

Programme Specification for MSc Occupational/Business Psychology

This document applies to Academic Year 2025/26 onwards

Table 1 Programme Specification for MSc Occupational/Business Psychology

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3.	Programme accredited by	British Psychological Society (BPS) for MSc Occupational Psychology
4.	Final award or awards	MSc
5.	Programme title	MSc Occupational Psychology MSc Business Psychology
6.	Pathways available	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	MSc Occupational/Business Psychology- Taught UW campus MSc Business Psychology - Taught UW campus and Hong Kong Management Association (HKMA)
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Full and Part-time Block Delivery (Weekends) 12 months full time, part time 2-3 years recommended.
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	This programme of study meets the QAA descriptor at Master's level QAA Master's Degree Characteristics (February 2020); the descriptor for a higher education qualification at Level 7 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) ; BPS Division of Occupational Psychology Standards for Accreditation
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	Re-approved June 2019 August 2019, AQU amendments to Section 19 August 2020 – Updates and AQU amendments July 2021 – Accessibility requirements added August 2021 – AQU amendments August 2022 – AQU amendments July 2023 – annual amendments September 2024 – annual amendments

12. Educational aims of the programme

These programmes aim to provide students with an understanding of the application of psychology to the workplace which may be useful to students wishing to start/further careers in psychology, business, marketing and human resources. There are two programmes offered to students, dependent on a student's entry qualifications. The programmes are co-delivered, with the only difference in teaching being the Research Analysis module due to differences in students' prior education and knowledge on entering the course. The programmes utilise block teaching, designed to give students the opportunity to combine work and study, thus enabling peer learning from experience.

MSc Occupational Psychology

The MSc Occupational Psychology is only open to those students who hold a psychology degree with Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC), which indicates accreditation by the BPS of their undergraduate degree programme. The MSc Occupational Psychology is ideal for those students wanting to train further to become Registered Occupational Psychologists. The seven areas covered in the British Psychological Society (BPS) Division of Occupational Psychology (DOPTC) syllabus are:

1. Psychological Assessment at Work
2. Learning, Training and Development
3. Leadership, Engagement and Motivation
4. Well-being and Work
5. Work Design, Organisational Change and Development
6. Research Design, Advanced Data Gathering and Analytical Techniques
7. Applying Psychology to Work and Organisations

To become a Registered Occupational Psychologist and to be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) students must undertake the Stage 2 Qualification in Occupational Psychology (QOccPsy). This qualification is run by the British Psychological Society (BPS). The MSc Occupational Psychology is an accredited Stage 1 qualification that provides students with the knowledge and research components required before undertaking Stage 2 training. More information about how to access Stage 2 training will be provided as part of the course and can be found on the BPS website.

The British Psychological Society's Division of Occupational Psychology Training Committee accredits Occupational Psychology masters courses. This accreditation means that all students who pass the course and have a GBC accredited first degree in psychology gain the knowledge and research components of the Stage 2 QOccPsy. The process of Chartership consists of a number of stages, all of which are predicated on candidates being qualified for the Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) with the Society.

MSc Business Psychology

The MSc Business Psychology is open to students with a non-BPS accredited psychology degree or non-psychology related degree. Psychology has long been applied to the workplace and has become one of the main professional practice areas for occupations such as Business Psychologists, personnel managers, human resource managers and any manager/supervisor of staff. Applications of the major theories and models of business/occupational psychology occur in the practices of, for example; personnel assessment, selection and training; the design of work environments, implementation of training interventions; management of careers. The Business Psychology route is designed to develop the key knowledge and skills required for a career in these professions.

Programme Aims:

1. To provide students with a systematic understanding of the seven areas of occupational/business psychology, as defined by the DOPTC Syllabus, and a critical awareness of current problems at the forefront of discipline.
2. To provide students with a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to applied research and advanced scholarship in the field of Business/Occupational Psychology.
3. To develop originality in the application of knowledge together with a practical understanding/ application of theoretical and research skills necessary to practice successfully in Business/Occupational Psychology.

