

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### KEY FACTS

Programme name	Research Methods with Psychology
Award	MSc
School	School of Arts and Social Sciences
Department or equivalent	Department of Psychology
Programme code	PSRMAP
Type of study	Full Time
Total UK credits	180
Total ECTS	90

### PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The programme provides training in psychological research methods, including research design, statistical methods, and relevant software, but also offers a range of supplementary options from several other psychology masters programmes. The course comprises seminars, lectures, computing and statistics classes, and an individual research project/dissertation.

The programme draws on our other MSc programmes, especially the MSc in Behavioural Economics (particularly for generalized linear model /regression training, undertaken using e.g. R software), the MSc in Clinical, Social & Cognitive Neuroscience (particularly for programming/ computational modelling training, undertaken using e.g. Matlab software) and our school-wide MSc Research Methods programme (particularly for qualitative methods training, e.g. phenomenological, narrative and discourse approaches). Optional modules introduce psychological content with a less methodological focus in order to provide a broader context for the methods that are being taught. They come from the programmes mentioned above and also our other MSc course (in Organisational Psychology).

This programme covers an array of methodological content which will provide you with the skills necessary to engage in research in public or private-sector organisations, or alternatively continue on to a PhD in preparation for an academic research career. By offering modules from several masters programmes, this course will allow you to gain broad-ranging research skills that leave your future options open, whilst allowing you to engage with a range of students on more specialised programmes, thus providing specific practical examples to help ground abstract research concepts.

Typically, you will complete the entire course, leading to an MSc award. However, the programme is designed with three possible exit points:

1) PG Certificate. You can achieve this award through the successful completion of 60 credits worth of taught modules. At this stage, you will have achieved substantive critical understanding of at least one methodological approach, typically alongside

knowledge of core theories and concepts in at least one area of advanced psychological content.

2) PG Diploma. You can achieve this award through the successful completion of 120 credits worth of taught modules. At this stage, you will have systematic understanding of several methodological approaches, with the ability to synthesise this knowledge within and across research areas. You will have the capacity to formulate, design, analyse and critique research projects bearing on current issues in a range of psychological content areas.

3) MSc. You can achieve this award through the successful completion of 120 credits worth of taught modules, plus a dissertation (carried out primarily in the summer period). In addition to the expectations of the PG Diploma (above), you will have demonstrated the ability to design and implement a substantial piece of scientific research addressing a question of current psychological relevance using one or more state of the art research methods.

### Aims

The programme aims to:

- (1) Provide you with advanced knowledge of the research process across a range of disciplines covering primarily quantitative but also some qualitative methods.
- (2) Provide you with in-depth training on the conduct and management of psychological research from inception to completion.
- (3) Provide you with up-to-date knowledge in several areas of psychological investigation to help you to develop meaningful research questions.
- (4) Enable you to acquire expertise in the use and application of the methods of data collection and analysis.
- (5) Provide you with learning opportunities to critically evaluate research methodology and findings.
- (6) Enable you to be reflexive about your role and others' roles as researchers.
- (7) Enable you to become skilled in the formulation of theoretically informed research questions and their translation into practical research designs.
- (8) Provide you with the skills necessary to present your findings in a structured and informative way.
- (9) Enable you to address your own capacity to develop as a professional researcher in academia, business, government or the voluntary sector, and equip you with an enthusiasm for acquiring new skills and a recognition of the opportunities for further study and life-long learning.

### **WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?**

**On successful completion of this programme, you will be expected to be able to:**

#### Knowledge and understanding:

- Understand and apply key approaches of psychological research, particularly the experiment.
- Identify and evaluate methodological principles in the design of different types of research.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the strengths and limitations of several methods of data collection.
- Show critical knowledge of data analytic techniques and sampling theory including their appropriate application to research design and analysis.
- Demonstrate advanced psychological knowledge in one or more of the following subject areas: Occupational Psychology; Behavioural Economics; Neuroscience.
- Decipher the relationship between evidence and theory in a wide range of different contexts, and synthesise converging evidence to evaluate theory.
- Understand the ontological and epistemological foundations of social research.

#### Skills:

- Demonstrate the ability to clearly support and articulate a research question and to plan, implement and evaluate a range of different methodological approaches to its investigation.
- Show an advanced and practical expertise to handle a range of research methods such as experiments, surveys, interviewing, data management, quantitative analysis and modelling.
- Critically summarise key areas of the psychological literature
- Systematically relate scientific research to practical matters in areas such as Occupational Psychology, Behavioural Economics, Clinical Neuroscience, and Medicine
- Exhibit accurate and critical reading and exposition.
- Display self-reliance and the ability to manage time and work to deadlines when working both independently and in groups
- Conduct library, Internet and database searches in a systematic and critical manner, and gather and organise information from a range of different sources.
- Challenge received explanations of research findings and construct grounded and coherent arguments for any rival explanations.
- Apply advanced numerical and quantitative skills relevant to research.
- Exhibit advanced IT skills such as programming and use of statistical analysis software.
- Communicate well and present research in a manner suitable for a range of audiences.

