

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes **Honours Degree programmes in Psychology**. For Combined and Joint Honours Degree programmes, please also refer to the equivalent document(s) for the other subject(s). This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2007**.

The aims of all Honours Degree programmes in Psychology are:

- to produce a scientific understanding of mind, brain, behaviour, and experience, and of the complex interactions between these;
- to present multiple perspectives in a way that fosters critical evaluation;
- to allow students to gain an understanding of real life applications of theory to the full range of experience and behaviour;
- to develop in students an understanding of the role of empirical evidence in the creation and constraint of theory and the way in which theory guides the collection and interpretation of empirical data;
- to provide knowledge of a range of research skills and methods for investigating experience and behaviour, culminating in an ability to conduct research independently;
- to provide students with the knowledge and skills to be able to appreciate and critically evaluate theory, research findings, and applications.

Programmes are delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). The curriculum is based around a core of mandatory units. Stage one provides a foundation for the later stages by providing a grounding in the main areas of psychology. In stage two, several of these areas are developed further and in greater depth. In stage three, students are given the opportunity to study specialist areas of psychology and to undertake an independent research project.

The Single Honours programme is approved by the British Psychological Society as providing Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR). The Combined Honours programmes with Psychology as an equal component are also designed for students to be able to be recognised for GBR. Successful completion of the third year Research Project is a British Psychological Society requirement for GBR recognition and therefore GBR status will not be given to any student who is awarded a degree without successful completion of the Research Project course.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

Students will develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding in some or all (depending on the programme) of the following core areas of Psychology identified by the British Psychological Society:

- biological psychology, including biological bases of behaviour, hormones and behaviour, neuropsychology, neuroscience, and evolutionary psychology;
- cognitive psychology, including perception, attention, learning, memory, thinking, language, consciousness and cognitive neuropsychology;
- developmental psychology, including infancy, childhood, adolescence, socio-emotional development, cognitive and language development, atypical development and social and cultural contexts of development;
- personality and individual differences, including abnormal and normal personality, psychological testing, intelligence, cognitive style, emotion, motivation and mood;
- social psychology, including social cognition, close relationships, attribution, attitudes, group processes and intergroup relations;
- conceptual issues in psychology, including the role of psychology as a science, introspectionist and behaviourist approaches to human behaviour, cognition and computers, historical concepts and current approaches, feminist psychology, psychology in a socio-political context.
- research methods in psychology, including research design, appropriate statistical analysis of data, psychometrics and measurement techniques, and quantitative and qualitative methods.
- ethical, theoretical and practical issues in research;

Skills and other attributes

- integrating and applying ideas and findings across the multiple perspectives in psychology, recognising distinctive psychological approaches to relevant issues;
- identifying and evaluating general patterns in behaviour, psychological functioning and experience;
- carrying out empirical studies involving a variety of methods of data collection, including experiments, observation, psychometric tests, questionnaires, interviews;
- analysing data using both quantitative and qualitative methods, and presenting and evaluating research findings;*
- employing evidence-based scientific reasoning and examining practical, theoretical and ethical issues associated with the use of different methodologies, paradigms and methods of analysis in psychology;
- use of a variety of psychological tools, including specialist software, laboratory equipment and psychometric instruments;
- defining research problems, generating and exploring testable hypotheses and research questions, choosing appropriate methodologies, evaluating methodologies and analyses employed, planning and carrying out independent empirical research;
- written and oral communication;*
- computer literacy;*
- retrieve and organise information effectively and handle primary source material critically;*
- teamwork and, where appropriate, collaboration with colleagues, research participants and outside agencies;*
- problem solving;*
- sensitivity to contextual and interpersonal factors in behaviour;*
- independence and pragmatism as a learner.*

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching is mostly by means of lectures and tutorials, the latter generally providing a forum for students, with the support of their instructors, to engage in critical analysis and discussion of topics in a smaller and more interactive setting. Seminars, laboratory classes and practical workshops are also key teaching forums. Learning is through participation in teaching sessions, designated reading and completion of coursework. Essays and short written answers ensure that the skills of exposition and critique are

developed and evaluated. At the end of the programme, most students are required to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the conduct of a piece of original research under the close supervision of a member of staff. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by a combination of formal, unseen written examination and coursework. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

Please note that the list of available courses offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department](#).

