

Course Information Form (CIF)

The CIF provides core information to students, staff teams and others on a particular course of study.

Section 1 - General Course Information	
Course Title	Health Psychology (50% pass, BPS accredited award)
Qualification	MSc
Intermediate Qualification(s)	MSc Psychology of Health and Wellbeing (40% pass, non BPS accredited) Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma
Awarding Institution	University of Bedfordshire
Location of Delivery	AA
Mode(s) of Study and Duration	Full-time over 12 months Part-time pathway typically over 2 years
Core teaching pattern	3
FHEQ Level	Level 7
Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation or endorsement	British Psychological Society (BPS)
PSRB Renewal Date	February 2014
University of Bedfordshire Employability accreditation	
Route Code (SITS)	MSXHP
Subject Community	Psychology
UCAS Course Code	
Relevant External Benchmarking	The programme's aims and objectives are informed by the QAA level 7 descriptors from the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (QAA, 2008) and Masters Degree Characteristics (QAA, 2010). The course also meets the aims and objectives of a Stage 1 Qualification in Health Psychology as set out by the British Psychological Society (2017).

Section 2 - Published Information

Material in this section will be used on the course web site to promote the course to potential students. The text should be written with this potential audience in mind.

Course Structure

The Units which make up the course are:

Unit Code	Level	Credits	Unit Name	Core or option
FULL TIME				
PSY001-6	7	15	Advanced Research Methods for Health Psychology	Core
PSY002-6	7	15	Perceptions and Actions	Core
PSY003-6	7	15	Lifestyle and Individual Differences	Core
PSY004-6	7	15	Public Health	Core
PSY005-6	7	15	Health Psychology in Context	Core
PSY006-6	7	15	Mechanisms of Health and Disease	Core
PSY007-6	7	15	Stress Coping and Chronic Disease	Core
PSY008-6	7	15	Professional Skills for Health psychologists	Core
PSY009-6	7	60	Dissertation (Health Psychology)	Core
PART TIME				
YEAR ONE				
PSY001-6	7	15	Advanced Research Methods for Health Psychology	Core
PSY002-6	7	15	Perceptions and Actions	Core
PSY005-6	7	15	Health Psychology in Context	Core
PSY006-6	7	15	Mechanisms of Health and Disease	Core
YEAR TWO				
PSY003-6	7	15	Lifestyle and Individual Differences	Core
PSY004-6	7	15	Public Health	Core
PSY007-6	7	15	Stress Coping and Chronic Disease	Core
PSY008-6	7	15	Professional Skills for Health psychologists	Core
PSY009-6	7	60	Dissertation (Health Psychology)	Core

Why study this course

The MSc Health Psychology deals with important topics facing society such as obesity, lifestyle and stress and examines them from the viewpoint of the staff currently researching those topics. This course provides stage 1 of the two-part training required to achieve Chartered Membership of the British Psychological Society (CPsychol) and full membership of the Division of Health Psychology. This allows a pathway to becoming a registered Health Psychologist and provides the theoretical basis for psychological practice in health settings (e.g., NHS).

Course Summary – Educational Aims

The course aims to provide you with an appreciation of how psychology helps us understand health-related behaviours and how it can have a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing, as evidenced by the range of health-related research conducted by your lecturers. The course aims to:

- provide you with a systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and new insights in the theory and practice of health psychology;
- develop a high level of knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods to allow you to perform complex data analysis, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis and develop your competence in a range of techniques including multivariate analyses;
- make explicit links between scientific theory and practice by showing how a critical understanding of theory may guide the collection and interpretation of empirical data within a given context;
- inculcate a strong sense of personal responsibility and professionalism to enable you to practise or conduct research within ethical guidelines whilst being cognisant of the requirements of equal opportunities and disabilities legislation and practice;
- foster personal skills in relation to your own personal development planning such as reflecting on your own performance and evaluating your own learning needs.

Entry requirements

Standard:

To be admitted to the course you are normally required

- to have attained at least a second class honours degree in psychology

- to provide evidence of the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society (BPS).

Students from the European Union and International students:

As a general guide, to apply for a place on the course you need to have met the above requirements and the University's English language requirements.

PSRB details

The MSc Health Psychology is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) Division of Health Psychology. It is only available to those able to demonstrate the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership with the BPS. The programme therefore covers the core syllabus areas of Health Psychology. The final part of the programme includes the dissertation unit which allows you to engage in detail within a research topic relevant to health psychology and is designed in line with the recommendations for further enhancement outlined in BPS post accreditation visit report (2014).

Graduate Impact Statements

The course has been designed to develop graduates who:

- display mastery in the complex and specialised area of health psychology and who can apply theory to practice through their mastery of advanced research skills;
- provide an ethically sound intervention proposal with due regard to individual and cultural factors, working effectively in interdisciplinary teams while being professional and accountable for their decision making;
- show the capacity to generate and implement effective and ethically sound intervention proposals.