#### Values and attitudes:

- Identify and respect ethical issues in social research.
- Appreciate the importance of honesty in the conduct of scientific research.
- Appreciate the value of the scientific approach to the study of mind and behaviour.
- Appreciate the importance of a sceptical mindset in the pursuit of scientific truth
- Respect individual differences.

#### **HOW WILL I LEARN?**

The general approach to teaching and learning in this programme is through a combination of lectures, interactive sessions, practical workshops and small group classes, including individual and group presentations. Thus, you are expected to give presentations, to engage in discussions designed to encourage you to reflect on issues raised in the lectures, to expand further specific topics, and to develop your communication skills. You are encouraged to undertake extensive reading in order to understand the topics covered in lectures and classes and to broaden and deepen your knowledge of the subject. The teaching and learning process is supported by resources available on City's virtual learning environment, Moodle, and by a personal tutorial system, as well as the welfare services provided by City.

## **WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?**

### Assessment and Assessment Criteria

Assessment of the Programme outcomes is done by coursework (i.e. assessed essays and assignments, for example stats tests, research proposal presentations, and programming exercises), unseen examinations, and a summer dissertation.

Assessment Criteria are descriptions, based on the intended learning outcomes, of the skills, knowledge or attitudes that you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured. Grade- Related Criteria are descriptions of the level of skills, knowledge or attributes that you need to demonstrate in order to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured and placed within the overall set of marks. Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria will be made available to you to support you in completing assessments. These may be provided in programme handbooks, module specifications, on the virtual learning environment or attached to a specific assessment task.

### Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in line with our Assessment and Feedback Policy. In particular, you will normally be provided with feedback within three weeks of the submission deadline or assessment date. This would normally include a provisional grade or mark. For end of module examinations or an equivalent significant task (e.g. an end of module project), feedback will normally be provided within four weeks. The timescale for feedback on final year projects or dissertations may be longer. The full policy can be found at:

[https://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/68921/assessment\\_and\\_feedback\\_policy.pdf](https://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/68921/assessment_and_feedback_policy.pdf)

### Assessment Regulations

In order to pass your Programme, you should complete successfully or be exempted from the relevant modules and assessments and will therefore acquire the required number of credits. You also need to pass each Part of your Programme in order to progress to the following Part.

The taught part of the course (i.e. Part 1) contributes 120 out of 180 credits (67%) while the dissertation (i.e. Part 2) contributes the remaining 60 credits (33%). The credit value of each module determines their weighting in the aggregation of marks for a Part.

The Pass mark for each module is 50%. Many modules require both an overall mark of 50%, and a mark of at least 50% on each of the assessment components (e.g. essay and exam), but in some cases a mark of 40% may be acceptable for one or more assessment components so long as an overall mark of 50% is achieved. Further details are provided in each module specification.

If you fail an assessment component or a module, the following will apply:

1. Compensation: where you fail up to a total of 20 credits at first or resit attempt (15 for a Postgraduate Certificate), you may be allowed compensation if:
  - Compensation is permitted for the module involved (see the What will I Study section of the programme specification), and
  - It can be demonstrated that you have satisfied all the Learning Outcomes of the modules in the Programme, and
  - A minimum overall mark of no more than 10% below the module pass mark has been achieved in the module to be compensated, and
  - An aggregate mark of 50% has been achieved overall.

Where you are eligible for compensation at the first attempt, this will be applied in the first instance rather than offering a resit opportunity.

If you receive a compensated pass in a module you will be awarded the credit for that module. The original component marks will be retained in the record of marks and your original module mark shall be used for the purpose of your Award calculation.

2. Resit: where you are not eligible for compensation at the first attempt, you will be offered one resit attempt.

If you are successful in the resit, you will be awarded the credit for that module. The mark for each assessment component that is subject to a resit will be capped at the pass mark for the module. This capped mark will be used in the calculation of the final module mark together with the original marks for the components that you passed at first attempt.

If you do not meet the pass the requirements for a module and do not complete your resit by the date specified you will not progress and the Assessment Board will require that you be withdrawn from the Programme.

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme, the Assessment Board will consider whether you are eligible for an Exit Award as per the table below.

