

De Montfort University

Course Template

1. Basic information

- Course Name: Health Psychology
- Course Code: PP179T
- Level (UG, PG): Postgraduate Taught
- Academic Period: 2015
- Faculty: HLS - Faculty of Health & Life Sciences
- Department: Psychology
- PMB: APSS
- Offered at:
- Type (single, joint.): SI
- Highest Award : Master of Science
- All possible exit awards : Postgraduate Certificate; Postgraduate Diploma; Institutional Postgraduate Credit
- Award notes : An award of PG Cert will be available for students who have achieved 60 credits; an award of PG Dip will be available for students who have achieved 120 credits. The award of MSc. will be made to those students who have achieved 180 credits including a 60-credit dissertation. Awards of PG Cert and PG Dip are not accredited by the British Psychological Society and do not provide the basis for further training as a health psychologist.

Professional Body Recognition

- Accreditation by Professional/Statutory body:

No

- Exemption by Professional/Statutory body:

No

- Details

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- Modes of attendance: Main MOA: Full-Time
Other MOA: Part-Time
- Mode Notes: Full-time and part-time. The programme will be available in both full and part-time modes of delivery. All modules require attendance at the university. Students on both modes will be taught together wherever practicable. Adjustments will be made where the needs of the two cohorts differ. The full-time mode will generally be of twelve months duration. The programme may be followed on a flexible part-time basis providing that the period of registration does not exceed six years.
- Course leader: Iain Williamson

2. Entry Requirements and Profile

Applicants are usually expected to possess (or be predicted to obtain) a First or 2:1 award from a BPS accredited Psychology course (or international equivalent).

Students with a 2.2 award will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are usually invited to interview as part of the selection process.

Alternative arrangements can be made if you are unable to attend in person. You must complete a declaration form and enhanced DBS disclosure application form (if you are overseas you will also need to submit a criminal records certificate from your home country), before starting the course, which need to be cleared in accordance with DMU's admission policy.

If English is not your first language, an IELTS score of 6.5 including a minimum 5.5 in each component, or equivalent, is essential. English language tuition is available both before and during the course if you need it.

3. Course Description

Characteristics and Aims

The MSc Health Psychology programme comprises a portfolio of modules which are designed to offer advanced level study in how psychological theory and research can be applied to the areas of individual and community health and modern healthcare practices. The programme brings together advanced conceptual and theoretical explorations of the psychology of human health and illness and also provides initial vocational training for professional health psychologists in the UK. Both curriculum and assessment have been informed by reference to a range of agencies including the British Psychological Society, the Health and Care Professions Council and the Quality Assurance Agency which set standards for Master's level (FHEQ level 7) education in the UK.

The programme has been designed to appeal both to students aiming to pursue further training in health psychology and to the increasing numbers of Psychology graduates who seek an MSc qualification to enhance their employability.

The programme comprises five 15-credit theoretical modules, a 15-credit module which focuses on contemporary practice in health psychology, a 30-credit module which equips students with advanced skills in research methods and data analysis appropriate to applied psychology, and a 60-credit module in which students prepare a Master's level dissertation and related conference-style presentation.

A combination of four of the 15-credit modules is available to form a coherent programme for students who wish to register (solely or initially) for a Postgraduate Certificate award rather than the full MSc. Students who successfully complete the PG Cert award will be eligible to register for the full MSc programme.

Aims

The over-arching aim of the programme is to provide students with an advanced and focused education in an applied area of psychology and more particularly to offer Stage 1 training, equipping those students who seek to become professional health psychologists with the initial requirements leading to chartered and/or registered practitioner status with appropriate agencies. In doing so, the intention is to equip all students with both specific in-depth knowledge and competencies in applying psychology professionally and ethically to health, illness and health care systems, and to enable students to develop a range of highly transferable skills of particular benefit to graduates seeking employment or further training in the area. More specifically, the programme aims are as follows:

