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About this Statement

This document is a QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Psychology that defines what can be expected of a graduate in the subject, in terms of what they might know, do and understand at the end of their studies. Subject Benchmark Statements also describe the nature and characteristics of awards in a particular subject or area. Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as a membership organisation on behalf of the higher education sector. A summary of the Statement is also available on the QAA website.

Key changes from the previous Subject Benchmark Statement include:

- a revised structure for the Statement which includes the introduction of cross-cutting themes of:
  - equality, diversity and inclusion
  - education for sustainable development
  - employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education
- a comprehensive review updating the context and purposes of Psychology, including course design and content in order to inform and underpin the revised benchmark standards.

How can I use this document?

Subject Benchmark Statements are often used by higher education providers in the design and development of new courses in the relevant subject, as they provide a framework for specifying intended learning outcomes in an academic or vocational discipline. They are also used as a reference point when reviewing or revalidating degree courses. They may be used by external examiners in considering whether the design of a course and the threshold standards of achievement are comparable with other higher education providers. They also provide professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) with the academic standards expected of students.

Subject Benchmark Statements provide general guidance for understanding the learning outcomes associated with a course but are not intended to represent a national curriculum in a subject or to prescribe set approaches to teaching, learning or assessment. Instead, they allow for flexibility and innovation in course design within a framework agreed by the subject community.

You may want to read this document if you are:

- involved in the design, delivery and review of courses in Psychology
- a prospective student thinking about undertaking a course in Psychology
- an employer, to find out about the knowledge and skills generally expected of Psychology graduates.

Relationship to legislation

The responsibility for academic standards lies with the higher education provider which awards the degree. Higher education providers are responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them by their relevant funding and regulatory bodies. This Statement does not interpret legislation, nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements.

The regulatory status of the Statement will differ with regard to the educational jurisdictions of the UK. In England, Subject Benchmark Statements are not sector-recognised standards as set out under the Office for Students’ regulatory framework. However, they are specified
as a key reference point, as appropriate, for academic standards in Wales under Quality Assessment Framework for Wales and in Scotland as part of the Quality Enhancement Framework. Subject Benchmark Statements are part of the current quality requirements in Northern Ireland. Because the Statement describes outcomes and attributes expected at the threshold standard of achievement in a UK-wide context, many higher education providers will use them as an enhancement tool for course design and approval, and for subsequent monitoring and review, in addition to helping demonstrate the security of academic standards.

**Additional sector reference points**

Higher education providers are likely to consider other reference points in addition to this Statement in designing, delivering and reviewing courses. These may include requirements set out by PSRBs and industry or employer expectations. QAA has also published Advice and Guidance to support the Quality Code which will be helpful when using this Statement - for example, in course design, learning and teaching, external expertise and monitoring and evaluation.

Explanations of unfamiliar terms used in this Subject Benchmark Statement can be found in QAA’s Glossary. Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Statement where appropriate.
1. Context and purposes of a Psychology degree

1.1 Psychology is a broad-based discipline that encompasses a range of empirical approaches and methods of enquiry that aim to understand the mind, brain, experience, behaviour and contexts of humans and animals. The antecedents of psychology can be found in physics, biology and philosophy, but its methods of enquiry have developed not only from these disciplines but also from the humanities and other natural, social and mathematical sciences. These origins, often referred to as ‘global north’, have narrowed the lens of the discipline and restricted wider focus on the diversity of the human experience. This has had the effect of amplifying the experiences of some, while marginalising, misunderstanding and mischaracterising others. The purpose of psychology is to be an inclusive, empirically based and reflective discipline that fosters the development of local and global psychological literacy to address human, social, economic and environmental challenges, as well as building a knowledge and understanding of the fundamental premises of psychology. This Subject Benchmark Statement outlines a roadmap for psychology that is underpinned by a commitment to inclusion, ethical practice and integrity in addressing the questions and challenges facing society.

Purposes of a Psychology degree

1.2 The purpose of a Psychology degree is to develop students’ understanding of themselves, others and society. The student journey through the degree exposes students to the core domains of the discipline from their historical roots to the present day. Students learn how to use a range of empirical methods of enquiry, critically and ethically, while considering matters of conscience, and are able to interpret and share to a range of different audiences. Courses also emphasise the interconnectedness between the core domains and other disciplines, in covering theoretical perspectives and applied issues.

1.3 A key aim of a degree in Psychology is to develop students as psychologically literate citizens, who recognise the relevance of their disciplinary knowledge, understanding and skills, and can respond to local, national and global opportunities and challenges.

1.4 The British Psychological Society (BPS) accredits undergraduate and postgraduate study and training in psychology and maintains a public Directory and a List of Chartered Members. In order to become a Chartered Psychologist (C.Psychol), students need to complete an accredited programme in order to acquire the Graduate Basis for Chartered Member of the society (GBC), followed by additional postgraduate study and training. For students who have not completed an accredited undergraduate degree, conversion courses are available at master’s level. These are also accredited by BPS. Cyclical reviews and visits are conducted by BPS to ensure that accredited degrees continue to achieve the necessary standards; any changes to courses that impact the standards are also reviewed to ensure that accreditation is not compromised. This Statement, however, sets out academic standards for all bachelor’s degrees with honours whether these are BPS accredited or not.

1.5 Psychology graduates are equipped to go into further study and/or professional training or research in a variety of disciplines and domains in psychology, including other, wider, psychological workforce roles. Graduates are also employed in the public sector (such as community, health and education settings), private sector (for example, marketing, finance and human resources) and third sector (such as charity, campaigning and advocacy organisations). Graduates can also be enterprising and entrepreneurial, work within creative industries and drive forward innovation through interdisciplinary collaboration. Psychology graduates are well placed to contribute to the full range of sustainability challenges.

1.6 To become a practitioner psychologist, further postgraduate study and supervised training are required. By law (Health Professions Order 2001), anyone using the following
protected registered psychologist titles must be registered with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC), and have successfully completed an HCPC-approved course of training:

- practitioner psychologist
- clinical psychologist
- counselling psychologist
- educational psychologist
- forensic psychologist
- health psychologist
- occupational psychologist
- sport and exercise psychologist

HCPC is the regulator set up to protect the public. Other, wider, psychological workforce roles are registered by the Professional Standards Authority.

1.7 Although this Statement is a UK reference point for academic standards in Psychology, it recognises the significance and validity of international standards and relevant developments in this area.