Higher Education Achievement Report - Additional Information

A novel aspect of the teaching is role-playing to give you a flavour of the sorts of tasks you might engage in as a professional health psychologist. You will have the chance of designing health interventions to develop skills relevant to health promotion and disease prevention. You will learn to critically review journal articles to further develop critical thinking and to learn about current ideas in the field. You will also be asked to produce written responses to consultancy briefs so that you may apply knowledge and skills to a simulated real world problem. Further, you will have the chance of developing teaching and training briefs to develop relevant skills for health interventions including ethics proposals and grant applications. You will also analyse quantitative and qualitative data using SPSS and Atlas Ti, and design, run, analyse and report on your own research project in a health psychology area.

Learning and Teaching

The course uses a variety of teaching methods to provide a curriculum based on the competencies that are required for health psychologists and on the research and expertise of the staff. Methods include simulations, computer-based activities, problem based learning, case studies and so on and make use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) known as BREO. The teaching activities are also dictated by the fact that this is a science-based course; hence you will have the opportunity to design and take part in research projects as part of both your learning and assessment. In preparation for the dissertation you will learn about a range of research methods and advanced statistical analyses so that you are well prepared for the research project in which you generate research aims or hypotheses, conduct research, analyse the results and report on them.

The VLE provides a means of accessing sites elsewhere that illustrate various topics and that allow you practice relevant skills.

All staff are research active or engage in professional practice and teach in areas that reflect and incorporate their expertise, and you will get the opportunity to work with staff on research projects.

Developing your employability

All staff are research active or engage in professional practice and teach in areas that reflect and incorporate their expertise, and you will get the opportunity to work with staff on research projects with a view to enhancing your CV and employability.

The teaching strategy is directly related to the competences required of a trainee health psychologist and so the teaching covers the skills and knowledge need to engage in health-related interventions. It is an exciting and expansive academic discipline that can lead to registration (with the HCPC) as a practitioner psychologist. As a Health Psychologist, you could be working within the health sector at management level or be applying health psychology knowledge and methods to educate and improve patient recovery and

health.

However, the advanced (Stage 2) route to registration in health psychology is only one possibility and, having completed your degree you will find that many career opportunities are open to you both inside or outside the health sector or even psychology. But nonetheless, health psychology is compelling as both a discipline and a profession. To develop your employability you will:

- be invited to seminars by practitioners in the field;
- apply psychological theory to develop interventions in simulated consultancy exercises;
- have guidance and demonstrate competence regarding simulated client-practitioner communication;
- review psychological methods to manage a wide range of health conditions including substance misuse and stress;
- receive guidance on how health psychology related to other professional disciplines in providing health services and review the changing nature of health care practice;
- have guidance and demonstrate competence in relation to the development of teaching or training programmes for health care professionals;
- review areas of development in health care policy and practice.

Department (s)

Psychology

Assessment

The primary focus is to ensure build upon the core skills developed through successful achievement of the completed Graduate Basis for Chartered Status (via an approved undergraduate degree or conversion postgraduate course) and to move towards the competences required of a Health Psychologist as outlined in the Subject Benchmark statement for Psychology (QAA, 2016) and aims and objectives of a Stage 1 Qualification in Health Psychology as set out by the British Psychological Society (2017). The assessment strategy therefore reflects the academic rigour required for a BPS accredited MSc degree.

The assessments are designed to test your academic knowledge, oral and written skills, use of literature using primary and secondary sources, critical analysis of ideas, connections made between theory, practice, real life situations and the understanding and application of professional values, to include ethical issues as detailed by the BPS.

The ability to engage in research at a high level and to analyse data using advanced statistical techniques are assessed as these are important skills for health psychologists as well as important in many employment settings. Communication skills are assessed through videotaped role play as these are very important in any career. The ability to analyse and understand issues and apply theory to practice are assessed through a consultancy brief.

Finally the important career skill of project management is assessed mainly through the research dissertation involving self-directed problem-based enquiry, managing time, reviewing evidence, generating and analysing data and communicating results in an extended piece of writing.

After Graduation

The success of our MSc programme here at the University of Bedfordshire is represented in the successful careers of our previous students. In previous years, a number of students have gained PhDs. Others have entered jobs that include: smoking cessation co-ordinator for an NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT), Shared Care support worker, Research Assistant in the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Health Psychologist in Specialist Obesity Services, Lecturer in Health Psychology, Academic Researcher for University, Assistant working in the Clinical Health Psychology Unit of a General Hospital, Psychological Well-being Worker.

