

**COURSE (previously
programme) SPECIFICATION**

This document describes the **Master of Science, Postgraduate Diploma, and Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Social Psychology**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2020**.

The aims of the course 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 and, thought leadership.

The Masters course is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks), or two (104 weeks) to five years of part-time study. The course consists of 7 modules. 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. 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 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 course(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, courses and the availability of individual modules 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 course. 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 course are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the course 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 with 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 course 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 focusing on methodology and statistics. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from [Moodle](#).

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Details of the course structure(s)

The brief outline of the modules is shown below; however students can obtain further details from the Course Handbook. **Credits are indicated in brackets, and indicate proportional weighting towards the Masters, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate classification grade.**

Full-time students

In the Autumn Term, students take:

- PS5202 - Intergroup and Interpersonal Processes (20 credits)
- PS5204 - Advanced Techniques in Social and Behavioural Research (20 credits)

In the Spring Term, students take:

- PS5201 - Psychology in Applied Settings (20 credits)
- PS5301 - Topics in Psychological Science (20 credits)

During the Autumn and Spring Term students take:

- PS5302 - Statistics for Research (20 credits)

During the Spring and Summer Terms students take

- PS5205 - Social Research Project (60 credits)

*Students can also choose **one** optional module from:*

- PS5206 - Adjustment and Wellbeing (20 credits)
- PS5303 – Forensic Investigations: Cognitive and Social Approaches
- PS5207 – Neuroscience of Emotion and Decision Making
- PS5208 – Applied Neuroscience

The course structure for the Postgraduate Diploma is as above, with the exception that students will not undertake the dissertation, while that for the Postgraduate Certificate is that students are required to take and pass three taught modules including PS5301.

Part-time students

The course can be taken part-time over two to five years beginning in September of year one but will normally over two years**. Part-time students will normally cover three taught modules in their first year, and three 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 4-5 taught modules in their first year, and the remaining taught modules in the second year). The research project would also be prepared and completed in the second year.

** part time students are permitted under College regulations to complete their course of study over a period of up to 5 years. Students who are unable to complete the course within the standard 2 year timeframe should liaise with the course director to agree a time frame for completion.

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Progression and award requirements

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through assessed performance in coursework and examinations.

Please note that if a student holds a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and chooses to leave (or is required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on their CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

To pass the **Masters** course a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks between 40-49% can be condoned in modules constituting up to a maximum of 40 credits, 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 60.00% or above. module course

The Masters degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above. course

The **Postgraduate Diploma** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00% and has either chosen not to proceed to the dissertation, or has failed the dissertation on either the first or second attempt.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above.

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 module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The **Postgraduate Certificate** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks in the region 40-49% are not condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate.

The Postgraduate Certificate with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Certificate with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

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Student support and guidance

- The Course Director can advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues (if the latter are sufficiently severe, students will be referred to relevant personnel). The Course Director is available for consultation within office hours. You may also consult the Department's Student Support Coordinator.
- All staff teaching on the module are available via their e-mail, and addresses are published on the [Departments webpages](#).
- Detailed student handbook and module resources.
- The Department's postgraduate welcome and induction sessions for incoming students in the first week of the Autumn term, aligned with the College's welcome and induction procedures.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and the Information Support Services Centre.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Library 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, the Centre for the Development of Academic Skills, Health Centre and and students with additional learning needs also have access to Disability and Dyslexia Services (ESO)
- A staff/student committee is held each term which all the Department's postgraduate taught students are invited to attend. Minutes of these meetings are posted on the Department webpages.

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Admission requirements

For details of admissions requirements please refer to the [Course Finder](#).

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Further learning and career opportunities

The course 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 course 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 Excellence Framework (REF 2014) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The scoring system for the REF 2014 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 rigor and

3* indicating research that is internationally excellent. 81% of the College's research profile was deemed to be within the 4* or 3* categories, an increase of over 20% since 2008. The results for the quality of our research outputs placed Royal Holloway 15th in the UK based on an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) score and 20th in the UK for 4* and 3* research.

The Department also prides itself on its excellent ratings for teaching and research. The 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) reported that in its assessment 93% of research has been classified as 4* which is world leading or 3* internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigor. This places the department in sixth place among UK universities. 51% of Psychology research at Royal Holloway is rated in the top category of 4* which is world leading and of the highest standard, and the department was ranked in sixth place nationally on this measure and also for the caliber of 4* and 3* quality research output

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

The courses are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London and the Masters leads to an award of the University of London. The Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate lead to awards of Royal Holloway, University of London. The Banner course codes are given in parentheses.

Master of Science Course in Applied Social Psychology

MSc in Applied Social Psychology (2341)

Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Social Psychology

PG Diploma in Applied Social Psychology (2434)

Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Social Psychology

PG Certificate in Applied Social Psychology (2881)

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