1. The development of a comprehensive and critical understanding of the body of knowledge (both theoretical and empirical) which comprises contemporary health psychology;
2. The facilitation of expertise in advanced qualitative and quantitative research methodologies in psychology;
3. The provision of an opportunity to plan, conduct and write up an original and independent health psychology research project with due consideration of discipline-specific conventions and ethical standards;
4. The development of skills in communication, assessment and intervention in health psychology;
5. The facilitation of a critical and self-reflective awareness of the ethical concerns and implications of applying psychology to the areas of health, illness and health care practice;
6. The development of a critical and self-reflective awareness of implications, problems and issues pertaining to the social, cultural, organisational and political context within which psychology is applied to health care;
7. The appreciation and facilitation of working effectively with and with due sensitivity to socially excluded individuals and within diverse communities;
8. The provision of opportunities to work collaboratively and reflexively alongside trainee professionals from different areas of health and social care in inter-professional activities;

9. The facilitation of students' creative decision-making skills to address complex and potentially unpredictable situations.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies

All teaching takes place in designated workshop sessions at the city campus. All theoretical modules and the practice-based module are taught in a series of two-hour sessions which combine lecture, seminar-style and problem-based learning elements appropriate to the specific subject matter. Students need to supplement what they learn during taught sessions with further reading and follow-on activities to achieve the depth of critical knowledge required. The majority of the taught programme will be delivered by health psychologists who are chartered with the British Psychological Society and/or registered as practitioners with the Health and Care Professions Council.

Research methods sessions are taught in psychology laboratories where students have access to appropriate facilities (e.g., computers and resources for psychological research including experimental and data analysis software, psychometric instruments and psycho-physiological equipment). Research methods workshops will largely be activity-based and are timetabled in three-hour blocks to allow students to consolidate their understanding, and in recognition that a significant number of students find this element of Master's provision challenging. There is in-depth coverage of both qualitative and quantitative methods. All dissertation work will be supervised by a psychologist with expertise in the area of health.

E-learning is integrative to the programme, and students are supported to develop skills around database searching, data organisation and analysis, report writing and interacting with the Blackboard virtual learning environment. There are opportunities within the programme for the students to be taught skills relating to more specific and recent e-learning developments (such as constructing reflective 'blogs' and contributing to discussion boards) and in some cases to be assessed on these.

The diet of assessment is varied and includes traditional essay and examination elements alongside critical reviews of journal articles, reflective 'blogs', problem-based learning activities, research reports, presentations and a substantial research project. Assessments have been carefully considered to ensure that the student experience is both diverse and coherent both in terms of ensuring that work is appropriate for Master's level, evidences a range of skills which should be attractive to employers and provides an initial grounding in the skills and competencies that will be required in Doctoral level training.

4. Outcomes

Generic outcome headings	What a student should know and be able to do upon completion of the course
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge & understanding 	<p>Upon completion of the programme students should be able to demonstrate a scholarly, evaluative, integrative and self-reflective knowledge in the following areas:</p> <p>KU(i) The complex interface between theory and practice in applying psychology to health, illness and health care systems;</p> <p>KU(ii) The diverse theoretical perspectives that inform the application of psychology to health, illness and health care processes;</p> <p>KU(iii) The key theoretical perspectives in explaining health and illness;</p> <p>KU(iv) The range of measurement techniques, methodologies and analytical procedures used in research in contemporary health psychology;</p> <p>KU(v) The range of techniques, perspectives</p>