Student Support during the course

The Department of Psychology places strong emphasis on student support so that you are in a good position to achieve your maximum academic potential and to enjoy the University experience. We are very aware of the differing needs of our students and this is reflected in the range of support mechanisms that are available. The Department of Psychology places particular emphasis on the accessibility and availability of the teaching team.

You will attend the MSc induction programme providing a range of activities to introduce you to the Psychology Department this will include elements that will focus on the University Services that are available

to you.

We aim to foster a sense of belonging to the University, Psychology Department and your award programme in order to nurture your academic and professional identity. During induction you will hear about the units you will study and you will learn how to access your unit results using e-vision, and practise using BREO the University's virtual learning environment.

By the end of week 5, you should be allocated with a Dissertation Supervisor who will also be able to share the role of a PAT. You will also be asked to have face-to-face meetings during the course of the first year. You can also contact your PAT at any time if you have general queries or academic issues.

Staff have published office hours and these are particularly useful if you have queries about a unit's content or assessment. These are fixed times each week and a face-to-face meeting is often preferable to strings of emails some of which are easy for staff to miss. These sessions are also an excellent opportunity to get further feedback on assessments if you want more information about how to improve.

Academic support and advice is available from our Engagement and Mitigation teams who can give you independent and confidential advice if you are having difficulties, for example, if you are unwell during an assignment hand-in or exam period. When you have extenuating circumstances, perhaps an untimely illness then the service can provide you with extra time to complete your work or postpone an exam without penalty when the work is marked. You can contact: <http://www.beds.ac.uk/studentlife/student-support/academic/extenuating>

The Professional and Academic Development team are able to help you through study skills workshops or with one-to-one sessions to help you improve the quality of your written assignments, organisations skills to help you manage your study programme, language skills and much more. PAD can be contacted via the PAD BREO site that you will be automatically enrolled on.

We also have a Disability Advice Team and the Counselling Service. The Disability Advice Team is available to discuss any issues you may have and can provide services such as dyslexia screening. The Learning Resources Centre (LRC) offers a range of services and specialist software and equipment. You can find out more on the LRC website: <http://www.beds.ac.uk/studentlife/student-support> The counselling service is available at Student Services and assists with personal, and financial difficulties.

The LRC provides valuable resources to enable you to develop essential, knowledge and understanding of the range of online databases available to you so that you are in a good position to expand your knowledge of Psychology and undertake your independent project. The Psychology Department works closely with our subject specific librarian and with our commitment to supporting students' employability skills we have embedded into the curriculum as series of lectures, tutorials and workshops to enhance your employment opportunities. In addition, our subject librarian is available for one to one support outside of the teaching programme.

The Careers Service helps students to reflect on their unique capabilities, interests and circumstance which can be expanded to prepare you for successful employment or further postgraduate study. This service offers one-to-one career coaching on job search, how to complete application forms, interviews techniques, and study and career planning. If you are interested in Community Volunteering then visit the Careers Service to help to build your personal confidence and participate in work experience. For more information on the services offered go to: <http://www.beds.ac.uk/studentlife/careers/services>

Students with disabilities

There are no particular issues of accessibility to the curriculum for disabled students. The combination of face-to-face and on-line resources enables a flexible approach that aims to be learner centred. Where individual support needs are recognized the course team works with others within the University to ensure that student needs are addressed.

There are procedures for students with dyslexia and some software that might help some students with dyslexia or mild visual problems. Students with hearing problems have been successful on Psychology courses in the past. The Department of Psychology has technical support and if your disability causes problems with the use of conventional computers then alternative arrangements can be discussed.

For further information please contact <http://www.beds.ac.uk/studentlife/support/disabilities>

Assessment Map

Unit Code																								
	C/O	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	22	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	45	
PSY001-6	C				CW-Data				CW-Data															
PSY002-6	C					CW-Ess					EX													
PSY003-6	C	CW-Ess								CW-Ess														
PSY008-6	C					PR-Oral				WR-I														
PSY005-6	C														CW-Ess							EX		
PSY006-6	C																CW-Ess					EX		
PSY007-6	C																	CW-Ess				EX		
PSY004-6	C															PR-Oral					WR-I			
PSY009-6	C							PJ-Proj															PJ-Diss	

Section 3 - Academic Information

This section will be used as part of the approval and review process and **peer academics** are the target audience.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Apply skills in advanced research methods, statistical analysis techniques and the reporting of results using both quantitative and qualitative methods;
2. Demonstrate a systematic and critical understanding of the different theoretical and methodological approaches relevant to perceptions and behaviour related to health;
3. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the various elements involving lifestyle and individual differences that impact on health and health-related behaviour;
4. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of psychological theories and research contributing to the development of effective public health interventions;
5. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the development of Health psychology both nationally and internationally and the way health psychologists work in relation to other areas of applied psychology and other professional groups;
6. Demonstrate an advanced understanding of how underlying psychological, social and biological mechanisms affect the development and progression of illnesses and relate to treatment options and outcomes;
7. Demonstrate an advanced and critical awareness of the concept of stress itself, an appreciation of the current body of evidence for a link between stressors and coping styles and health status, and how this relationship might be explained.
8. Demonstrate professional communication and consultancy skills and the ability to assess and meet the training and development needs of other professionals by linking research and evidence base when designing intervention packages.
9. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in systematically tackling and solving complex problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.

