



Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology
Programme Handbook
2023/24
MSc Applied Clinical Psychology

This handbook is available online or in alternative formats. Please contact psy-pg-clinical@bath.ac.uk if required

September 2023

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Purpose and scope

Your handbook for academic year 2023/24 comprises the following three documents which should be read alongside each other:

1. University information
2. **Department handbook (this document)**
3. Your course specification

These documents were made available to you as pdf files at the beginning of the academic year. You are expected to familiarise yourself with the contents.

This handbook includes important information, about the Department and about your course, that you should be aware of whilst studying here.

This handbook can be provided in alternative formats. Please contact:

psy-pg-clinical@bath.ac.uk

The content of this handbook is accurate at the time of publication in September 2023 but information contained within may sometimes be subject to change after this handbook has been issued. You will be informed of any changes and issued with a revised version, if there are any material changes to the information in this handbook.

Please note that links to further information are embedded in the title of each section or in applicable text.

The Department

Introduction to the Department

The Department of Psychology at the University of Bath has a breadth in terms of expertise and focus of research. As students you are an important member of the community and we encourage you to join departmental activities that are available to you. The Psychology department seminar series is an important activity for the department and students are very much encouraged to attend these. Departmental research groups are also open to students and you can find out about these opportunities on the **Research** tab of the Psychology Department page of the university website

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/departments/departments-of-psychology>

Welcome from the Director of Studies

We are really pleased that you have chosen to study MSc Applied Clinical Psychology at the University of Bath. We hope that you will feel welcome, and that you will enjoy your course of study and the learning process. We also hope that the programme will serve you well in your educational and career aspirations.

At the core of the discipline of Clinical Psychology is the application of psychological theory to problems and issues occurring in clinical contexts. Clinical refers to the 'clinical', non-laboratory environment where people are the focus of study with health, community and social settings amongst the relevant contexts. Clinical Psychology has a broad reach and scope with significant impact.

Clinical Psychology is not a stand-alone discipline and is just one strand of the application of psychological theory. You will be learning alongside postgraduate students completing other applied psychology programmes. In choosing to study this topic at the University of Bath,

you will also benefit from the excellent research and work being carried out in the Psychology Department as a whole, work which directly feeds the development of clinical psychology. Thus, we will encourage and support you to take advantage of the wider learning opportunities including Psychology Department seminars, PhD and Doctorate in Clinical Psychology student research conferences and other relevant events.

We will try to help you in learning the principles of applied clinical psychology. One year is not such a long time however and it will not be possible to cover much of what is known. Instead, we will try to instil what we consider to be important conceptual and methodological approaches to what is a large and growing discipline, giving you the tools for ongoing learning.

This programme does **not** confer any license to practice in clinical contexts or any professional accreditation. You will not be trained in any way to work with people. However as far as is possible, we will try to use the classroom and other educational experiences to confer some important professional practice skills that may help you on your way.

Your contribution to and participation in this programme is very important and will help you to get the most out of it. You can also help to shape and improve the programme. You will be asked to reflect on your own experience of the programme and what changes might have improved that experience. We ask you to do this generously, constructively and in the spirit of collaboration. We will respect and take your views seriously.

A final note about assessment. This is a postgraduate taught programme and hence you will be evaluated within the Higher Education System. However, our experience has been that there are no subtle grading systems in the clinical world. The aim is to try and do as best you can for people, to the best of your knowledge and ability, within the limits of your competence. There are ordinarily a range of other factors outside our control in clinical psychology research and practice which have an important bearing on the final outcome. Although we will want you to demonstrate a certain level of knowledge, we are also interested in what you bring to that knowledge in respect of critical thinking and reflection as part of your assignments. Beyond the academic assignments, we hope that there will be learning only you can evaluate.

