Programme Specification

MSc Health Psychology (2020-21)

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Mode of Study	Full-time
Duration in years	1
Accreditation details	British Psychological Society (BPS)
Final award	Master of Science (MSc)
Name of award	Health Psychology
Interim Exit awards	Postgraduate Certificate
	Postgraduate Diploma
FHEQ level of final award	Level 7
UCAS code	
Programme code	4881
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	The British Psychological Society Accreditation Regulations 2019
Programme Lead	Flis Bishop (flb100)

Programme Overview

Brief outline of the programme

Health psychology is the educational, scientific, and professional contributions of psychology to: understanding the promotion and maintenance of health and the aetiology of illness, the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of physical illness, the study of psychological, social, emotional, and behavioural factors in physical illness, the improvement of the health care system, and formulation of health policy. This Masters in Health Psychology programme aims to train people who will become scientist-practitioners working in a range of health settings.

Your contact hours will vary depending on your module/option choices. Full information about contact hours is provided in individual module profiles.

Learning and teaching

The BPS-accredited MSc in Health Psychology extends over 12 months for full-time students and 27 months for part-time students

On this Masters in Health Psychology, the core taught component of the programme extends over two semesters. There are seven core modules, covering health psychology and research methods. In addition to the core modules, you will be expected to take one or two optional modules (totalling 10 ECTS/20 CATS) during your studies. Skills development is an important component of this course and so a bespoke programme of skills training workshops is integrated with and assessed by the core modules in health psychology. Students also attend the health psychology journal club in order to further develop skills pertaining to critical appraisal of scientific research.

Your acquisition of core and specialist knowledge and understanding is achieved through traditional lectures, seminars, tutorials, and interactive workshops. Diverse learning and teaching methods are used across the programme. A brief synopsis of methods used in the core modules is provided here:

- PSYC6001, 6002, 6003 – these modules utilize 3-hour seminars, which combine mini lectures with structured learning activities such as debates, small group work, activity sheets, presentation of reviewed papers etc. Skills training workshops are also provided where students develop and reflect on their practical skills under supervision and guidance.
- RESM6009, RESM6010, RESM6011, and RESM6012– these modules are taught over a series of 3-hour workshops which combine lectures, workshops, and tutorials. Blended learning is also used.
- PSYC6022 – this is a supervised research dissertation, relying on regular structured individual supervision sessions.

Teaching and learning methods across the optional modules will vary as appropriate to the different topics and skills being taught.

Throughout this Masters in Health Psychology programme, you are encouraged to undertake independent reading to consolidate what is being taught and broaden your knowledge and understanding of particular topics. This includes academic text books, scientific journals and other selected sources.

Assessment

Formative assessment and feedback are provided throughout the programme, as you take part in learning activities in lectures and workshops and utilise self-assessment aids such as quizzes.

Summative assessment takes the form of coursework and traditional exams. Diverse and innovative coursework assignments are used, including traditional and diary-based essays, mini systematic review, skills portfolios, presentations and reports on the study and analysis of original and second-hand data sets.

The summative assessment methods for the core modules are summarised here:

- PSYC6001: Behaviour change/diary study, exam, skills portfolio
- PSYC6003: Essay, exam, skills portfolio
- PSYC6002: Mini-systematic review, exam, skills portfolio
- PSYC6022: Dissertation (10,000 words)
- RESM6009: Mini qualitative project
- RESM6010: Report statistical analysis of a given dataset using SPSS
- RESM6011: Multiple choice questions, report on statistical analysis of a given dataset using SPSS
- RESM6012: Coursework

Assessment of optional core modules will vary.

Special Features of the programme

This programme allows students to tailor their studies via selection of option modules (that become CORE once chosen), these include Gerontology, CBT, Sexual Health and Research Methods modules. Also available as an option is the Apprenticeship in Health Psychology, which allows students to work as a Health Psychology apprentice one day a week for an entire semester.

Please note: As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration; however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our Disclaimer to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Programmes and major changes to programmes are approved through the University's programme validation process which is described in the University's Quality handbook.

Educational Aims of the Programme

The MSc provides the first step towards Chartered Psychologist status for those students with the British Psychological Society (BPS) Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership. Successful completion of an accredited Stage 2 programme subsequently will complete the requirements.

The aims of the MSc programme are:

- To provide you with a sound understanding of the theoretical bases of, and research literature in, health psychology;
- To facilitate your development of appropriate skills in health care communication, teaching and training;
- To promote ethical working practices and to equip you with the skills of a competent research worker.

