Msc Psychological Science (conversion) FAQs

Who is the Programme designed for?

The Psychology (Conversion) MSc is suitable for people who have at least a 2:1 honours degree in a science subject (or equivalent qualification GPA 3.0 or above) that is either:

a) NOT an Undergraduate degree in Psychology (but in another science subject),

b) IS a Bsc Undergraduate degree in Psychology, but one that isn't accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS).

c) An Msc degree.

It is aimed at people for whom BPS accreditation is important - i.e. those who want to go on to try and train as a practitioner, such as Clinical, Health, Occupational, Forensic, Sports and Exercise, Educational and Counselling Psychologists.

Importantly, this programme is not designed as on-demand learning, but an accredited programme with specific learning outcomes, and time-limited deadlines that require communication, teamwork and engagement.

The programme is only delivered full time at this time and is recommended for those students able to balance this workload effectively with other work and life commitments. The requirements of accreditation mean that this programme may not be as flexible as other programmes that are not accredited. If you currently work full time and have other significant personal/caring responsibilities, please feel free to discuss the suitability of this programme for you with the Programme Director.

Does successful completion of the MSc Conversion programme confer Chartered Psychologist (C.Psychol) status?

The University of Glasgow’s MSc Psychology (Conversion) is accredited by the BPS which means that following successful completion you are eligible to apply for BPS accredited Postgraduate courses (you cannot apply for these without a society accredited BSc or MSc qualification).

Successful completion of the programme does NOT mean that students leave with C.Psychol. C.Psychol is a Chartered Psychologist title only awarded by the BPS.

Completing the conversion course is the first step in that process, but you would then need to complete a further accredited postgraduate qualification (e.g., PhD in Psychology; Clinical Psychology Doctorate, DEdCPsy (Educational Psychology) AND then apply and pay for membership of the BPS. This programme is the first steppingstone on your pathway into psychology and we would recommend reviewing the resources provided by the BPs for further information: [https://careers.bps.org.uk/](https://careers.bps.org.uk/)

How long does the Programme take?

The programme is delivered over approximately 12 months across 1 academic session. Session dates can be found here [https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/senateoffice/sessiondates/](https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/senateoffice/sessiondates/). The programme cannot be achieved in less time than this due to the need to fulfil requirements for a BPS-accredited conversion course. Over semesters 1 and 2 (Sept-March) you will take core and optional coursework modules. Exam periods are in December, April and May. You will start work on the dissertation in Semester 2 and submit the dissertation in August.
How is each semester structured?

The Msc Psychological Science (conversion) programme consists of a series of core and optional courses taken over one academic session. An example of a typical timetable can be found in the link to the programme handbook on the PGT Msc Psychological Science webpage. Note that timetables are subject to change. Core courses form the basis of our BPS accreditation and include; • Research Methods, • Individual Differences, • Cognitive Psychology, • Physiological Psychology, • Social Psychology, • Human Development. Along with the core courses, students will choose three optional courses from a range of topics details of which can be found on the PGT Msc Psychological Science webpage. These topics may include Counselling Psychology, Principles of Clinical Psychology, Autism, Health Neuroscience, but are subject to change and contingent upon staff availability. Students will also undertake a supervised Research Project (dissertation) which is the final component of the BPS accreditation.

Can I work part time and complete the programme/how many hours per week would I need to study?

Alongside the great flexibility of academic study there are unique challenges in a conversion programme that may differ from your previous experiences. This is especially important in a conversion course as you may not have prior background in Psychology or related disciplines. Each semester consists of 10 teaching weeks, followed by an examination period. The amount of study you undertake will likely vary between weeks and will be influenced by your broader work/life demands. As an approximate guide, you will take 60 credits worth of coursework/exams per semester (apart from the Dissertation which is 60 credits). Each 10 credits of coursework approximates 100 intended hours of instructional materials, guided activities, and independent study over the course of the semester. Thus, each semester students complete approximately 600 intended hours (60 credits) worth of assessments. Over the 10 weeks within each semester this may equate to 35 hours per week, however these hours might be distributed somewhat unevenly across semesters, depending on optional course choices and major assessment milestones. Therefore, you are advised to plan ahead for assessment as appropriate.

As this is a full-time programme of study please do consider how these activities might balance with any work and your other commitments, as well as your preferred methods of learning and time-management. We will endeavour to provide all formative and summative assessment deadlines at the beginning of academic sessions to facilitate your long-range planning, with changes to these made only in response to extraordinary unforeseen circumstances. If at any point you find yourself struggling to keep with course content, you are encouraged to contact relevant teaching staff, the programme director, or pastoral support/counselling services.

What kinds of study and learning methods will I experience in the programme?

Across the programme you will experience a variety of different learning methods supported by our world-renowned teaching teams, resources from the University’s Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Services (LEADS) Team, and full access to the University’s Library catalogue and resources.

Teaching methods throughout the programme may include lectures or seminars/tutorials, asynchronous discussions and debates, guided activities and practical demonstrations, formative activities with peer or tutor feedback, and formal summative assessments with tutor feedback. A significant amount of your learning hours will take the form of guided independent study - time spent reading, researching, reflecting and preparing for assessments. Throughout the programme there will be opportunities to join live seminar and tutorials with your peers and tutors.