**Characteristics of a Psychology degree**

1.8 Students studying Psychology develop a breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of topics and methods of enquiry across the core areas of the discipline. Courses are designed to develop students’ critical faculties, collaborative, communication skills and reflective skills, ethical awareness and social and personal responsibility. Valuing and respecting the perspectives of others is an important aspect of being inclusive and critical in the discipline and supports the holistic development of students.

1.9 Students studying Psychology develop knowledge and understanding, alongside attributes and skills critical to addressing challenges and opportunities - locally, nationally and globally - as set out in the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

1.10 Through participation in practical activities, experiential learning and assessment, students develop a range of employability and entrepreneurial skills, which are transferable to a variety of roles and contexts. Students may also have opportunities to study abroad and participate in credit-bearing placement activities or global classrooms.

1.11 At undergraduate level, students can study Psychology as a single honours course, or in combination with another subject or area of study, as a joint honours course where both subjects carry equal weight or as a combined joint or major/minor honours degree. Higher education providers may locate Psychology in a variety of different schools or faculties, aligning it with biological sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics. Psychology can also be aligned with other social sciences, such as business, health or education. This may lead to different emphases while still delivering the core areas required for accreditation by the professional body.

1.12 Graduates from any other discipline can also study Psychology as a conversion degree at master’s level. Successful completion of accredited conversion courses is a direct route to GBC membership of the UK professional body. This Subject Benchmark Statement applies to conversion level as well as undergraduate courses.

1.13 Duration of studies can be full-time or part-time, with variation in the minimum and maximum duration of study as determined by individual providers.
Equality, diversity and inclusion

1.14 Under the Equality Act 2010, education providers have a duty to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) into all learning opportunities. This can be achieved by designing and creating learning, teaching and assessment experiences that promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination, across all stages of the student journey. It can also be achieved by challenging historical and dominant narratives about the ‘psychological’ world that continue to be reproduced. In achieving this it is expected that future graduates of Psychology will value and incorporate equality, diversity and inclusivity into their personal and professional lives, contributing to a socially just society.

1.15 Psychology courses are historically based on research and theory from homogenous white, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic countries and do not represent diverse voices and contributions to the discipline. As a consequence, curricula often privilege a narrow range of voices (for example, white, cisgender, non-disabled, male voices) and exclude or marginalise others. This practice fails to represent the diversity of human psychology, and hence provides a narrow understanding of the discipline. Current practice also reproduces and reinforces existing narratives that facilitate inequality and marginalisation rather than challenges them.

1.16 A range of social movements such as ‘Why is my Curriculum White?’ have challenged existing practice, promoting decolonised and anti-racist curricula. It is essential that the discipline adopts a more socially just position which advances inclusivity for all, including those with protected characteristics that have often been excluded. Wider consideration of intersectionality and characteristics such as social class - not covered by the Equality Act 2010 - are critical to advancing inclusion in the discipline.

1.17 For Psychology and related disciplines, discussions of mental health and well-being necessitate extending our thinking about equality and inclusion in a manner that embraces and values diversity and belonging. It also requires us to critically reflect on the language and terminology used within the discipline and make challenges where necessary. We recognise that Psychology curricula have far-reaching consequences and the knowledge produced within higher education providers inform subsequent policy and practice. It is important that these standards clearly express the expectation that course design, curricula and the wider student experience is underpinned by a commitment to inclusion. This commitment to EDI emphasises not only the need to diversify curricula and improve representation, but to interrogate and challenge historical and dominant narratives about the ‘psychological’ world that continues to be reproduced, thereby advocating for social change.

Accessibility

1.18 The Equality Act 2010 places a legal duty on education providers to adopt a proactive rather than reactive approach where issues of accessibility of teaching, learning, assessment and the wider student experience are anticipated for disabled students. Consideration of accessibility must be considered in course design as well as planning the wider student experience.

1.19 The Equality Act compels all providers to make anticipatory reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment - be it on campus, online or part of a work placement programme - to enable all students to develop and demonstrate module and course learning outcomes.

1.20 Providers should adopt a flexible approach and discuss the specific nature of reasonable adjustments with individual students to ensure they are appropriate to them as
an individual. This is likely to involve modified or alternative forms of assessment that allow students to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes.

1.21 It is also acknowledged that structural inequalities have a negative impact on students’ educational experiences and that adopting a flexible approach is likely to improve accessibility and promote equity and inclusivity between groups of students. Good practice includes flexible approaches to create the conditions to support all students to achieve.

**Sustainability**

1.22 As a broad subject area, Psychology contributes to addressing the questions and challenges experienced locally, nationally and globally. Psychology aims to analyse, understand and explain experience, behaviour and social environments in a range of systematic approaches. The aim of a Psychology degree is to develop psychologically literate graduates who are able to purposefully apply psychological knowledge, values and understanding, as well as practical and transferable skills. The goal is to develop psychology students and graduates as global citizens who have the motivation and ability to work towards environmental integrity (cognisant of limited, finite resources), social justice (equality, fairness, sharing), economic prosperity (constrained by economic integrity and social justice) and the factors that affect their inter-relationships.

1.23

1.24 Sustainable development addresses the connections between human, economic, social and environmental factors impacting the pursuit of a better world as envisioned in the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With an understanding of the human experience, behaviour and social environments, Psychology has a clear role in responding to the challenges and opportunities expressed in all 17 of the SDGs. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) focuses on developing the knowledge, skills and values learners need to be able to be active and committed participants in shaping a sustainable present and future. UNESCO has identified a set of key competencies that are essential for addressing the SDGs and pedagogies to achieve these. These key competencies cover ways of thinking (systems, future, critical), ways of practising (strategically, collaboratively, integrated) and ways of being (self-awareness, normative, reflective).
1.25 Effective pedagogical approaches for ESD are designed to be transformative and focus on learning processes rather than products, transcending performative tendencies, building confidence and enabling action in addressing sustainable development. Transformative, learner-centred and active learning pedagogies are therefore evident in course and module design. This includes, for example, collaborative learning, enquiry-based learning, playful learning (gamification), storytelling and problem-based learning. Assessments facilitate attainment and authentic demonstration of the key competencies.

1.26 At the heart of the UN’s Agenda of Sustainable Development is the core commitment to inclusion while ensuring that ‘no-one is left behind’. This commitment is reflected in the emphasis on ethical considerations within the discipline, course and module design, the student experience and curriculum content. The contributions of psychology are critical to addressing the challenges of sustainable development, including urgent climate action, and represent an opportunity for learners and graduates to apply their psychological literacy to the problems experienced in local communities, nationally and globally.

