

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE COURSES

1	Awarding institution/body University of Worcester
2	Teaching institution University of Worcester
3	Programme accredited by N/A
4	Final award MSc
5	Programme title Psychological Therapies
6	Pathways available N/A
7	Mode and/or site of delivery Taught
8	Mode of attendance Part-Time
9	UCAS Code N/A
10	Subject /Professional Benchmark statements N/A
11	Date of Programme Specification preparation/revision Dec 2010
12	<p>Educational aims of the programme</p> <p>This course is designed to cater for Psychology graduates who have a special interest in Psychological Therapies, perhaps with a particular aim to continue towards professional training in Clinical or Counselling Psychology at Doctoral level. With the Government's commitment to increasing access to psychological therapies, this course would enable graduates to continue with their academic careers in the direction of psychological therapies, which would provide them with additional benefits in terms of subsequent BPS-accredited professional training.</p> <p>Students will be expected to develop a critical understanding of psychological theory and its application to therapeutic practice along with a critical appreciation of both humanistic philosophy and the conceptual framework of the medical model of applied psychology. The notion of a scientific evidence-base will be contrasted with the reflexive practitioner standpoint, both of which underpin the therapeutic approach offered in practice, in order that the student gains a holistic view of the contributory factors influencing the psychological and therapeutic processes of change.</p> <p><i>The course aims to provide:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critical, analytical problem-based learning and transferable skills to prepare the student for further professional training as a practitioner of psychological therapies; 2. A synthesis of the critical and analytical powers of the student in relation to how theory, reflexive practice and research findings can be applied to real life clinical practice; 3. Opportunities for the critical evaluation of the reliability and quality of evidence offered in support of psychological approaches as applied to psychological therapies; 4. Opportunities for the critical exploration and discussion of ethical aspects of clinical practice, including Codes of Professional Practice; diversity and difference; accountability and the law; and boundary issues; 5. Opportunities for the systematic development of the skills of objective analysis, evaluation, reflection and presentation to enable students to further develop confidence in effectively appraising or researching psychological

therapies;

6. The acquisition of advanced knowledge and skills in a range of methodological approaches, skills and techniques, with the ability to design and implement a personal project related to psychological therapies (on completion of the full masters programme only).
7. A consolidation of cognitive and transferable skills, independence and autonomy in learning;

13 *Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods*

Subject specific

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Retrieve, interpret and critically appraise the current literature in the field of psychological therapies and related disciplines (e.g. philosophy, psychology, psychiatry, psychotherapy, sociology, and politics) and evaluate the various sources of information available, conduct effective searches and critically appraise the value of the material
2. Critically appraise the value of theoretical frameworks; research; reflexivity; cultural and political sensitivity; and the role of the practitioner's personal development and 'self care' to the 'real world' practice of psychological therapies whilst considering the needs of individual clients.
3. Synthesise skills in communication through a variety of methods and media, demonstrating high standards of clarity and coherence;
4. Apply a range of appropriate research or scholarly techniques to the critical analysis and evaluation of psychological theories, therapeutic models and legal and ethical frameworks (British Psychological Society's (BPS) Professional Practice Guidelines and Code of Conduct);
5. Communicate to specialist and non-specialist audiences a systematic understanding and a critical analysis of issues and new insights in psychological therapies;
6. Independently design, manage and evaluate a personal project relating to psychological therapies through the process of advanced scholarship whilst demonstrating an understanding of the implications of ethical issues involved in such research and the limitations and implications of their research for professional practice.

The subject specific intended learning outcomes 1. – 6. are achievable variously across the mandatory and optional modules. Students achieving all awards will be able to achieve 1. – 5. (see Table 1). Only students completing the Dissertation will be able to achieve 6.

The programme subject specific learning outcomes have also been developed in accordance with the most currently available UoW Learning and Teaching Strategy (2006/7-2008/9).

Generic

At the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Work collaboratively and ethically to achieve personal learning goals
2. Consolidate cognitive and transferable skills, and develop independence and autonomy in learning

The generic learning outcomes 1. – 2. are achievable by all students on the programme. As these outcomes are fundamental to any master's level work, these are both achievable in any module, and are therefore not indicated in Table 1 or in module guides.