Within the academic and practical skills in our programme is a fundamental focus on professional skills and psychological literacy. Just some of these fundamental skills will be academic writing, critical evaluation, timeliness, and collaborative group work. These skills are core to the requirements of BPS accreditation and enhance your future employment aspects. These are not skills that can be explicitly taught, but rather skills that you gain through experiences, discussion, use of your knowledge and reflection. Although they may seem challenging at first,
opportunities to explore and develop these skills are built throughout the entirety of your programme and will be supported by services like LEADS, Career Services and our own workshops and advice sessions.

How will I be assessed?

A variety of assessment methods are used, and these will differ depending on the subject matter of different courses. These will consist of both formative and summative milestones and individualised as well as collaborative work. Formative activities will guide you to keep to a recommended pace or series of milestones to support your progression through semester, allow opportunities for peer and/or tutor feedback, as well as opportunities to reflect on your learning and understanding up to that point. Summative assessments are more formal evaluations of your learning that are tied to specific deadlines, awarded grades, and formal tutor feedback. Summative assessments include but are not limited to essays, critical reviews, scientific reports, case study reports, portfolios and podcasts. Critical and reflective scientific writing will be present throughout all courses on this programme.

Are there any specialised streams?

The optional courses allow students to specialise in either psychology and cognitive neuroscience or clinical psychology. Students who specialise also have the opportunity to do their dissertation in a topic area related to their specialised stream. Students can also choose not to specialise and have a wide range of optional courses to choose from. This is a BPS-accredited programme and many students use it as a stepping-stone for further and more specialised psychological study. The optional courses taken do not have a bearing on your future career path but may provide insight and facilitate your interest in particular realms of Psychology.

What if I experience sudden changes in my circumstances that may disrupt my studies?

If you experience any significant disruptions to your study (short- or long-term) you are strongly encouraged to discuss this with the Programme Director in complete confidence as soon as you are able. Further information about Good Cause and requirements for the award of a Masters degree can be found in the programme handbook link.

What's the nature of the work required in the dissertation?

For the dissertation project you will be paired with a member of staff as your dissertation supervisor. Where possible, and contingent upon staff availability, you will be paired with a supervisor whose research activities align with your interests. The nature and scope of your dissertation project will then be negotiated with your supervisor and will take into account their research activities, your interests, and your developed skillset to-date. Some projects may involve acquiring new skills and experiences. This will be supported by your supervisor but is significantly driven by your own independent contribution. You will be expected to work continuously throughout the dissertation, communicate openly with your supervisor, and meet a series of formative deadlines and milestones for certain activities within this project. These milestones will include, but are not limited to, developing a project proposal, applying for ethical approval, analysing data and interpreting results. Your research project will culminate in a written dissertation as the major summative assessment piece for this course, and a core component of BPS accreditation requirements.
Can I conduct research in collaboration with research teams in other Universities/Institutions?

There may be possibilities for collaboration with other universities, but this would need to be mutually agreed with your supervisor. They will guide you in selecting a project that is manageable so that you have the best opportunity to do well.

Can I obtain letters of recommendation from this programme?

You can absolutely request letters of recommendation from the programme. The most common people that students would request letters of recommendation from would be the dissertation supervisor, academic adviser, or programme director. The dissertation supervisor will probably know you the best since you will work most closely with them. For this programme, the Programme Director is also your academic adviser.

Are there support services for learning or academic writing?

Upon commencement of the programme you will be given access to two key resources;

Resources developed by Learning Enhancement and Academic Development service (LEADS) to help you develop Academic Study Skills within our Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle. Here you will find resources guiding you in how to source information in your writing, critical reading, academic writing, and presentation skills.

The College of Science & Engineering also employs an Effective Learning Adviser and International study adviser whose role it is to assist students including mature students and international students, to maximise their potential. The Effective Learning Adviser runs regular study skills workshops and students may self-refer or be referred by the course organiser for one to one sessions.

Should I prepare or study before I start the programme?

Many students applying to this programme have a diverse range of background experience and bring a multitude of different skills with them. This may or may not include skills and knowledge that is foundational to degrees in Psychology. Prior to the programme commencing you may wish to spend some time exploring or consolidating information that will support your studies in the programme, and potentially alleviate any anxiety about exploring a new academic field. Keep in mind this is optional and you are not expected to have completed any work or reading prior to starting the programme.

There are many open-source textbooks that will be helpful to familiarise you to foundational language and terminology in Psychology: [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/subjects/psychology](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/subjects/psychology)

Statistics and research methods are areas that can be particularly daunting to many students who are not familiar with them or have not engaged with them in a while. You will be instructed in this material as part of the programme and fully supported as you progress, however before commencing the programme you may wish to explore some of this in advance, and in particular the programming language, R, used for quantitative research methods. To this end you may wish to explore the Overview and Chapters 1 and 2, one of the teaching resources you will use on the programme: [MSc Data Skills and Statistics book](#)

For further reading on research methods and statistics see also [https://nobaproject.com/browse-content](https://nobaproject.com/browse-content)

[Khan Academy statistics series](#) (YouTube)

[An Introduction to Psychological Statistics](#) (open textbook)

[Research Methods in Psychology](#) (open textbook)