contexts</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>O³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPP022</td>
<td>Psychological Science: Perspectives &amp; Practicalities</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH170</td>
<td>Community Psychology: Principles &amp; Practice</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 (Yr 1 or 2)</td>
<td>O²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID183</td>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Full year (yr 3)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A maximum of 30CR to be chosen from each of O¹, O² and O³

If a student selects optional modules in combinations leading to another named award, the student will not be eligible for the award of MSc Psychology, and will instead be eligible for the following awards:

- MPY023 & MPY020: MSc Psychology of Child & Adolescent Development
- MPY021 & MPH170: MSc Community & Critical Social Psychology
- MPY024 & MPY025: MSc Applied Cognitive Psychology

### Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Students will experience the following learning and teaching strategies: Lectures; seminars; tutorials; use of the VLE. A particular emphasis will be placed on the use of small group discussion-based teaching methods (primarily seminars). Use of the VLE will draw on the principles of the Faculty’s Technology-Enhanced Learning framework.
Students will experience the following assessment strategies: essays; brief reports; presentations; an independent research project; and depending on the optional modules selected, may also include a proposal for, and report on, a community intervention; a research proposal; a case study report. Assessments will be both formative and summative.

Placements in the Community Psychology: Principles & Practice module will be in relevant community/voluntary/third sector organizations. Under the leadership of the module director, these will be supported by the Psychology Placement Tutor and the Faculty Placement Office.

**Progression and Graduation Requirements**

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

In addition, the following programme-specific regulations apply in respect of progression and graduation:

- Candidates who are awarded a minimum of 60 credits, but less than 120 credits, will be eligible for the award of PG Cert. Psychology.
- Candidates who are awarded 120 credits will be eligible for the award of PG Dip. Psychology.
- The following are barred combinations for the award of MSc Psychology and PG Dip Psychology:
  - MPY023 & MPY020 (awarded PGDip/MSc Psychology of Child & Adolescent Development)
  - MPY021 & MPH170 (awarded PG Dip/MSc Community & Critical Social Psychology)
  - MPY024 & MPY025 (awarded PG Dip/MSc Applied Cognitive Psychology)

**Internal and External Reference Points**

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission Statement](#) [see page two]
- [Strategic Plan 2015-20](#) [see page four]
- [QAA subject benchmark statement](#)
- [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- [York St John University Strategic Plan 2012-15](#)
- [York St John University ‘Structure of Awards’ document](#)
- [York St John University ‘General Regulations for Postgraduate Awards’ (2011-12)](#)
- [York St John University ‘Programme Levels’ document](#)
- [QAA Master’s degree characteristics (March 2010)](#)
- [ESRC Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines 2009](#)
- [ESRC, BPS, EPS & AHPD International Benchmarking Review of UK Psychology (April 2011)](#)

**Further Information**

Further information on the programme of study may be obtained from:

- [Admissions entry profile](#) (Admissions)
- [Programme validation document](#) (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- [Regulations](#) (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- [Student programme handbook](#) (faculty)
- [Module handbooks](#) (faculty)

*Date written / revised: 04/07/13  first year of entry to the programme is 2014*