**Enterprise and entrepreneurship education**

1.27 Enterprise and entrepreneurship education supports the development of behaviours, attributes and skills that together comprise a mindset for enabling students to add social, cultural and economic value to society.

1.28 Providing students with opportunities to develop and apply enterprise behaviours, attributes and skills - individually or collaboratively - is also likely to have a significant impact on the successful career trajectories of students. It enhances students’ employability and prepares them for changing environments (with other examples of employability skills covered in section 4). It may also lead to venture creation that has a commercial and/or social impact.

1.29 Enterprise and entrepreneurship education takes different forms and may be embedded in the core domains of the discipline, in work placements and through activities that strengthen links between academic institutions and external organisations.
2 Distinctive features of a Psychology degree

Design

2.1 Psychology can be studied as a Bachelor's degree in Science (BSc) or Arts (BA), and at a more advanced level a Master of Science (MSc) or Arts (MA). In all, the emphasis is on providing a scientific understanding of the mind, brain, behaviour as well as the experiences and contexts of humans and animals. Courses also develop in students a range of research skills and methods of enquiry for investigating these perspectives. Therefore, there is flexibility for courses to be designed in order to draw upon providers' areas of expertise, culture and ways of working. There is also design flexibility in terms of how psychology interfaces with research and practice in other disciplines.

2.2 Although there is flexibility in course design, degree titles are reflective of the content of a course, for example an undergraduate Psychology degree with Counselling will be appropriately referenced as Psychology with Counselling rather than Counselling Psychology.

2.3 Courses are designed to provide an understanding of both historical and contemporary psychological theories and research, and to prepare students for the application of psychological knowledge and skills to future issues. Historical and contemporary viewpoints will be integrated throughout the design of a course and represent culturally diverse perspectives.

2.4 Courses provide an opportunity to equip students with a broad range of subject-specific and transferable skills, preparing graduates for employment in a diverse range of occupations. Subject-specific skills are those that relate closely to the subject knowledge and/or are an integral part of any Psychology degree, and transferable skills are less tied to the subject matter of Psychology (see section 3).

2.5 Psychology courses which draw on research literature and professional practice help to guide the psychological literacy of graduates who develop confidence in addressing their personal, professional and community goals. The possession and application of such skill and knowledge are much sought after by future employers and society, locally and globally. In addition, an understanding of psychological literacy is of great value to graduates' self-awareness and personal development over their lifespan.

2.6 At the core of the discipline is ethical understanding and ethical behaviour and this is often at the heart of course design. For example, there will be a range of activities that will facilitate the comprehensive application of ethics in research, professional practice and everyday conduct. Students will be able to apply this to their own ethical behaviour as well as critically evaluating the ethical behaviour of others.

Progression

2.7 Over the course of an undergraduate degree with honours (FHEQ Level 6; FQHEIS Level 10) a Psychology student will progress from one level of study to the next, in line with the regulations and processes for each institution. However, it is expected that each level would see the attainment of knowledge, expertise and experience that build towards the final achievement of meeting the threshold-level subject-specific and transferable skills listed in this Statement. Regulations and processes will therefore ensure sufficient knowledge, expertise and experience is evidenced at each level.

2.8 Students may also study Psychology as conversion at postgraduate level.
2.9 Upon graduation from an undergraduate degree, it would be expected that a student who had achieved a second-class degree or higher would be capable of, and equipped for, undertaking postgraduate study in Psychology or an associated discipline. For some postgraduate study there is a requirement for students to have passed a BPS-accredited Psychology degree (GBC) and therefore an accredited conversion course may be studied to enable progression.

2.10 Undergraduates studying joint or combined programmes will achieve core elements of the specific and transferable skills for the subject and will add others according to the subjects covered in joint courses. Additionally, they may explore the overlap between their two subject areas, creating further opportunities for interdisciplinary study. Such courses may or may not be accredited by a professional body such as the BPS depending on the breadth and depth of psychology covered.

2.11 Integrated master’s degrees (FHEQ Level 7; FQHEIS Level 11) are available in the UK and comprise a four-year full-time course or a part-time course of not less than five and not more than eight academic years.

2.12 In a standard three-year undergraduate honours degree course, students may exit earlier and be eligible for a Certificate of Higher Education, a Diploma of Higher Education, or an ordinary degree depending upon the level and number of credits of study completed to a satisfactory standard. Scottish bachelor’s degrees with honours are typically designed to include four years of study, which relates to the structure of Scottish primary and secondary education. For students following part-time routes, their study time would be the equivalent of the three or four-year degree.

**Flexibility**

2.13 There is flexibility for courses to offer full-time, part-time and distanced modes of delivery, and the flexibility to move between these. Courses are also encouraged to provide a variety of digital, blended and/or hybrid learning opportunities, particularly to improve accessibility for students to learn at a preferred time, pace and place. Enhanced flexibility through the use of state-of-the-art technology to assist remote investigation offers new opportunities for involvement in research experiences, that may not be possible in face-to-face environments.

2.14 Courses use technology-enhanced learning to ensure that students develop skills for online learning, interaction and collaboration, which will be important during future employment in a world that increasingly requires digital skills.

2.15 There is flexibility to allow students to have an input into the design of the curriculum and assessment, with active and participatory approaches, enhanced choice, and personalisation of education providing an opportunity for enhanced student learning.

**Partnership**

2.16 Course providers work with internal and external partners to be able to offer students work-based learning and/or placement opportunities. There may be a variety of flexible, paid and voluntary options to ensure accessibility and equity of learning opportunities.

2.17 Providers collaborate with internal and external partners to provide students with enterprise and entrepreneurial skills, and the opportunity to practice these skills in relation to real-world issues. There is flexibility in terms of how such collaborations are embedded.
within courses, for example there may be opportunities in specific modules or options to work with partners on projects.

2.18 Course teams work in partnership with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies as appropriate, such as the BPS and The Health and Care Professions Council.

**Monitoring and review**

2.19 Degree-awarding bodies and their collaborative partners routinely collect and analyse information and undertake periodic course review according to their own needs. They draw on a range of external reference points, including this Statement, to ensure that their provision aligns with sector norms. Monitoring and evaluation are a periodic assessment of a course, conducted internally or by external independent evaluators. Evaluation uses information from both current and historic monitoring to develop an understanding of student achievement or inform future course planning. Students actively contribute to monitoring and review processes where appropriate and receive feedback regarding their contributions.

