

School of Health and Life Sciences

Department of Psychology, Social Work and Allied  
Health Sciences

DPsych Health Psychology

Programme Approval Submission Document

Appendix 1: Programme Specification Proforma

August 2017

## Programme Specification Pro-forma (PSP)

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. **Programme Title:**

Doctorate in Health Psychology

2. **Final Award:**

DPsych Health Psychology

3. **Exit Awards:**

PgCert in Psychological Approaches to Health & Wellbeing

PgDip in Psychological Approaches to Health & Wellbeing

MSc in Health Psychology

DPsych in Health Psychology

4. **Awarding Body:**

Glasgow Caledonian University

5. **Approval Date:**

June, 2017

6. **School:**

School of Health & Life Sciences

7. **Host Department:**

Psychology, Social Work & Allied Health Sciences

8. **UCAS Code:**

N/A

9. **PSB Involvement:**

HCPC/BPS

10. **Place of Delivery:**

Glasgow Caledonian University

11. **Subject Benchmark Statement:**

HCPC/BPS

12. **Dates of PSP Preparation/Revision:**

March 2017/August 2017

## 2. EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

Applied psychology, or Practitioner Psychologists, became a Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) regulated profession in 2009. The regulatory framework encompasses seven domains of applied psychology practice, each with protected title status. These include: Health, Sports and Exercise, Counselling, Forensic, Clinical, Occupational and Educational Psychology. HCPC Standards of Proficiency (SOPS) for applied psychology are organised into two components: 1) generic standards spanning all domains of applied psychology practice (known as profession-specific standards); and 2) standards specific to each domain (known as domain-specific standards). Profession-specific standards comprise over 80% of all SOPS.

With such a significant proportion of shared standards and competencies, postgraduate programmes have the opportunity to move away from historically entrenched, domain-specific training structures, which typically emphasise the differences between applied psychology practice. We propose a broad, Applied Psychology Doctoral Framework (APDF) which promotes the sharing of profession-specific resources, utilising inter-professional collaborations while still retaining a specific professional domain identity.

Currently at GCU, psychology is strongly focussed on the application of psychological knowledge and research for the common good. Existing programmes, accredited by appropriate professional bodies (e.g., British Psychological Society [BPS] and HCPC) include: a BSc (Hons) in Applied Psychology with domain-specific bracketed titles; a Graduate Diploma (conversion course) in Psychology; an MSc in Forensic Psychology; and a HCPC/BPS approved DPsych in Counselling Psychology with multiple exit points. The DPsych in Counselling Psychology offers an effective, financially proven postgraduate training model with over 100 doctoral-level students registered. The DPsych model is highly flexible, utilising a small 'core' team of expert staff supplemented by wider departmental expertise and external support. It is inherently expandable and responsive to scale.

We propose an extension of the current DPsych to a new Applied Psychology Doctoral Framework, which will initially offer 2 domain specific routes: 1) a Doctorate in Health Psychology and 2) a Doctorate in Sports and Exercise Psychology. It is proposed that two further domain specific routes (Doctorate in Forensic Psychology and Doctorate in Counselling Psychology) will then join the framework in 2019/2020. The APDF will, therefore, offer shared profession-specific teaching and resources while also delivering domain-specific training. Students will benefit from shared teaching and learning on 'core' topics, while the programme team will draw on existing, efficient systems of administration, research supervision and placement management.

Health psychology as a discipline is the fastest growing field of psychology within the UK and yet only three Universities in Scotland (University of Stirling, University of Aberdeen and St Andrews University) currently offer British Psychological Society (BPS) accredited MSc programmes. At present, there are no health psychology doctorate programmes offered in Scotland. Given an ageing and obesogenic population (and the associated increased prevalence of chronic and long-term health conditions), the

demand for behavioural health and wellbeing interventions (and, therefore, Health Psychologists), is only set to increase.

The doctoral programme is designed to meet the BPS's accreditation standards for Stage 1 and 2 training in health psychology, thus meeting the requirements for eligibility to apply for Chartered Psychologist status. In addition, approval has been granted from the HCPC for eligibility to apply for registration as a Health Psychologist. It is noteworthy that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register.

### **Programme Aims**

The overall aim of the Doctorate in Health Psychology is to provide the knowledge and skills required to develop a career as a practitioner Health Psychologist. The programme, therefore, aims to prepare students for accreditation as a Health Psychologist by providing training and supervision in five key areas of competency, including: research, teaching and training, consultancy, behaviour change interventions, and professional skills. In doing so, the proposed programme aims to enable students to work as Health Psychologists within a broad range of inter-disciplinary environments, including third sector, health and social care (e.g., NHS), government, industry, private practice and academic/research settings.

More specifically, the programme aims to:

1. Critically explore the historical underpinnings and development of health psychology.
2. Critically examine the theoretical frameworks within which health psychology practice is located.
3. Deliver a comprehensive, critical understanding of the ethical and professional issues pertinent to practicing as a health psychologist.
4. Provide original, specialist professional training in a range of behaviour change approaches.
5. Develop an advanced capability to establish, conceptualise and employ effective professional relationships with clients utilising a range of psychological models and approaches.
6. Offer highly innovative, specialist training in the conduct and analysis of health psychology research, together with an advanced understanding of its implications for professional practice.
7. Provide a psychologically safe, creative environment for personal development and self-reflection.

