

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Master of Science in Applied Social Psychology**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2009**.

The aims of the programme are:

- to promote an extensive knowledge and critical awareness of current developments in the forefront of Applied Social Psychology;
- to develop the students' competence in the original application of this knowledge to a wide range of applied contexts (including health, organizational, and educational settings);
- to advance the students' conceptual understanding to a level where they can critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;
- to equip students with analytical and research skills necessary to carry out advanced research and to master complex problems often arising in professional employment;
- to develop the students' methodological and statistical skills, promoting them to a level of advanced numeracy indispensable for advanced research and many professional positions;
- to develop further the students' written and oral communication skills, required for further research and many senior professional positions;
- to hone a range of other transferable skills, e.g. how to organise complex information, critical analysis, deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, solve problems in a self-directed and original fashion, plan and implement tasks autonomously, work to deadlines, thought leadership.

The programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks), or two years of part-time study (104 weeks). The programme consists of 7 courses. They are designed to give students in-depth insights into topical issues and the latest research in Social Psychology in a wide range of applied settings. Courses are taught with an emphasis on group discussions and the development of independent thought and analysis, appropriate to such an advanced level of study. The research project offers students the opportunity to carry out an independent piece of research of high quality, in an area of interest to them.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes, all on a level appropriate for MSc:

Knowledge and understanding

- An advanced knowledge of psychology in applied settings;
- A familiarity the social psychology of interethnic relations;
- An awareness of how the social identity perspective can be applied to organizations;
- An appreciation of advanced techniques in social and behavioural research;
- An insight into advanced statistics for psychology.

Skills and other attributes

Students following the programme will gain the ability to:

- critically evaluate the quality of applied psychological research;
- carry out original research projects independently, including conception, literature review, study design data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, and dissemination (applicable to MSc only);*
- communicate clearly in both written and oral form;*
- work collaboratively within a group;*
- work to deadlines;*
- apply their advanced numerical skills to a range of issues;*
- approach problems logically and systematically.*

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning are mainly by means of sessions lasting anywhere between one and a half and five hours. These would typically combine periods of seminar discussion and practical exploration or workshops. Where possible, these are student-led, with participants being encouraged to devise exercises engaging with the relevant issues and to direct their fellow-students in these experiments. In some contributing modules, students will give oral presentations which form part of their formative assessment. Summative assessment is mainly by extended essay, although written exams are more appropriate to the modules focussing on methodology and statistics. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

Where weightings are indicated in brackets, these refer to weightings within the MSc. The programme structure for the PGDip is as below, with the exception that students will not undertake the dissertation. Weightings for courses within the PGDip are proportionate, but exclude the dissertation.

Full-time students

In the Autumn term, students take:

- The social psychology of interethnic relations (12.5% weighting)
- Topics in psychological science (12.5% weighting)
- Advanced statistics for psychology (12.5% weighting)

In the Spring term, students take:

- Social identity in organisations (12.5% weighting)
- Advanced techniques in social and behavioural research (12.5% weighting)

During the Autumn and Spring Term students take:

- Psychology in applied settings (12.5% weighting)

During the Spring and summer terms students take

- Research project (25% weighting)

Part-time students

Students will normally cover three taught courses in their first year, and three taught courses in their second year (however, this will be open to negotiation with the student; for instance it might be desirable

and possible for them to cover 4-5 taught courses in their first year, and the remaining taught courses in the second year). The research project would also be prepared and completed in the second year.

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Progression and award requirements

To pass the programme a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks between 40-49% can be condoned in courses which do not constitute more than 25% of the final assessment, provided that the overall weighted average is at least 50.00%, but a failure mark (i.e. below 50%) in the dissertation cannot be condoned.

The Masters degree with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 65.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Masters degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 60%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Diploma** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50% and has either chosen not to proceed to the dissertation, or has failed the dissertation on either the first or second attempt. Failure marks in the region 40-49% are not usually condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, but if they are, such condoned fails would be in courses which do not constitute more than 25% of the final assessment.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 65.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 60%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

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Student support and guidance

- The Programme Director can advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues (if the latter are sufficiently severe, students will be referred to relevant personnel). The Programme Director is available for consultation within office hours. You may also consult your personal advisor.
- All staff teaching on the course are available via their e-mail, and addresses are published in the programme handbook.
- Detailed student handbook and course resources.
- The Department's postgraduate Induction sessions for incoming students in the first week of the Autumn term, aligned with the College's induction procedures.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and the IS Services Centre.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service Liaison Officer. The Department also arranges careers events for undergraduates. Many of these events might be interesting to MSc students also, and they are welcome to participate on a voluntary basis.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, RHI , Health Centre and the Education Support Unit for students with special needs.
- A staff/student committee is held each term which undergraduate and postgraduate student representatives are invited to attend. Minutes of these meetings are posted on the Department webpages.

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Admission requirements

1. A Bachelor's or Master's degree with at least a 2.1 or Merit in the UK system (this is the second highest classification after a First/Distinction). Academic results from non-UK institutions, and applications from non-standard applicants will be assessed individually. The degree does not necessarily have to be in psychology, as long as the requirements described in point 2 below are met.

2. Usually students must have taken and passed a minimum of one module of 'statistics' and 'social science research methods' at either undergraduate or postgraduate level as the programme requires familiarity with topics such as hypothesis testing, statistical significance, means, standard deviations, distributions, t-test, correlations, variables and measurement.

3. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. For further details please refer to the [Prospective Students](#) web page. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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Further learning and career opportunities

The programme will equip students with knowledge about cutting edge developments and issues in Applied Social Psychology, as well as an array of analytical, methodological, and statistical research skills. These skills will be useful for pursuing further academic research such as a PhD or a research assistantship, and it is anticipated that many of the course participants are planning to go down this career path. However, many skills which the programme will equip the students with are transferable, and will also add value in settings of non-academic employment (e.g. numeracy, how to organise complex information, critical analysis, work to deadlines, thought leadership). For further details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. The Department of Psychology was ranked joint 5th in the top 10 universities in the country in terms of proportion of 3* and 4* research, with 70% of its research profile being of 3* and 4* standard.

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List of programmes with details of teaching arrangements, awards and accreditation

The programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway and by contracted external NET staff, and the Masters leads to an award of the University of London. The Postgraduate Diploma leads to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. The programme is not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The Banner programme codes are given in parentheses.

Master of Science Programme in Applied Social Psychology

MSc in Applied Social Psychology (2341)

Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Social Psychology

PG Diploma in Applied Social Psychology (2434)

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