Dr Melissa Atkinson
Director of Studies, MSc Applied Clinical Psychology

Contact information

Name	Role	Room	Ext. No.	email
Dr Melissa Atkinson	Director of Studies, Senior Lecturer	10 West 2.12	6197	ma2293@bath.ac.uk
Dr Manuela Martinez-Barona Soyer	Deputy Director of Studies, Lecturer	10 West		mmmbs20@bath.ac.uk
Dr Tom Barry	Reader	10 West 2.09		tb2249@bath.ac.uk
Dr Kate Cooper	Lecturer	10 West		kc377@bath.ac.uk
Dr Christel Schneider	Lecturer	10 West 3.16	6960	cs2522@bath.ac.uk
Dr William Skylark	Lecturer	10 West		wjs55@bath.ac.uk
Ms Ziyu Guan	Programmes Administrator	10 West 1.02		psy-pg-clinical@bath.ac.uk

Dr Melissa Atkinson is the Director of Studies for the MSc in Applied Clinical Psychology and is responsible for the overall running of the course and ensuring students' welfare. Should you have any questions or queries you can contact her directly by email.

Internal messages are usually sent by email and you should make a point of checking your account every day. You can also access your account via the internet by typing <https://mail.bath.ac.uk> or clicking on 'Webmail' on the University's internal home page. You must ensure that your email inbox does not become full otherwise emails cannot be sent to you and you therefore run the risk of missing important information.

The best way to contact staff is by email. If you want to send hard copy mail to a member of staff, you can hand this to the administrator in the 10 West programme office who will place it in the appropriate 'pigeon-hole' (mail box). A pdf of a document can be attached to the email if needed.

Should you have any queries or problems (that you have not been able to resolve using the various sources of information in this handbook and elsewhere) we strongly recommend you talk to us. Any issues relating to your work then please contact either the lecturer concerned or your Director of Studies.

Personal tutoring

When you join the University, you are assigned a Personal Tutor who is a member of academic staff. They will act as a personalised point of contact within your department, supporting your academic and personal development.

External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed for a course or set of courses and are important in assuring academic quality and standards. Please note that it is not appropriate for students

to contact an External Examiner directly. If you have any queries or concerns, please contact your Director of Studies in the first instance.

External Examiner for the programme, tbc

Dr Georgina Charlesworth, University College London (for shared unit PS50188)

The University's expectations of students

University regulations

When you registered with the University you agreed to abide by the Regulations for Students. These are important documents which set out the roles and responsibilities of both you as a student and the University. **You are expected to familiarise yourself with these.**

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

The MSc in Applied Clinical Psychology is a taught post-graduate programme and clinical placements are not part of the programme. Sometimes, opportunities arise for students during the research apprenticeship and dissertation units to carry out research in clinical settings with patients or vulnerable populations. A DBS check will be necessary in these circumstances. You can find further information here: [The Disclosure & Barring Service \(DBS\) and types of DBS checks \(bath.ac.uk\)](#) It is a good idea to make an application well in advance of the conduct of the research. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to pay for the DBS check if one is necessary.

Attendance expectations

You are expected to be in attendance and participate in all scheduled learning and teaching activities required by your course. If you are ill or are likely to be ill for more than three days, please contact the Director of Studies (Dr Melissa Atkinson, ma2293@bath.ac.uk), or Deputy Director of Studies (Dr Tom Barry, tb2249@bath.ac.uk) by email.

Learning and Teaching delivery

Timetables

Using [MyTimetable](#), you can access your personal timetable and download it into an electronic calendar. MyTimetable updates regularly, so should there be a change to your timetable, it will be reflected.

Any ad hoc changes to your teaching schedule will be conveyed to you via the Announcement forums on Moodle and /or relayed by email using course and unit mailing lists.

Learning resources, Moodle, and recorded lectures

The programme will be taught through lectures, tutor-led seminars and tutorials, student-led seminars, practical workshops, guided reading, group work, active participation in research seminar programmes, monitoring of personal development with personal tutor and problem-based scenarios. Moodle is used to provide a virtual learning environment and includes information on the programme and individual units.

