

Programme Specification

Award and title: Psychology with Counselling BSc (Hons)

<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>	British Psychological Society (BPS)
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education Psychology Diploma of Higher Education Psychology BSc (Ord) Psychology with Counselling
<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>	Yes
<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

The BSc Psychology with Counselling programme offers an exciting opportunity to study two distinct yet complimentary disciplines, Psychology and Counselling. You will receive a comprehensive education in the scientific foundations of Psychology, an introduction to applied psychology across multiple domains, and an insight into the theory and practice of Counselling Psychology.

In broad terms, students enrolling on the programme will develop an enhanced understanding of themselves, others, and societal dynamics. The programme blends transferable skill development with a robust academic curriculum, focused on cultivating confidence, resilience, self-awareness and ethical decision-making. Teaching is research-informed, combining historical and contemporary perspectives on the mind, brain, and behaviour alongside a final year specially focused upon Counselling Psychology. Future employability is a key focus throughout, with the curriculum embedding work-related experiential learning within the timetable so that it is accessible for all. The programme team are also committed to social justice and inclusivity, ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, can access and fully participate in the learning experience. The programme therefore incorporates diverse teaching methods

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

and assessments to cater to different learning styles with a scaffolded approach to learning across the years.

The programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) and confers eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC), provided the minimum standard of qualification of second-class honours and a pass in the final-year empirical project (Research Paper) is achieved. This is the first step towards becoming a Chartered Psychologist, and essential if you are wishing to pursue a career in psychology.

Work-related Experiential Learning (WREL)

The Psychology with Counselling 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 self-awareness, reflection, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork, which are critical for professional success. 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 with Counselling 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 career, 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.

Final Year Specialism

The final year of the programme offers a focused and specialised curriculum that integrates foundational knowledge with contemporary practices in counselling psychology. It covers a wide range of topics, from the theoretical underpinnings and historical contexts of counselling psychology to the latest debates and evidence-based practices, focusing on both cognitive behavioural and person-centred therapeutic skills. This curriculum is designed to explore various aspects of the therapeutic relationship, ethical considerations, integrative counselling models, and specific mental health issues, fostering a strong understanding of both the theory and practice of counselling psychology.

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)

1. To provide a comprehensive education in the scientific foundations of psychology and an introduction to applied practice across multiple domains.
2. To foster the development of students as independent and self-aware individuals who are socially responsible, global in outlook, confident, adaptable, effective in communication, research-oriented, curious-minded, and digitally literate.
3. To enable students to demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles relating to psychology, including the evaluation and interpretation of psychological concepts and principles, accurate presentation and interpretation of research data, and the structured presentation of arguments relating to psychology

Programme learning outcomes

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

Level 4

- 4.1 Knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles relating to psychology.
- 4.2 Evaluation and interpretation of psychological concepts and principles.

- 4.3 Accurate presentation, evaluation and interpretation of research data.
- 4.4 Structured, accurate and coherent presentation of arguments relating to psychology.
- 4.5 Evaluation of different theoretical approaches to psychological problems.
- 4.6 Qualities and skills required for continual development, learning and employment.

Level 5

- 5.1 Critical knowledge of the principles and limits of psychology.
- 5.2 Application of psychological principles outside of the context in which they were first studied, including the field of counselling psychology.
- 5.3 Knowledge and critical scientific evaluation of the main methods of psychological enquiry.
- 5.4 Effective communication of complex information in a variety of audience-appropriate forms.
- 5.5 Reflective practice related to the limits of your knowledge and skills relating to psychology.
- 5.6 Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment.

Level 6

- 6.1 A systematic and relativistic understanding of key aspects of knowledge in counselling psychology, some of which is at the forefront of the discipline.
- 6.2 Accurate and appropriate application of empirical research techniques and enquiry in counselling psychology.
- 6.3 Critical evaluation of knowledge and data in order to frame empirical questions and identify solutions in counselling psychology.
- 6.4 Clear communication of uncertain or ambiguous knowledge in counselling psychology to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- 6.5 Reflective practice related to your specific and generic skills and knowledge in relation to graduate career opportunities in counselling psychology.
- 6.6 Qualities and transferable skills necessary for roles requiring initiative, personal responsibility and decision making in complex or unpredictable counselling psychology contexts.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
PSY4013M	4	1	Biological Bases of Behaviour	20	C	X
PSY4014M	4	1	Differential Psychology	20	C	X
PSY4015M	4	1	Foundations of Research 1	20	C	X
PSY4016M	4	2	Cognition and Development	20	C	X
PSY4017M	4	2	Psychology at Work	20	C	X
PSY4018M	4	2	Foundations of Research 2	20	C	X
PSY4019M	4	1&2	Psychology Professional Development and Participation 1	0	C	X
PSY5009M	5	1	Developmental Psychology	20	C	X
PSY5020M	5	1	Applying Psychology in Mental Health Settings	20	C	X
PSY5011M	5	1	Psychological Research 1	20	C	X
PSY5021M	5	2	Brain and Mental Health Behaviour	20	C	X
PSY5013M	5	2	Social Psychology	20	C	X
PSY5014M	5	2	Psychological Research 2	20	C	X
PSY5015M	5	1&2	Psychology Professional Development and Participation 2	0	C	X

PSY6036M	6	1&2	Research Paper	40	C	NC
PSY6037M	6	1&2	Psychology Professional Development	0	C	X
PSY6059M	6	1	Foundations of Counselling Psychology: Theory and Practice	20	C	X
PSY6060M	6	1	Person-centred Therapy: Skills and Practice	20	C	X
PSY6061M	6	2	Contemporary Counselling Psychology: Theory and Practice	20	C	X
PSY6062M	6	2	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: Skills and Practice	20	C	X

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable 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 programme is structured such that your knowledge and skills continually develop across the different levels of the programme and assumes no prior knowledge of psychology.

Level 4 is designed to introduce key concepts of psychology and psychological investigation so that you can begin to develop your generic and psychology-specific skills and knowledge.

Level 5 builds on the solid foundation of the previous level to provide more challenging content and skills, expanding many of the core concepts delivered in level 4 by encouraging further intellectual challenge and curiosity, and introducing the field of counselling psychology. There are additional study abroad opportunities at level 5 which you can take part in for a semester – usually at partner institutions in the United States. In order to keep BPS accreditation whilst studying abroad you must take comparable modules at the partner institution; if these are not available then you may still choose to study abroad but with the loss of BPS accreditation. Psychology staff will be on hand to provide guidance and support for this decision.

Level 6 will provide you with an opportunity to identify and pursue specific interests in psychology through the self-directed research of the Research Paper module. The final year of the programme also provides the focus for your study of counselling, allowing you to apply your knowledge and understanding from the first two years to the specific discipline and skills of counselling. You will spend this final year studying the theoretical knowledge and practising the practical skills of counselling psychology.

Each module on the programme provides structured learning utilising a variety of 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). Assessment activities are designed to enable you to receive relevant feedback about your learning before submitting assessments for marking.

In creating assessments for the modules, great thought has been given to providing a range of assessment types to meet the differing strengths, weaknesses and preferences of all our students in order to help you reach your full potential, whilst also being challenging in order to help develop important skills expected of all graduates.

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-compensable.

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

- PSY6036M Research Paper must be passed in order to achieve an honours degree and to be eligible for the graduate basis for chartership with the British Psychological Society.

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