2.20 Externality is an essential component of the quality assurance system in the UK. Higher education providers will use external reviewers as part of periodic review to gain an external perspective on any proposed changes and ensure threshold standards are achieved and content is appropriate for the subject.

2.21 The external examination system currently in use across the UK higher education sector also helps to ensure consistency in the way academic standards are secured by degree-awarding bodies. Typically, external examiners will be asked to comment on the types, principles and purposes of assessments being offered to students. They will consider the types of modules on offer to students, the outcomes of a cohort and how these compare to similar provision offered within other UK higher education providers. Examiners will consider whether regulations ensure that all students have demonstrated adequate breadth and depth of knowledge, and application of psychology. Examiners are encouraged to comment on accessibility and equality in learning and assessment and highlight good practice relevant to sustainability goals. External examiners are asked to produce a report each year and make recommendations for changes to modules and assessments (where appropriate). Subject Benchmark Statements, such as this one for Psychology, play an important role in supporting external examiners in advising on whether threshold standards are being met in a specific subject area.

2.22 Courses with professional and vocational outcomes may also require evaluation and accreditation from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. These are usually done through a combination of site visits and desk-based reviews.
3 Content, structure and delivery

Subject knowledge and understanding

3.1 The following list of core areas reflects the current scope of Psychology. For each of the core areas, a list of examples is provided. These examples are not intended to be either prescriptive or exhaustive and it is recognised that their role in degree courses varies from provider to provider and over time. Employability skills - examples of which are provided in section 4 - are essential for psychology as a discipline and are fundamental characteristics of the core areas in any honours degree or conversion-level course. These core areas may be delivered and assessed by distinct modules or as part of an integrated structure over a number of modules.

3.2 Each core area addresses the historical and contemporary ethical issues associated with research and practice, including inappropriate applications.

3.3 Courses cover knowledge both of the areas identified and of the links between them, as well as an understanding of the use of psychological theory to answer real-world questions. Courses acknowledge the value of multiple perspectives and the inherent difficulties associated with extrapolating research conducted with the ‘global north’ samples to other cultures.

- **Biological psychology**: for example, biological bases of human and non-human behaviour, hormones and behaviour, behavioural genetics, neuroscience, psychopharmacology, acquired and developed neurodiversity, neuropsychology, comparative and evolutionary psychology
- **Cognitive psychology**: attention, perception, learning, memory, thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, metacognition, language, consciousness, artificial intelligence, cognitive neuropsychology, cognitive bias, and social cognition.
- **Lifespan psychology**: development and diversity across the lifespan (prenatal, childhood, adolescence, aging and death), including attachment, social relations, cognitive and language development and cultural development.
- **Diversity and individual differences**: diversity in personality, intelligence, cognitive style, emotion, motivation, mood, physical and mental health (including social, biological and cognitive processes), as well as positive psychology.
- **Social psychology**: decision-making in a social context, attribution, attitudes, group processes and intergroup relations, social influence, political psychology, culture, close relationships and sexualities, social constructionism, self and identities in context, and leadership.
- **Community psychology**: ecological or systems models of psychology, marginalisation, globalisation and sustainability, poverty, power, powerlessness and empowerment, equality, protest psychology, and social justice, discrimination (including ableism), citizenship and community.

Conceptual and historical issues in psychology and interdisciplinarity

3.4 Conceptual and historical issues are integral to all areas of psychology. Courses provide students with an understanding of epistemological and ontological issues to provide a foundation in the philosophy of science. Courses also address historical and contemporary positions within Psychology, and the dominance of privileged perspectives and the damage these have caused. The value of interdisciplinary approaches is recognised.
Methods of research and enquiry

3.5 Research design, methods of enquiry and practice are integral to Psychology. Students obtain a sound knowledge of, and demonstrate an ability to use, a range of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods appropriately and responsibly. Knowledge and understanding of how to operationalise research questions, investigate psychological phenomena and select appropriate measures is required. In particular, this includes the ability to design, obtain, analyse, and disseminate evidence. Such knowledge and understanding are best acquired and demonstrated through extensive and progressive empirical work in laboratories (physical or virtual) and naturalistic settings through all stages of a degree.

3.6 Courses acknowledge the context in which research is conducted and the value of an inclusive approach, for example through introducing participatory action research and expert practitioners. Ethical issues are addressed at the design, data collection, and dissemination stages of research, including the accurate representation of research findings. Students also develop an understanding of the value of being self-reflexive as a researcher, as well as the ethical consequences of research.

3.7 Research approaches adopted by each core area can be outlined in course content. For example, in the context of Diversity and Individual Differences, psychometric tests may be covered - with a critical appraisal of their use, limitations and historical origins.

3.8 Psychology students learn the basic principles of sound ethical data collection and socially responsible research - for example, principles of open science and pre-registration. Given the broad theoretical scope of Psychology, rigorous specialist training is required to engender a critical understanding of the role of research design and enquiry, the choice of research methods employed, and the analytic approach taken, for developing, testing and refining psychological theories and understanding.

Skills

3.9 Psychology provides an opportunity for students to develop a rich and diverse range of attributes, drawing on skills that are associated both with studying the humanities (for example, critical and reflective thinking and writing), social sciences (qualitative and quantitative analysis) and other sciences (hypothesis-testing and quantitative analysis).

3.10 In addition, the nature of the discipline, and the kinds of learning opportunities that it provides, allows students to develop and practice a range of transferable skills which can be underpinned by their own formal knowledge of psychological processes. Examples include communication skills for enhancing knowledge of theories of learning, critical thinking for underpinning knowledge of cognitive biases, and teamwork for supporting knowledge of group processes.

3.11 Transferable skills are less closely tied to the subject matter of psychology; these are covered in paragraph 4.6. While the distinction between subject-specific and transferable skills is not clear-cut, psychological training allows subject-specific understanding to lead to enhanced transferable skills, as noted in paragraph 4.2. In addition, many of the subject-specific skills, including research design, methods of enquiry and data analysis, have direct application in professions outside Psychology, and many of the transferable skills are essential in the work of a professional psychologist.

3.12 Together, the development of these subject-specific and transferable skills enhance students’ employability. Subject-specific and transferable skills are of benefit to the local, national and global economy across a range of sectors and industries. The application of
these skills also benefits communities and the environment. Students can effectively articulate the value of specific skills, how these can be applied in different contexts and how these skills contribute to their own well-being.