Single Honours Degree programmes

Stage one:

Students must take and pass:

PS1011 Statistical Methods (½ unit)

PS1012 Introduction to Research Methods (½ unit)

and must also take:

PS1021 Learning and Memory (½ unit)

PS1030 Self and Society (½ unit)

PS1040 Introduction to Developmental Psychology (½ unit)

PS1060 Psychology, Philosophy and Physiology (½ unit)

PS1061 Sensation and Perception (½ unit)

PS1110 Introduction to Abnormal Psychology (½ unit)

Part-time students must take PS1011, PS1012, PS1040 and PS1021 in their first year and PS1030, PS1060, PS1061 and PS1110 in their second year. Students must pass PS1011 and PS1012 in order to progress to stage two.

Stage two:

Students must take:

PS2010 Research Methods (1 unit)

PS2021 Cognitive Psychology (½ unit)

PS2030 Social Psychology (½ unit)

PS2040 Developmental Psychology (½ unit)

PS2050 Personality and Individual Differences (½ unit)

PS2061 Brain and Behaviour (½ unit)

PS2080 Conceptual Issues in Psychology (½ unit)

Part-time students must take PS2011, PS2012, PS2021 and PS2030 in their first year and PS2040, PS2050, PS2061 and PS2080 in their second year. Students must pass PS2011 and PS2012 in order to progress to stage three.

Stage three:

Students must take:

PS3200 Research project (1 unit)

and choose options equal to the value of 3 full units from a list of Stage three courses offered by the Department. The student may also take appropriate courses (up to a maximum of 1 unit) in other departments.

Part-time students must take PS3200 and two half units in their first year, and four half units in their second year.

Joint Honours Degree programmes with Psychology as an equal element:

Students take the following courses in the Psychology Department:

Stage one:

Students must take and pass:

PS1011 Statistical Methods (½ unit)

PS1012 Introduction to Research Methods (½ unit)

and must also take:

PS1021 Learning and Memory (½ unit)

PS1040 Introduction to Developmental Psychology (½ unit)

and specified courses in the other subject.

Stage two:

Students must take:

PS2010 Research Methods (1 unit)

PS2021 Cognitive Psychology (½ unit)

PS2040 Developmental Psychology (½ unit)

PS2080 Conceptual Issues in Psychology (½ unit)

and specified courses in the other subject.

Stage three:

Students must take:

PS3200 Research project (1 unit)

PS2050 Personality and Individual Differences (½ unit)

PS2061 Brain and Behaviour (½ unit)

PS3090 Advanced and Applied Social Psychology (½ unit)

and specified courses in the other subject.

Combined Honours Degree programmes with Psychology as a minor element

Students take the following courses in the Psychology Department:

Stage one:

Students must take:

PS1061 Sensation and Perception (½ unit)

PS1110 Introduction to Abnormal Psychology (½ unit)

and specified courses in the major subject.

Stage two:

Students must choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department

and specified courses in the major subject.

Stage three:

Students must choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two or three courses offered by the Department

and specified courses in the major subject.

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Progression and award requirements

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. On some programmes there may be a requirement to pass specific courses in order to progress to the next stage, or to qualify for a particular degree title (see programme structure above). Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

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Student support and guidance

- Personal Tutors: All students are allocated a personal tutor who meets with them regularly through the programme. The tutor's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues.
- The Academic Co-ordinator provides a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All staff available and accessible through dedicated office hours system.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- Detailed student handbook and course resources.

- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and Computer Centre.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service liaison officer.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Education Support Unit for students with special needs.

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Admission requirements

The Department's standard conditional offer is available on the [Course Catalogue](#) web page. However, the Department also has considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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Further learning and career opportunities

Graduates from Psychology degree programmes have successfully progressed into a wide range of professions, while some have continued onto Postgraduate studies. For further details please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. The Department of Psychology was ranked joint 5th in the top 10 universities in the country in terms of proportion of 3* and 4* research, with 70% of its research profile being of 3* and 4* standard.

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List of programmes

All the programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. The single and joint honours degrees: BSc Psychology (C800), BSc Mathematics and Psychology (GC18) and BA Music and Psychology (WC38) are accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) as conferring the Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR). The degrees were last re-accredited in 2005. The QAA subject benchmark statement in Psychology describes the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject, and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see www.qaa.ac.uk). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see www.ucas.ac.uk).

Single Honours Degree programmes in Psychology

BSc Hons Psychology (C800)

Joint Honours Degree programmes with Psychology as an equal component

BSc Hons Mathematics and Psychology (GC18)

BA Hons Music and Psychology (WC38)

Combined Honours Degree programmes with Psychology as a minor component

BSc Hons Biology with Psychology (C1C8)

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