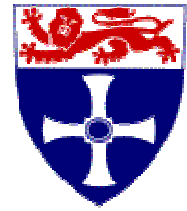


UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

FACULTY OF
SCIENCE, AGRICULTURE & ENGINEERING

DEGREE PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE



1. Awarding Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2. Teaching Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
3. Final Award	BA or BSc Hons
4. Programme Title	Psychology
5. Programme Accredited by:	British Psychological Society
6. UCAS Code	C800/802
7. QAA Benchmarking Group(s)	Psychology
8. Date of production/revision	April 2002/Sept2004

9. Programme Aims:

The programme aims:

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

10. Intended Learning Outcomes; Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods; Assessment Strategies and Methods

10 (a) Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

A Knowledge and understanding

A successful student will have gained and 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.

B Subject –specific/professional skills

A successful student will be able to:

- B1 Understand and implement experimental design principles and identify appropriate research methods for the design of empirical studies.
- B2 Conduct statistical analyses and interpret data and findings.
- B3 Demonstrate numerical and graphical data presentation skills.
- B4 Use results to inform their understanding of psychology.

C Cognitive skills

A successful student will be able to:

- C1 Gather information from a variety of sources.
- C2 Understand and apply theoretical concepts.
- C3 Critically evaluate arguments and evidence.
- C4 Formulate and test hypotheses.
- C5 Understand and consider critical issues in psychology and articulate arguments and points of view in relation to these.

D. Key skills

A successful student will have developed:

- 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.

10 (b) Intended Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods, Assessment Methods and Strategies

A. Knowledge and understanding

Teaching and Learning Strategy

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 dissertation in Stage 2 and a project in Stage 3 aid the development of knowledge and understanding. Issues concerning research ethics (A4) 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. Most 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.

B Subject-specific/practical skills

Teaching and Learning Strategy

These skills (B1-B4) 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. Practicals are 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 for their dissertation in Stage 2, which may provide the basis for their project. Learning is also aided by discussions between students and their dissertation and project supervisors.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment is by way of examination and coursework (B2) and practical reports, dissertation and project report (B1-B4).

C Cognitive skills

Teaching and Learning Strategy

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 (C1-C5) are acquired further and developed through tutorials and seminars, coursework essays, practicals and statistics examples classes, and dissertation 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 (C1-C5) are assessed by essays, unseen written examinations, data interpretation and experimental design work in Stages 1 and 2 practicals, the Stage 2 Dissertation and the Stage 3 Project.

D Key skills

Teaching and Learning Strategy

Communication skills (D1) are acquired and developed in tutorials, seminars and the project presentation, and in essays, practical, dissertation and project report writing. A particular focus for this is in stage 1 through the psychology of study skills (PSY120), which incorporates communications skills, use of information sources, computing skills directly through a mixture of lectures, seminars, individual work, presentations and written assignments. Library workshops teach further information searching skills (D2), which are developed in essay, practical, dissertation 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, dissertation 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.

Assessment Strategy

Skills D1, D2 and D6 are assessed variously through essays, practical, dissertation 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 PSY120. D5 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.

11 Programme Features, Structure and Curriculum

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, for example in the biological psychology and sensation and perception.

Stage 2 has eight 10 credit lecture courses in the core areas of psychology, a 20 credit Methods course, which provides a detailed and comprehensive approach to and research methodology in conjunction with practical work. There is also a 10 credit advanced statistical techniques course which develops from PSY107 and is intended to underpin the statistics which will be necessary when the student undertakes their project in Stage 3. There is a 10 credit dissertation, which 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 dissertation 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.

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 are two compulsory modules, conceptual Issues (PSY306) and the Project (30 credits) and four 20 credit modules, which are chosen from a range of options including up to 20 credits from outside the degree structure.

Conceptual Issues encourages students to think critically about major issues, debates and current problems and advances 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 all three years of the degree programme. It is examined at the end of Semester 2 in a 3 hour paper.

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 resit attempts are allowed.

B Programme Structure

Code	Credits	Descriptive title
Stage 1		
PSY107	20	Statistics for Experimental Psychology 1
PSY198	20	Methods in Psychology 1
PSY120	10	Psychology of Study Skills
PSY109	10	Evolution
PSY171	10	Biological Psychology
PSY 121	10	History of Psychology
PSY114	10	Instinct, Learning and Memory
PSY 113	10	Sensation and Perception
PSY108	10	Developmental and Social Psychology
PSY163	10	Personality 1

Stage 2

PSY203	10	Mental Processes and Brain Function
PSY207	10	Perception
PSY212	10	Personality 2
PSY214	10	Language and Thought
PSY295	20	Methods in Psychology 2
PSY294	10	Statistics for Experimental Psychology 2
PSY210	10	Social Psychology
PSY204	10	Developmental Psychology
PSY 213	10	Motivation
PSY298	10	Dissertation
PSY211	10	Intelligence

Stage 3

PSY306	10	Conceptual Issues
PSY399	30	Project

Students choose 60-80 credits from the following

PSY301	20	Evolution of Behaviour
PSY303	20	Cognitive Development
PSY305	20	Evolutionary Psychology
PSY307	20	Group Processes
PSY308	20	Occupational Psychology
PSY310	20	Thinking and Problem Solving
PSY321	20	Psychology of Language
PSY322	20	Applied Psychology for Managers
PSY323	20	Abnormal Psychology and Psychiatry
PSY328	20	Art, Mind and Brain
PSY329	20	Cooperation
PSY330	20	Personality Disorders