	<p>and interventions utilised in the application of psychology to health, illness and health care; KU(vi) The ethical and related issues involved in applying psychology to health, illness and health care, and their challenges; KU(vii) The current role of the health psychologist and its social, cultural, political and organisational context</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cognitive skills 	<p>Upon successful completion of the programme, students can be expected to have developed the ability to:</p> <p>C(i) Comprehend, analyse, evaluate and present complex primary and secondary research data effectively;</p> <p>C(ii) Select, retrieve, organise and synthesise complex information effectively;</p> <p>C(iii) Evaluate primary source material critically and with originality;</p> <p>C(iv) Reason systematically and solve problems by clarifying questions, considering diverse solutions and evaluating outcomes;</p> <p>C(v) Apply the principles of health psychology models and research to real or hypothetical case study material in a creative and evaluative manner.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject specific skills 	<p>Upon completion of the programme, students should be able to demonstrate the following skills pertinent to health psychology:</p> <p>S(i) The critical evaluation of theories, concepts and issues in psychology applied to health, illness and health care systems in the United Kingdom;</p> <p>S(ii) The appraisal of appropriate theory and research to inform suggested or actual practice (i.e. assessment and intervention) in keeping with the 'scientist-practitioner' framework;</p> <p>S(iii) The application and evaluation of assessment techniques relevant to an understanding of health, illness and health care behaviours;</p> <p>S(iv) The ability to generate coherent and appropriate research questions independently and the subsequent selection and application of sophisticated research techniques to investigate these;</p> <p>S(v) The ability to show initiative and to make appropriate adjustments when planning and carrying out research in a healthcare context;</p> <p>S(vi) The communication of complex research results, advanced theoretical</p>

	<p>concepts and psychological approaches in written format to discipline-specific conventions;</p> <p>S(vii) The communication of complex research results, advanced theoretical concepts and psychological approaches orally;</p> <p>S(viii) The ability to adapt proposed interventions creatively and sensitively to meet the needs of a diverse range of individuals and communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Skills 	<p>Upon completion of the programme, students should be able to demonstrate the following key skills:</p> <p>KS(i) Working independently, setting appropriate goals and time management;</p> <p>KS(ii) Demonstrating competence with a range of technologies including various forms of computer mediated communication;</p> <p>KS(iii) Working effectively and collaboratively with others (both within the discipline and with those in other fields) in group activities;</p> <p>KS(iv) Working ethically and reflexively with others (including clients/patients, and research participants);</p> <p>KS(v) Selecting, summarising and synthesising appropriate research findings and communicating these clearly and concisely;</p> <p>KS(vi) Producing written work which is clear, coherent and appropriately original, evaluative and analytical;</p> <p>KS(vii) Demonstrating a highly developed awareness of, and sensitivity to, issues relating to social and cultural diversity, social exclusion and structural inequalities;</p> <p>KS(viii) Working effectively with complex sets of data (both qualitative and quantitative);</p> <p>KS(ix) Solving problems independently and creatively across a broad range of contexts.</p>

5. Structure and Regulations

Relationship Details

<u>Module</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Take/Pass</u>		<u>Semester</u>	<u>Locations</u>
PSYC5601	15.00	5	Both	1	DM	
PSYC5602	15.00	5	Both	1	DM	
PSYC5603	15.00	5	Both	1	DM	
PSYC5604	15.00	5	Both	2	DM	
PSYC5605	30.00	5	Both	1, 2	DM	
PSYC5606	15.00	5	Both	2	DM	
PSYC5607	15.00	5	Both	2	DM	
PSYC5608	60.00	5	Both	2, 1, X	DM	

Structure

Structure notes

1 Students electing to register initially for a PG Dip will take all modules except PSYC5608.

Because PSYC5608 is primarily an independent module students will be working on this in collaboration with their academic supervisor at different points of the academic year depending on whether they are in full or part-time mode of study. Initial preparation for the dissertation including an assessed research proposal will take place in PSYC5605. An additional series of support workshops will be delivered at the start of semester three. These will be repeated as required for part-time students.

Course Specific Differences or Regulations

1

Numbers at sites, including partner institutions

1

Relevant QAA Subject Benchmarking statement(s)

1

6. Quality Assurance Information

QA of Workbased Learning

Liaison with Collaborative Partners

Procedures for Maintaining Standards

Quality will be assured and enhanced in a number of ways including:

- The administration of evaluation questionnaires to students.
- The presentation and discussion of student evaluation data at quality boards.
- Regular meetings with student representatives.
- Discussion of the programme and review of assessed work by the external examiner.
- Discussion of the programme at an annual review and planning event.
- Standardisation and moderation procedures for all items of assessed work.
- Blind double marking of the dissertation and presentation components on PSYC5608.

Course Handbook Descriptor