Lectures may be recorded and made available after the session by request.

Student Representation

Mechanisms for student representation are designed to enable you to be an active partner in continually improving your learning and teaching experience. The main ways in which your feedback will be sought will be through:

- Staff/Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) ([Academic and Faculty Reps](#))
- surveys and evaluations
- [the Students' Union](#)

Assessment

Assessment Regulations

The University's New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phases 2 & 3 for postgraduate taught programmes ('NFAAR-PGT') specifies the rules governing progression from one stage of your programme to the next as well as for the award of degrees. The rules cover all areas of assessment, including supplementary assessment and the extent to which failure may be condoned.

If at any time you are in doubt about how NFAAR-PGT provisions apply to your work, please consult your Director of Studies.

This section highlights areas of the University's assessment framework for the type of programme you are undertaking. It explains the regulations that govern your assessment and outlines how the University makes decisions concerning your progression through your programme and award. Complete information is available in the [NFAAR-PGT document](#).

The full NFAAR-PGT, and definitions of terms used in it, are available online.

YOUR PROGRAMME AND HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Within your programme of study, there are *compulsory units* (i.e. those units in a programme which must be taken by every student registered on the programme).

In the Programme and Unit Catalogues, there are links to the relevant appendices of the NFAAR-PGT which state exactly how the assessment rules operate for each stage of your programme.

The following points will help you to understand how the assessment rules relate to your specific programme, such as pass marks, averaging of marks and dealing with any failures:

Firstly, there are several references below to the persistent generic rules on the extent of any failures of units permitted overall. The rules are that you can only (1) fail and retrieve units, or (2) marginally fail units and have them condoned, **within set limits**. Breaking these rules results in failure of the programme.

- Your programme does not have any Designated Essential Units (DEUs).
- Your programme is a single-stage programme, so your eligibility for the award you seek will only be judged at the end of the programme. You must also never break one of the persistent generic rules.
- Since your programme has just one stage comprising both the units that constitute the Taught Stage(s) Credits and the Dissertation/Project type unit(s), there is no

Programme Progression Requirement to get from the taught phase to the Dissertation/Project phase. The status of the different units is indicated in the table showing the structure of your programme.

- Should you fail to qualify for the award of the degree of Master, you may be considered for the award of a related Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate (subject to your having met the requirements for one of those awards).

The normal pass mark for a unit is 50%. Particular rules apply to failure of units of the 'Taught type', or in the 'taught' stages. They are as follows:

- If you fail any units badly (i.e. achieve less than 45%), you will have to undertake supplementary assessment – unless you have failed so many units that you fail outright or the attempted retrieval would break the rule on how much failure can be retrieved.
- If you only fail units marginally (i.e. achieve 45%-49%), you might be able to progress without supplementary assessment. Whether you do progress will depend on the total credit value of the failed units.

Dissertation/Project units have their own special rule on failure: only cases of marginal failure (i.e. 45%-49%) will be given permission for attempted retrieval through supplementary assessment, and any resubmission that is permitted for marginal failure must be made within a specified period. Ultimately, you must pass a Dissertation/Project unit (or have an average of at least 50% for them if there are more than one) for satisfactory completion of the requirements for Dissertation/Project elements.

Your unit results are combined as follows to make overall assessment/award decisions:

- The Taught Stage(s) Average (TSA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the taught stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units defined as of 'Taught type' required to contribute to the programme.
- The Dissertation/Project Average (DPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) required to contribute to the Dissertation/Project stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) defined as of 'Dissertation/Project type' required to contribute to the programme.
- The Overall Programme Average (OPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the programme.

CALCULATING YOUR DEGREE OUTCOME

A Board of Examiners will decide at appropriate points whether you are continuing to meet the requirements for the programme (including not breaking persistent generic rules whereby you can only fail and retrieve, or marginally fail and have condoned, units within set limits), and/or whether you have met all the requirements for your target award or any alternative that might be available. The outcomes will depend on both your performance in individual units and your overall performance. Generally, if you pass each of your units, you will progress and, in due course, be recommended for an award.

