

# MSc Psychology Conversion (Online) FAQs 2019/20

## Who is the Programme designed for?

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

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

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 MOOC learning, but an accredited programme with specific learning outcomes, and time-limited deadlines that require communication, teamwork and engagement.

The online programme is only delivered part-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 online 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. An approximate breakdown of the course workload can be found below.

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## 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/>

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## How long does the Programme take?

The programme is delivered over approximately 2.5 years across 3 academic sessions (5 semesters). At present, the online programme cannot be achieved in less time than this due to the need to fulfil requirements for a BPS-accredited conversion course.

Over 2.5 years you will take core and optional coursework modules in semesters 1-4 and then complete the dissertation in semester 5.

This was adjusted from 3 years so that students eager to pursue further educational study after the programme or who have other professional commitments can proceed quicker.

	<b>Study Activity</b>	<b>Academic Session</b>
<b>Year One</b>	Core Courses	September to July
<b>Year Two</b>	Core & Optional Courses	September to July
<b>Year Three</b>	Dissertation Project	September to March

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## How is each semester structured?

The Psychology M.Sc. (conversion) ODL programme consists of a series of core and optional courses taken over 3 academic sessions.

A year by year breakdown can be found below in Figure 1.

Core courses form the basis of our BPS accreditation and include;

- Research Methods,
- Individual Differences,
- Cognitive Psychology,
- Physiological Psychology,
- Social Psychology,
- Human Development and,
- Conceptual & Historical Issues in Psychology.

Along with the core courses, students will choose two optional courses in their second year from a range of topics. These topics may include Educational Psychology, Clinical Health Psychology, Current Issues in Psychology, and Counselling Psychology, but are subject to change and contingent upon staff availability.

In the final year students will also undertake a supervised Research Project (dissertation) which is the final component of the BPS accreditation.

## Year One

Research Methods 1 (20 credits)	
Human Development	Cognitive Psychology
CHIP	Physiological Psychology

## Year Two

Research Methods 2 (20 credits)	
Individual Differences	Option 1
Social Psychology	Option 2

## Year Three

Dissertation Project (60 Credits)
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<b>Key</b>	Full Year	1st Sem	2nd Sem	Optional courses may include Clinical Health, Educational Psychology, Counselling, Applied Qualitative Methods & Current Issues but are subject to change
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## How much does the Programme cost?

The programme costs £15,000GPB across 3 academic sessions (£1,667 per 20 credits). Payment by instalments is possible.

Funding for this programme will be contingent on your personal circumstances as the funding opportunities differ between different programmes of study and depending on your residency.

Advice regarding funding may be sought here:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/feesandfunding/fundingyourstudies/>

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## What are the entry requirements?

To be accepted to this programme, you must have **at least a 2:1 honours degree or equivalent qualification (e.g. GPA 3.0 or above)**. We are currently not accepting applications below this benchmark.

For applicants whose first language is not English, the University sets a minimum English Language proficiency level.

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic module (not General Training); overall score 6.5 | no sub-test less than 6.5 | or equivalent scores in another recognised qualification

You must apply online for this Masters and as part of your online application, you need to submit the following:

- A copy (or copies) of your official degree certificate(s), if you have already completed your degree.
- A copy (or copies) of your official academic transcript(s), showing full details of subjects studied and grades/marks obtained.
- Official English translations of the certificate(s) and transcript(s).
- One academic reference letter on headed paper.
- Evidence of your English Language ability (if your first language is not English).

Please check you meet the entry requirements for this programme before you begin your application. If you have any questions regarding these requirements, please contact the Postgraduate Admissions Team: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/contact/>

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

Alongside the great flexibility of learning online, and part-time, there are unique challenges to this method of study 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 Science disciplines. Each semester consists of 14 session weeks, whilst also including scheduled holiday and reading weeks. 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 30 credits worth of coursework per semester (apart from the Dissertation Semester 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 300 intended hours (30 credits ) worth of coursework over 4-5 months. Over the 14 sessions within each semester this may equate to 21 hours per session week, however these hours might be distributed somewhat unevenly across semesters, as major assessment milestones will typically fall in the second half of each course. Therefore, you are advised to plan ahead for assessment as appropriate.

As this is a part-time programme of study please do consider how these activities might balance with full-time 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.

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## 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, a dedicated Learning Technologist, and full access to the University's Library catalogue and resources.

Teaching methods throughout the programme will include virtual instruction (e.g. recorded lectures or online 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. Where possible these will be arranged for times that suit as many time zones as possible. If you are not able to attend a live session for any reason, recordings will be provided on our secure Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle.

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, quizzes, case study reports, portfolios and podcasts. Critical and reflective scientific writing will be present throughout all courses on this programme. There are no traditional exams as you might have experienced in other campus-based courses,

however some courses may include quiz-style mini-exams and other shorter variations of this format that are delivered over specific timeframes.

## How much interaction will I have with teaching staff and other students?

In order to facilitate flexibility within your learning and how you engage with the programme, the programme is designed in such a way as to not overburden students with numerous compulsory live/synchronous sessions. Your direct contact with staff members may take the form of virtual zoom meetings individually or within small groups, as well as online mediums like emails, Microsoft Teams, Moodle private messages or discussion boards. Direct contact with your peers will also take place both synchronously and asynchronously for both formative and summative activities. For live sessions and workshops that students cannot attend, recordings or transcripts will be provided.

Staff will be contactable and responsive during working hours (BST) but may (at their discretion) communicate or organise sessions outside of these hours to support as many timezones as possible. When organising small-group collaborative work, we aim to align students with similar timezones as much as possible, but students are encouraged to combine whatever methods of synchronous and asynchronous communication suits them (and their peers) best.

## Am I required to attend the University in person at any time during the Programme?

There is no need to physically attend the University for ANY part of your teaching and learning. However, you do have full access to all the facilities should you be near to Glasgow or visiting. In previous years some students have visited to meet staff in-person and explore the campus.

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## Are there any concentration tracks?

There are no concentration tracks, but there are optional courses taken in the second year of the programme, and students select two options to take. This past year we offered three options that were the most requested by students: Counselling, Clinical Health, and Educational Psychology. We may be offering additional options in the future as well. 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.

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## 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. In some circumstances it may be possible to adjust course loads to take courses over a longer period of time, however this is limited by the ordering of particular courses and all core and optional courses being completed before the dissertation is attempted.

If in the most exceptional circumstances you can no longer continue in the programme, there are two exit points for the programme:

- The requirement for the award of a **Postgraduate Certificate** is a grade point average of D3 (9) or above in 60 credits, with not less than 40 of these credits at grade D or above.
- The requirement for the award of a **Postgraduate Diploma** is a grade point average of D3 (9) or above in 120 credits, with not less than 80 of these credits at grade D or above.

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

For the dissertation project in your third year of the programme 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 this third academic session, 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, conducting a literature review, designing an empirical study, 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## Are there support services for learning or academic writing?

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

1. An induction module supported by a Learning Technologist to familiarise you with the Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle, and other technology used on the programme.
2. A self-guided module of resources 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 whose role it is to assist students, particularly mature students and non-graduates, 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>

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 of the one of the teaching resources you will use on the programme:

<https://psyteachr.github.io/msc-conv-odl/>