



PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. General information

Awarding body / institution	Leeds Trinity University
Teaching institution	Leeds Trinity University
'Parent' School (ICE / SAC / SSHS)	SSHS
Academic Group	SBS
Professional accreditation body (if applicable)	British Psychological Society (BPS)
Final award (eg. BA Hons)	MSc
Title of programme(s)	Psychology (Conversion)
Subsidiary award(s) (if any)	Pg Diploma in Psychology (Conversion) Pg Certificate in Psychology (Conversion)
Honours type (Single / Joint / Combined)	n/a
Duration and mode(s) of study	1 Year Full-Time (FT) 2 Years Part-Time (PT)
Month/year of approval of programme	April 2020
Start date (this version) (month and year)	September 2021
Periodic review next due (academic year)	2024/25
HECoS subject code(s)	100497 Psychology (100%)
UCAS course code & route code (available from Admissions)	n/a
SITS codes (Course / Pathway / Route) (available from Student Administration)	MSPSYCH
Delivery venue(s)	Leeds Trinity University

2. Aims of the programme

Rationale and general aims, including what is special about this programme (from the student's and a marketing perspective)

This is an MSc Psychology (Conversion) programme, not an MSc Psychology programme. As such, this course is aimed at **non-Psychology graduates** who seek further training as a Psychologist, but who do not wish to undertake a second undergraduate degree. Access to postgraduate psychology qualifications and training generally requires eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) of the British Psychological Society (BPS). The standard route to GBC is to complete an undergraduate psychology degree accredited by the BPS. This

programme represents a time-effective and cost-effective way in which students can to obtain eligibility for GBC within a single year [or two years part-time].

This programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) as conferring eligibility for Graduate Membership of the Society with the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership. It requires no prior knowledge of psychology but is designed to ensure that the successful student is grounded in all seven core domains of Psychology, as defined by the BPS: Biological Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Conceptual and Historical Issues in Psychology (CHiP), Developmental Psychology, Individual Differences, Social Psychology and Research Methods. In addition, students must complete an empirical research project (their thesis), or they will not be eligible for GBC.

Eligibility for GBC is an entry requirement for many BPS accredited postgraduate training courses, for example: Clinical, Forensic, Counselling, Educational, Health, Occupational or Sport Psychology, and is a route to becoming a practitioner as, for example, a Clinical Psychologist, a Forensic Psychologist, Counselling Psychologist, Educational Psychologist, Health Psychologist, Occupational Psychologist or Sport Psychologist. These specialisms form part of the route to becoming a Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol.), a professional award conferred by the BPS in recognition of experience, competence and professional reputation. As such, the MSc Psychology (Conversion) programme provides a desirable gateway to a professional career within an exciting, previously unreachable, discipline for those who have not hitherto taken a BPS-accredited undergraduate degree.

The programme emphasises the historical rise of psychology as a social science and, because psychology recognises the importance of individual appraisal in determining behaviour, taught modules highlight the cultural differences existing between populations. Furthermore, the programme incorporates a broad range of teaching methods to encourage student-led discussion and deeper learning of a new discipline assessed at postgraduate level. The overarching aim of the programme is to provide modern, outward-looking modules, grounded in psychological theory, yet suitable for a range of contemporary careers. Programme aims are:

1. to provide the framework enabling scientific understanding of mind, brain, behaviour, environment and experience, and of the complex interactions between them.
2. to provide opportunities to develop knowledge, leading to greater appreciation and understanding of psychological theory, research findings and applications.
3. to consider multiple perspectives within psychology in a way that fosters critical evaluation and synthesis of ideas in holistic fashion.
4. to develop the knowledge and research skills necessary for investigating a range of human experience and behaviour.
5. to evidence the status of psychology as an empirical science, enabling engagement with ethical issues surrounding psychological research, practice and intervention.
6. to meet the accreditation requirements of the British Psychological Society (BPS) for the award of the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC), which is the first step towards a career as a Chartered Psychologist.
7. to develop a range of transferable personal, practical and intellectual skills, relevant to a wide range of employment and further training.
8. to assist students in becoming psychologically literate, gaining skills and knowledge that help make a positive contribution to communities.