4. To develop transferable skills that students will be able to utilise to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively and communicate their conclusions clearly.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Table 2: Knowledge and understanding outcomes for module code/s

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s	Award
1	Apply a systematic understanding of knowledge and critical awareness of all seven areas of occupational psychology within the DOPTC syllabus, which is informed by the forefront of both the academic discipline and professional practice.	All taught modules	PGDip MSc
2	Demonstrate a comprehensive critical understanding of research methods and statistical techniques and their application to advanced research and scholarship in business/occupational psychology.	MPSY4182 MPSY4184	PGCert PGDip MSc
3	Synthesize conceptual understanding that enables the application of appropriate theories and tools to both academic and applied settings.	MPSY4180 MPSY4181 MPSY4185 MPSY4186 MPSY4187	PGCert PGDip MSc
4	Use self-direction and originality in identifying needs, analysing needs, formulating solutions and evaluating strategies within the context of business/occupational psychology.	MPSY4180 MPSY4185 MPSY4187	PGCert PGDip MSc
5	Critically evaluate current research methodologies and advanced scholarship in occupational/ business psychology, and where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.	MPSY4182 MPSY4184	PGCert PGDip MSc
6	Demonstrate initiative, reflective practice and personal responsibility when working alone and with others on applied problems or tasks.	MPSY4167 MPSY4186	PGCert PGDip MSc
7	Make clearly justified and explained decisions in complex applied situations, using systematic and creative methods to communicate their conclusions clearly.	MPSY4181 MPSY4186	PGCert PGDip MSc
8	Plan and carry out a significant research project through the creative application of advanced methodologies to develop new insights or understandings within the discipline and communicate this to professional standards.	MPSY4000	MSc

Learning, teaching and assessment

The programmes adopt a student-centred approach to teaching and learning that utilises theoretical knowledge and practical skills, building on the student's strengths, interests and experiences.

Teaching

The programmes utilise face to face delivery with modules being supported with the use of online reading materials. There is an emphasis on self-directed autonomous learning with students applying learning outcomes and content to their own areas of interest or practice which is evidenced through a variety of module assessments.

Teaching within the course aims to be engaging for students with formal approaches such as lectures being interspersed with discussion, debates, analysis of cases, and examples from organisational settings. Learning approaches may include the use of Blackboard Collaborate, online discussion forums and flipped classrooms which expect students to complete independent work in preparation for teaching sessions to reinforce learning.

Sessions take a variety of formats and are intended to enable the application of learning through discussion and small group activities. Seminars enable the discussion and development of understanding of topics covered in lectures and are focused on developing subject specific skills and applied individual and group project work. Tutorials are a key aspect of the learning strategy with student being encouraged to share their assessment plans with tutors and peers, allowing structured questions and feedback. Tutorials can be face-to-face or utilise technologies such as Skype.

When undertaking the dissertation module, a supervisor will also be allocated for additional support in the last semester. Timetabled group support sessions as well as individual tutorials will be used for supervision of the independent research dissertation.

Contact time

The programme is taught across two-day blocks on a Friday and Saturday, each 15 credit module being four days in total, and the 30 credit module being eight days in total. Full time students complete all eight taught modules across two semesters, four modules per semester, plus the dissertation within a third semester in one academic year. Part time students select which modules and how many they want to complete in each year, with their dissertation in the final year.

In Hong Kong teaching hours will be structured around a three-day block weekend basis and delivered as a full-time programme only.

In the final semester when students will normally be undertaking the dissertation, they will have less classroom contact time in order to do more independent study. Individual supervision will be provided on a one to one basis of a total of 8 hours.

It is expected that a full-time student will be spending 37 hours per week engaged in study which will, in a normal week, include a combination of taught sessions and independent study.

Independent self-study

In addition to the contact time, full time students are expected to undertake around 24 hours of personal self-study per week. Part time students are expected to undertake around 6 hours of personal self-study per module per week. Typically, this will involve completing online activities, reading journal articles and books, working on individual and

group projects, undertaking research in the library and online, preparing coursework assignments and presentations, and preparing for examinations.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

Teaching staff

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes staff from a variety of Psychology backgrounds including Occupational/Business Psychology, Counselling, Coaching and Research.