If you fail units beyond certain credit values, or you fail some too badly, you might break one of the persistent generic rules whereby you can only fail and retrieve, or marginally fail and have condoned, units within set limits, and this will result in failure of the programme – without any opportunity for supplementary assessment. (Further information on supplementary assessment is provided below.)

The criteria for making awards with distinction or with merit are described in the relevant NFAAR-PGT rules (paras. 78-80).

Supplementary assessment

‘Supplementary assessment’ is the term normally used for an opportunity given to a student to retrieve failure before starting the next stage of a programme, or by the end of the programme if it is a single-stage programme or the failed units are not Stage Required Units (SRUs).

[Academic year dates](#), including the supplementary assessment period, can be found online.

Each unit’s method of supplementary assessment is shown in the online Unit Catalogue.

At supplementary assessment, students will normally have the opportunity to gain credit for units they successfully passed and to have the mark gained reported to them for feedback purposes, but a maximum mark of 50% will be awarded and used in the Overall Stage Average, the Overall Programme Average, the Taught Stage(s) Average, and any award calculation.

If you pass all your supplementary assessments, you will be able to progress onto the next stage of your programme and/or, as appropriate, be considered for an award. If you do not pass them all, the outcome will depend on your overall performance including consideration of the rules about passing particular types of units and the persistent generic rules (as set out above).

[Exit awards](#)

If you leave the University early, without completing your course, you may be eligible for an exit award. You will find information on these awards in your course specification.

[Switching courses](#)

If you are considering transferring to a different course, where this would be permitted, you should speak to your Director of Studies in the first instance. In certain circumstances you may be able to or may be required to transfer onto a specific alternative course, known as a Designated Alternative Course/Programme (DAC/P) if you have not met the criteria to remain on your current course of study.

Academic Registry have also published [further information and guidance on assessment arrangements](#). This also includes a link to the [University’s Academic Integrity Training and Test](#). **All students will be unable to progress beyond the next progression point in their studies until they pass the test.** The test has a pass mark of 85% but you can take the test as many times as you need to.

[Individual Mitigating Circumstances \(IMCs\)](#)

We acknowledge that you may experience circumstances that disrupt your assessment attempt or performance. Submitting an IMC claim allows you to report any conditions

which prevented you from taking assessment or significantly impaired your performance. If accepted an IMC recognises that your assessment was affected.

You are expected to familiarise yourself with the information available about IMCs

including the process for submission, the evidence requirements, how claims are considered and what can (and cannot) happen if a claim is accepted as valid.

Coursework

Assignment briefs, word counts and deadlines

You will be informed of the deadlines to submit your assessments. All information including assignment briefs is on your Moodle unit pages and deadlines are published in the 'Important Dates' document on your Moodle programme page: [Course: MSc Applied Clinical Psychology \(bath.ac.uk\)](#).

Coursework tasks will normally have a word limit or word range. This, and the penalty for not adhering to this, will be confirmed when you receive an assignment

Coursework extensions

If you find you are facing circumstances that are preventing you from submitting on time you can request an extension to your deadline before the work is due. Short extensions are often granted but occasionally there may be a better measure to support you depending on your individual circumstances and the type of assessment. You will need to give a brief explanation of how your circumstances are impacting on your ability to complete on time. Extension requests require evidence to confirm what has happened and when.

If you need to ask for an extension to your coursework deadline you must request this in good time before the original submission deadline. Extension requests are submitted via SAMIS. You can find further information on how to request an extension on your programme Moodle page: [Course: MSc Applied Clinical Psychology \(bath.ac.uk\)](#)

Late submission of coursework

To ensure fairness to all students, you will be expected to hand in all assessed coursework and dissertations/projects by a specified date and time, and [there are penalties for submitting work after the specified deadline](#). **If you are experiencing difficulties completing work on time, please seek help before the deadline.**

Unless you have been granted an extension by your Director of Studies work submitted after the submission date and time will be assessed at a maximum mark of 50%, coursework submitted more than five days after the submission date will normally receive a mark of zero (0).