At the end of their doctoral training, students should be:

1. Highly competent, reflexive, ethically sound, resourceful, creative and informed health psychology practitioners, who offer highly specialised skills to a range of practice settings.
2. Leading in their responsibility to the interpretive, personal, intimate and relational aspects of

health psychology practice.

3. Autonomous, committed and accountable for ongoing personal and professional development training.
4. Critically aware of the significance of wider social, cultural and political domains within which health psychology operates.
5. Deeply critical and evaluative of the philosophy, theory, research and practice that constitutes health psychology.

#### 4. **PROGRAMME STRUCTURES AND REQUIREMENTS, LEVELS, MODULES, CREDITS AND AWARDS**

A Doctorate is awarded for a minimum of 540 credits with a maximum of 420 at Doctoral level.

A Masters in Health Psychology is awarded for a minimum of 180 credits at M level.

A Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Approaches to Health & Wellbeing is awarded for 120 credits at M Level: All modules except Advanced Research in Applied Psychology 1 (M/D).

A Postgraduate Certificate in Psychological Approaches to Health & Wellbeing is awarded for a maximum of 60 credits at M Level.

The DPsych Health Psychology programme will be delivered over 36 calendar months and up to 84 months, if on a part-time basis. The MSc will be delivered over 12 months (full-time) or 24 months (part-time). The Postgraduate Diploma will be delivered over 9 months (full-time) or 21 months (part-time). The Postgraduate Certificate will be delivered over 9 months part time.

**For the award of MSc Health Psychology:** 180 credits (at M Level), including the following modules:

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Principles of Person Centered Approaches in Applied Psychology Practice	15
Professional Development in Applied Psychology 1	30
Consultancy & Training in Applied Psychology 1: Health	30
Interventions in Applied Psychology 1	30
Analytical Methods	15
Advanced Research in Applied Psychology 1 (M)	60
Total	180

**For the award of Doctorate In Health Psychology:** Minimum of 540 credits with a maximum of 420 at Doctorate level, including the following modules:

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Principles of Person Centered Approaches in Applied Psychology Practice	15

	Professional Development in Applied Psychology 1	30	
	Consultancy & Training in Applied Psychology 1: Health	30	
	Interventions in Applied Psychology 1	30	
	Analytical Methods	15	
	Advanced Research in Applied Psychology 1 (D)	60	
	Professional Development in Applied Psychology 2	60	
	Consultancy & Training in Applied Psychology 2	30	
	Interventions in Applied Psychology 2	30	
	Advanced Research in Applied Psychology 2	60	
	Professional Development in Applied Psychology 3	60	
	Consultancy & Training in Applied Psychology 3	30	
	Interventions in Applied Psychology 3	30	
	Advanced Research in Applied Psychology 3	60	
	Total	540	

## 8. ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

Students should expect to complete their programme of study under the Regulations that were in place at the commencement of their studies on that programme, unless proposed changes to University Regulations are advantageous to students. The Glasgow Caledonian University

Taught Postgraduate Assessment Regulations which apply to this programme, dependent on year of entry can be found at:

[http://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/gcalwebv2/theuniversity/gaq/gaqfiles/assessmentregulations/GCU\\_TPG\\_Assessment\\_Regulations\\_Handbook\\_2016\\_17\\_v1.5.pdf](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/gcalwebv2/theuniversity/gaq/gaqfiles/assessmentregulations/GCU_TPG_Assessment_Regulations_Handbook_2016_17_v1.5.pdf)

With the following approved exceptions:

A minimum pass of 50% for each module in stage 1 (MSc) is required, with a minimum threshold for each element of assessment of 50% to ensure that students cannot pass via a module composite pass/aggregate.

Students are permitted to carry one module (up to 60 credits) at the discretion of the Assessment Board. This exception is to enable students to carry one large module in each year of the programme so that a student's progress is not necessarily impeded by a small amendment being necessary to a research submission, for example.

### ***Regulations for Merit/Distinction:***

For candidates undertaking the MSc in Health Psychology, and when the Assessment Board is satisfied that a candidate has shown special merit in the final level assessment at the first diet, it may recommend that the MSc award be granted 'with Merit' or 'with Distinction'. The Assessment Board will normally recommend that an award be granted 'with Merit' to a candidate who has achieved an overall credit-weighted average of modules of 65-69% and passes all modules. An award 'with Distinction' will be recommended for a candidate who has passed all elements and achieved an overall average of 70% or more and no mark below 55% in any of the programme modules. A minimum mark of 70% will also be required in the dissertation for the award 'with Distinction'. Glasgow Caledonian University's Qualification Framework contains the mechanism for the awarding of the 'with distinction' classification.

Distinction will only be considered on the basis of a candidate's performance in their first diet of assessments in all modules.

### ***Role of External Examiner(s):***

External Examiners are appointed to the Assessment Board after being approved by Glasgow Caledonian University Academic Policy and Practice Committee (through the submission of an EXT1 form).

External examiner duties include the following:

- Moderating the work of the Internal Assessors in respect of the assessments under his/her jurisdiction.
- Attending Assessment Boards at which the results of a final stage assessment will be determined.
- Satisfying himself/herself that the work and decisions of the Assessment Board(s) are consistent with the policies and regulations of the University and best practice in higher education.
- Ensuring that students are assessed within the regulations approved by the University for the programme and to inform the University on any matter which, in his/her view, militates against the maintenance of proper academic standards.
- Reporting annually to the Academic Policy and Practice Committee on the standards attained by students on the programme and on any other matters which may seem appropriate to report.