

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

<b>1</b>	<b>Awarding Institution</b>	Newcastle University
<b>2</b>	<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Newcastle University
<b>3</b>	<b>Final Award</b>	BSc Hons
<b>4</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	Psychology
<b>5</b>	<b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>	C800
<b>6</b>	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	British Psychological Society
<b>7</b>	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	Psychology
<b>8</b>	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	H
<b>9</b>	<b>Date written/revised</b>	July 2007

**10 Programme Aims**

The programme aims:

1. To recruit able and well-motivated students.
2. To provide undergraduate degree programmes that will enable our students to gain the Graduate Basis for Registration from the British Psychological Society.
3. To provide knowledge and understanding of the theoretical and empirical basis of the major areas of contemporary Psychology.
4. To provide knowledge of and competence in the practical skills and quantitative methods needed to carry out psychological investigations and procedures.
5. To equip students to progress to professional training in Psychology or related programmes.
6. To develop students' intellectual and key skills relevant to work in a wide variety of careers.

**11 Learning Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for (subject) .

**Knowledge and Understanding**

On completing the programme students should be able to demonstrate:

- A1 Knowledge and understanding of the basic processes, theories and research methods in the main areas of Psychology which will provide sufficient breadth and depth to meet the BPS requirements for Graduate Basis for Registration.
- A2 Knowledge and understanding of the core areas of psychology and their inter linkages, i.e. cognitive psychology, perception, learning and memory,

personality and individual differences, intelligence, social psychology, developmental psychology, biological psychology and conceptual issues

A3 Knowledge and understanding of research methods i.e. research design, the statistical analysis of data and issues concerning research ethics.

#### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding is lectures, supplemented by handouts and supported by tutorials or seminars (A1, A2), and practical classes and examples classes (A3). Students are encouraged to supplement taught material with independent reading and are provided with reading lists to guide them in this. Essay writing, practical report writing, practice at multiple choice questions, seminars, and individual supervision of extended essay in Stage 2 and a project in Stage 3 aid the development of knowledge and understanding. Issues concerning research ethics (A3) are supported by a lecture, practical work and the project, which is subject to ethical assessment, and through explicit discussion in the Degree Programme Handbook.

#### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment is by means of formal unseen written examinations (essay, MCQs and short answers) and course work. Some modules include coursework, and essays and practical reports are assessed both formatively and summatively. Feedback on both form and content informs and encourages students' progress and self-monitoring.

#### **Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1 Gather information from a variety of sources.

B2 Understand and apply theoretical concepts.

B3 Critically evaluate arguments and evidence.

B4 Formulate and test hypotheses.

B5 Understand and consider critical issues in psychology and articulate arguments and points of view in relation to these.

#### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Initially, students are introduced to many of the principles underlying cognitive skills through the lectures, where the different views and critical issues surrounding particular areas of psychology are introduced. Following this, cognitive skills (B1-B5) are acquired further and developed through tutorials and seminars, coursework essays, practicals and statistics examples classes, and extended essay and project work. Specifically, some coursework encourages students to engage with adversarial viewpoints in order that critical thinking and evaluation is developed and assessed.

**Assessment Strategy**

Cognitive skills (B1-B5) are assessed by essays, unseen written examinations, data interpretation and experimental design work in Stages 1 and 2 practicals, and the Stage 3 Project and Extended essay.

**Practical Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1 Understand and implement experimental design principles and identify appropriate research methods for the design of empirical studies.

C2 Conduct statistical analyses and interpret data and findings.

C3 Demonstrate numerical and graphical data presentation skills.

C4 Use results to inform their understanding of psychology.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

These skills (C1-C4) are taught by hands-on experience of the methods of research and scholarship including library skills training and statistics. Laboratory training begins in Stage 1 and continues in Stage 2 with more advanced data analysis and report writing. Practical work is used to develop research skills through the integration of research methodology and statistical techniques, and to prepare students for Stage 3 project work (which can be supervised by professional psychologists working outside the department). Students review critically primary literature if they choose to do the Extended Essay in Stage 3 (PSY3011), and this is also a necessary component of their Experimental Project (PSY3097). Learning is also aided by discussions between students and their Extended Essay and project supervisors.

**Assessment Strategy**

Assessment is by way of examination and coursework (C2) and practical reports, extended essay and project report (C1-C4).

**Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

D1 The ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally.

D2 The ability to use library and other information sources effectively.

D3 The ability to work both independently and as an effective member of a team.

D4 The ability to take responsibility for their own learning and intellectual development.

D5 Time-management skills and the ability to schedule work-loads effectively.

D6 The ability to use computing and IT resources.