By the end of the programme, you will have the ability to:

- Identify, set up and use a variety of learning strategies, including interactive and group work
- Interpret, conceptualise and critically evaluate health psychology literature, and relate it to practice
- Synthesise models and research findings
- Formulate and test new ideas from a variety of approaches, including scientific and interpretative, and justify the foundations of those ideas
- Test ideas and models, using a variety of research designs, methodologies, measurements and techniques of analysis - for example, in planning, carrying out, and reporting on a health-related intervention
- Present ideas and research findings in a well-structured and convincingly argued way, as oral presentations or written papers
- Plan, execute and report a significant piece of research
- Understand and debate ethical issues and work to ethical guidelines
- And you will have developed independent judgement and critical self-awareness

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

On successful completion of this programme you will have knowledge and understanding of:

A1. Major psychological theories and associated evidence concerning biopsychosocial aspects of health, including the role of behavioural and psychological factors and processes in promoting wellbeing and preventing illness.

A2. Major psychological theories and associated evidence concerning psychosocial aspects of illness and disability, including the role of psychosocial factors in the onset, progression, management and outcome of a range of diseases, disabling, and long-term conditions.

A3. Major approaches to developing, delivering, and evaluating health psychology interventions for a range of client groups and settings.

A4. The impact of the broader contexts (e.g. social, cultural, economic) in which health behaviours and health care take place.

A5. A range of research methods from across the spectrum of qualitative and quantitative techniques for applied psychological research. Know how to use tools and software to support the data collection and analysis involved in these techniques.

A6. Relevant ethical principles and guidelines and their application to health psychology research and practice

Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

B1. Effectively search, select, collate, summarise, and report on relevant material from appropriate sources in health psychology.

B2. Critically evaluate evidence from the health psychology literature and your own work.

B3. Critically apply theory and research findings in health psychology to real-life health concerns.

B4. Formulate research questions and develop scientifically appropriate and ethically-sound research designs informed by an understanding of the philosophy of social science research and research design.

B5. Analyse quantitative psychological data statistically.

B6. Analyse qualitative psychological data using appropriate techniques.

B7. Conduct a substantial piece of research on a health psychology topic.

Transferable and Generic Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

C1. Use a wide and appropriate knowledge and evidence base to evaluate and synthesise empirical findings, models, theories and practices.

C2. Take legal, ethical and professional issues into consideration in all aspects of your work.

C3. Demonstrate self-awareness and reflexivity in your thinking.

C4. Demonstrate a critical and evaluative approach to your work.

C5. Analyze and resolve intellectual, practical and ethical problems in research, policy, and practice.

C6. Plan and manage research and other projects, independently and as a member of a team.

C7. Use IT skills and tools effectively for communication, presentation, data base searching, data management and analysis.

C8. Demonstrate effective and advanced level written and verbal communication skills in a range of contexts.

Subject Specific Practical Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

D1. Critically and systematically evaluate your own health psychology work and that of others.

D2. Consider and develop appropriate research questions and designs in health psychology.

D3. Consider, effectively and appropriately, the ethical, legal and professional issues in your health psychology work.

D4. Disseminate health psychology knowledge through effective and appropriate oral and written presentations.

D5. Describe and demonstrate basic core applied health psychology skills.

Programme Structure

The programme structure table is below:

Information about pre and co-requisites is included in individual module profiles.

Part I

Programme Structure
The programme structure and content was informed by the BPS core curriculum in Health Psychology. The structure of the programme and the modules currently offered are set out below. Of the modules shown against each year of your programme, some are compulsory (i.e., enrolment is automatic) and others are optional. You are directed to which modules are compulsory and which are optional. The option modules shown below constitute an indicative list; there will always be choice but the options might vary between years. A full list of modules and rules will be available to you via the Student Record Self-Service system once you enrol at the University.

Programme Content
There are four major themes to the programme, reflected in the programme structure and modules. The first, PSYC6001, is psychology and health, in which the major theoretical and research developments around health protective behaviour are explored. The second, PSYC6003, is psychology and illness/disability, in which the role of psychosocial factors in the onset, progression, management and outcome of diseases and disabilities are considered – again, with a focus on theories and research findings. The third, PSYC6002, is psychology and the delivery of health care, in which issues around communication in consultations, in the design of written and other information and the training of health professionals are explored. The fourth theme is research methods, which is delivered in a series of modules, RESM6009; RESM6010; RESM6011; RESM6012. These modules use a combination of lectures, workshops, and tutorials and cover research design, qualitative methods, and quantitative methods. You will be supported in applying your learning of research methods to health psychology topics. An important component of research methods training, the Philosophy of Science, is integrated within the three health psychology modules (PSYC6001; PSYC6003; PSYC6002). The final component of the programme is the research dissertation (PSYC6022). It is an original piece of health-related research designed, run, analysed and reported on over 6 months (April-September). Students are given support in identifying a dissertation topic and supervisor. Opportunities for skills development are embedded throughout the programme.