9. to operate as a psychologist with understanding and appreciation of others different from ourselves.

3. Student learning outcomes of the programme

Learning outcomes in terms of:

- knowledge and understanding (K)
- intellectual / cognitive / 'thinking' skills (I)
- practical skills specific to the subject (P)
- employability skills (E)

The 'K1', etc codes are used in section 7b) and module descriptors to refer to each of these learning outcomes.

On successful completion of the programme, students will have demonstrated:

- K1 detailed knowledge and systematic understanding of the range of core subject areas as defined by the British Psychological Society, including reference to contemporary scholarly resources and evidence, and the accurate use of scholarly conventions in so doing;
- K2 comprehensive understanding of a variety of methodologies used in psychological research and analysis, including quantitative and qualitative methods and approaches;
- K3 understanding and original application of knowledge gained, used in parallel with a critical appreciation of the research methodologies used by others in past and contemporary research;
- K4 the ability to recognise the inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning, including the contribution of international and cultural differences to this;
- K5 understanding of psychological literacy and the contribution that an understanding of psychology can make to the wider community and society and its role in promoting human values of equality and social justice.
- I1 secure use of analytical and methodological techniques appropriate to Psychology as a discipline, and where appropriate, to develop new and original hypotheses based upon previous psychological research whilst conforming to ethical principles and codes of professional conduct;
- I2 critical evaluation of approaches to solving problems in a disciplinary context, thus recognising the most advanced and respected scholarship in the field of psychology;
- I3 effective and sustained communication of results and arguments, as adapted to the needs of the target audience;
- I4 understanding of the limits of their knowledge and the consequent influence on their analysis;
- P1 consideration and evaluation of ethics and values relevant to application and practice of psychology
- P2 the ability to employ psychological knowledge in an integrated and sophisticated way in order to address real-world problems including, but not limited to, those associated with personal and professional development;

Employability skills

- E1 **Self-management** – the ability to plan and manage time; readiness to accept responsibility and improve their own performance based on feedback/reflective learning; the ability to take initiative and be proactive, flexible and resilient;
- E2 **Teamworking** – the ability to co-operate with others on a shared task and to recognise and take on appropriate team roles; leading, contributing to discussions and negotiating; contributing to discussions; awareness of interdependence with others;
- E3 **Business and sector awareness** – an understanding of the key drivers for business success, including the importance of customer/client satisfaction and innovation; understanding of the market/sector in which an organisation operates; the ability to recognise the external context and

pressures on an organisation, including concepts such as value for money, profitability and sustainability;

E4 **Problem-solving** – a capacity for critical reasoning, analysis and synthesis; a capacity for applying knowledge in practice; an ability to retrieve, analyse and evaluate information from different sources;

E5 **Communication** – the ability to present information clearly and appropriately, both orally and in writing, and to tailor messages to specific audiences and purposes;

E6 **Application of numeracy** – a general awareness of mathematics and its application in practical contexts; the ability to carry out arithmetic operations and understand data, to read and interpret graphs and tables and to manage a budget;

E7 **Application of information technology** – the ability to identify the appropriate IT package for a given task; familiarity with word-processing, spreadsheets and file management; the ability to use the internet and email effectively.

E8 **Entrepreneurship/enterprise** – the ability to demonstrate an innovative approach and creativity, to generate ideas and to identify and take opportunities;

E9 **Social, cultural & civic awareness** – embracement of an ethos of community and civic responsibility; an appreciation of diversity and ethical issues; an understanding of cultures and customs in the wider community.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

And holders will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

See also the learning outcomes for subsidiary awards set out in section 4 below.

3a External benchmarks

Statement of congruence with the relevant published subject benchmark statements
(including appropriate references to any PSRB, employer or legislative requirements)

Learning outcomes are consistent with the most recent Psychology Benchmark Statement (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2019), Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, requirements for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) of the BPS, and LTU's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and widening participation strategies. The latest QAA subject benchmark statement (2019) for undergraduate degrees, is relevant for taught MSc Psychology (Conversion).

4. Learning outcomes for subsidiary awards

If the programme is not completed, there are two fallback awards:

1) Award of Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert).

On successful completion of 60 credits at Level 7, students will have demonstrated an ability to:

- (i) develop new skills to a high level and advance knowledge and understanding in the discipline and/or area of professional practice;
- (ii) approach complex issues in a systematic and creative manner and make sound judgements in the absence of comprehensive information/data;
- (iii) communicate judgements and conclusions to different audiences;
- (iv) develop the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment including the ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility.

This fallback award will not confer eligibility for GBC.

2) Award of Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip).

On successful completion of 120 credits at Level 7, students will have demonstrated, in addition to the outcomes for a Postgraduate Certificate:

- (i) the ability to utilise knowledge that is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline and/or area of professional practice to evaluate critically new insights and/or current issues;
- (ii) comprehensive knowledge of research techniques and how these can be critically applied to existing knowledge;
- (iii) Further development of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment including autonomous decision-making in complex situations.

This fallback award will not confer eligibility for GBC.

5. Content

Summary of content by theme

(providing a 'vertical' view through the programme)

Eligibility for Graduate Basis of Chartership (GBC)

Students will study a curriculum designed to provide a thorough grounding in the core domains of psychology that are required for GBC (namely: Biological Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Conceptual and Historical Issues in Psychology (CHiP), Developmental Psychology, Individual Differences, Social Psychology and Research Methods. The nature of CHiP is such that it is integral to the content of other taught modules, emphasising the historical rise of psychology as a science; the social and cultural construction of psychology; conceptual and historical paradigms, models and theories, etc. This enables inclusion of a final taught module emphasising a research approach that will increase awareness of mental health issues and causes. The programme will enable informed choice across multiple psychological career paths, as well as promoting community understanding.

Psychological Literacy and Citizenship

Different people in the same circumstances can and will make different judgements (and act out different behaviours) through a complex interaction between biological, psychological and socio-cultural factors. By way of the core domains, the student will explore physiological explanations of behaviour, consideration of mood and personality traits, mental wellness, social development across the human lifespan, processes of memory and attention, and the strategies through which we interact with others. Consideration will be given to relevant and contemporary issues, including sexual orientation, mental health, irrational beliefs, and how psychology is represented and understood (e.g. in the media). Students will contemplate the early dominance of 'western' psychology and compare the limitations of such approaches with contemporary (international) research. Students will consider the importance of becoming a 'global citizen' in a modern society rich in cultural interaction. Group work and student-led discussion are emphasised, encouraging the broader interaction of ideas and individual beliefs, and utilising the process of peer-review. The programme, through use of weekly teaching sessions and semester assessments, will emphasise shared learning and teamwork. Students will work with others to be collaborative and co-dependent learners throughout.

Research Skills

Research Skills are introduced and developed at the start of the programme with PSY7073 (Psychological Research Methods), a 30-credit module that will assist student in working towards the culmination of the programme [PSY7086, MSc Thesis (Journal Format)]. The completion of such a project is critical for eligibility for GBC and students will be guided through the process of research design, ethical application processes, data collection and subsequent analysis. In addition to being the pinnacle of the programme, increasing knowledge of research methodology will effectively prepare students for further postgraduate course in psychology and enable a stronger, broader and more critical understanding of published academic work.

Personal Development and Future Directions

The programme places a strong emphasis on critical skills, with students taking control of their learning, assisted and supported by academic staff/personal tutors. Students will develop a holistic confidence in the discipline, having achieved success across a range of practical and academic assessments. Graduates will have taken their first step towards chartership (CPsychol.) and be well positioned to achieve a successful and rewarding career in psychology.