If you would like to know more about the way in which assessment works at City, please see the full version of the Assessment Regulations at:

[http://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0003/69249/s19.doc](http://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/word_doc/0003/69249/s19.doc)

## WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?

### Master's Degree:

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	120	66.7
Dissertation	7	60	33.3

Class	% required
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With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

### Postgraduate Diploma:

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	120	100

Class	% required
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With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

### Postgraduate Certificate:

Part	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	60	100

Class	% required
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With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

## WHAT WILL I STUDY?

### Taught component (Part 1)

You will take five core modules (PEM104, PEM107, SAM005, PSM207 and PSM208) totalling 75 credits. The Autumn term contains 30 credits of core modules, and the Spring term contains 45 credits of core modules. You will also take three elective modules worth 45 credits. To balance your workload, you should expect to take 30 credits worth of elective modules in the Autumn term and 15 credits in the Spring term. Hence the total number of credits for the taught modules is 120, typically divided 60/60 between the Autumn and Spring terms.

Please note that not all electives will be offered in any given year.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Behavioural Research Methods: Design and Analysis	PEM104	15	C	N	7
Applied Econometrics and Psychological Research	PEM107	15	C	N	7

Methods					
Research Methods & Programming	PSM207	15	C	N	7
Statistical Models	PSM208	15	C	N	7
Applied Qualitative Research Methods	SAM005	15	C	N	7
Qualitative Research Methods	SAM004	15	E	N	7
Multivariate Data Analysis	SAM009	15	E	N	7
Fundamentals of Cognitive Science	PEM106	15	E	N	7
Psychological Processes: Individual and Social	PEM103	15	E	N	7
Principles of Neuroscience: Brain anatomy, techniques and paradigms	PSM201	15	E	N	7
Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience	PSM202	15	E	N	7
Mental Health, Wellbeing and Neuroscience	PSM203	15	E	N	7
Work Design, Organisational Change and Development	PSM502	15	E	N	7
Research, Design & Analysis	PSM403	15	E	N	7
Research in organisations	PSM510	15	E	N	7
Epidemiology	ECM214	15	E	N	7

### Dissertation component (Part 2)

To be eligible for the MSc, you must complete a 60 credit dissertation. You will have to complete your dissertation by late September.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Psychology Research Methods Dissertation	PSM515	60	C	N	7

### **TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?**

Possible career paths for graduates of this course include academic research (usually following a PhD) or work involving central and local government agencies, public health, the voluntary sector, market/media research, or management consultancy.

If you would like more information on the Careers support available at City, please go to: <http://www.city.ac.uk/careers/for-students-and-recent-graduates>.

### **HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?**

You should have or expect to gain a first or upper second-class honours degree with

psychology or a related discipline as a main field of study. Applications are also welcome from those with experience of working in a relevant area.

#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

For students whose first language is not English, the following qualifications will meet the English language requirement for entry to a postgraduate course of study:

- A first degree from a UK university or from the CNA
- A first degree from an overseas institution recognised by City as providing adequate evidence of proficiency in the English language, for example, from institutions in Australia, Canada or the USA.
- GCE O-level/GCSE English language or English literature, grade C minimum.
- An overall score of 7.0 in the English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum of 6.5 for each subtest.
- Other evidence of proficiency in the English language which satisfies the board of studies concerned.

#### OVERSEAS QUALIFICATIONS

Equivalent qualifications from an overseas university will be considered.

#### IT SKILLS

You are expected to be computer literate.

#### **RPL/RPEL Requirements**

You may apply for RPL/RPEL for a minimum of one module and a maximum of 25% of the overall credits for the programme (taught modules only).

Exemptions are not awarded for programmes/qualifications that were awarded five years ago or longer, prior to the enrolment date for the intended programme of study at City. Programmes/qualifications which were awarded over five years ago may be considered towards RPL/RPEL requests if you can provide supporting evidence which gives an account of ways in which learning achieved through the programme/qualification has been applied actively and updated within the past five years.

Former students of City who have been withdrawn from a programme due to academic failure are not normally permitted to RPL/RPEL any awarded credits back onto the same programme within the School.

Version: 5.0

Version date: March 2017

For use from: 2017/18

#### **Appendix**

#### **HESA and JACS code information**

Please see

[http://www.hesa.ac.uk/component/option,com\\_studrec/task,show\\_file/Itemid,233/mnl,12051/href,JACS3.html/](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/component/option,com_studrec/task,show_file/Itemid,233/mnl,12051/href,JACS3.html/) for the full list of JACS codes and descriptions.

<b>CODES</b>		
<b>HESA Cost Centre</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Price Group</b>
104	Psychology & behavioural sciences	C2
<b>JACS Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
C831	The study of the techniques, methodology and statistical procedures used in psychology.	62.5
C800	Psychology	37.5