

Programme Specification

Postgraduate Programmes

Awarding Body/Institution	University of London
Teaching Institution	Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MSc Forensic Psychology
Name of Interim Award(s)	N/A
Duration of Study/Period of Registration	1 year full-time
UCAS Code(s)	N/A
HECos Code(s)	(100387) Forensic Psychology
QAA Benchmark Group	N/A
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	British Psychological Society
Date Programme Specification last updated/approved	August 2017
Primary Department/Institute	Psychology

Departments which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme
Not Applicable

Programme overview

This one year full-time (2 years part-time) programme of study aims to satisfy the academic component of professional training in forensic psychology. It is expected that the course will be accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) and that successful completion will therefore meet the requirement for Stage One of the BPS Diploma in Forensic Psychology and allow students to enrol in the BPS Qualification in Forensic Psychology (Stage 2) with the eventual aim of achieving the Division of Forensic Psychology (DFP) Qualification in Forensic Psychology and becoming a Chartered Psychologist with the DFP and Practitioner Forensic Psychologist with the Health and Care Professionals Council.

This programme will introduce students to a range of psychological theories, methods and processes within the context of the legal, criminal and civil justice systems. It will cover the assessment and treatment of offenders, including risk assessment methods, and the treatment of offenders with mental health and personality disorders. It will also include a focus on the investigation of crime by examining issues such as identification of suspects, investigative interviewing, psychological profiling and detecting deception. As well as the psychological aspects, this programme will also cover legal and criminological concepts relevant to contemporary social issues and organisations. Issues relating to ethics, human rights, professional practice and research will be emphasised in order to provide a firm grounding for further professional training and practice.

Programme entry requirements

Entry requirements will normally be a good degree (2:1 or above) in Psychology or a related subject (e.g. Criminology) with a research component. Applications from overseas students are welcome. Overseas students will be required to have an undergraduate degree or equivalent in a Psychology or related subject. Students whose first language is not English will be asked to provide evidence of their English language skills. The College norm of an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent will be applied.

Aims of the programme

Specifically, the programme aims to fulfil the requirements of the Division of Forensic psychology (British

Psychological Society) Stage 1 training and to thereby equip students with the academic knowledge necessary to successfully undertake the Stage 2 training and eventually to become a Chartered Psychologist and Full Member of the Division of Forensic Psychology with the British Psychological Society and a Forensic Psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) (upon successful completion of Stage 2 training).

The programme aims to produce students who are able to think critically, reflectively and independently about current theory and knowledge in forensic psychology, with specialist skills and knowledge of forensic practice. They will have a thorough understanding of the criminal justice system, theories of offending behaviour, and the full range of methods of assessment, formulation and intervention with perpetrators and victims of crime. Students will be able to use a range of methods of psychological enquiry to critically evaluate current knowledge and theory in forensic psychology and to apply it to relevant practice settings. They will be able to reflect on their learning and experience and to develop the skills to communicate the outcome of their work to immediate and wider professional networks.

In order to achieve this, the programme will equip students with a sound understanding of:

- o The legal framework and criminal justice system as applied to forensic psychology

- Ethical and professional considerations of forensic psychology practice
- The application of psychology to processes in the justice system (e.g. investigation, trial, detention, throughcare and aftercare)
- o Psychological theories and interventions in relation to a range of specific client groups, such as sexual and violent offenders, people with personality disorder and mental health difficulties, juveniles and victims of crime
- Evaluating outcomes of interventions with perpetrators and victims of crime
- The impact of victimisation on different groups (including children and adults) including the appropriate assessments and interventions.

Students will become skilled in:

- Using a range of psychometric instruments used widely within forensic psychology, and in interpreting and communicating the outcome of these assessments
- A variety of approaches to assessment, professional report production and the giving of expert testimony within forensic settings
- Using consultation, project management and organisational skills and interventions as applicable within different forensic settings and with different client groups
- A range of research skills including the design, implementation and interpretation of service evaluations, clinical audit, and outcome research within forensic settings, enabling the individual to undertake a substantial piece of empirical research and to produce work of journal standard
- A range of transferable skills, such as the ability to communicate effectively, to manage their time efficiently, and to make appropriate use of information technology.