Course-specific regulations

None

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The teaching team offers an exciting and engaging curriculum that incorporates their research expertise and supports the requirements of the British Psychological Society, Division of Health Psychology. In terms of curriculum content the course covers the main topic areas as well as advanced training in Research Methods and Professional Skills. The programme offers an 'employability-focused' curriculum involving 'realistic learning' with aspects of health psychology tied to real life scenarios and practice. The teaching methods offered are structured around a considerable range of learning experiences. These include lectures, tutorials, seminars, workshops, presentations, role plays, supervised research work and group work. Each teaching method is carefully tailored to the needs of each unit and is designed to expose you to the material in the most appropriate style. Some of the MSc Health Psychology units, such as the Advanced Research Methods unit involve a great deal of laboratory work. In line with our core philosophy of practical, applied health psychology teaching and learning, students are guided in the use of SPSS and other software such as AtlasTi in the course of practical work in the laboratories. The lab and practical sessions are very closely linked to the sessions on the Advanced Research Methods units as well as being related to the content of some of the other units (e.g., the dissertation and Stress, Coping and Chronic Disease requiring analysis of journal articles).

The MSc Health Psychology is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) Division of Health Psychology. It is only available to those able to demonstrate the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the BPS. It provides stage 1 training towards becoming a Chartered Member of the Society (CPsychol) and full membership of the Division of Health Psychology. Thus the skills development strategy is to build upon those core skills developed through successful achievement of the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the BPS and to move towards the competences required of a registered Health Psychologist. More specifically as outlined in the Accreditation through partnership handbook: Guidance for health psychology programmes (BPS 2017) the programme is designed to meet standards such that:

a) The programme reflects contemporary learning, research and practice in psychology and covers the curriculum specified by the BPS guidance for health psychology programmes (2017) and in line with the

recommendations for further enhancement outlined in BPS post accreditation visit report (2014).

b) The programme meets standards expected by the BPS in terms of entry requirements and working ethically.

c) The programme has been designed to support professional body membership and engagement.

d) The programme has been designed to support personal and professional development as this is one of the core BPS standards and one that is key to employability.

Additional Academic Information

Peer-assisted learning (PAL)

Initial Assessment

There is an initial assessment within the first six weeks. The purpose of this is:

- to build confidence about undertaking assessment tasks
- to provide developmental feedback at an early stage
- to enable the identification of any specialist or additional support that may be required
- to support monitoring processes, StAR boards etc.

This will take place in the Lifestyle and Individual Differences unit (PSY003-6).

Improving students' learning

The programme is at postgraduate level and all entrants will have demonstrated eligibility for the BPS Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership. However development and support of student learning is provided especially in relation to the work around the research proposal within Advanced Research Methods (PSY001-6). Specifically, tutor-led sessions on database searching and searching collections of systematic reviews (eg Cochrane) are provided.

Academic Integrity

Issues relating to academic practice are highlighted during induction and re-emphasised within unit introductory sessions which provide in-depth guidance on assessment expectations within each unit.

HEAR implementation

Beyond the HEAR process, sessions are provided in relation to the development of a Stage 2 portfolio of skills and competences.

Internationalisation

By its very nature, psychology covers human diversity and difference as well as using a nomothetic approach that emphasises the common biology and underlying social and cognitive processes common to all humans. The core unit Lifestyle and Individual Differences explicitly covers cultural influences on psychological functioning. Additionally Health Psychology in Context provides a variety of international perspectives in relation to research and practice.

Sustainability

Section 3 - Administrative Information

This section will be used as part of the approval and review process and peer academics are the target audience.

Faculty	CATS
Portfolio	Postgraduate Psychology
Subject Community	Psychology
Department/School/Division	Psychology
Course Coordinator	Clio Spanou
Version Number	1/19
Approved by (cf Quality Handbook ch.2)	
Date of approval (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Implementation start-date of this version (plus any identified end-date)	October 2016

Form completed by:

Name: Clio Spanou Date: ...April 2019.....

Authorisation on behalf of the Faculty Teaching Quality and Standards Committee (FTQSC)

Chair: Date:

Course Updates		
Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Nature of Update	FTQSC Minute Ref: