

Programme Specification (Postgraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2025/26

Date created: 01/02/2022

Last amended: 16/12/2024

Version no. 1

1. Programme title(s):

- a) MSc Occupational Psychology
- b) PGDip Occupational Psychology (Exit Award)
- c) PGCert Occupational Psychology (Exit Award)

2. Awarding body or institution:

University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study: Part Time

b) Type of study: Distance Learning

4. Registration periods:

The normal period of registration for the MSc is 24 months

The maximum period of registration for the MSc is 48 months

5. Typical entry requirements:

Applicants must have a second class honours (or above) degree in Psychology that confers Graduate Basis for Chartership with the British Psychological Society (BPS). Applicants are also expected to have some occupational experience that they have reflected on from a psychological perspective.

Students for whom English is not their first language and who have not lived in a country where the first language is English for at least three years must demonstrate an IELTS of 6.5 or a TOEFL score of 575 with a score of 4.0 in the test of written English.

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning:

Students can APL up to 60 credits into the PG Diploma or the MSc from another course and in accordance with [Senate Regulation 2](#) and the [University Policy on the Accreditation of Prior Learning](#). Credits must be at Level 7 and must be relevant to the programme. All APL of credits will be considered on an individual basis by the course directors once evidence of the APL credits has been submitted.

7. Programme aims

The programme aims to equip students with a sound knowledge and understanding of a broad range of topics in Occupational Psychology. This knowledge is based not only on theory and accumulated findings, but also on awareness of the strengths and limitations of research evidence and its application. This is done in such a way as to provide a sound basis for supervised experience and later independent practice in occupational psychology so that graduates can achieve chartered psychologist status with the BPS and register as occupational psychologists with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

The modules studied assume a basic grounding in psychology and its methodologies. Each module covers key fields in details and explores the application of research to the world of work.

A particular aim of this programme is to make learning available to those who are unable to pursue a more conventional, campus-based programme.

By the end of the programme successful students will be able to demonstrate:

- integrated knowledge of psychological theory and methodology applicable to the study of people at work.
- an understanding of the role of the occupational psychologist in professional practice.
- skills of research and enquiry, independent learning and the use of contemporary information resources.
- competence in empirical research design, implementation and evaluation.
- reasoning, analysis and creativity at a postgraduate level
- effective written communication skills
- knowledge in the appropriate areas for stage 1 of the British Psychological Society Qualification in Occupational Psychology

8. Reference points used to inform the programme specification:

- [Education Strategy](#)
- [Assessment Strategy](#) [log in required]
- University of Leicester Periodic Developmental Review Report
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- External Examiners' reports (annual)
- [BPS Accreditation](#) through Partnership Handbook; Guidance for Occupational Psychology Programmes
- [QAA Master's Degree Characteristics](#):

9. Programme Outcomes:

Unless otherwise stated, programme outcomes apply to all awards specified in 1. Programme title(s).

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
	<i>(a) Subject and Professional skills</i>	
Knowledge		
Advanced knowledge of psychological theories/research and how they can contribute to our understanding of people at work.	Module material, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.
Concepts		
Understanding of how concepts relating to psychological theories can be applied in a practical sense in a work setting.	Module material, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.

Techniques		
Understanding of all, and practical experience of some, of the following: researching, data analysis by quantitative or qualitative methods, research ethics and familiarity with IT packages including SPSS. Ability to apply relevant ethical and legal frameworks within the context of work psychology.	Module material, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.
Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Critical analysis		
Ability to independently evaluate concepts and techniques, to critique material read and hence construct an informed opinion.	Module material, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.
Presentation		
Ability to organise research findings to construct an argument, to write assignments to a high standard, to write empirical reports in the format expected for publication and to a high standard, to present statistical findings in the correct manner according to universal standards. In addition, to interpret findings in a form for effective communication to non-specialist clients.	Module material, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.
Appraisal of evidence		
Ability to evaluate published research and commentary and make appropriate judgements about its application and practical relevance to workplace contexts.	Module material, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.

(b) Transferable skills		
Research skills		
Ability to conduct a literature search and review, ability to write a research proposal, considering ethics and other methodological issues, ability to devise research tools or to use correctly those already designed.	Module material, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments particularly the dissertation proposal and dissertation.
Communication skills		
Good written communication skills developed in the context of formal written assignments.	Blackboard discussion groups, personal communication with tutors, module material.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.
Data presentation		
Ability to present statistical findings correctly and to present other research findings clearly with a correct interpretation.	Module material particularly module 1, Supplementary readings provided, Blackboard discussion groups moderated by tutors, Independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.
Information technology		
Ability to use a range of IT packages including data analysis software such as SPSS. Engagement with online discussion forums and podcasts through Blackboard.	Module material, Blackboard discussion groups, induction/welcome information provided.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.
Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Problem solving		
Understanding of how to take an evidence based practice approach to problem solving. Ability to apply research findings to real world problems involving individuals at work and organisational issues.	Module material, assignment briefs, supplementary readings and case studies provided, Blackboard discussion groups, independent research.	Formal written assignments, dissertation.

Working relationships		
Drawing on the expertise and guidance from academic or support staff, informal interaction with fellow students at course conferences or via email/bulletin board, formal contact and negotiation with dissertation supervisor.	Email/bulletin board interactions with students, formal interactions with staff and, in particular dissertation supervisor, informal interactions with staff and students at course events.	Monitoring group discussions on Blackboard and communication with tutors.
Managing learning		
Ability to self-motivate and self-direct learning so as to schedule work adequately and meet deadlines.	Independent research, programme modules, integrated and supplementary readings, textbooks.	Formal assignments, dissertation.
Career management		
Understanding of career opportunities within occupational psychology and transferrable skills gained from the course.	Career advice and materials provided on Blackboard, career and job opportunity discussion strand on Blackboard.	Monitoring group discussion on Blackboard.

10. Special features

A number of the assignments require the student to take part in a role-playing exercise, typically interpreting findings of research for clients or other interest groups. The objective here is to develop the skills of interpreting research within a particular context and communicating the findings to a non-specialist audience.

Students will have contact with a range of Occupational Psychology practitioners who work as course tutors. This gives the students a rounded learning experience and exposes them to a variety of career opportunities.

10a. Research-inspired Education

Students on this programme will advance through the four quadrants of the University of Leicester Research-inspired Education Framework as follows:

RiE Quadrant	Narrative
Research-briefed	<p>The programmes provide a thorough grounding in the area of occupational/work psychology. They seek to develop core skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and evidence-based practice through exposure to real-world/authentic work-related problems. The courses draw on both academic and practitioner research, literature, and evidence to ensure that the knowledge and skills our graduates acquire through the programme will have relevance across both domains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research briefed - The students will be exposed to challenging learning, inspired and informed by cutting-edge research. Research will come from both academic and professional domains and will incorporate latest trends and challenges facing

Bringing staff research content into the curriculum.	the area of occupational psychology. The course seeks to fuse academia and professional practice. Staff teaching on the programme are engaged in research and bring their experiences into their teaching.
Research-based Framed enquiry for exploring existing knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research based – Module assessments require students to establish arguments based on current knowledge, research and known practices. They then need to exploit the identified knowledge to outline strengths and weaknesses and where best practice would sit in relation to this.
Research-oriented Students critique published research content and process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research oriented – Students are required to critique research and theory. This is done both informally via discussion forums and when reading, and more formally within assessments. The programmes look to provide guidance and training in how to critically appraise published research. They also look to highlight the importance of evidence-based practice.
Research-apprenticed Experiencing the research process and methods; building new knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research apprenticed – Opportunity is given to develop skills including report writing, presentation skills, and analysis skills. Students will also work individually on a research project under the supervision of an academic staff member. This will provide opportunity to design, undertake, analyse and present the findings of research. This is then reported in both a written report format as well as an oral poster presentation.

As part of studying at a research-intensive university, students on this programme have the following extra or co-curricular opportunities available to them to gain exposure to research culture:

Students have the opportunity to participate in the Association for Business Psychology ‘biz psych cup’. This event requires students to work as a university team to put forward a proposal to solve contemporary organisational issues set by sponsoring companies. More locally at a school level, students on the course have access to the school’s external seminar speaker series, which brings experts working in the core areas of health and wellbeing and vision sciences into the school every month. Students are invited to attend these events which are held in a hybrid format to facilitate attendance wherever our students are based. Finally, following the completion of the dissertation process it is common for some students to seek publication or present at conferences. This is often done alongside their supervisors and in doing so enables them the opportunity to be involved to varying degrees in the peer review process and to be listed as an author.

Teaching on this programme will be research-informed (it draws consciously on systematic inquiry into the teaching and learning process itself) in the following way:

The School supports all staff involved in teaching to gain an accredited Higher Education teaching qualification, in which they demonstrate their use of teaching theory to support their own practice and reflect on their current teaching and continuing professional development.

Members of the teaching team attend the School Education Learning Forum which discusses both pedagogical related research and examines best practice in teaching delivery. The teaching team have also authored papers and presented at conferences related to teaching methods. There are also monthly team meetings where the team share best practice. Staff are involved in school research groups such as the Health and Wellbeing research group. Members of the teaching team are also active in research and consultancy, ensuring relevant and current challenges (both from academia and industry) are included within the programme and reflected in the research examined.

11. Indicators of programme quality

As well as relying on the mainstream indicators (external examiner reports, student results, student feedback forms) the programme benefits from external assessment by the BPS every three years. In addition module materials are reviewed on an annual basis and completely rewritten when required. The course director is actively involved in the BPS and keeps up to date with the changing requirements of their syllabus. The course team are all committed to CPD which directly benefits the course and students.

12. Scheme of Assessment:

As defined in [Senate Regulation 6](#): Regulations governing taught postgraduate programmes of study, with one exception. To gain BPS accreditation students must achieve a pass mark of 50 in all modules as outlined in the BPS Standards:

Accredited stage one postgraduate programmes (i.e. not conversion awards) must stipulate a minimum pass mark of 50% for all modules that contribute to the accredited award where quantified marking is employed. No compensation across modules is permissible.

13. Progression points

As defined in [Senate Regulation 6](#): Regulations governing taught postgraduate programmes of study (with the BPS exception outlined in point 12).

In cases where a student has failed to meet a requirement to progress he or she will be required to withdraw from the course and a recommendation will be made to the Board of Examiners for an intermediate award where appropriate.

Student will be considered by a Board at 60 and 120 and 180 credits

14. Rules relating to re-sits or re-submissions:

As defined in [Senate Regulation 6](#): Regulations governing taught postgraduate programmes of study.

15. Additional features (e.g. timetable for admissions)

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis from January to August.

16. External Examiners

The details of the External Examiner(s) for this programme and the most recent External Examiners' reports can be found at exampapers@Leicester [log-in required]

Appendix 1: Programme structure (programme regulations)

Module code	Module title	Period	Credits
PS7587	Psychological Assessment at work	JAN	15
PS7586	Learning, Training and Development	OCT	15
PS7588	Work Design, Organisational Change and Development	MAR	15
PS7591	Wellbeing and work	JULY	15
PS7590	Leadership, Engagement and Motivation	MAY	15
PS7585	Research Methods	OCT	15
PS7589	Application of Occupational Psychology	SEPT	30
PS7593	Empirical Dissertation	NOV	60

Appendix 2: Module specifications

See [module specification database](#) [log in required]