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- The construction of a coherent and mandatory programme with a number of interdisciplinary modules shared with the MSc in Counselling, and Advanced Issues in Applied Psychology pathways
- A programme of structured lectures, seminars, group work, presentations, group and individual tutorials with e-learning support
- The researching and writing of a variety of assignments and the subsequent written and oral feedback
- Self-directed research and project work with tutorial guidance and discussion
- Consistent approach to theory as related to practice
- Case study analysis and role play
- Contributions to teaching by service users and practitioners
- A dissertation providing the opportunity for critical analysis of a conceptual or theoretical aspect or an empirical study of a counselling issue

Cognitive and intellectual skills of:

- Critical thinking, analysis and synthesis in the use of established and emergent theory, and concepts, to critically analyse the theory and practice of psychological therapies
- Synthesis to construct an integrative understanding of approaches to care
- Creative, imaginative and flexible approaches to problem solving in relation to social and individual needs
- The construction of coherent and reasoned arguments and conclusions
- Reflexive and evidence based approaches to data collection and information concerning therapeutic outcomes and interventions and their impact on service users.
- Sensitivity to the values and interests of others

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- The presentation, discussion and analysis of competing philosophical, political, theoretical and ideological concepts and their analysis
- The engagement of learners in discussion and analysis of key issues and concepts
- The consistent application of UW LO policy to encourage the growth of critical analytic skills such as the ability to evaluate evidence and arguments and to

- recognise underpinning assumptions and judgements
- Formative and summative case study work
 - The promotion of reflexivity in research and an understanding of its use in therapeutic practice

Practical skills relevant to employment:

- A positive attitude to personal development through critical reflection, self evaluation and self care
- Communicate effectively through a variety of mediums and in a range of contexts
- Interpersonal and team working skills employed to effectively collaborate with others in a range of contexts, including further training and counselling contexts

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- The application of theory to practice, critical reflection and self evaluation in the assessments
- The use of discussion and presentations both formatively and summatively
- Critical analysis and reflection on own research
- The sharing of information in small groups and in the class through presentations
- The use of case study material and research based assessments

Transferable skills of:

- Advanced oral and written communication using appropriate academic conventions
- Negotiation and interpersonal skills
- Problem solving
- Independence in learning, planning and time management
- Ethical principles in practice
- Effective use of information technology
- Data analysis and numeracy
- Personal reflection, self assessment and action planning

Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:

- The embedding of advanced study skills within the programme
- The embedding of research based skills within the programme
- Written assessment in a variety of formats including analytic and critical essays and research based skills
- Self management skills are developed through the meeting of assignment deadlines, contributing to group work, working with others and the dissertation
- Oral skills are developed by peer and whole group discussion, group and individual presentations
- Interpersonal skills and ethical principles, negotiation and problem solving are embedded within the programme both as individual modules and within module assessment content
- Information technology is used to support the programme and student learning

14 Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategies adopted in the MSc Psychological Therapies reflect the aims of the course and the descriptors for Masters Level Study (QAA 2008) and make a significant contribution to learning. The assessment strategies are designed to develop skills and knowledge and provide evidence of the students' progress and achievement throughout the course and prepare the students for lifelong learning. Both formal (summative) and informal/ developmental (formative) approaches will be used. In order to develop the skills of advanced study identified within the course aims, students will experience a variety of assessment strategies. These include essays, seminar papers and presentations, critical review, reports and independent learning contracts. The opportunity for students to demonstrate independence in a sustained piece of work is provided in the completion of the dissertation.

15 Programme structures and requirements

In order to gain the award of MSc in Psychological Therapies, students must successfully complete seven mandatory modules, including the 60 credit dissertation, validated within the postgraduate programme, including a 15,000 word dissertation. To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma, students must successfully complete six mandatory modules. For a Postgraduate Certificate, students must successfully complete three mandatory modules only.

Module Title	Credit Values
Professional Practice in Applied Psychology (MPSY4001)	20
Psychology of Mental Health (MPSY4010)	20
Advanced Research Analysis (MPSY4002)	20
On completion of the 3 above mandatory modules (total of 60 credits), exit/interim award is Postgraduate Certificate Psychological Therapies	
Psychological Approaches to Personality and Aetiology (MPTH 4001)	20
Psychological Interventions in Clinical Practice (MPTH 4002)	20
The Professional, Political and Social Context of Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Practice (MCOU 4004)	20
On completion of the 6 above mandatory modules (total of 120 credits), exit/interim award is Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Therapies	
Dissertation (MPTH 4003)	60
On completion of all 6 mandatory modules PLUS 60-credit dissertation (total of 180-credits), exit award is MSc in Psychological Therapies	

16 QAA Academic Infrastructure

The MSc in Psychological Therapies is modular and part of the University of Worcester's (UW) Postgraduate Regulatory Framework (PGRF). The programme comprises the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) at masters

level.