**Subject-specific skills**

3.13 On graduating with an honours degree in Psychology, students are able to:

- apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues, recognising that psychology involves a range of methods of research and enquiry, theories, evidence, interpretations and applications
- integrate ideas and findings across multiple perspectives and approaches in psychology and apply psychological knowledge ethically, professionally and safely to real-world problems (for example, sustainable development)
- identify, contextualise and evaluate diverse patterns in behaviour, psychological functioning and experience
- generate and explore appropriate psychological hypotheses and research questions drawing on relevant theory, research and practice
- design studies and collect new research data
- apply a variety of methods of inquiry, such as experiments, observation, questionnaires, psychometric tests, interviews, focus groups, creative methods or secondary data analysis
- understand and appreciate the value of participatory and/or action research and user involvement in research and community and peer research
- analyse, present and evaluate quantitative, qualitative data and mixed methods data and critique research findings
- employ evidence-based reasoning and examine practical, theoretical and ethical issues associated with a range of methods of inquiry
- use and critique a variety of psychological tools, including specialist software, laboratory and field equipment, and psychometric instruments
- critically and reflectively evaluate psychological theory and research
- carry out an extensive piece of empirical research that requires students individually to demonstrate a range of research skills, including planning, considering and resolving ethical issues, analysis and dissemination of findings.

**Transferable skills**

3.14 On graduating with a degree in Psychology, students are able to:

- communicate effectively using a range of verbal and/or non-verbal methods to include responding inclusively in a manner sensitive to the needs and expectations of others as well as delivering information
- demonstrate numerical reasoning skills including the analysis, presentation and interpretation of quantitative data
- demonstrate the analysis, interpretation and presentation of qualitative data
- be digitally literate through the use of online databases and analytic software, and digital approaches to personal and professional development
- understand the ethical, practical and legal issues associated with the digital collection, management, storage, processing, sharing and presentation of information
- retrieve and organise information found in a range of sources (for example, academic books, policy documents and non-academic sources) while recognising the different perspectives and influences that amplify or marginalise certain forms of knowledge and evidence
• demonstrate inclusive and collaborative working and reflect on the value of engagement with a variety of views in reaching consensus in solutions to problems.
• reflect on and articulate personal strengths and areas for development and identify how these may be addressed
• take ownership for own learning, employability and development, including effective personal planning and project management skills.

Teaching and learning

3.15 A degree in Psychology covers specific subject knowledge (including core areas of the discipline), subject-specific skills and transferable skills, with a particular emphasis on conducting and reporting empirical research - including an independent research project.

3.16 Courses are designed to ensure that students acquire the skills and knowledge outlined above, and need to demonstrate that the learning, teaching and assessment methods are fit for that purpose. It is recognised within psychology that there are a variety of ways in which material can be delivered, with developed skills including opportunities for students to shape and co-create aspects of their learning and assessment.

3.17 Teaching and learning through engaging in practical work within the discipline covers a wide variety of methodologies, and includes quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. The practical elements expose the student to a range of core domains and encompass both collaborative group work and independent research.

3.18 Course delivery equips students with the ability to apply ethical principles from the discipline across a range of contexts, not only in conducting ethical research but also ethical conduct in professional practice and social responsibility. The teaching of these values will be based upon the guidance on appropriate ethical knowledge and practice at undergraduate level as published by the BPS.

3.19 Teaching and learning strategies help students to demonstrate an awareness of the values and expectations expressed by relevant professional and regulatory bodies (such as the BPS and the Health and Care Professions Council).

3.20 Learning and teaching approaches involve a progression from initially scaffolded and guided study to more independent, collaborative and self-directed study, enabling graduates to take a critical and contextualised stance to theories, findings and approaches of the discipline.

3.21 Throughout Psychology courses, the emphasis is on active learning and the acquisition of both transferable and subject-specific skills and abilities. The emphasis is on transformative change with the aim of enabling students to build confidence and acquire self-knowledge, and psychological literacy for the purpose of participating in positive action locally and internationally, for example towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

3.22 Many different forms of learning and teaching are encouraged in Psychology. They include:

• lectures
• laboratory classes
• workshops
• seminars
• tutorials
• independent study
• working collaboratively
• project supervision.

3.23 Problem-based learning, team-based learning, experiential learning, student-led learning and work-based learning (for example, placements and fieldwork) are also considered good practice for the development of transferable and subject-specific skills.

Assessment and feedback

3.24 Assessment and feedback enable students to develop and demonstrate a full range of knowledge, skills and attributes through individual and group work.

3.25 Courses provide a coherent assessment and feedback strategy which considers the range and level of assessments employed in relation to facilitating the attainment of learning outcomes and skills development both at a modular and course level. Throughout their studies students obtain and build upon clear, constructive feedback that is integrated across the degree course.

3.26 A diversity of assessment methods is encouraged to promote inclusivity. The choice of assessment methods clearly relates to the learning outcomes they seek to develop and measure. Assessment methods may include essays, practical reports, reflective reports, presentations and examinations. Authentic and innovative assessments such as case-studies, portfolios, artefacts and blogs are encouraged. Assessments oriented towards a variety of academic and non-academic audiences (such as information leaflets and websites) are considered to be good practice.

3.27 Assessment criteria are clearly articulated and related to the module and course learning outcomes. It is good practice for assessments to be collaboratively negotiated with students and relevant interested parties.

3.28 Assessments help students to monitor and reflect on their own development and also lead to the progressive development of transferable skills and competencies - such as critical and dialogic thinking skills.

3.29 A graduate of Psychology will have successfully completed a series of practical reports throughout their course, culminating in an empirical project or equivalent reporting on a substantial piece of research. The project typically involves the collection of original quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods data from participants, or equivalent alternatives such as computational modelling or secondary data analysis.
4 Benchmark standards

Introduction

4.1 This Statement sets out the minimum threshold standards that a student will have demonstrated when they are awarded an honours degree in Psychology, or a master’s conversion degree. Achievement can be mapped to four key categories:

- knowledge
- understanding
- subject-specific skills
- transferable generic skills.

4.2 Achievement can be mapped to four key categories: knowledge, understanding, subject-specific skills and transferable generic skills. Within each category a series of criteria depict more specific achievements. The standards within this Statement further illustrate achievement that goes beyond threshold level, extending to typical, higher and excellent.

