



The British
Psychological Society
Accredited



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology
Programme Handbook
2023/24
MSc Health Psychology

This handbook is available online or in alternative formats. Please contact psy-pg-health@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-health@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

On behalf of the Health Psychology team, I am very pleased to welcome you onto our Masters in Health Psychology programme, which is accredited by the British Psychological Society.

We look forward to meeting you all and getting to know you through teaching, tutoring, placement and various other activities throughout the year. We are here to support your efforts to develop as thoughtful, critical and independent researchers in Health Psychology. We are immensely proud of our highly rated course and are confident that the many challenges and rewards it brings will equip you for a range of future careers in health related contexts.

Dr Abbie Jordan
Director of Studies, MSc Health Psychology
pssalj@bath.ac.uk

Departmental information including course teams

The MSc Health Psychology programme is delivered by the Department of Psychology. The Department is located in building 10 West – see the campus map at [University of Bath, Claverton Down campus](#)

Information regarding the department, including a list of academic staff, their individual research interests, departmental research activities, events (including seminars to which you may be able to attend) and news items can be found by linking from <http://www.bath.ac.uk/hss/postgraduate-study>.

Dr Abbie Jordan is the Director of Studies for the MSc in Health Psychology. Abbie is responsible for the overall running of the course and ensuring students' welfare. Should you have any questions or queries you can contact her at the above email address.

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 (1.02) who will place it in the appropriate 'pigeonhole' (mail box) for the staff.

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 staff member concerned (e.g. Unit Coordinator) 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.

Your Tutor should arrange to meet with you on three occasions during your first semester and offer at least one meeting per semester on an ongoing basis for the remainder of your studies. Your Personal Tutor can provide information and guidance about:

- your transition into the University community and your academic studies
- placement opportunities and future career plans
- sources of support with any personal matters or situations involving your health and wellbeing
- providing you with a reference for work experience, internships, your placement, further studies, or career

Contact information

Key contacts include your Director of Studies (a member of academic staff who has overall responsibility for the programme) and your programme administrator, specifically:

<u>Academic Team</u>	Role	Room	Ext. No.	email
Dr Charlotte Dack	Lecturer	10 West 3.14	3658	cnd31@bath.ac.uk
Dr Rhiannon Edwards	Senior Lecturer	10 West 3.28	7595	rte22@bath.ac.uk
Dr Lindsey Hines	Lecturer	10 West	tbc	lh2461@bath.ac.uk
Dr Abbie Jordan	Director of Studies, Reader	10 West 3.10	6982	pssalj@bath.ac.uk

Dr Paula Smith	Senior Lecturer	10 West 3.18	4844	pcs21@bath.ac.uk
Dr Andrew Weyman	Reader	10 West 4.31	5279	aw290@bath.ac.uk

<u>Administration</u>				
Ziyu Guan (in post from 02/10/23)	Programmes Administrator	10 West 1.02	tbc	psy-pg-health@bath.ac.uk
<u>Placements Team</u>				
Dr Charlotte Dack	Lecturer, Placement Tutor	10 West 3.14	3658	cnd31@bath.ac.uk
Izzy Ford	Placements Officer	1 West 3.06	3723	lf383@bath.ac.uk

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.

Professor Lucie Byrne-Davis, University of Manchester

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

Whilst you are not required to provide a satisfactory DBS check prior to commencing your programme it may be required for your placement. Further information can be found in your placement handbook which is available on the Moodle page for the Placement unit PS50051.

A DBS check will cost approximately £50 and it is not paid by the University of Bath. If you need a DBS for your placement, you will need to arrange this some months prior to the start of your placement.

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:

Dr Abbie Jordan, Director of Studies, pssalj@bath.ac.uk

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

Learning is provided through a mix of lectures, online resources, seminars, tutorials and workshops. 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, subject to any confidentiality issues.

Placements and placement support

The University is committed to enhancing students' vocational outcomes and learning experiences by supporting placements. We have a dedicated placements team.

The contact details for your Placements Manager and Placement Tutor can be found under the 'key contacts' section at the start of this handbook.

If you have any queries or concerns then please contact the placements team.

Research ethics

Please see the Moodle page for the Dissertation unit PS50055 for information on research ethics.

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, you have *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 has Designated Essential Units (DEUs) which you must pass to gain the award you seek; even marginal failure in these units cannot be condoned.
- 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 DEUs, you will have to undertake supplementary assessment – unless you have failed so many DEUs that you fail outright or the attempted retrieval would break the rule on how much failure can be retrieved.

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 Health Psychology \(bath.ac.uk\)](#).

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 Health 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), tables and figures are included in the word count. The title, contents pages, executive summaries/abstracts, appendices and reference lists/bibliographies are excluded.

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

The MSc Health Psychology programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society and meets their requirements for Stage 1 training towards Chartered Health Psychology status. For more information please see <https://www.bps.org.uk/>.

Those who wish to become a Chartered Psychologist in Health with the BPS will need to go on to complete Stage 2 training, details can be found on the British Psychological Society Website: <https://www.bps.org.uk/health-psychologist-job-profile>

[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 programme is the responsibility of the Department of Psychology and was established in 1996. We have built an excellent track record for the training of health psychologists since it began. Our programme was one of the first in Britain to be accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) in 1999. The content of the programme adheres to the skills and curriculum requirements of the BPS.

The programme aims to provide the first stage (stage 1) in training towards becoming a BPS Chartered Psychologist via the health psychology route and Practitioner Psychologist with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), for working in the UK. Guidance is provided during the course for those who wish to pursue health psychology as a profession through a stage 2 qualification.

The inclusion of a placement in the programme provides practical experience with a psychologist working in a health-related setting, as well as the opportunity to integrate applied psychology. We also aim to provide a multidisciplinary programme through our own teaching and with the assistance of colleagues working on other health disciplines.

CORE PHILOSOPHY OF THE MASTERS IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMME

The core philosophy that underpins the MSc in Health Psychology at the University Bath is one that emphasises the practical, evidence-based application of health psychology. The aim of the programme is to develop the appropriate knowledge base and skills required for students to become scientist practitioners working in health settings. The programme is structured in such a way that the first semester focuses on the core knowledge base in health psychology theory and research, whereas the second semester allows students to develop their practical skills within the classroom. The inclusion of a work-based placement and dissertation within the final stages of the programme provides students with an opportunity to develop their knowledge-base through direct practical experience working with a psychologist in a health related setting, as well as for students to integrate health psychology theory in an applied manner. The academic members of staff who teach on the programme are all research active and their research interests are reflected in the course content. These span a wide range of different health-related areas and methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches. Students who graduate from Bath leave with a unique set of academic and practical experiences, which should place them in a good position to follow a variety of health-related careers.