

Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for a postgraduate award
MSC CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY (2948)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the College's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the College's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

The Masters course consists of taught modules and a dissertation. The taught modules are designed to give students in-depth insights into topical issues and the latest research in Clinical Psychology. Modules 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 dissertation offers students the opportunity to carry out an independent piece of research of high quality, in an area of interest to them.

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – Also referred to as 'programme', this term refers to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies. 'Courses' were formerly known as 'programmes' at Royal Holloway.

Module – This refers to the credits you will study each year to complete your degree course. Postgraduate taught degrees at Royal Holloway comprise 180 credits. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title. 'Modules' were formerly known as 'course units' at Royal Holloway.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	May 2024	Location of study	Egham
Course award and title	MSc Clinical Psychology	Level of study	Postgraduate
Course code	2948	Year of entry	2025/26
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	Department of Psychology School of Life Sciences and the Environment	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full time and part time	Duration of the course	One year (52 weeks) full-time Two to five years (104 - 260 weeks) part-time
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure				
3.1 Mandatory module information				
The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study				
Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC)
PS5306	Clinical Assessment and Treatment Approaches	15	7	MC
PS5204	Advanced and Applied Research Techniques	15	7	MC
PS5307	Professional Clinical Practice and Skills	15	7	MC
PS5206	Adjustment and Wellbeing	15	7	MC
PS5302	Statistics for Research	30	7	MC
PS5305	Clinical Dissertation	60	7	MNC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there may be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered, or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example, where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

Students must choose two (30 credits total) of the following:

- PS5301 – Topics in Psychological Science (15 credits)
- PS5201 – Psychology in Applied Settings (15 credits)
- PS5303 – Forensic Investigations: Cognitive and Social Approaches (15 credits)
- PS5304 – Clinical Placement (15 credits)
- PS5207 – Neuroscience of Emotion and Decision Making (15 credits)
- PS5208 – Applied Neuroscience (15 credits)

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's [Academic Regulations](#).

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 in order to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the [Academic Taught Regulations](#) but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

The course can be taken part-time over two to five years beginning in September of year one but will normally be over two years. Part-time students will normally cover 60 credits of taught modules in their first year, and 60 credits of taught modules 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 additional credits in their first year, and the remaining taught modules in the second year). The dissertation would also be prepared and completed in the second year.

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are to:

- to promote an extensive knowledge and critical awareness of current developments in the forefront of Clinical Psychology;
- to develop the students' competence in the original application of this knowledge to a wide range of applied contexts within health care 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 in many professional positions;
- to develop further the students' written and oral communication skills, required for further research in 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, and work to deadlines.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes		
In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (<i>Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*)</i>)		
Theme	Course Learning Outcome	Level 7
Graduates from this course will foster KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	1. Acquire knowledge in clinical psychology and show understanding of relevant disciplinary theories, concepts, and research.	1.7.1 Show knowledge and understanding of subject-specific concepts. 1.7.2 Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of subject-specific theories. 1.7.3 Show knowledge and understanding of subject-specific research.
Graduates from this course will generate APPLICATIONS	2. Apply the knowledge acquired in clinical psychology to generate solutions to real world problems.	2.7.1 Demonstrate knowledge of existing solutions to real world problems relevant to clinical psychology. 2.7.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of existing solutions to real world problems relevant to clinical psychology. 2.7.3 Apply appropriate subject-specific knowledge, theories, and concepts to generate realistic recommendations to solve complex real-world problems. 2.7.4 Understand key ethical, applied and clinical aspects of working in real world settings.
Graduates from this course will demonstrate INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS (or: INDEPENDENCE)	3. Work and think independently to critique, analyse, and synthesize material in clinical psychology.	3.7.1 Make appropriate choices of topic to focus on. 3.7.2 Conduct independent literature search relevant to the task and the choices made within the topic. 3.7.3 Conduct high level independent literature search, including recent research. 3.7.4 Evaluate subject-specific theories and applied practice and decisions. 3.7.5 Analyse and synthesize relevant materials to draw sensible conclusions.
Graduates from this course will develop PROFESSIONAL WRITING AND PRESENTATION SKILLS	4. Communicate clearly and concisely to both researchers and practitioners, and doing so orally, in writing, and using visual aids.	4.7.1 Communicate logically, clearly and concisely. 4.7.2 Select and apply appropriate style of communication for the audience and medium. 4.7.3 Select appropriate visual aid to the audience to enhance communication.

<p>Graduates from this course will foster sophisticated and CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH SKILLS</p>	<p>5. Develop deep knowledge and understanding of a variety of research methods in the subject area, including cutting-edge methods.</p>	<p>5.7.1 Show knowledge and understanding of research methods in the subject area.</p> <p>5.7.2 Select and justify appropriate research methods to the research question.</p> <p>5.7.3 Apply research methods correctly and effectively.</p> <p>5.7.4 Evaluate research methods and their suitability to the research question.</p>
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Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning are mainly by means of sessions lasting anywhere between two and three and a half 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 or written reports, although written exams are more appropriate to the modules focussing on methodology and statistics. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from [Moodle](#).

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module, you will gain the credits listed.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online [Module Catalogue](#). The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs
There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this degree course.
These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	7
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	Criteria	Awarding body
PG Diploma	Passes in at least 120 credits, with fails of between 40% to 49% for up to 40 credits condonable (with the exception of any course specific requirements).	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College

PG Certificate	Passes in at least 60 credits with no condonable fails	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
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