Other modules up to 20 credits subject to approval of DPD

C Programme Curriculum

(Insert Regulations as given on University web site – currently being updated)

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.	PSY107, PSY198, PSY294, PSY295, PSY299, PSY399
B1	Understand and implement experimental design principles and identify appropriate research methods for the design of empirical studies.	PSY107, PSY198, PSY294, PSY295, PSY399
B2	Conduct statistical analyses and interpret data and findings	PSY107, PSY294, PSY399
B3	Demonstrate numerical and graphical data presentation skills.	PSY107, PSY294
B4	Use results to inform their understanding of psychology.	PSY198, PSY295, PSY399 and all other modules
C1	Gather information from a variety of sources	All modules but less important in PSY107 and PSY294
C2	Understand and apply theoretical concepts.	All modules
C3	Critically evaluate arguments and evidence.	All modules
C4	Formulate and test of hypotheses.	PSY198, PSY295, PSY399
C5	Understand and consider critical issues in psychology and articulate arguments and points of view in relation to these.	All modules, especially PSY306 but less important in PSY107 and PSY294
D1	The ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally.	All modules but less important in PSY107 and PSY294
D2	The ability to use library and other information sources effectively.	All modules except PSY107 and PSY294
D3	The ability to work both independently and as an effective member of a team.	PSY198 and PSY295 and <i>stage 3 module</i> presentations for teamwork specifically; all modules for independent work

D4	The ability to take responsibility for their own learning and intellectual development.	All modules
D5	Time-management skills and the ability to schedule work-loads effectively.	All modules
D6	The ability to use computing and IT resources.	All modules

12 Criteria for Admission:

High grades at A-level and minimum of grade B at GCSE Maths, or the equivalent of these.

Admissions policy:

Decisions on applications are made with respect to the above criteria and in light of the high applicant: place ratio. Preference may be given to those offering at least one science A-level. Individual subject grades required at A-level are usually specified.

Arrangements for non-standard entrants:

We require evidence that prospective students demonstrate that they meet the required intellectual standards; interviews may be arranged.

Any Additional Requirements:

None

13 Support for Students and their Learning:

Induction

The first week of the first term/semester is an Induction Week with no formal teaching. During this period all students will be given detailed programme information relating to their Stage and the timetable of lectures/practicals/labs/ tutorials/etc. In particular all new students will be given general information about the School and their course, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/coming_to_newcastle/orientation.phtml).

Study skills support

Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification.

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. Details of the personal tutor system can be found at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/tutor.phtml>. In addition the University offers a range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Student Counselling Service, the Mature Student Support Service, and a Childcare Support Officer, see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/welfare.phtml>.

Support for Special Needs

Support for students with special needs is provided as required and the University's Disability Support Service can be consulted where appropriate. For further details see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/disability.phtml>.

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, see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/acfacilities.phtml>.

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language test in the Language Centre. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The Language Centre houses a range of resources for learning other languages which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchanges. See <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/langcen.phtml>.

14 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 under Reserved Business, in the absence of the student representatives. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Accreditation reports

This programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society.

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.

Feedback mechanisms

Feedback to students is effected 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 programme, see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/internal/academic-quality/qualityhome.htm#2>.

15 Regulation of Assessment:

Pass Marks

The pass mark, as defined in the University's Undergraduate Examination Conventions (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugexamconv.html>), is 40.

Course Requirements

Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugcont.html>) and Undergraduate Examination Conventions (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugexamconv.html>). In summary, students must pass 120 credits at each Stage. Limited compensation down to 35 is possible at each Stage and there are resit opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Weighting of Stages

Modules taken at Stages 2 and 3 are Honours modules and the two stages contribute to the award of the final degree in the ratio 1:2.

Common Marking Scheme

The University employs a common marking scheme, which is specified in the Undergraduate Examination Conventions (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugcont.html>), namely

	Honours	Non-honours
<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

Three External Examiners, distinguished members of the subject community, are 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 June Board of Examiners
- Report to the University on the standards of the programme

16 Indicators of Quality and Standards:

- The degree programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society every five years and was last re-accredited in 2000.
- The University's Internal Subject Review Report (March 1999), Biennial Taught Programme Review and Degree Programme Quality Report (May 2000), Annual Programme review (June 2004).
- 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.
- Professional Accreditation Reports: This programme was accredited by the British Psychological Society in 2000 .

Internal Review Reports

This programme was covered by the Annual Programme Review process in June 2004. The review was subsequently approved by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee and University Teaching and Learning Committee. Comments from the report not available at time of writing. This programme is due for Internal Subject Review in November 2004. See the timetable at

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/internal/academic-quality/schdlisr.doc>

Previous QAA Reports

This programme received a QAA Subject Review in April 2000 and achieved a score 24/24.

17 Other Sources of Information:

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

The School Prospectus (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/subjects/psychol>)

The University and Degree Programme Regulations (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/pdf/uniregs.pdf> and <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/sae/>)

The Degree Programme Handbook

QAA Subject Review Report

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. It should be noted that there may be variation in the range of learning opportunities reflecting the availability of staff to teach them. While every effort will be made to ensure that the module or modules described in the programme specification are available, this cannot be guaranteed.

The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

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

- The University Prospectus
- The Departmental Brochure
- The University's web page: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/external>
- The Department's web page: <http://www.psychology.ncl.ac.uk>
- The University and Degree Programme Regulations
- The Degree Programme Handbook