<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
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<p>Communication skills (D1) are acquired and developed in tutorials, seminars and the project presentation, and in essays, practical, extended essay and project report writing. The use of library and information searching skills (D2) are developed in essay, practical, extended essay and project work. Teamwork, working independently and taking responsibility for their own learning (D3, D4) are skills that are acquired in the context of practical, extended essay and project work and also by progression from a fairly structured course in Stages 1 and 2 to more independent learning in Stage 3. Time management skills (D5) are encouraged throughout the course by the requirement to meet regular coursework and other deadlines. Computing and IT skills (D6) are introduced in Stage 1 Induction Week, developed in specific modules and reinforced in many elements in each stage of the programme.</p>
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<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
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<p>Skills D1, D2 and D6 are assessed variously through essays, practical, extended essay and project reports, tutorial and seminar discussions, and project presentation, and in unseen written examinations. Skills D1-D5 are also assessed by means of in-course exercises in PSY2008 and PSY2012. D6 is not assessed per se, but is necessary for the student to achieve success over the three year period, and counselling in relation to this is provided where necessary by personal tutors.</p>
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<b>12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features</b>
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<b>Basic structure of the programme</b>
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<b>Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)</b>
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## **A Programme Features**

This is a three-year full-time programme based on 30 weeks attendance per annum. Modules to the value of 120 credits are taken in each year or stage, and 10 credits are equivalent to 100 hours of study time (contact time plus private study time). Modules can vary in size from 10 to 30 credits, although the majority are worth either 10 or 20 credits.

Stage 1 provides a good introduction to a broad range of basic topics in Psychology and also gives guidance in the development of a range of key skills, including time management, memory techniques, organising knowledge, note-taking, reading styles (including speed-reading), creative use of IT and communication skills. Topics are taught in this Stage in order to introduce students to the variety of content and different methodologies of the subject, and to provide them with basic psychological principles, which are important to apply throughout the subject; this approach continues throughout the first year, although there is some development between semesters 1 and 2.

Stage 2 has seven 10 credit lecture courses in the core areas of psychology, two 10 credit Methods courses, which provide a detailed and comprehensive approach to research methodology in conjunction with practical work. There is also a 10 credit advanced statistical techniques course which develops from PSY1010 & PSY1011 and is intended to underpin the statistics which will be necessary when the student undertakes their project in Stage 3. Principles of Psychology (PSY2008) and Practice of Psychology (PSY2012) encourage students to think critically about major issues, debates and current problems and practical issues in psychology. This module is intended also to encourage the student to interpret psychological findings in context [for example the political or societal contexts] and also to integrate the various aspects of psychological knowledge gained throughout the first two years of the degree programme.

Stage 3 allows for specialisation in a narrower range of topics and offers the opportunity to discover some of the latest work that is being carried out in the field. There is one compulsory module, the Project (30 credits) and a range of optional 10 and 20 credit modules, which are chosen from a range which can include up to 20 credits from outside the degree structure. The 10 credit extended essay aims not only to extend students' knowledge and understanding of research and data analysis techniques in psychology generally, but especially to enable them to read journal articles in an informed and critical way; the extended essay is based on a substantial literature review around a research question, and involves critical evaluation of research papers which purport to address the research question.

The 30 credit project provides students with the opportunity to do a piece of research in an area, either of their own choosing or that is part of the current research programme of a member of staff, and enables students to apply and develop the various skills of research methodology and statistical analysis acquired over the previous two years.

Much Stage 3 teaching takes place in small groups, tutorials and student-led

seminars, rather than being predominantly lecture based. Course syllabuses are broad, reading lists detailed and extensive, and a great deal of responsibility is placed upon students to decide how to organise their learning, the scope and focus of their reading, and the nature of the practical work they undertake.

Progression through to Stages 2 and 3 is dependent on obtaining marks of at least 40 in all modules at the preceding stage. Two re-sit attempts are allowed.

**Programme regulations (link to on-line version)**

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2007-2008/programme/C800MED.php>

**13 Criteria for admission**

*Entry qualifications*

**Entrance Requirements for C800**

**A Levels**

AAB/BBB including at least one A level from a subject with a substantial science or mathematics component including Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Psychology, Chemistry, Statistics, or Economics. Offer levels depend on the number of science/mathematics A levels a candidate offers. Standard offers are: 1 science/mathematics A level, AAB 2 science/mathematics A levels, ABB 3 or more science/mathematics A levels, BBB. General Studies is accepted. GCSE Mathematics (minimum grade B) required if not offered at a higher level. Two AS levels (or one AS Double Award) will not be considered in the place of one A level.