What you will be expected to achieve

Students will be expected to achieve the knowledge and skills outlined below to a standard that enables them to undertake supervised practice in forensic psychology leading to the Stage 2 qualification and chartership with the British Psychological Society and a Forensic Psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) in due course.

Knowledge and Understanding		Taught by the following modules
A1	Context of forensic psychology services to a range of client groups in the UK	Professional Issues in Psychological Practice Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology
A2	The role of the forensic psychologist and relationships with associated professions	Professional Issues in Psychological Practice
A3	Issues in the provision of forensic services in the UK (e.g. ethics, cultural issues, reflective practice,	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology

	multi agency working)	
A4	Assessment and measurement tools used across a range of forensic practice settings	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology
A5	Career pathways and structures within UK criminal justice and health services	Professional Issues in Psychological Practice
A6	Service evaluations and audits, and research into the effectiveness of forensic psychology interventions	Research Design and Analysis
A7	Theoretical perspectives that underpin the delivery of forensic psychology services	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Psychology, Crime and Law
A8	Research design and statistics used in forensic and mental health settings	Research Design and Analysis

Cognitive and Thinking Skills		Taught by the following modules
B1	Understand the interdependence of theory and practice in forensic and related settings	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Investigative Forensic Psychology Psychology, Crime and Law
B2	Identify and articulate principles of good practice in a range of forensic and clinical settings	Professional Issues in Psychological Practice Psychology, Crime and Law
B3	Assess the strengths and weaknesses of particular approaches to investigation, research and evaluation in a range of forensic settings	Investigative Forensic Psychology Research design and analysis
B4	Critically evaluate forensic interventions and services, taking into account the quality and diversity of existing relevant literature	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology
B5	Understand the multidisciplinary and multi agency work in criminal justice and forensic mental health settings	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Investigative Psychology
B6	Interpret and evaluate psychometric data in forensic settings	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology
B7	Familiarity with a range of applications and interventions within criminal and civil justice systems, including attention to litigants, appellants, and individuals seeking arbitration and mediation	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology
B8	Knowledge of assessment and intervention methods with victims and perpetrators of offences (adults and children)	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology

Subject Specific Skills and Professional Behaviours and Attitudes		Taught by the following modules
C1	Conduct and report on a forensic or related service audit/ evaluation	Research Design and Analysis
C2	Use electronic databases and resources to search for relevant research papers and reports	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Research Project
C3	Use statistical software (e.g. SPSS/PASW) to analyse service related data	Research Design and Analysis Statistics
C4	Communicate the results of their own research and that of others to their peers	Research Design and Analysis Research Project
C5	Produce high quality written reports demonstrating intellectual rigour	Research Design and Analysis Professional issues in Psychological Practice Research Project

C6	Develop a comprehensive knowledge of the legal framework of the law and the civil and criminal justice systems	Psychology Crime and Law Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Professional Issues in Psychological Practice
C7	To be fully aware of the ethical and professional considerations of forensic practice	Professional Issues in Psychological Practice Investigative Forensic Psychology
C8	Awareness of issues around and skills in giving of expert testimony	Psychology, Crime and Law
C9	Knowledge of consultancy, project management and organizational interventions in forensic settings	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Professional Issues in Psychological Practice
C10	Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative research methods applied to forensic psychology	Research Design and Analysis