For students studying in Hong Kong learning, teaching, assessment, tutorial support, preparation, marking and moderation will be shared on a 50:50 ratio across the course from University of Worcester and HKMA staff. All the HKMA staff will be [Registered Lecturers](#) with University of Worcester. Each module will have a designated module leader from both UW and HKMA to offer support and input into the module.

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy, and as at January 2018, 75% per cent of UW course lecturers have a higher education teaching qualification or are Fellows of Advance HE.

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments both within the UK and Hong Kong. Each module, on both sites, has one or more formal or 'summative' assessment which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade.

Assessment methods include a range of coursework assessments such as essays, reports, project plan, presentations and a dissertation. Submission of assignments and feedback is managed electronically through Blackboard.

The precise assessment requirements for an individual student in an academic year will vary according to the mandatory and optional modules taken, but a typical formal summative assessment pattern, for a full-time student on both sites, for each year of the course is:

Semester 1

- 1 Research proposal
- 1 Analysis of Research data
- 1 Design of a training programme
- 1 Design of a selection process
- 1 Reflective log

Semester 2

- 2 Case study
- 1 Group presentation
- 1 Consultancy report
- 1 Reflective log

Semester 3

- Dissertation

The precise assessment requirements for part time students will vary according to the modules selected.

All assignments, from both UK and HKMA, will be internally marked and moderated as well as being externally examined as per the [UW assessment policy](#). All assignments are submitted electronically, with feedback focusing on areas of strength and development needs, with advice for feeding forward to future assignments. Feedback takes a range of formats, including written comments, peer feedback, discussions with staff and audio recorded comments.

14. Assessment strategy

The assessment strategies adopted in the MSc Occupational/Business Psychology reflect the aims of the course and the Master's Degree Characteristics - QAA Guidance on Writing Masters Courses and make a significant contribution to learning. The assessment strategies are designed to develop skills and knowledge in business/occupational psychology and provide evidence of the students' progress and achievement throughout the course and prepare the students for careers in business/occupational psychology. Both formal (summative) and informal, developmental, (formative) approaches will be used.

In order to develop the skills of advanced study identified within the course aims and the DOPTC syllabus, students will experience a variety of assessment strategies. These include case studies, essays, fieldwork studies and presentations (individual and group), and reports. The opportunity for students to demonstrate independence in a sustained piece of work is provided in the completion of the Dissertation. E-learning through the use of Blackboard will be utilised to support student learning between taught sessions, including the use of tests and knowledge checks.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The syllabus of the course is designed to cover the BPS requirements for a Masters in Occupational Psychology. A full version of the BPS requirements can be found [here](#).

The Award Maps for these programmes are shown below:

MSc Occupational Psychology (BPS accredited), for students entering the course with a GBC, and MSc Business Psychology:

Table 3: award map for each level of the course

Module Code	Module Title	Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)			
		Credits (Number)	PG Cert	PG Dip	MSc
MPSY4182 (MSc Occupational Psychology) OR MPSY4184 (MSc Business Psychology)	Advanced Research Analysis 1 OR Advanced Research Analysis 2	15	M	M	M
MPSY4185	Psychological Assessment at Work	15	M	M	M
MPSY4186	Work Design, Organisational Change and Development	15	O	M	M

MPSY4187	Learning Training and Development	15	O	M	M
MPSY4180	Wellbeing and Work	15	O	M	M
MPSY4181	Leadership Engagement and Motivation	15	O	M	M
MPSY4167	Professional Skills Development	30		M	M
MPSY4000	Dissertation	60			M
Total Credits		180			
PG Certificate To be awarded the PG Cert Occupational/Business Psychology students must successfully complete 60 credits at level 7. This must include MPSY4182 Advanced Research Analysis 1 (Occupational Psychology) or MPSY4184 Advanced Research Analysis 2 (Business Psychology), and MPSY4185 Psychological Assessment at Work; plus 30 credits from the optional modules as indicated in the award map above.					
PG Diploma To be awarded the PG Dip Occupational/Business Psychology students must successfully complete the PG Cert plus MPSY4167 Professional Skills and a further 30 credits of taught modules from the award map above.					
Masters MSc To be awarded the Masters, students must complete a total of 180 credits at level 7 including 60 credits from the Dissertation.					