**Scottish Qualifications**

AAAAB/BBBBB at Higher Grade, including at least one subject with a substantial science or Mathematics component including Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Psychology, Chemistry, Statistics, or Economics. Offer levels depend on the number of science/mathematics Highers a candidate offers. Standard offers are: 1 science/mathematics Higher, AAAAB 2 science/mathematics Highers, AABBB 3 or more science/mathematics Highers, BBBBB Combinations of Highers and Advanced Highers accepted. Mathematics required at grade 2 Standard Grade (or Intermediate 2 equivalent) if not offered at Higher Grade.

**International Baccalaureate**

A minimum of 34 points in the IB Diploma. Three subjects at Higher Level grade 6 or above, preferably including science. Mathematics to be offered at Standard Level grade 6 if not offered at Higher Level. At least one third of all subjects taken must be science/mathematics.

**Irish Leaving Certificate**

AAABB/ABBBB at Higher Level, including at least one subject with a substantial science or mathematics component including Mathematics, Applied Mathematics,

Biology, Physics, Chemistry, or Economics. Offer levels depend on the number of science/mathematics subjects a candidate offers at Higher Level. Standard offers are: 1 science/mathematics subject at Higher level, AAABB 2 science/mathematics subjects at Higher level, AABBB 3 or more science/mathematics subjects at Higher level, ABBBB

#### *Admissions policy/selection tools*

Given the high number of applications we receive we make offers to all candidates.

#### *Non-standard Entry Requirements*

#### **Access Qualifications**

For applicants offering the HEFC, Mathematical Studies, Human Biology and a third subject (preferably a science subject) are required (all at Distinction grade). Applicants offering other Access to HE courses are considered on an individual basis, but mathematical and science subjects are preferred.

#### **BTEC Higher National Diploma**

Applicants offering a BTEC Higher National Diploma are considered on an individual basis.

#### **BTEC National Diploma**

Applicants offering a BTEC National Diploma are considered on an individual basis.

#### *Level of English Language capability*

IELTS of 6.5 or more.

### **14 Support for Student Learning**

#### *Induction*

During the first week of the first semester students attend an induction programme. New students will be given a general introduction to University life and the University's principle support services and general information about the School and their programme, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. New and continuing students will be given detailed programme information and the timetable of lectures/practicals/labs/ tutorials/etc. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students.

#### *Study skills support*

Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification. Some of this material, e.g. time management is covered in the appropriate Induction Programme. Students are explicitly tutored on their approach to both group and individual projects.

Numeracy support is available through Maths Aid.

Help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre.

Introductory information on the course and study skills are available on-line from;

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/psychology/undergrad/resources/>

#### *Academic support*

The initial point of contact for a student is with a lecturer or module leader, or their tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

#### *Pastoral support*

All students are assigned a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees. In addition the University offers a range of support services, including one-to-one counselling and guidance or group sessions/workshops on a range of topics, such as emotional issues eg. Stress and anxiety, student finance and budgeting, disability matters etc. There is specialist support available for students with dyslexia and mental health issues. Furthermore, the Union Society operates a Student Advice Centre, which can provide advocacy and support to students on a range of topics including housing, debt, legal issues etc.

#### *Support for students with disabilities*

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with: advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies.

#### *Learning resources*

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports campus-wide computing facilities.

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language Proficiency Test. This is administered by INTO Newcastle University Centre on behalf of Newcastle University. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The INTO Newcastle University Centre houses a range of resources which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchange.

### **15 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

#### *Module reviews*



All modules are subject to review by questionnaires which are considered by the Board of Studies. Changes to, or the introduction of new, modules are considered at the School Teaching and Learning Committee and at the Board of Studies. Student opinion is sought at the Staff-Student Committee and/or the Board of Studies. New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

*Programme reviews*

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

*External Examiner reports*

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Staff-Student Committee.

*Student evaluations*

All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Staff-Student Committee, and the Board of Studies. The National Student Survey is sent out every year to final-year undergraduate students, and consists of a set of questions seeking the students' views on the quality of the learning and teaching in their HEIs. With reference to the outcomes of the NSS and institutional student satisfaction surveys actions are taken at all appropriate levels by the institution.

*Mechanisms for gaining student feedback*

Feedback is channelled via the Staff-Student Committee and the Board of Studies.

*Faculty and University Review Mechanisms*

The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process. Every five years, degree programmes in each subject area are subject to periodic review. This involves both the detailed consideration of a range of documentation, and a two-day review visit by a review team which includes an external subject specialist in addition to University and Faculty representatives. Following the review a report is produced, which forms the basis for a decision by University Teaching and Learning Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further five year period.