Transferable Skills		Taught by the following modules
D1	Critical analysis and evaluation of research material and assess the interpretation of research findings within the field	Research Design and Analysis Psychology, Crime and Law Investigative Forensic Psychology
D2	Use of internet and electronic databases for research	Research Design and Analysis Research Project
D3	Ability to construct and develop evidence-based written arguments	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Professional Issues in Psychological Practice
D4	Development and delivery of effective oral presentations	Research Design and Analysis Research Project
D5	Ability to synthesise complex information in to concise forms readily understood by others	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Research Design and Analysis Professional Issues in Psychological Practice Investigative Forensic Psychology Psychology Crime and Law
D6	Knowledge and development of personal attributes that enhance leadership potential	Professional Issues in Psychological Practice
D7	Ability to work effectively with others in team environments	Professional issues in Psychological Practice Research Design and Analysis
D8	Ability to conduct a good quality systematic literature review	Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology Research Design and Analysis

How you will learn

The teaching and learning methods to which you will be exposed have been designed in recognition of: (a) the different knowledge routes to learning; (b) the learning requirements of different types of information and skills; and (c) the need for students to engage in a complementary range of learning activities leading to the synthesis of academic knowledge and professional skills/competencies.

To achieve the learning outcomes, you will experience a range of teaching/learning methods. You will attend lectures, tutorials, computer lab classes and workshops. You will also achieve the learning outcomes by undertaking practical research and work experience in clinical settings at a range of NHS facilities in London via contacts established by the programme teaching staff.

These teaching/learning methods are integral to the acquisition of subject specific skills and

understanding, but also provide the opportunity for discussion and debate. An aim of the programme is to facilitate independent thought and enable you to develop a critical perspective.

You will receive feedback on written work (essays and coursework) in the form of structured numerical feedback, relating to the logic of arguments, their coherence, references, coverage of background literature, as well as in the form of written constructive criticism, highlighting the major strengths and weaknesses sufficient to allow you to know how to improve your work. During meetings with programme teaching staff, you will have a further opportunity to receive feedback and academic guidance.

The reliability and validity of these forms of assessments are assured by group meetings between teaching staff. In addition, all written work is either second marked or moderated. Detailed criteria for marking bands are provided for students in the Programme Handbook.

Learning support activities are chosen to meet the particular requirements of this MSc programme, as well as requirements as a member of the student body. You will attend lectures in order to provide the background theoretical knowledge that is then used in practical activities to develop the skills and competencies in the application of psychological knowledge.

How you will be assessed

Each module has a set of learning outcomes. Final grades are based on a set of generic criteria that are used across programmes in the Department of Psychology (see generic grading criteria further below). Module learning outcomes are assessed by a variety of means: extended essays; research design coursework; unseen written examinations; an oral presentation and a dissertation based on a substantive research project.

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/Exceptional)	In addition to the criteria for an excellent grade it will also have an exceptional or original line of argument that can be followed very easily.
70-79%	Distinction	Overall the work shows evidence of rigorous analytical research in its conceptualisation; an excellent level of response to the set tasks; the conceptual coherency of the work is strong and ideas are researched and deployed within a clearly defined contextual framework. The work shows ample evidence of sustained academic enquiry, draws on a wide range of sources all of which are critically evaluated; issues are readily identified and contextualised using appropriate theoretical frameworks; A mark of 70% - 79% is likely to be awarded to work that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. addresses the topic in an explicit manner 2. announces its structure at the start and stick closely to this announced structure 3. has relationships between statements that are very easy to recognise gives wide-ranging and appropriate evidential support for claims that are made The mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.
60-69%	Merit	Overall evidence of a very good level of response to the set tasks; the conceptual coherency of the work is good and ideas are researched and deployed within a defined contextual framework. The work shows evidence of