4.3 Students will undertake a variety of assessments matched against the learning outcomes for their particular curricula of study, which allows them to achieve the standard required and to develop and demonstrate characteristics associated with higher levels of learning of a bachelor’s degree with honours. At the base level the classification means that students will have achieved the characteristics of Level 6 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Level 10 in Scotland of the respective qualification. The standards also provide a reference point for setting and maintaining academic standards for Psychology conversion courses at Level 7 (FEHQ) or 11 (FQHEIS), although outcomes for these courses must ultimately align with the appropriate levels on the Qualifications Frameworks.

4.4 The vast majority of students will perform significantly better than the minimum threshold standards. Each higher education provider has its own method of determining what appropriate evidence of this achievement is and can refer to Annex D: Outcome classification descriptions for FHEQ Level 6 and FQHEIS Level 10 degrees. This Annex sets out common descriptions of the four main UK degree outcome classifications for bachelor's degrees with honours in Psychology: 1st, 2.1, 2.2 and 3rd.

4.5 The study of Psychology includes specific aspects of knowledge, understanding, and subject-specific skills while also allowing for the development of transferable generic skills. Alongside consideration of Annex D as stated above, subject-specific descriptors for Psychology in the stages of progressive learning are amplified in the following table. The purpose of this amplification is to show that while all students will meet the threshold level, some students may achieve at higher levels either vertically or horizontally. For example, a student might achieve higher levels in knowledge and understanding, but not necessarily in subject-specific skills, which may remain at threshold levels.
Threshold level

4.6 Graduates are able to accomplish the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threshold level</th>
<th>Stages of progressive learning and achievement – Threshold standard in Psychology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Knowledge (threshold understanding appropriate to the level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding (fundamental)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject-specific skills (no psychology domain competencies/practice skills will be measured or assessed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transferable generic skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td><strong>Attain</strong> psychological knowledge both theoretically and practically via instruction, observation, and self-directed learning (through any or all modes: campus-based, online or blended learning).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Identify</strong> what needs to be known about psychology, and why it needs to be known at this level of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sift</strong> information appropriately to find significant areas of psychological knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grow</strong> their psychological literacy, especially how this is applied in context in the widest application locally, nationally, and globally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Comprehend</strong> the scientific underpinnings of psychology as a discipline, its historical origins, development and their limitations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Take account</strong> of psychological literacy and how this relates to studies and the wider application of the subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grasp</strong> the inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning and its significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Apply</strong> what is known and understood about psychology both theoretically and practically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrate</strong> what has been learnt about psychology through practical application across assessments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Reason</strong> in a scientific mode and understand the role of evidence in making rational judgements about the premise of psychology, and the arguments in psychology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Construct</strong> and test a hypothesis and research questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Adopt</strong> different perspectives and analyse the relationships between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Communicate</strong>: Strong verbal and/or non-verbal communication skills utilised to communicate and respond to ideas and research. Design and deliver presentations and reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Employ</strong> clear and concise verbal and/or non-verbal communication skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Problem-solve</strong>: utilising techniques to clarify questions, consider alternative solutions, evaluate outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Contemplate</strong>: issues and make decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Work in groups</strong> and teams while respecting turn-taking, differences of opinions, and responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover systematic knowledge of a range of influences on psychological functioning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify where areas in psychology interrelate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognise several specialised areas and/or applications, some of which are current thinking within the discipline.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain psychological knowledge and information, once gained, upskill and keep abreast of knowledge-based learning where required, especially in areas of identified weaknesses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ techniques, for the systematic examination and evaluation of psychological texts, to retain knowledge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationalise why core areas of psychology are studied and in what contexts these might be applied.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring to the forefront issues relating to EDI.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say why sustainability is important across the subject and practice of psychology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be aware of the importance of ethics and ethical approval of research practices and how to apply for ethical approval.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply digital literacy in the context of psychology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detect different patterns in behaviour and account for their significance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognise the subjective and variable nature of individual experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake ethical research following ethical principles and protocols across psychological subject matter and research.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect data samples adhering to ethical guidance for psychological investigations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put forward research findings in both quantitative and qualitative methods for the appropriate level of study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake supervised research in specific areas of psychology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use subject-specific software and equipment for learning and research purposes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct reviews of relevant psychological literature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake group work in psychological contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw conclusions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make recommendations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate report format to present findings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take charge of their own learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use and manipulate data: interpret and use numerical, textual and other forms of data.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be IT literate, for the purposes of furthering their own learning and in the analysis and presentation of ideas and research findings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ appropriate ethical consideration and behaviours for the situation in hand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor and maintain personal well-being.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Build** their systematic knowledge of a range of research paradigms, methods of enquiry and measurement techniques, including statistics and probability, and be aware of their limitations.

**Realise** what is known or something that is a process that can be learnt (how to do something) or the informed reasoning in decision making (the why).

**Be acquainted** with the concept of psychological literacy and how this positions the subject.

**Disseminate** psychological research findings.

**Be able** to apply for ethical approval on an individual basis.

**Assessment**

Fair assessment strategies clearly map onto the learning outcomes, and provide full coverage of the above descriptors. All of the core psychology content is assessed and passed at the appropriate level.
## Typical level

4.7 Graduates are able to accomplish all of the Threshold level alongside any criteria from the following:

| Typical level | Stages of progressive learning and achievement  
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Category      | Knowledge (depth and breadth)  
|               | Understanding (complete)  
|               | Subject-specific skills  
|               | Transferable generic skills  

| Criteria | Gain both depth and breadth in the knowledge of psychology, both theoretical and applied via instruction, observation, and self-directed learning (via campus-based, online, or blended learning).  
|          | Enquire into specific subject matter in a way that makes psychology accessible and retainable.  
|          | Map the main 'go to' publications within the subject and develop skills in identifying and accessing these.  
|          | Scientifically rationalise the current main requirements of psychology to inform rational thinking and reasoning in decision making.  
|          | Offer explanations to clarify the language and discourse used within the discipline, especially in terms of acronyms and jargon.  
|          | Debunk myths around specific subjects within the discipline.  
|          | Rationalise the significance of the inclusion of certain psychological topics, why these are studied, and in what  
|          | Be psychologically literate.  
|          | Foster approaches to address local and global approaches to the premises in psychology in relation to human engagement.  
|          | Reason scientifically, understand the role of evidence in making critical judgements about the premises and the arguments in and around psychology.  
|          | Adopt multiple perspectives in psychology and systematically analyse the relationships between them.  
|          | Detect meaningful patterns in behaviour and evaluate their psychological significance.  
|          | Recognise and account for the subjective and variable nature of individual experiences.  
|          | Reason and be objective  
|          | Think critically  
|          | Use emotional intelligence.  
|          | Take charge of their own learning and monitor their own progress in line with SMART targets.  
|          | Reflect upon personal strengths and weaknesses for the purposes of future learning.  
|          | Listen actively using a range of sense modalities and then respond appropriately.  
|          | Recognise and respond to the needs of others in work/study situations.  