6. Structure

MSc Psychology Conversion

Duration: 1 year full-time/2 years part-time
Total credit rating: 180

Full time

Core: Students are required to take the following modules:

PSY7045	Cognitive Psychology	Sem 1	15 credits
PSY7065	Personality and Individual Differences	Sem 1	15 credits
PSY7035	Social Psychology	Sem 1	15 credits
PSY7073	Psychological Research Methods	Sem 1	30 credits
PSY7015	Research in Mental Health	Sem 2	15 credits
PSY7025	Developmental Psychology	Sem 2	15 credits
PSY7055	Biological Psychology	Sem 2	15 credits
PSY7086	MSc Thesis (Journal Format)	Sem 2 & Summer	60 credits

Part time

Year 1 Core: Students are required to take the following modules:

PSY7045	Cognitive Psychology	Sem 1	15 credits
PSY7073	Psychological Research Methods	Sem 1	30 credits
PSY7015	Research in Mental Health	Sem 2	15 credits
PSY7025	Developmental Psychology	Sem 2	15 credits
PSY7055	Biological Psychology	Sem 2	15 credits

Year 2 Core: Students are required to take the following modules:

PSY7065	Personality and Individual Differences	Sem 1	15 credits
PSY7035	Social Psychology	Sem 1	15 credits
PSY7086	MSc Thesis (Journal Format)	Sem 2 & Summer	60 credits

7. Learning, teaching and assessment

7a) Statement of the strategy for learning, teaching and assessment for the programme

The programme meets the requirements of relevant policy documents, particularly the QAA Framework for HE Qualifications, relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement and the University's Strategic Plan and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (2015-20). The learning, teaching and assessment strategy for the programme is centred on principles of active learning, critical reflection and teamwork. We believe that students are responsible for their own learning and also that students also have a role in supporting the learning of their peers. Learning is a shared experience and students can gain enormous benefits from developing skills and knowledge in partnership with others. This high level of student responsibility is embedded into the programme, with students taking the lead in their own learning, with the support and facilitation of expert tutors. Class sizes are small (n=30-40) and classes are delivered in a range of formats. The programme employs a variety of teaching methods, including traditional lectures and seminars, but with emphasis on student-led activities, supervised small-group work and an approach to teaching and learning which values active learning.

All taught modules on this programme (i.e. all except for the MSc Thesis module) will be delivered through a combination of lectures and small group tutorials/seminars. Module assessments

employ a full range of written forms, presentations and practical activities, in order to reflect the academic and employability skills being developed within the programme. Employability-relevant forms of assessment – including posters, information leaflets, grant proposals and evidence-based briefs – are used to assess the outcomes from both individual and group-based learning. Assessments across the programme ensure a good variety and balance of assessment forms, and there are opportunities for students to exercise an element of choice in negotiated assessments.

Students will further develop transferable and employable skills (e.g. critical thinking, teamwork) while engaging with a variety of online resources, including basic statistical packages (i.e. SPSS), video tutorials, podcasts and the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment. Moodle is used to support class sessions, with module information and learning materials posted in advance. We also use e-resources to enable 24/7 access to learning materials from off-campus and these include access to over 1,600 psychological journal titles. As emphasised in the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy, we are committed to increasing the amount of contact time devoted to student-led enquiry. Students will engage with programme content and learn in an active fashion and in alignment with BPS standards. Assessment methods will be used, matched to the learning outcomes for the programme – all of which include internationalisation and a historical perspective of the discipline, while promoting awareness of how psychology can be applied in the workplace and in the community, to the benefit of all.

5. Entry requirements

Postgraduate programmes

Applicants should normally have achieved the following prior to registration for the programme:

- (i) A minimum 2:2 classification degree in a subject area other than Psychology (may be UK equivalent) or a 3rd in Psychology (may be UK equivalent) since the latter will not have been accredited by the BPS.
- (ii) GCSE grade 'C' passes in English and Mathematics (or UK equivalent).

For students whose first language is not English, a pass in an approved test in English is needed, e.g. the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) at 6.0 as a minimum with no component below 5.5 (or accepted equivalent test).

Other non-certificated requirements

Applications are welcome from those variations on the above, and previous and relevant work experience will be acknowledged as part of the learning process. Please see Leeds Trinity's *Recognition of Prior Learning Guidelines and Procedures*. However, an undergraduate degree of some form is essential for entry, since BPS accreditation requires a degree to be 'converted'.

6. Progression, classification and award requirements

Details of requirements for student progression