*Accreditation reports*

The degree programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society every five years and was last re-accredited in 2005.

*Additional mechanisms*

QAA Report (April 2000), in which we gained the maximum score of 24/24 points. The 2001 Research Assessment Exercise, in which Psychology gained a 5\* grade.

## 16 Regulation of assessment

### *Pass mark*

The pass mark is 40 (Undergraduate programmes)

### *Course requirements*

Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations and Undergraduate Examination Conventions. In summary, students must pass, or be deemed to have passed, 120 credits at each Stage. Limited compensation up to 40 credits and down to a mark of 35 is possible at each Stage and there are resit opportunities, with certain restrictions.

### *Weighting of stages*

The marks from Stages 2 and 3 will contribute to the final classification of the degree  
The weighting of marks contributing to the degree for Stages 2 and 3 is 1:2

### *Common Marking Scheme*

The University employs a common marking scheme, which is specified in the Undergraduate Examination Conventions, namely

	<b>Modules used for degree classification (DC)</b>	<b>Modules not used for degree classification</b>
<40	Fail	Failing
40-49	Third Class	Basic
50-59	Second Class, Second Division	Good
60-69	Second Class, First Division	Very Good
70+	First Class	Excellent

### *Role of the External Examiner*

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, after recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:

- See and approve examination papers
- Moderate examination and coursework marking
- Attend the Board of Examiners
- Report to the University on the standards of the programme

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/> or <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>)

The School Brochure (contact [enquiries@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@ncl.ac.uk))

The University Regulations (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/>)

The Degree Programme Handbook: Stage 1.

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/psychology/assets/pdfs/Stage-1-handbook.pdf>

The Degree Programme Handbook: Stage 2.

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/psychology/assets/pdfs/Stage-2-handbook.pdf>

The Degree Programme Handbook: Stage 3.

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/psychology/assets/pdfs/Stage-3-handbook.pdf>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

### Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Development of specific Intended Learning Outcomes occurs through the following modules (compulsory modules in bold text, optional modules in normal, italic text)

	Statement of intended learning outcome	Modules contributing to the outcome
A1	Knowledge and understanding of the basic processes, theories and research methods in the main areas of Psychology which will provide sufficient breadth and depth to meet the BPS requirements for Graduate Basis for Registration	All modules
A2	Knowledge and understanding of the core areas of psychology and their inter-linkages, i.e. cognitive psychology, perception, learning and memory, personality and individual differences, intelligence, social psychology, developmental psychology, biological psychology and conceptual issues	All modules
A3	Knowledge and understanding of research methods i.e. research design, the statistical analysis of data and issues concerning research ethics.	PSY1010, PSY1011, PSY2008, PSY2009, PSY2010, PSY2011, PSY2012, PSY3097
B1	Gather information from a variety of sources	All modules
B2	Understand and apply theoretical concepts.	All modules
B3	Critically evaluate arguments and evidence.	All modules
B4	Formulate and test of hypotheses.	PSY1010, PSY1011, PSY2009, PSY2011, PSY2012, PSY3097
B5	Understand and consider critical issues in psychology and articulate arguments and points of view in relation to these.	All modules, especially PSY2008 and PSY2012
C1	Understand and implement experimental design principles and identify appropriate research methods for the design of empirical studies.	PSY1010 PSY1011, PSY2009, PSY2011, PSY2012, PSY3097
C2	Conduct statistical analyses and interpret data and findings	PSY1010 PSY1011, PSY2009, PSY2011, PSY3097

C3	Demonstrate numerical and graphical data presentation skills.	PSY1010 PSY1011, PSY2009, PSY2011, PSY3097
C4	Use results to inform their understanding of psychology.	PSY1010 PSY1011, PSY2009, PSY2011, PSY3097
D1	The ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally.	All modules, especially PSY2008, PSY2012, PSY3011 and PSY3097
D2	The ability to use library and other information sources effectively.	All modules
D3	The ability to work both independently and as an effective member of a team.	PSY1010, PSY1011, PSY2008, PSY2009, PSY2010, PSY2011, PSY2012, PSY3097
D4	The ability to take responsibility for their own learning and intellectual development.	Induction and throughout the psychology course, particularly PSY3011 and PSY3097.
D5	Time-management skills and the ability to schedule work-loads effectively.	All modules, but particularly in PSY1010, PSY1011, PSY2008, PSY2009, PSY2011, PSY2012, PSY3011, PSY3097.
D6	The ability to use computing and IT resources.	All modules, but particularly in PSY1010, PSY1011, PSY2008, PSY2009, PSY2010, PSY2011, PSY2012, PSY3011, PSY3097.