Note: This typical standard is the Expected Level of Achievement for BPS entry into the professional route and the eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC).
| **Be aware of** what needs to be known about psychology, what is appropriate to the level of study, and why it needs to be known. |
| Continually refresh psychological knowledge and related information. |
| **Be mindful** and self-aware in order to address boundaries of knowledge and areas of identified weaknesses in subject-specific areas. |
| **Pass on** psychological knowledge with confidence. |
| **Identify** capabilities and transferable skills developed through the core psychological areas. |
| contexts these can be applied. |
| **Critically conceptualise** a range of influences on psychological developments, how they are conceptualised across the core areas of psychology, and how these interrelate. |
| **Reason** the importance of engaging in contemporary debates relating to global sustainability, and act in a sustainable manner. |
| **Consider** the implications of EDI in relation to psychology in terms of power relations and unconscious bias and discrimination. |
| **Critically reflect on** historical concepts and theories in psychology to explore the ramifications of these in and for current thinking in psychology and different approaches to psychology. |
| **Be aware of** the reasons for gaining ethical approval |
| **Pose and critique** research questions. |
| **Demonstrate** substantial competence in research skills through practical activities. |
| **Reason** analytically and demonstrate competence in a range of quantitative and qualitative methods. |
| **Initiate**, design, conduct and report an empirically-based piece of research under appropriate supervision, and recognise its theoretical, practical and methodological implications and limitations. |
| **Be aware** of ethical principles and approval procedures and demonstrate these in relation to personal study, particularly with regard to the research project or equivalent, and be aware of the ethical context of psychology as a discipline. |
| **Undertake** ethical research following ethical principles and protocols across psychological subject matter and research. |
| **Substantiate** research findings in both quantitative and qualitative methods for the appropriate level of study. |
| **Collect** data samples adhering to ethical guidance. |
| **Substantiate** research findings. |
| **Apply** ethical consideration to specific contexts. |
| **Adopt** appropriate behaviours. |
| **Adopt** practices to support own well-being and the well-being of others. |
| **Articulate** all skills sets gained and their relevance to different contexts and situations. |
| and adopting ethical practice for specific research and the consequences of not undertaking such approval and practices. | **Draw conclusions** and make recommendations to further develop inferences. |
| Grasp the importance of wider capabilities and employability skills gained while studying psychology. | **Integrate** the ethical considerations for the subject and the profession into research and their wider applications. |
| | **Use** subject-specific software and equipment for learning and research purposes. |
| | **Conduct** reviews of psychological and psychologic-related literature. **Engage and contribute** to group work in psychological contexts to produce outcomes. |
| | **Disseminate** psychological research findings and suggest further investigations. |

**Assessment**

Fair assessments strategies clearly map onto the learning outcomes, and provide full coverage of the Knowledge, Understanding, and Specific skills descriptors. All of the core psychology content is assessed and passed at the appropriate level.
Higher level

4.8 Graduates are able to accomplish all of the elements from the Threshold and Typical levels alongside any criteria from this Higher level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stages of progressive learning and achievement – advanced standard in Psychology education for the level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Knowledge (comprehensive)</strong> <strong>Understanding (full)</strong> <strong>Subject-specific skills (no psychology domain competencies will be measured or assessed)</strong> <strong>Transferable generic skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td><strong>Gain</strong> knowledge both theoretically and practically with examples including instruction, observation, and self-directed learning. <strong>Expand</strong> systematic knowledge of a range of research paradigms, research methods and measurement techniques, including statistics and probability, and be aware of their own and others’ limitations. <strong>Absorb</strong> a wide range of psychological theoretical models, facts and case studies. <strong>Comprehend</strong> the main requirements of psychology to inform reasoning in decision making. <strong>Consider</strong> the implications for psychology through a wide range of psychological theoretical models, facts and case studies. <strong>Comprehend</strong> the purpose of understanding psychology and how this relates to thinking and being. <strong>Grasp</strong> the fundamental concepts for rationalising psychology in relation to thinking and being. <strong>Integrate</strong> theory and its relevance to core psychological skills. <strong>Apply</strong> psychological factual information to reason within and across contexts, making significant connections and showing comprehensive application of subject knowledge. <strong>Display</strong> to peers, supervisors and mixed audiences a comprehensive grasp of the main requirements of psychology to inform reasoning in decision making. <strong>Engage</strong> in the practical application of psychology to demonstrate the ability to relate subject directly to task. <strong>Apply</strong> critical thinking skills to address relevant psychological issues and offer solutions. <strong>Employ</strong> clear and strong verbal and/or non-verbal communication skills utilised to communicate and respond to ideas and research. <strong>Design</strong> and deliver presentations and reports in line with audiences’ needs and expectations. <strong>Lead groups</strong> and teams and encourage debate and interaction. <strong>Ensure</strong> consistency in the standard of work. <strong>Put forward</strong> own opinions. <strong>Scrutinise and challenge</strong> the opinions of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engage</strong> with and retain a wide range of psychological material in the core domains.</td>
<td><strong>Be able</strong> to articulate the ethical considerations for the subject and the profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflect</strong> on the significance of recent psychological knowledge.</td>
<td><strong>Put forward</strong> psychological arguments and concepts coherently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explain</strong> the ethical considerations for the subject and the profession.</td>
<td><strong>Integrate</strong> the ethical considerations and ethical procedures for the subject and the profession into research, spanning the depth and breadth of subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explain</strong> the implications for ethical approval and ethical practice for both the subject and the profession, locally, nationally and globally.</td>
<td><strong>Lead</strong> debate involving online and/or face-to-face dialogue, while encouraging turn-taking in groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Be aware</strong> of and sensitive to contextual and interpersonal factors in groups and team working and be able to set boundaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Evaluate</strong> personal strengths and weaknesses and those of others for the purposes of future developments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Critically evaluate</strong> points of contention, concepts, and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Solve</strong> problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Assessment** | Fair assessments strategies clearly map onto the learning outcomes, and provide full coverage of the Knowledge, Understanding, and Specific skills descriptors. All of the core psychology content is assessed and passed at the appropriate level. |
## Excellence level