		<p>sustained academic enquiry, draws on a wide range of sources most of which are critically evaluated and synthesised within a clear argument/structure; most issues are identified and contextualised using appropriate theoretical frameworks</p> <p>A mark of 60% - 69% is likely to be awarded to work that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. attempts to address the topic or answer the question 2. has a detectable structure which is adhered to for the most part 3. has relationships between statements that are generally easy to follow 4. has a good quality line of argument 5. supports claims by reference to relevant literature 6. Within this category, the mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.
50-59%	Pass	<p>Overall mainly adequate level of response to the set task; the conceptual coherency of the work is largely adequate and ideas are researched and deployed with an inconsistent recognition of the need for a contextual framework. The work shows some evidence of the identification of relevant issues; limited range of sources; evidence of some analytical and contextual skills but inconsistently employed.</p> <p>A mark of 50% - 59% is likely to be awarded to work that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. presents relevant material but fails to use it to answer the question or address the issue 2. has a structure, but one that is rather loose and unannounced 3. has relationships between statements that are sometimes hard to follow 4. has a fair quality line of argument (information drives argument, rather than other way round) 5. tends to make claims without sufficient supporting evidence <p>Within this category, the mark awarded will depend on the extent to which the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.</p>
30-49%	Fail	<p>Overall the work may not be without merit but not Masters standard. The concepts in question are realised inappropriately or under-developed. The work shows little evidence of the identification of relevant issues; limited and inadequate range of sources; little evidence of analytical and contextual skills, inconsistently employed.</p> <p>A mark of 30-49% is likely to be awarded to work that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fails to adequately address the topic or to answer the question, either by reproducing material that is only partly relevant, or by inaccurately reproducing material that is relevant, or by reproducing only a very small amount of relevant material. 2. lacks a clear structure or framework

		<p>3. has relationships between statements that are often difficult to recognise</p> <p>4. has a poor quality line of argument</p> <p>5. makes poor use of evidence to support most of the claims that are made</p> <p>The mark awarded will depend on the extent to which the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.</p>
10-29%	Bad fail	<p>Overall inadequate level of response to the set task; the work does not utilise a sufficient range of processes and materials; level of response is not always appropriate or consistent. The range of sources in the work is very limited, there is little interpretation or analysis and it lacks breadth or awareness of a contextual framework.</p> <p>A mark close to 30% might be awarded to an answer that contains some indication that the student can recall something relevant to the question. 20% might be awarded to an answer that contains something that shows that the student has attended the relevant lecture module, even if there is little in the answer that is of direct relevance to the question. A 10% answer contains no evidence that the student knows anything from the literature that is relevant to the question.</p>
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment

How the programme is structured

Year One:

PS71078B Assessment and Intervention in Forensic Psychology

PS71079B Psychology, Crime and Law

PS71077A Investigative Forensic Psychology

PS71071B Professional Issues in Psychological Practice

Various Optional Module

Year Two:

PS71051B Research Project

PS71054D Research Design and Analysis

PS71020D Statistical Methods

Various Optional Module

The part-time route is flexible and may be agreed on an individual basis with the Programme Convenor.

The full-time programme structure is shown below:

Academic Year of Study 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Assessment and Intervention in	PS71078B	30	7	Core	1 and 2

Forensic Psychology					
Professional Issues in Psychological Practice	PS71071B	15	7	Core	1
Psychology, Crime and Law	PS71079B	15	7	Core	1
Investigative Forensic Psychology	PS71077A	15	7	Core	2
Professional Practice Project	PS71094A	15	7	Optional	1 and 2
Addictive Behaviours	PS71058B	15	7	Optional	1
Academic Year of Study 2					
Research Project	PS71051B	60	7	Core	2 and 3
Research Design and Analysis	PS71054D	15	7	Core	1
Statistical Methods	PS71020D	15	7	Core	1
The Family And Child Mental Health	PS71093A	15	7	Optional	1 or 2
Social Psychology of Social Problems: Intergroup perspective	PS71076A	15	7	Optional	1 or 2
Advanced Quantitative Methods	PS71082A	15	7	Optional	2
Statistical Data Analysis Project	PS71083A	15	7	Optional	2
Psychopathology	PS71061A	15	7	Optional	2

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

Students are allocated a personal tutor and a Senior Tutor in each department who has overall responsibility progress and welfare. Departments arrange regular communication to students in the form of mailings and meetings as well as regular progress reports and feedback on coursework and assignments. This is in addition to scheduled seminars, tutorials and lectures/workshops.