Accordingly students receiving the masters award will have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - a) to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
 - b) to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;

- a) decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
- b) the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

17 Support for students

In common with other UoW courses all students have a personal tutor who will offer support when requested by the student. In addition, all students are contacted by their personal tutor each semester offering dedicated tutorial support.

Students experience a wide range of learning and teaching methods. For example, lectures, seminars, practical classes, computer workshops, CD ROM and Internet, tutorials, visiting speakers, and directed study.

In addition, there is considerable support available for students. A Student Handbook is provided to all students and is updated annually. There are further subject leaflets and guides, most of which are also available on the web.

Student support is also offered in the VLE.

Central support from university services:

A full range of support for students is available within the University, see www.2.worc.ac.uk/studentservices

18 Admissions policy, criteria and procedures

The university is committed to widening participation to candidates from diverse backgrounds, abilities and ages. Admissions to the MSc in Psychological Therapies are considered from applicants that can demonstrate the ability to successfully study at an advanced level. The normal requirement for entry to this MSc is a 2(2) Honours degree in Psychology with an advisory interview being conducted. A lower level qualification together with appropriate experience or substantial related experience alone will be considered. Professional experience within the field of psychological therapies is **not** a requirement for entry onto this course. All international students for whom English is not their first language are required to achieve IELTS 6.5 or equivalent.

Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L):

Students may seek APL in accordance with the University and IHSCP APL procedures and within the parameters set out within the University Postgraduate Regulatory Framework

See the APEL section of the University website:

www.worc.ac.uk/courses/4216.html

Students are normally invited for an informal interview to ensure that they undertake the course and named award specific to their needs and to enable them to meet staff and ask any questions. Once accepted and prior to the commencement of the course students will be invited to an induction day that will familiarise them with the University, the Department and Course requirements.

19 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

There are a number of methods used by the course team in order to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality and standards of teaching and learning:

- Annual review of the quality of the Subject;
- External Examiners reports;
- Mid and end of module evaluations by students;
- Module comments slips allowing anonymous feedback from students about modules;
- Subject staff/student committee considers student and staff feedback on modules;
- University Learning and Teaching Committee and the Academic Development and Practice Unit (ADPU) promotes learning and teaching across the institution;
- Peer assessment of teaching;
- Regular staff meetings have a standing item on sharing good practices, including teaching and learning;
- Institute of Health Society Learning and Teaching Committee;

20 Regulation of assessment

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is 50% for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Some modules have attendance requirements (delete if this does not apply).
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at 50% unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module, which will incur payment of the module fee.

- For full details of submission regulations see Postgraduate Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance or non-submission.
- Reassessment takes place during the following semester or during the summer reassessment period at the end of the academic year.
- If following reassessment the module has been passed, the module grade will be capped at 50%.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they will have one further and final reassessment opportunity.
- A student who fails 40 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7
Masters (MA/MSc/MBA/MTL)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 including a minimum of 40 credits from the Dissertation

The awards of PG Cert, PG Dip or Masters may be made with Merit or Distinction.

Departmental Examination Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Scheme Examination Board considers candidates; mark profiles to make decisions about progression, awards and degree classifications as appropriate.

The University requires departments and/or course teams to have a formally stated policy for internal and external verification and moderation of marking which meets the requirements for the University Assessment Policy.

21. Indicators of quality and standards

In November 2005, the institution was audited by the Quality Assurance Agency. The audit confirmed confidence in the University's management of the quality of its academic programmes and the standards of its awards. The QAA particularly commended the University's supportive ethos and range of departmental and central services provided to students and staff in support of its mission to deliver an excellent inclusive higher education.

22. Career Opportunities & Links with Employers

The course aims to provide students with a clear understanding of key areas of psychological therapies. It will provide students with a springboard for further

study in Counselling Psychology, Clinical Psychology or other related disciplines. Finally, the course should provide the opportunities for students to develop their research skills and hence move into research positions.

The Psychology Division liaises with the University's Careers service to keep it informed of changes within professional areas of the discipline, and to communicate to potential employers the knowledge and skills acquired by students taking psychology.

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 on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module study guide and course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Key sources of information about the Course can be found in:

The course handbook
The Student Handbook for WBL
University website www.worc.ac.uk
The Postgraduate Regulatory Framework