4.9 Graduates are able to accomplish all elements from the threshold, typical and higher levels alongside any criteria from this Excellence level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellence level</th>
<th>Stages of progressive learning and achievement – Excellence attainment in Psychology education for the level. This level is particularly relevant for master’s conversion courses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Knowledge (principal driven and lead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Gain knowledge both theoretically and practically outside of what is being taught that is relevant to psychology via self-directed learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage with specialist subject areas and/or applications, some of which are at the cutting edge of research in the discipline of psychology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impart recently acquired psychological knowledge with a range of audiences.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies</td>
<td>Critical rationale of concepts and theories in psychology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diligently examine psychology and how this relates to thinking and being from an ontological perspective.</td>
<td>Demonstrate a commitment to the ongoing development of psychology by continuing to advance knowledge, understanding and research competence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain importance of EDI and its global perspectives, including global diaspora of race and cultures, anti-racism, poverty and deprivation, widening participation, decolonisation of antiquated imperial and colonial systems-awareness.</td>
<td>Lead group work in psychological contexts using a range of communication methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain debates and concepts around sustainability and appropriately apply these to psychology.</td>
<td>Employ critical thinking skills to address relevant psychological issues and offer possible solutions to complex issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend the wider implications for ethical approval and ethical practice for both the subject and the profession, locally, nationally and globally.</td>
<td>Apply the ethical considerations and ethical procedures for the subject and the profession into research and their wider applications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment**

Fair assessment strategies clearly map onto the learning outcomes, and provide full coverage of the Knowledge, Understanding, and Specific skills descriptors. All of the core psychology content is assessed and passed at the appropriate level.
4.10 The study of Psychology requires that students be fully prepared and equipped for the workplace so that they can utilise their psychological literacy and apply both their psychology skills and wider skills in a variety of employment contexts. Therefore, it is not simply about embedding employability into the curriculum but about extracting what occurs naturally within the psychology curriculum and, importantly, articulating this for students.

4.11 First, students should be taught to both recognise and articulate the employability innate within the subject study of Psychology and how this aligns to specific types of employment. Fundamentally, by recognising this, the students will be made aware of possibilities. Second, by being able to articulate this, students will be able to persuade future employers that they have the right skills set for their chosen/desired employment destination. It is important that students understand the transparency within their subject for the longer term. Third, grasping the wider value of their Psychology qualification and its applied nature in relation to the skills learnt, they will understand that study in the subject is not simply the accumulation of their acquired knowledge for the sake of it. Finally, the following specific descriptors show the employability aspect of psychology and how these can be contextualised.

4.12 Employability is relevant to all Psychology students, especially those that move directly into employment following their undergraduate studies, but also those students who will undertake further studies before entering their chosen profession. The acquisition of employability skills is fundamental to social mobility and equality of opportunities for all students of Psychology. Inclusion means that employability is a central component for psychology as a discipline, as through employment students will be able to disseminate and practically apply the skills acquired for the benefit of organisations and individuals alike. The following are the essence of those extracted skills.

**Extracted employability skills**

- analyse factual information from different sources and distinguish fact from opinion to rationalise approaches
- sort and classify information in relation to required filters
- collect and analyse data and offer statistical breakdown
- identify any relevant issues to the current contexts
- understand the importance of engaging in contemporary debates relating to global sustainability and act in a sustainable manner
- understand the relevance of psychology to contributing to the challenges of sustainable development locally, nationally and globally
- draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the information presented
- apply critical thinking skills across a myriad of situations
- present an argument being aware of its strengths and limitations
- use a variety of communication skills across different modes of communication
- use clear and concise written communication skills
- be digitally literate and utilise those skills to perform tasks
- employ ethical research skills
- undertake tasks independently and meet objectives
- lead and/or work in a team to achieve set goals, and taking responsibility for assigned roles
- use people management skills within project and/or group contexts
- apply enterprise and entrepreneurial skills
- undertake self-directed work and study
- monitor the well-being of themselves and others
- be inclusive and responsive and embrace the hands, hearts and minds approach.
Postgraduate study

4.13 Following on from undergraduate master’s conversion studies, are a variety of other postgraduate qualifications in psychological professions.

4.14 Postgraduate qualifications in Psychology set out the requirements for professional training in Psychology. The content of such courses is very much determined by the specific domain in Psychology with Stage One and/or Stage Two courses of study. Stage One is designed to prepare students in the core skills required to progress onto the Stage Two professional training routes for a particular domain. Stage Two professional training courses of study are designed to be sufficiently flexible in content and structure to adapt readily to current and future needs and to the emergence of new knowledge in the specific domain of psychology and its related fields.

www.bps.org.uk/accreditation
www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/mental-health/psychological-professions

Award nomenclature

4.15 It is important that all postgraduate study in Psychology accurately reflects the level of students/trainees’ achievements, represents appropriately the nature of the field(s) of study undertaken and is not misleading, either to potential employers or to the general public. Hence postgraduate study in specific domains of Psychology reflect the discipline of study in the course title. Furthermore, the course provider must ensure that students are made aware that the psychological professions regulated by the HCPC have one or more designated titles that are protected by law and professionals must be registered to use them. More information regarding the protected titles is available at the following link:

www.hcpc-uk.org/about-us/who-we-regulate/the-proessions

4.16 Other wider psychological workforce profession routes in Psychology may also require qualified individuals in their specific area to be placed on a professional register regulated by the Professional Standards Association and the relevant professional body.
5 Membership of the Advisory Group

Membership of the Advisory Group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Psychology 2022

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Membership of the review group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Psychology (2019)

The fourth edition, published in 2019, was revised by QAA to align the content with the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education, published in 2018. Proposed revisions were checked and verified by a member of the review group of the Subject Benchmark Statement for Psychology from 2016.

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University of Huddersfield; Chair of BPS Division of Academic Researchers and Teachers of Psychology
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Membership of the original benchmark statement group for Psychology (2002)

Details below are as published in the original Subject Benchmark Statement for Psychology.

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