16. **QAA and professional academic standards and quality**

The MSc in Occupational/Business Psychology is modular and part of the University of the Worcester (UW) [TCRF \(Taught Courses Regulatory Framework\)](#). These programmes have been developed in line with the [QAA Master's Degree Characteristics \(February 2020\)](#). The MSc Occupational Psychology is accredited by the BPS DOPTC the [BPS Division of Occupational Psychology Training Committee \(DOPTC\)](#).

This award is located at Level 7 of the [OfS sector recognised standards](#).

17. **Support for students**

Induction:

Prior to commencing the course, students in the UK are invited to attend an induction that will familiarise them with the University, the School and the course. They can meet representatives from Student Services, Registry Services, Library Services and ICT and hear more about their services as well as meeting the programme team.

A similar induction programme will be offered in Hong Kong at the start of the programme and include HKMA support staff representatives.

During the application process all students are advised that they are welcome to visit the programme leader where possible to discuss the course or contact them via email or skype if not able to attend the university.

There is extensive programme information on Webpages and within the programme handbook.

Personal Academic Tutors:

[Personal Academic Tutors](#) provide an exceptional level of individual academic support and encouragement to students. All students are allocated a personal academic tutor for the duration of the course and are encouraged to meet with them at least four times in the first year to discuss; feedback on assignments, module choice and dissertation plans. This support is personal and flexible and proactive; it is tailored to the particular needs of students who are known to the team over a long period of time. Tutorials can be face-to-face or utilise technologies such as Skype.

Additional support:

There is a programme community website via Blackboard for all students on both sites which will provide ongoing support, information and a way of enabling students to interact with each other.

Each module has a module outline/guide and related blackboard page containing additional module information and guidance.

Most modules have a visit from the ILS link librarian on the first day of the programme within the UK and support staff within HKMA.

All dissertation students have a supervisor allocated from first contact and throughout the proposal writing and dissertation process.

All module leaders on both sites provide individual academic support through module assessment specific tutorials in addition to personal academic tutor support.

University based support is available from Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service:

<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/firstpoint/>

<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx>

<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/>

18. Admissions

Admissions policy. The programmes aim to recruit students from a broad range of backgrounds, including those who have recently completed BPS accredited undergraduate degrees in Psychology (for MSc Occupational Psychology) or related subject areas, for example, non-accredited Psychology, Business, Marketing and Human resources (for MSc Business Psychology). Applications are welcomed from those who are returning to HE, who already work in organisations as Managers, HR Professionals and Consultants who see this course as a qualification to underpin their current work.

Entry requirements**EITHER****MSc Occupational Psychology**

The requirement for entry to the **Occupational Psychology MSc** is a 2(2) Honours degree in Psychology with Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC). Professional experience within Occupational Psychology is **not** a requirement for entry to this course.

MSc Business Psychology

The requirement for entry to the **MSc Business Psychology** is a 2(2) Honours degree in a Psychology (non-BPS accredited) degree or a related subject (e.g. Business Management, Human Resource Management). Applications from those with a non-related subject will also be considered. Professional experience within Business Psychology is **not** a requirement for entry to this course.

Applications are through the University Registry department
<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/journey/postgraduate-applications.html>

Students whose first language is not English will be expected to have reached a sufficient standard on admission to the programme (e.g. usually IELTS 6.5, with a minimum of 5.5 in each element, or equivalent).

For UWIC courses (MSc Business Psychology only):

International students may apply for this course through University of Worcester International College (UWIC) pre-Masters course.

See Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive academic experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at
<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

Admissions procedures

- All applications will be via the Admissions office.
- All application forms are viewed by Programme Leader and/or admissions tutor.
- If applicants meet the initial entry requirements then applicants are invited for interview. This will be either as face to face or via video conferencing/skype. The interview is a two way process to ensure that the applicant understands and meets the requirements for post graduate study and also for the applicant to ensure the course is the right one for their needs. The interview will also include a discussion of their support needs and, if appropriate, signpost them to School of Health and Wellbeing bridging materials online.
- Potential applicants are welcome to attend the University to meet the Programme Leader for informal discussion.

