

Programme Specification

MSc The Psychology of Child & Adolescent Development

<i>School:</i>	Education, Language and Psychology
<i>Subject area:</i>	Psychology
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2026-27
<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>	Not applicable
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Postgraduate Certificate Developmental Psychology Postgraduate Diploma Developmental Psychology
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	Not applicable
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Level 7)
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Postgraduate periods of study ¹ for full time / part time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with foundation year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	No
<i>Placement year opportunity:</i>	No

Introduction and special features

This programme takes an expanded view of development by moving beyond the traditional focus on childhood into adolescence. In so doing, you'll be encouraged to develop interests in advanced areas of social, emotional, cognitive and neurobiological development. The MSc in The Psychology of Child & Adolescent Development (PCAD) thus enables you to move beyond traditional conceptions of development and to widen the purview of the subject matter of developmental psychology. The programme features advanced coverage of both core areas – child development and adolescent development - together with advanced issues in research methods. The programme culminates with you undertaking a major independent research project, with supervision, in an area of child and/or adolescent development. In contrast to a traditional Master's dissertation, the aim of your independent research is to produce a report in the format of a recognised journal in the field which may lead to publication.

In addition to providing you with an advanced level qualification, it also provides opportunities for you to further develop valuable transferable skills including data collection and analysis; research design; decision making; critical thinking; independent learning; and presentation skills. Additionally, you'll gain an understanding of the social context of development; and an understanding of the applicability of developmental psychology to broader educational issues.

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

Student support

Throughout the duration of the programme you'll be well supported to grow and develop your skills, knowledge and interests. You'll be allocated an academic tutor in your first week of study and be able to develop that supportive relationship throughout the duration of your studies whilst also working on a set programme of postgraduate Personal, Academic and Professional Development (PAPD). The PAPD scheme provides access to careers workshops and activities and an opportunity to participate in a number of careers related events.

Student opportunity

You'll also have access to, and are actively encouraged to use, two well-resourced psychology laboratories permanently staffed by our technical staff who are on hand to offer support and guidance at the point of need. There is a range of continually updated technical resources for you to engage with in your practical work, including (but not limited to) portable and static eye-tracking equipment, surveillance rooms equipped with HD cameras and ceiling mounted microphones, virtual reality headsets and motion sensors, Biopac physiological recording equipment, specialist software for creating, recording and analysing experimental stimuli and a range of questionnaires and psychometric tests.

The programme is designed to encourage you to engage in psychological research as a researcher, a participant and a disseminator through modules and a formal Research Participation Scheme (RPS); this is supported by specialist SONA software and which is available for you to advertise your research to potential participants from our undergraduate programmes.

Additionally, we'll encourage you to apply to the Students as Researchers scheme where you can work alongside psychology staff as a research assistant on current research programmes, with the opportunity to collect and analyse data and possibly co-author a published research paper or present it at a national conference.

Finally, you can create your own final year research project under the supervision of one member of staff, which you can tailor to your own interests and / or career goals.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for [postgraduate](#) study. In addition:

- Successful applicants will normally have a 2:1 in Psychology or a closely related discipline, although in cases where there has been exceptional performance on the final year project, mitigating circumstances, or relevant employment can be demonstrated, you may be considered if you have a 2:2. If your first degree is not in psychology we will consider applications on a case-by-case basis to ensure that you have covered sufficient levels of psychology and research methods during your first degree.

If your first language is not English you should have IELTS at grade 6.5 or above (including a minimum of 6.5 in the writing component) or another acceptable English Language qualification.

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)

1. To develop students' advanced knowledge and understanding of the psychology of child and adolescent development.
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.
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.
5. To develop the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.
6. To develop an understanding of the philosophy of research methods, how these inform design, representation and presentation of data.
7. To develop an understanding of the use and impact of research and an understanding of the skills required to become a research leader.

Programme learning outcomes

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

Level 7

- 7.1 A systematic understanding and critical awareness of current problems and / or new insights at the forefront of the psychology of child and adolescent development.
- 7.2 A comprehensive understanding of applicable techniques in the psychology of child and adolescent development and a sympathetic understanding of approaches used by other subject areas.
- 7.3 Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create, and interpret knowledge in the psychology of child and adolescent development.
- 7.4 Critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship in the psychology of child and adolescent development.
- 7.5 Critical evaluation of methodologies and, where appropriate, hypothesis generation in the psychology of child and adolescent development.
- 7.6 Integration and critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship in the psychology of child and adolescent development.
- 7.7 The ability to deal with complex issues in the psychology of child and adolescent development both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and to communicate their findings in ways specific to the interests of different audiences.
- 7.8 Self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems in the psychology of child and adolescent development, and the ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.

Programme structure

Full-time (1 year)

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					compulsory or optional to take C or O	non-compensable or compensable NC or X
PSY7001M	7	1&2	Psychological Research Methods	60	C	NC
PSY7002M	7	2&3	Research Paper	60	C	NC
PSY7003M	7	1	Child Development	30	C	NC
PSY7004M	7	2	Adolescent Development	30	C	NC

Part-time (2 years)

Code	Level	Year	Semester	Credits	Module status	
					compulsory or optional to take C or O	non-compensable or compensable NC or X
PSY7003M	7	1	1	30	C	NC
PSY7004M	7	1	2	30	C	NC
PSY7001M	7	2	1&2	60	C	NC
PSY7002M	7	2	2&3	60	C	NC

Learning, teaching and assessment

The programme is structured to provide in-depth knowledge and skills in the psychology of child and adolescent development specifically and also to provide excellent research training through a psychological research methods programme which is designed to meet the ESRC postgraduate Training & Development Guidelines ([2nd Edition, 2015](#)).

The research paper provides you with an opportunity to identify and pursue research ideas within the psychology of child and adolescent development through a research project under supervision. This approach enables you to identify and, within typical constraints such as ethics and available supervisory capacity, follow your own interests in order to prepare for destinations after York St John.

More specifically, each module provides structured learning utilising a variety of summative and formative assessment techniques. Module-based learning activities will include formal lectures, seminars, supported open learning, independent study, and the use of virtual learning environments (i.e. Moodle). Formative activities are designed to enable you to receive relevant feedback about your learning in preparation for subsequent summative assessments. In relation to specific assessments, the programme provides a range of assessment types across the modules in order to develop your skills and challenge you to reach your full potential.

Alongside the formal content of the programme is the Personal and Professional Development programme contained within timetabled academic tutorial sessions to support career and academic development.

Progression and graduation requirements

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

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

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission Statement](#) and [Strategic Plan 2015-20](#)
- York St John University 'Credit Framework for Awards'
- York St John University [Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards](#).
- QAA Framework for [Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) (2014)
- ESRC Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines 2015

Date written / revised:

Programme originally approved: 15/08/18