Typical Programme Delivery
The MSc Health Psychology full-time programme runs for 12 months, from the end of September to the end of September of the next year. The taught component is completed by May, and the rest of the time is devoted to the dissertation. The programme is modular, and all core teaching takes place on set days (Mondays and Wednesdays) in Semesters 1 and 2. Students are also expected to be in the department for departmental seminars, small group work, tutorials and practicals. This pattern of delivery is common to the accredited health psychology MSc programmes in other institutions and is designed to enable students to take opportunities to gain practical experience (e.g., as hospital and hospice volunteers) and also to enable some part-time working for those who need a source of income.

Approximate, Indicative, Timetable

Semester 1 (October - January):
Mondays: RESM6009 – ARM: Qualitative Methods; RESM6012 – ARM: Designing Research; PSYC6001: Biopsychosocial aspects of health
Wednesdays: PSYC6003: Psychosocial aspects of illness and disability; Journal club; Skills training workshops

Semester 2 (January - May)
Mondays: PSYC6002: Psychology and the delivery of health care; RESM6010 – ARM: Group Comparisons ;RESM6011 – ARM: Correlational Methods;
Wednesdays: Journal club; Skills training workshops

You will also be working on your dissertation under individual supervision. This will start in Semester 1, and the time you allocate to the dissertation work will increase as the taught modules finish in semester 2. Over the summer, you will be working full time on your dissertation (PSYC6022) which is then submitted in September for full-time students. Option modules may run on any weekdays. Different option modules run in Semester 1 and Semester 2, as shown on the module profiles and the Student Record Self-Service system (once you enrol at the University). When choosing your options, you should consider your workload across the year. If you select semester 1 option(s), you will have a higher workload in semester 1 than in semester 2. If you select semester 2 option(s), your workload will be more evenly balanced across the two semesters.

Individual tutorials will be scheduled in consultation with your personal academic tutor. You will also organise times and venues for research group work.

Part I Core

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
RESM6011	Applied Research Methods (ARM): Correlational Methods	5	Core
RESM6012	Applied Research Methods (ARM): Planning & Designing Research	5	Core
RESM6009	Applied Research Methods: Qualitative Methods	5	Core
RESM6010	Applied Research Methods: Statistical Analysis of Comparisons & Group Differences	5	Core
PSYC6001	Biopsychosocial Aspects of Health	10	Core
PSYC6002	Psychology & The Delivery of Health Care	10	Core
PSYC6003	Psychosocial Aspects of Illness and Disability	10	Core

Part I Optional Core (choose a total of 10 ECTS)

These modules become CORE once chosen and can therefore not be compensated. All modules must be passed at 50% or above.

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
PSYC6046	Advanced Statistical Methods in Psychology	10	Optional

GERO6020	Ageing, Health and Well-being	10	Optional
PSYC6128	Apprenticeship in Health Psychology	5	Optional
PSYC6109	Concepts & Skills	10	Optional
GERO6019	Demographic Change, Ageing & Globalisation	10	Optional
PSYC6106	Evidence-Based Treatments for Anxiety Disorders	5	Optional
SOCI6046	International Social Policy	10	Optional
PSYC6104	Introduction to CBT Theory & Skills	5	Optional
RESM6305	Mixed Methods	5	Optional
RESM6001	Philosophy of Social Science Research	5	Optional
RESM6006	Qualitative Methods 2	5	Optional
GERO6017	Researching Ageing Societies	10	Optional
PSYC6056	Social and Psychological Approaches to Understanding Sexual Health	10	Optional
PSYC6055	Statistical Programming in R	10	Optional

Part II

Part II Core

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
PSYC6022	MSc Dissertation	30	Core

Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for ***Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Postgraduate Master's Programmes*** as set out in the University Calendar:

http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/sectIV-index.html

Support for student learning

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Hartley Library.
- Enabling Services offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling. Support includes daily Drop In at Highfield campus at 13.00 – 15.00 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday out of term-time) or via on-line chat on weekdays from 14.00 – 16.00. Arrangements can also be made for meetings via Skype.
- assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, long term health problem or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia).
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career and Employability services, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
- Other support that includes health services (GPs), chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls and in the local community, (18.00-08.00)
- A Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- an academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

Associated with your programme you will be able to access:

· Module co-ordinators support. Module co-ordinators will be available during the week to discuss issues related to the particular modules you are studying at the time. This will be in addition to class contact time.