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's [TCRF \(Taught Courses Regulatory Framework\)](#)

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.

- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to re-sit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Awards

MSc Occupational Psychology

Award	Requirement
PG Cert Occupational Psychology	To be awarded the PG Cert Occupational Psychology students must successfully complete 60 credits at level 7. This must include MPSY4182 Advanced Research Analysis 1 and MPSY4185 Psychological Assessment at Work; plus 30 credits from the optional modules as indicated in the award map in Section 15.
PG Dip Occupational Psychology	To be awarded the PG Dip Occupational Psychology students must successfully complete the PG Cert plus MPSY4167 Professional Skills and a further 30 credits of taught modules from the award map above.
MSc Occupational Psychology	To be awarded the MSc Occupational Psychology, students must complete a total of 180 credits at level 7 including 60 credits from the Dissertation and hold a first degree in Psychology accredited by the BPS.

MSc Business Psychology

Award	Requirement
PG Cert Business Psychology	To be awarded the PG Cert Business Psychology students must successfully complete 60 credits at level 7. This must include MPSY4184 Advanced Research Analysis 2, and MPSY4185 Psychological Assessment at Work; plus 30 credits from the optional modules as indicated in the award map above.
PG Dip Business Psychology	To be awarded the PG Dip Business Psychology students must successfully complete the PG Cert plus MPSY4167 Professional Skills and a further 30 credits of taught modules from the award map above.

MSc Business Psychology	To be awarded the MSc Business Psychology, students must complete a total of 180 credits at level 7 including 60 credits from the Dissertation.
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PG Cert and PG Dip awards are unclassified. The awards of Masters may be made with Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Classification of Masters

The classification will be determined by whichever of the following two methods results in the higher classification.

Method 1

- a) Candidates will be awarded a Distinction where they have attained an average of A- (PD) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award.
- b) Candidates will be awarded a Merit where they have attained an average of C+ (PM) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award.

Method 2

- a) Candidates will be awarded a Distinction, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade A- (PD) or higher
- b) Candidates will be awarded a Merit, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade C+ (PM) or higher

Candidates will be awarded a Pass where they have not fulfilled the rules for Method 1 or Method 2, but are eligible for the award of a Masters.

For further information on honours degree classification, see the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#).

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations

Previous graduates of the MSc have been placed in an excellent position following successful completion of the programme. Recent examples of graduate destinations have included, funded PhD study, Occupational Psychology Trainee Consultant, Independent Business Psychologist, Management Trainee, Recruitment Consultant, HR Manager.

Outcome rates for 2017-18 highlighted the success of students on the programme with 19 registered on the programme, 5 achieving distinctions, 7 achieving Merits, 4 achieving Pass and two continuing as part time students.

Links with employers

Our established partnerships enable us to advertise paid and voluntary work opportunities to psychology students on a regular basis. The department has excellent links with both local and national organisations including JCA Global, The OPC, Nationwide Building Society, Symbiotics, the NHS, Alive! Charity, the BPS, West Mercia Police Constabulary, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Worcestershire County Council and HMP Aylesbury. There are regular opportunities for students to

attend CPD workshops tailored for supporting CV writing, interview skills, recruitment and assessment techniques, Chartership with the BPS, and registration with the HCPC. As well as interactive sessions with guest speakers, visit days to external organisations and guidance on applying for work or further study. Students are able to complete their Dissertations with a range of established partners, including West Mercia Constabulary, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Consulting Tools Ltd.

The MSc Occupational Psychology is delivered by a research-active teaching team who provide students with contemporary expertise and practical skills used by practitioners in the area of occupational psychology. The course provides BPS accredited Stage 1 training in the field of occupational psychology.

Student employability

Embedding employability is integral to the culture of psychology at University of Worcester. The BSc and MSc Psychology programmes enable students to develop skills and attributes including self-reflection, problem solving, communication, critical thinking, professional context skills, leadership, team working, analytical skills and interpersonal awareness. The programmes provide a student-centered approach to support and guidance, an innovative approach to learning, teaching and assessment and a collaborative approach to curriculum design and delivery utilising relationships with the UW careers and employability service and external partnerships.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.