Word count

Coursework tasks will normally have a word limit or word range. This, and the penalty for non-compliance, will be confirmed when you receive an assignment.

Word counts are applied to give an indication of the depth and detail of work required, and to ensure that students' submitted work is comparable. You will be required to declare the word count for your work when submitting it for assessment.

If you do not observe the given word range or limit for the coursework task, for example if you exceed the word limit, then a penalty will be applied. The penalty that would apply should be stated in writing when the assignment task is distributed. You should take note of

what is included when calculating the total word count (e.g. whether or not contents pages, appendices, footnotes, bibliographies and other elements that are not part of the main text are included).

You should check with your Director of Studies if you have questions about word counts and penalties.

All items of assessed coursework have a stated word limit and the Department of Psychology policy is that all coursework (including the Dissertation) **should not exceed this word limit**. It is fine to submit work under the stated limit but any coursework which exceeds the stated word limit will be subject to penalties. The ability to submit a piece of work which is within the stated word limit is one of the criteria taken into account when a piece of work is being marked. Students must state the number of words at the end of each piece of work.

You will be penalised if you are even one word over the word limit.

It is the student's responsibility to check the word count and students should note that there can be discrepancies across different word processors (e.g. Google docs). As a rule students should use the word count checker in Microsoft Word

When a piece of work is over the stated word limit the work will be subject to the following penalties:

- if the work is up to 15% over the word limit, 10 marks will be docked;
- if it is between 15 - 30% over the word limit, 15 marks will be docked;
- if the work is more than 30% over the word limit, the work is an automatic fail at a maximum of 49%. (If the student's mark for the work is lower than 49% they will receive the lower mark.)

For the purpose of calculating the word count, headings and subheadings, footnotes, quotes, in text citations for example (Smith et al 2011), and tables are included in the word count. The title, contents pages, executive summaries, figures, appendices and reference lists/bibliographies are excluded. This is however general guidance. Individual assignments may have different specifications when calculating the word count. For example, tables are not included in the word count for the dissertation. Students should ensure that they check the individual guidance regarding the format for each assignment separately. Guidance can be found on each unit Moodle page.

Marking and feedback

We have in place processes to ensure that assessment is conducted and marked in a fair and rigorous manner which upholds the academic standards of the University. You can find further information [on such processes, and their purpose, on our website.](#)

You can find assessment criteria and learning outcomes for unit assessment via the Moodle page for each unit.

Your course

Professional Body Accreditation

This course is not professionally accredited and will not provide you with a licence to practise.

[Programme and Unit Catalogue](#)

This is where you will find details about individual units for the current academic year. The catalogues also provide links to the relevant assessment regulations.

[Course Specification](#)

Course Specifications set out important key information about your course, including the award title, the intended learning outcomes, and the structure of the course, as well as regulations for meeting the requirements for any exit awards and any agreed exemptions from your Assessment Regulations. You are expected to be familiar with this document and its contents.

[Any other course specification information](#)

The MSc Applied Clinical Psychology aims to provide students with the background knowledge and professional skills relevant for progressing into health service or research careers with a significant applied psychology component. The Masters programme equips students with an up to date knowledge of theory and practice issues relevant to UK mental health care settings. Students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to undertake research and development in healthcare settings, including research design, governance, ethical and organisational issues. They are introduced to the foundation skills of clinical psychology practice including interviewing, observation and psychometric assessment. This Masters programme is intended for graduates in Psychology, who are interested in progressing to careers in the health professions as practitioners, researchers or managers, and current health service professionals with a degree in Psychology or related disciplines who wish to enhance skills and knowledge in the areas covered by the programme. Relevant posts for graduates from this programme may include assistant psychologist or research assistant positions and these are general preparatory employment for doctoral training in clinical psychology.