· Personal Academic Tutor. As soon as you register on this programme, you will be allocated a personal tutor. S/he is a member of the academic team and will be available to discuss general academic issues related to the programme as well as offer advice and support on any personal issues which may affect your studies.

· Module handbooks/outlines. These will be available at the start of each module (often in online format). The Handbook includes the aims and learning outcomes of the module, the methods of assessment, relevant background material to the module and a session-by-session breakdown of the module together with appropriate reading lists.

· Within the Faculty, administrative support is provided by your Student Office which deals with student records and related issues and with queries related to your specific degree programme.

Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

- Completing student surveys for each module of the programme
- Acting as a student representative on various committees, e.g. Staff: Student Liaison Committees, Faculty Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feed back on your behalf.
- Serving as a student representative on Faculty Scrutiny Groups for programme validation
- Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group

The ways in which the quality of your programme is checked, both inside and outside the University, are:

- Regular module and programme reports which are monitored by the Faculty
- Programme validation, normally every five years.
- External examiners, who produce an annual report
- Professional body accreditation/inspection by The British Psychological Society (BPS)
- A national Research Excellence Framework (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience)
- Institutional Review by the Quality Assurance Agency

Further details on the University's quality assurance processes are given in the *Quality Handbook.*

Career Opportunities

Health psychologists work as applied psychologists, teachers, consultants and researchers within a variety of settings such as the NHS, Higher Education, health promotion, schools or industry.
For further information about health psychology as a career, visit the British Psychological Society's Division of Health Psychology webpage http://www.health-psychology.org.uk/dhp_home.cfm and NHS Careers http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/.

External Examiner(s) for the programme

Name: Dr Neil Coulson - University of Nottingham

Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their Personal Academic Tutor in the first instance.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the programme handbook.

Appendix 1:

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments, laboratory reports and dissertations as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. In addition to this, students registered for this programme also have to pay for:

Additional Costs

Type	Details
Conference expenses	The Psychology Postgraduate Conference is free of charge and the cost of printing posters to present at this conference is covered by Psychology. Should students wish to attend external conferences they would be expected to self-fund this. The cost of such conferences varies considerably.
Parking costs (including on placements at hospitals)	Should students wish to apply for a parking permit at the University, they would be expected to fund this themselves. For further information see: https://www.southampton.ac.uk/transport/parking/student-parking-permits.page
Stationery	You will be expected to provide your own day-to-day stationery items, e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, etc). Any specialist stationery items will be specified under the Additional Costs tab of the relevant module profile.
Textbooks	Where a module specifies core texts these should generally be available on the reserve list in the library. However due to demand, students may prefer to buy their own copies. These can be purchased from any source. Some modules suggest reading texts as optional background reading. The library will hold at least one copy of such texts, or alternatively you may wish to purchase your own copies.
Occupational Health, DBS checks or vaccinations	Any student doing work (e.g. dissertation or apprenticeship) in an NHS setting will need a research passport. To obtain a research passport, students may need a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) Check (which costs approximately £25), may need to undertake a Good Clinical Practice course (free online course available), and may need to obtain occupational health clearance which may involve providing evidence of appropriate vaccination history. Some doctors levy a charge for providing a vaccination history; the cost of this varies by doctor. The cost of the DBS check may be funded by the programme. Any cost associated with obtaining a vaccination history would be funded by the student.
Anything else not covered elsewhere	Students may apply to the programme director for funding to support well-justified costs associated with the Dissertation research. Such costs might include, for example, travel involved in data collection (your own or participants') and/or payments or other incentives for participants and/or printing of questionnaires/consent forms etc. Typically the programme is able to support applications of up to £50, but this is subject to the quality of applications.
Optional Visits (e.g. museums, galleries)	For any optional visits organised by the course students are expected to self-fund travel costs
Recording Equipment	Photographic and video and audio recording equipment is available on loan from the Psychology department. There is no cost for this.
Printing and Photocopying Costs	Students are expected to self-fund any day to day printing costs. There are two exceptions to this: 1. the programme funds the printing of posters for the postgraduate conference; and 2. financial support is available for printing costs associated with the dissertation.
Travel Costs for placements	Students are expected to self-fund any travel expenses associated with the (optional) Apprenticeship module or the Dissertation. Not all apprenticeships or dissertations involve travel costs.

In some cases you'll be able to choose modules (which may have different costs associated with that module) which will change the overall cost of a programme to you. Details of such costs will be listed in the Module Profile. Please also ensure you read the section on additional costs in the University's Fees, Charges and Expenses Regulations in the University Calendar available at www.calendar.soton.ac.uk.