



ACADEMIC SERVICES

MODULE / PROGRAMME APPROVAL LOG

<b>Module/Programme Title:</b>	MSc. Occupational Psychology
<b>Module/Programme Code:</b>	
<b>Initial 'Valid from' Date:</b>	September 2015
<b>Approved by (panel and date):</b>	HAS CAP 02/06/2015
<b>Approved until:</b>	September 2021

**Changes:**

Version 1.1

**Outline Change Details:**

**CHANGES TO MODULE USP7Y-30-M Conducting Psychological Research**

**Assessment Change – Component B.**

The module assessment has also had a minor tweak. The current Component B assessment "Research Proposal" has been modified to a "Mini Systematic Review".

**Name Change**

The current module title "Conducting Psychological Research" has had a name change to "Conducting and *Evaluating* Psychological Research".

**Module Adoption**

This module is also being adopted across the BPS accredited MSc programmes in Psychology, namely MSc Sports and Exercise Psychology and the MSc Health Psychology. These programmes will adopt this module (and the new name and assessment changes).

**Rationale:**

**Assessment Change Rationale:**

This is following the new BPS guidelines on research methods training for psychology, which requires some "systematic review" training and assessment. The research proposal would have included this part, but this makes it more explicit in the module specification.

**Name Change Rationale:**

This is in order to emphasize the assessment change. This makes it clear that the module is not just about conducting research and the skills required to do this, but also covers critical skills in evaluating research. This is in line with the recommendations and requirements of the BPS that the research module should involve reviewing research systematically.

**Module Adoption:**

This 30 credit module is being adopted by all BPS accredited MSc programmes in psychology (Sports & Exercise Psychology, Health Psychology, Occupational Psychology). This reflects current changes in the BPS recommendations for accredited MSc programmes in psychology. Therefore the changes outlined above also refer to the MSc Sports and Exercise Psychology and MSc Health Psychology.

**Change requested by:**

Paul Redford

<b>CAP approval date:</b>	
<b>Change approved with effect from:</b>	

**Version 1.2**

<b>Outline Change Details:</b> Change to proposed part time route – error with modules allocated in year 1 and 2.  Swap between Well-Being and Work, which should be in Year 2 and Work Design and Organisational Change and Development, which should be in Year 1.	
<b>Rationale:</b>  Incorrect programme spec – needs to reflect the route students are enrolled on.	
<b>Change requested by:</b>	<b>Gemma Phillips-Pike &amp; Paul Redford</b>
<b>CAP approval date:</b>	<b>December 2015</b>
<b>Change approved with effect from:</b>	ASAP

**Version 1.3**

<b>Outline Change Details:</b>	
<b>Rationale:</b>	
<b>Change requested by:</b>	
<b>CAP approval date:</b>	
<b>Change approved with effect from:</b>	

*Note: After three low impact changes have been made the module/programme will need to be taken to a CAP for re-approval.*



**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

Part 1: Basic Data	
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	University of the West of England, Bristol
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	University of the West of England, Bristol
<b>Delivery Location</b>	University of the West of England, Bristol – Frenchay Campus
<b>Study abroad / Exchange / Credit recognition</b>	NA
<b>Faculty responsible for programme</b>	Health & Applied Sciences
<b>Department responsible for programme</b>	Health & Social Sciences - Psychology
<b>Modular Scheme Title</b>	MSc. Occupational Psychology
<b>Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body Links</b>	British Psychological Society Association for Business Psychology
<b>Highest Award Title</b>	MSc. Occupational Psychology
<b>Default Award Title</b>	
<b>Fall-back Award Title</b>	
<b>Interim Award Titles</b>	PG Cert in Occupational Psychology PG Dip in Occupational Psychology
<b>UWE Progression Route</b>	NA
<b>Mode(s) of Delivery</b>	FT and PT Blended Learning
<b>Codes</b>	<b>UCAS:</b> <b>ISIS2:</b>
	<b>JACS:</b> <b>HESA:</b>
<b>Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements</b>	Psychology and Master's Degree Specifications. QAA (2010) subject benchmark statements for Psychology.