Every student is assigned a personal tutor who will meet with their student twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically, the first of which normally takes place within the first few weeks of the first term. Personal tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This way progress, attendance, essay/coursework/assessment marks can be reviewed, and an informed discussion can be about how to strengthen learning and success.

Students are sent information about learning resources in the Library and on the VLE so that they have access to programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance. Timetables are sent in advance of the start of term so that students can begin to manage their preparation and planning.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of coursework themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Coursework essays build on lectures and seminars, so students are encouraged to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

In depth feedback is provided for written assignments and essays via written feedback forms and formative feedback with module tutors/leads is provided to ensure that students' work is on the right track. Feedback comes in many forms and not only as a result of written comments on a marked essay. Students are given feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops and placements.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is clearly provided on the College Website and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The Inclusion and Learning Support and Wellbeing Teams maintain case loads of students and provide on-going support.

The Careers Service provides central support for skills enhancement, running the Gold Award Scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the higher education achievement report (HEAR).

The Academic Skills Centre works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision throughout the year, which students can access directly at gold.ac.uk/asc/.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

Goldsmiths Psychology Department have entered into a collaboration a consortium of local NHS Trusts (led by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust) to provide psychologically informed treatment for offenders with personality and other psychological disorders at HMP Swaleside. As a result, up to five Goldsmiths MSc students will be offered a two year placement in the project, which will include payment of fees (at UK/EU rates) and travel expenses for travel outside London as required.

The placements will involve working three days a week in the host organization (which will include local Medium Secure Units as well as HMP Swaleside at different times) as well as part time study at Goldsmiths. The work will be variable according to need within the prison, but will involve delivery of therapeutic and psychosocial interventions, for example behavioural analyses and development of behavioural plans to address challenging behaviours, delivery of basic interventions for anxiety, depression and other psychological disorders, co-facilitation of groups with other professionals, the administration of psychometric assessments, such as the WAIS, personality assessments and measures of risk) among other things. There may also be opportunities for research activities, such as audit and service evaluation, and perhaps to conduct the research project within the placement environment.

In addition to the significant link described above, we will use existing staff links with external organisations in Health, Criminal Justice and Social Care settings to both target potential students and to provide relevant work and research opportunities for students on the programme.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

Master's Degrees

All Master's degrees at Goldsmiths have a minimum value of 180 credits. Programmes are comprised of modules which have individual credit values. In order to be eligible for the award of a Master's degree students must have passed all modules on the programme.

Intermediate Exit Points

Some programmes incorporate intermediate exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. Individual programmes may specify which, if any, combination of modules are required in order to be eligible for the award of these qualifications. The awards are made without classification.

Final Classification

There are four possible categories of final classification for Master's degrees: Distinction, Merit, Pass

and Fail.

For further information, please refer to the Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Students, which may be found here: www.gold.ac.uk/governance/studentregulations/

Programme-specific rules and facts

The programme (once accredited by the BPS) will satisfy Part 1 of the training requirement for Forensic Psychology Chartership. The programme will accept non Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) candidates but these students will not be considered to have met the Part 1 requirements until they have achieved GBC - which may be done at a later date by agreement.

For Part-Time Students: a maximum of two resit modules may be carried over into the second year.

Programme costs

General Costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information here: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/programme-costs>

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules must be formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year in departmental staff / student forums and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme also has at least one External Examiner who produces an annual report which comments on the standards of awards and student achievement.

This output is considered with other relevant data in the process of Annual Programme Review, to which all programmes are subject, and which aims to identify both good practice and issues which require resolution.

Every six years all programmes within a department are also subject to a broader periodic review. This aims to ensure that they remain current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all of these procedures are published on the webpages of the Quality Office (<http://www.gold.ac.uk/quality/>).