<b>CAP Approval Date</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014
<b>Valid from</b>	September 2015
<b>Valid until Date</b>	September 2021
<b>Version</b>	1.2

Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme
<p><b>Context</b></p> <p>Occupational Psychology is one of the seven applied areas of psychology currently regulated by both the BPS (British Psychological Society) and the HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council). The title 'Occupational Psychologist' is one of the HCPC nine practitioner psychologist titles which are regulated by law. Occupational Psychology offers a highly practical and employee focused service with high academic rigour. The MSc Occupational Psychology forms the first step towards becoming an HCPC registered Occupational Psychologist.</p> <p>According to the definition from the BPS, Occupational Psychology is <i>"concerned with the performance of people at work and with how individuals, small groups and organizations behave and function. Its aim is to increase the effectiveness of the organisation and improve the job satisfaction of individuals"</i> (BPS)</p>

## Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme

Website, 2014).

There are six key areas of focus within occupational psychology:

- Learning, training and development
- Leadership, engagement and motivation
- Wellbeing and work
- Work design, organisational change and development
- Psychological assessment at work
- Applying psychology to work and organisations (research)

### **Practice Oriented and Applied Psychology**

The discipline of *Occupational Psychology* has practice and application at its heart. It is an applied discipline that focuses on understanding and enhancing individuals and organizations. The MSc will focus on application and practice based skills to ensure that the course is practice oriented and applied.

The MSc. Occupational Psychology is a one year full-time or two-year part time postgraduate programme designed to provide students with an advanced understanding of psychology as applied to the world of work and organizations.

The programme is designed to develop a critical understanding of the relationship between theory and practice, and apply this knowledge to a variety of work based contexts. Practical workshops, role play and seminars provide students the experience of appraisals, psychological assessment and coaching for development.

The MSc Occupational Psychology programme is advanced study into occupational psychology theory, research, applied skills and application of knowledge and provides stage 1 training in the qualification route for occupational psychologists. It prepares students for future stage 2 training, which if successful leads to Chartered status with the British Psychological Society and eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council as an Occupational Psychologist. It therefore provides a clear progression towards practitioner psychologist. Alternatively, those students who wish to follow a different route or are from allied professions, such as human resources, business, etc., then this MSc. will provide an in-depth understanding of the application of occupational psychology.

### **Broad aims**

The programme is designed to offer an advanced, flexible and professional educational experience in occupational psychology.

This programme will enable students to:

- Develop the understanding and application of current knowledge in occupational psychology to applied settings and practice
- Acquire and apply a wide range of appropriate professional skills
- Make significant, independent and original contributions to knowledge in occupational psychology
- Appreciate the value of professional integrity and high standards in practice in occupational psychology and the importance of continued professional development
- Develop research skills, specifically advanced analysis, data collection and interpretation of data and the production of a publishable standard of work
- Develop autonomy in the learning process and to become effective self-directed learners
- Develop expertise in practice and application of psychological skills
- Achieve a high level of presentation and critique of one's own work

### **Specific aims**

The programme specifically aims to:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the theory, research and practice of occupational psychology
- Develop expertise in occupational psychology to underpin a dissertation in occupational psychology
- Equip students with transferable professional and practice based skills appropriate to a career in occupational psychology
- Equip students with applied skills in occupational psychology in preparation for further training in occupational psychology

## Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme

- Provide a flexible approach to learning and teaching, enabling students from a variety of backgrounds to undertake postgraduate training in occupational psychology

## Programme requirements for the purposes of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)

NA – MSc Programme

## Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

The award route provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

### A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- Current psychological theory and new developments in occupational psychology
- An understanding of the five key areas of occupational psychology outlined by the BPS Guidelines
- The conduct and application of psychological research in occupational psychology
- The different frameworks and methods of analyzing psychological data
- The different applications and uses of key psychological skills in occupational psychology
- The practical and ethical issues associated with occupational psychology

### B. Intellectual Skills:

- Critically analyse the relationship between current theoretical developments in occupational psychology and the application of theory
- Synthesize complex and competing theories, research and methods used within occupational psychology
- Critically evaluate theories and practice and their utility in occupational psychology
- Demonstrate the ability to analyse data collected for dissertation
- Develop research questions and design studies to evaluate psychological interventions in occupational psychology
- Develop key psychological skills for use in occupational psychology

### C. Subject/Professional/Practical Skills:

- Planning, conducting and reporting on research from occupational psychology
- Applying professional skills to a range of problems and work based issues
- Critiquing the various approaches, tools, techniques used in occupational psychology
- Designing occupational psychology interventions for individuals, groups/teams and organizations, demonstrating an awareness of their advantages and limitations
- Presenting an understanding and awareness of professional and ethical practice and applying this to current issues and research in occupational psychology
- Able to demonstrate the application of theory to practice via workshops and *Applying Psychology to Work and Organizations* module
- Understanding of the BPS and HCPC and the code of conduct and ethical practice that governs Occupational Psychologists

### D. Transferable Skills:

- Work effectively within a group taking on a variety of roles
- Able to utilize and develop extensive skill in using a variety of learning resources
- Able to undertake self-reflection and reflect on others, providing constructive feedback
- Can undertake independent research to a high standard
- Is an independent and self-critical learner
- Engages confidently in academic and professional communication
- Understands and analyses different psychological data
- Disseminates and communicates research findings

### Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

<b>Learning Outcomes:</b>	Module No:USPK83-15-M	Module No: US)K7U-15-M	Module No: USPK7X-30-M	Module No: USPK7V-15-M	Module No: USPK7Y-30-M	Module No: USPK7W-15-M	Module No: USPK7T-15-M	Module No: USPJW9-45-M
	<b>A) Knowledge and understanding of:</b>							
Current psychological theory and new developments in occupational psychology	X	X	X	X		X	X	
An understanding of the five key areas of occupational psychology outlined by the BPS Guidelines	X	X	X	X		X	X	
The conduct and application of psychological research in occupational psychology					X			X
The different frameworks and methods of analyzing psychological data					X			X
The different applications and uses of key psychological skills in occupational psychology	X		X					
The practical and ethical issues associated with occupational psychology	X	X	X	X		X	X	
<b>(B) Intellectual Skills</b>								
Critically analyze the relationship between current theoretical developments in occupational psychology and the application of theory	X		X					X
Synthesize complex and competing theories and methods used within occupational psychology		X	X	X		X	X	
Critically evaluate theories and practice and their utility in occupational psychology		X	X	X		X	X	X
Demonstrate the ability to analyze data collected for dissertation					X			X
Develop research questions and design studies to evaluate psychological interventions in occupational psychology	X				X			X
Develop key psychological skills for use in occupational psychology	X				X			X
<b>(C) Subject/Professional/Practical Skills</b>								
Planning, conducting and reporting on research from occupational psychology	X							X
Applying professional skills to a range of problems and work based issues	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Critiquing the various approaches, tools, techniques used in occupational psychology	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Designing occupational psychology interventions for individuals, groups/teams and organizations, demonstrating an awareness of their advantages and limitations	X			X		X		
Presenting an understanding and awareness of professional and ethical practice and applying this to current issues and research in occupational psychology	X							X
Able to demonstrate the application of theory to practice via workshops and Applying Psychology module	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Understanding of the BPS and HCPC and	X							

**Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme**

the code of conduct and ethical practice that governs Occupational Psychologists								
<b>(D) Transferable skills and other attributes</b>								
Work effectively within a group taking on a variety of roles	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Able to utilize and develop extensive skill in using a variety of learning resources					X			X
Able to undertake self-reflection and reflect on others, providing constructive feedback	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Can undertake independent research to a high standard					X			X
Is an independent and self-critical learner	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Engages confidently in academic and professional communication	X				X			X
Understands and analyses different psychological data					X			X
Disseminates and communicates research findings								X

## Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

### Teaching and learning strategies to enable learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

Skills are synthesized across the range of modules and in particular the 'Applying Psychology to Work & Organizations' module allows practice of consultancy skills as well as the opportunity for reflection on practice. The relationship between research, theory and practice, ethical issues and current research and professional practice developments are also addressed across modules and through personal work experiences; The use of discussion and workshops on current issues and specialized input from a range of occupational psychologists facilitates this. Professional practice skills are addressed in all modules through a focus on application of knowledge and through module assessments.

The award builds on the skills developed through the students' first degrees such as analysis, critical thinking, research design, statistics, communication and group working.

The course can be taken full-time or part-time and is delivered through a "blended" mode of delivery. This entails using an online learning environment as well as via block face-to-face teaching days. During these face to face sessions, opportunities for networking and informal group work will be facilitated to help build interpersonal relationships within the cohort. This innovative style of delivery can fit both full-time and part-time study and offers a unique opportunity to study for a postgraduate qualification in the most flexible and convenient way to suit students' circumstance and geographical location. The programme is designed to be flexible for students currently in work. Furthermore the flexible blended style allows access for students from a range of backgrounds. Some modules on this course may be of interest to people already working in organizational or business settings who may wish to undertake CPD

### Employability and Graduate Skills

As occupational psychology is focused on businesses and organizations understanding issues related to employability is central to the subject matter. Understanding the key competencies related to job success, what makes some people perform at work better than others, understanding how to work with others as a team, how to be an effective leader, what factors influence employee engagement, etc., are all key topics covered in the MSc. Furthermore, not only are these taught, but the MSc in Occupational Psychology provides students the opportunity to have the knowledge and the understanding of both the evidence and practice of these employability skills.

### Business and Employer Partnerships

The MSc Occupational Psychology at UWE not only teaches students about occupational psychology but enhances their employability through partnerships with businesses and organizations. First, we would expect that most students are currently working, second we would expect the students to demonstrate some work experience in developing their skills as occupational psychologists. However, this is not a requirement for entry. If students were not currently in employment there will be support for volunteer, internship or placement work to gain experience in organizational settings. We have a number of local organizations that have expressed an interest in having internships or placements from our students. We would see this as having a mutual benefit to both organizations and our students. Moreover, working in partnerships with businesses and organizations would hopefully lead to other fruitful partnerships through consultancy and training and the further development of our local student community. Students currently in work may also take up opportunities of gaining further experience with these opportunities although it is not compulsory.

### Student Learning

For the 15 credit modules there will be approximately 150 hours of learning, whereas for the 30 credit modules this will equate to approximately 300 hours of learning. 75% of this learning will be independent, whereas 25% will be formal scheduled learning. This scheduled learning will include online lectures and online seminars as well as some face to face seminars, demonstrations and workshops.

Students will be expected to attend scheduled timetabled sessions – these will be via online or face to face delivery. They will also be expected to engage in further reading and group based online discussions as well as independent study.

**Scheduled learning:** includes online lectures, discussions and seminars as well as face to face workshops and seminars. It will also include online or face to face supervision and work based learning time.

**Independent learning:** includes hours engaged with essential reading and asynchronous online discussions as well as assignment preparation and completion.

**Virtual Learning:** This programme will be supported by a range of online learning environments, such



#### **Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support**

as Blackboard where a wide range of course materials will be available. Students will be expected to access and engage with these materials throughout the programme.

#### **Technology Enhanced and Flexible Learning**

The MSc is delivered through blended learning. The programme will be delivered in blocks throughout a one year period for full time students, with approximately 15 days of contact time delivered across approximately 5-6 blocks of 2-3 days. In between the contact time, online materials and support will be provided utilising a range of technological led learning programmes.

#### **Professional Regulation & Interdisciplinary working**

We would seek to achieve BPS accreditation prior to the commencement of the proposed MSc, which is now possible with the recent change in BPS guidelines. It is important to us to ensure that the BPS is part of the professional regulation.

#### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Students will be encouraged to take advantage of activities taking place both within Faculty and University-wide. These will include seminar and visiting speaker series, such as the distinguished Bristol Leadership Centre Seminar Series. Students will also be informed of any relevant activities outside of University, such as BPS branch activities and Bristol Festival of Ideas, for example.

#### **Description of the teaching resources provided for students**

Teaching resources provided by the University include: technology enhanced learning including virtual environments, videos, Blackboard; a well-equipped library with extensive access to online books, journals and e-zines; comfortable teaching rooms with IT resources. Assessments that are video recorded will be supported by appropriate technological support and resources. Course resources will be a combination of: online papers to read, access to recommended reading, teaching slides, assessment briefing documents as well as an overall programme handbook and guide for each module. Furthermore, specific resources such as use of psychometrics, case studies, organizational reports etc., will also be provided to aid learning and engagement.

#### **Description of any Distinctive Features**

The BPS have recently changed the areas of focus from 8 areas to the 6 outlined above. This MSc we will be the first institution to design an MSc programme based exclusively around the new criteria. Furthermore, there is no other institution in the South West offering this course at present.

There are only three other programmes nationally that offer online or blended learning as part of their MSc Occupational Psychology provision. The programme offers a blended learning based course which, from research, is what students and employers are seeking, allowing students to gain experience whilst working alongside learning

A comprehensive review and research was conducted by the BPS in conjunction with the Division of Occupational Psychology regarding the perspective from employers of MSc. programmes in Occupational Psychology (2013). The findings suggest that in general also the key areas required for organizations are currently being taught by MSc Occupational Psychology programmes, “the skills that employers most value are not being developed by MSc students to the necessary levels (for example, consultancy skills and basic business acumen)”.

#### **Consultancy Skills Exposure:**

A key recommendation from the BPS was that MSc programmes focus on providing consultancy skills as part of the modules. This programme has been designed with a number of key workshops throughout to help develop students' consultancy skills exposure. In addition, they will be able to obtain a Test User Certificate as part of their studies. We are also assessing consultancy skills in terms of providing development feedback and pitching a stress intervention programme as well as using psychometrics.

This programme has therefore been designed with a number of key workshops throughout to help develop students' consultancy skills exposure. We are also assessing consultancy skills in terms of providing development feedback and pitching a stress intervention programme as well as using psychometrics throughout the modules on the programme. The *Applying Psychology to Work and Organizations* module also allows for the development and demonstration of key consultancy skills. Applied practitioner Occupational Psychologists input will give the consultancy perspective to the

#### Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

students on the programme.

Moreover, focusing on applied and professional practice the MSc Occupational Psychology fits well with the overall UWE vision of the “University for the Real World” and enhances further the UG and PG portfolio of applied psychology programmes already on offer. Furthermore, there is a good alignment between other faculties to promote cross disciplinary working on this programme.

#### Part 5: Assessment

Approved to [University Regulations and Procedures](#) and PSRB accreditation.

##### **Assessment Strategy**

We have designed the assessment to demonstrate the students’ achievement of the learning outcomes. The assessments themselves have been designed in line with two key overarching principles. The first principle is that there should be a variety and range of assessments; this principle is based on the belief that a varied range of assessments will be both more engaging for the students and therefore enhance the student experience and will also allow a fairer assessment of students skills (allowing students with different skills to excel at different assessment methods). The second principle is that the assessments should emulate the applied work of occupational psychologists; this principle follows the BPS outline for stage 2 occupational psychology training and is therefore based on the belief that giving students assessments which are relevant in applied work (following stage 2 criteria) will increase their employability.

This strategy should allow students to become more reflective practitioners and enhance their development throughout the programme. Furthermore, the assessment will provide a thorough grounding for students wanting to continue their careers in occupational psychology.

The programme encompasses a range of **assessment methods** including; seminar presentations, formal assessed oral presentations, research critiques, problem based learning, role-play, portfolio of reflective practice, observational reports and a dissertation. These are detailed in the following assessment map.

## Assessment Map

The programme encompasses a range of **assessment methods** as outlined below.

Taught modules are assessed using a variety of formative and summative methods. We have designed the assessment to assist student learning, to cover a variety of skills, to reflect real world practice, to engage them with the material, and to develop their personal and professional competencies. Assessment is through a variety of means including case studies and critical essays, pitches and portfolios, videos and dissertation.

### Assessment Map for MSc. Occupational Psychology

		Type of Assessment*									
		Unseen Written Exam	Open Book Written Exam	In-class Written Test	Practical Exam	Practical Skills Assessment	Oral assessment and/or presentation	Written Assignment	Report / Project	Dissertation	Portfolio
Compulsory Modules Level M	USPK7T-15-M Learning, Training & Development						A 50%	B 50%			
	USPK7V-15-M Well-being & Work				A 50%			B 50%			
	USPK7X-30-M Psychological Assessment at Work					A 50%			B 50%		
	USPK7Y-30-M Conducting & evaluating Psychological Research	A 50%							B 50%		
	USPK7U-15-M Leadership, Engagement & Motivation	A 50%							B 50%		
	USPK7W-15-M Work Design, Organizational Change & Development	A 50%				B 50%					
	USPK83-15-M Applying Psychology to Work and Organizations										A 100%
	USPJW9-45-M Dissertation									A 100%	

\*Assessment should be shown in terms of either **Written Exams**, **Practical exams**, or **Coursework** as indicated by the colour coding above.

## Part 6: Programme Structure

This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a typical **full time student**, including:

- level and credit requirements
- interim award requirements
- module diet, including compulsory and optional modules

### ENTRY

YEAR 1	Compulsory Modules	Optional Modules	Interim Awards
	USPK7T-15-M <i>Learning, Training &amp; Development</i>	<b>None</b>	PG Certificate in Occupational Psychology (60 credits)
	USPK7V-15-M <i>Well-being &amp; Work</i>		
	USPK7X-30-M <i>Psychological Assessment at Work</i>		
	USPK7Y-30-M <i>Conducting &amp; evaluating Psychological Research</i>		PG Diploma Occupational Psychology (120 credits)
	USPK7U-15-M <i>Leadership, Engagement &amp; Motivation</i>		
	USPK7W-15-M <i>Work Design, Organizational Change &amp; Development</i>		
	USPK83-15-M <i>Applying Psychology to Work and Organizations</i>		
	USPJW9-45-M <i>Dissertation in Psychology</i>		MSc Occupational Psychology (180 credits)

### GRADUATION

**Part time:**

The following structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a typical **part time student**.

YEAR 1	Compulsory Modules	Optional Modules	Interim Awards
	USPK7T-15-M <i>Learning, Training &amp; Development</i>	None	PG Certificate in Occupational Psychology (60 credits)
	USPK7W-15-M <i>Work Design, Organizational Change &amp; Development</i>		
	USPK7X-30-M <i>Psychological Assessment at Work</i>		
	USPK7Y-30-M <i>Conducting &amp; evaluating Psychological Research</i>		

YEAR 2	Compulsory Modules	Optional Modules	Interim Awards
	USPK7U-15-M <i>Leadership, Engagement &amp; Motivation</i>	None	PG Diploma Occupational Psychology (120 credits)
	USPK7V-15-M <i>Well-being &amp; Work</i>		
	USPK83-15-M <i>Applying Psychology to Work and Organizations</i>		MSc Occupational Psychology (180 credits)
	USPJW9-45-M <i>Dissertation in Psychology</i>		

**GRADUATION****Part 7: Entry Requirements**

The University's Standard Entry Requirements apply with the following additions/exceptions\*:

Applicants must have at least 2ii honours degree in Psychology or a related discipline. In exceptional circumstances, applicants with relevant work experience or further training and a strong academic background will be considered as deemed appropriate by the Programme Leader.

In order to be eligible to progress for Stage 1 training in Occupational Psychology you must have Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) status. Applicants that do not have GBC status would not be eligible, under current BPS and HCPC arrangements, to acquire stage 1 training from this MSc. Please contact the BPS or HCPC for further guidance.

**Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks**

Description of **how** the following reference points and benchmarks have been used in the design of the programme:

**QAA UK Quality Code for HE**

QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications:

The QAA Framework provides the points of reference for setting standards across various levels of education. UWE has incorporated these into its assessment and grading profiles, and this programme will adopt the Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences standard marking and assessment criteria for level M. Some of the framework aspects are more closely tied to some modules than others: these are detailed below.

**Master's degrees criteria (QAA framework):**

- A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of

## Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

study or area of professional practice

### **All modules:**

- A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.
- Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline, to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

### **Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:**

- Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

### **All modules:**

- Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

### **Holders will have:**

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

There are no QAA subject specific benchmarks for psychology at M level. However, the programme has been developed to be consistent with the March 2010 QAA document, "Masters Degree Characteristics". Furthermore, the QAA benchmarks for *psychology* are also useful. In particular the QAA (2007) benchmark statements for psychology suggest that programmes should

- aim to produce a scientific understanding of the mind, brain, behavior and experience, and of the complex interactions between these
- present multiple perspectives in a way that fosters critical evaluation
- lead to an understanding of real life applications of theory to the full range of experience and behavior
- develop an understanding of the role of empirical evidence in the creation and constraint of theory, and also in how theory guides the collection and interpretation of empirical data
- include the acquisition and knowledge of a range of research skills and methods for investigating experience and behavior, culminating in an ability to conduct research independently
- develop knowledge, leading to an ability to appreciate and critically evaluate theory, research findings, and applications.

In developing this programme the QAA Code of Practice has also been consulted. Most issues highlighted in the Code of Practice are covered by general faculty or University systems, but specific attention has been paid to Career Education Information and Guidance.

Career education, information and guidance is embedded within the curriculum, as part of the emphasis within the programme on ensuring that students not only develop skills to enhance their employability, but also are able to articulate these and know where to best utilise them. The QAA code of practice states that where career education is embedded in the curriculum, awarding institutions ensure that

## Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

intended learning outcomes contribute to the aims and objectives of the programme, clearly identify knowledge, understanding and skills, are assessed appropriately. This is clearly the case through the Applying Psychology to Work and Organizations module and teaching, in particular through the work supporting students to develop their portfolio log within this module.

For students with the appropriate academic background (Psychology degree recognized as conferring eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartership with the British Psychological Society, the Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) for M level psychology), the taught modules on this programme have been designed to meet their criteria for postgraduate training in occupational psychology.

### University teaching and learning policies

In line with the universities teaching and learning policies, this programme takes a student-centred approach to learning by allowing students to take control of aspects of their learning and providing a learning environment that stimulates active engagement and participation. The programme seeks to create an environment that will stimulate students to take responsibility for aspects of their learning, while the module team facilitate this learning. Module learning outcomes have been designed to ensure that students meet the overall programme learning outcomes on completion of the programme.

A variety of assessment methods are incorporated within the programme to cater for a diversity of approaches to learning. The programme team recognizes the importance of both summative and formative assessments and feedback as an integral part of the learning teaching process. All assessments comply with university assessment regulations, in line with this the MSc will be awarded to students who can demonstrate:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.

### University strategies and policies

A second aspect to the strategic partnership themes is around "Making Knowledge Exchange and Public Engagement thrive throughout UWE" by ensuring external facing provision is accessible, visible, and engages with interested users. As an applied discipline, occupational psychology modules are very attractive to potential students in the workplace wishing to study them as CPD. This programme gives a route to not only attract such students in, but retain them with the potential of a full MSc award.

The team comprises senior lecturers and chartered and registered psychologists who have held and do hold positions of recognition within professional bodies, including the British Psychological Society and Health and Care Professions Council.

A comprehensive review and research has been conducted by the BPS in conjunction with the Division of Occupational Psychology regarding the perspective from employers of MSc. programmes in Occupational Psychology. The executive summary is presented below; a fuller report is available.

### **BPS Report from DOP. Eight Areas Review: Horizon Scan of Current Employers of Occupational/Organisational/Business Psychologists (2013)**

*"The aim of this piece of research was to build on the OP First report and Expert Panel review, in exploring employers' views on the current MSc curriculum and any future requirements. Survey results were supplemented with focus group sessions and individual telephone interviews and the questions were structured in such a way that the results could be cross-referenced with a similar exercise that was carried out with recent graduates and those with 2-5 years' post-graduate experience.*

*The questions considered: how Occupational Psychologists (OPs) add value to employers; key emerging functions/areas where OPs would work in the future; what the unique selling points (USPs) were of OPs; the main competitors of OPs in the world of work; what employers want from OPs; the*

## Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks

*value to employers of the different qualifications (e.g. Chartered Psychologist, MSc in Occupational Psychology); how effectively the MSc programme provides individuals with the skills that employers are looking for; and how important each of the eight areas are to employers.*

*The findings suggest that in general the majority of the eight areas are still applicable to the world of work, although some areas (for example Human-Machine Interaction) are less relevant and are being replaced by other emerging areas (for example, talent analytics and 'big data'). The findings also suggest that the skills that employers most value are not being developed by MSc students to the necessary levels (for example, consultancy skills and basic business acumen)."*

This MSc is therefore in line with the requirements and needs of the sector and fits with the stakeholder views (BPS, Employers, Students).

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in module specifications, available on the [University's website](#).