

## MSC THEORY AND PRACTICE IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY WITH CLINICAL/RESEARCH PLACEMENT FAQS

### Is the MSc TPCP programme accredited by the BPS?

Only programmes linked to professional pathways are accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS). There is no mechanism for accreditation by the BPS and no UK programme of this type is currently accredited.

### What if I want to do a BPS-accredited MSc?

We offer an MSc Psychology Conversion degree, which is accredited by the British Psychological Society and provides Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership. This programme is for graduates who would like to have a career in a psychology-related field, but who don't have:

- an undergraduate degree in psychology

OR

- GBC from the British Psychological Society (e.g., some Psychology graduates who completed their Bachelor's programmes outside the UK/EU and whose programmes weren't BPS accredited).

The MSc Psychology Conversion course is a one-year programme.

### What are the differences between Research and Clinical placements?

Both programmes will help develop the diverse skills and experience required within Clinical (or other applied) Psychology, also reflected in the shared teaching across both courses. It is expected that those on TPCP with Clinical Placement will have exposure to a clinical environment to help students develop skills such as clinical interviewing, assessment, and psychological formulation. The Research placements also have a strong clinical focus and are highly suitable for students intending to pursue further training in Clinical Psychology. TPCP with Research Placement would complement the skillset of students who already have clinical experience and who wish to develop their proficiency in clinical research, an important skill in pursuing Clinical Psychology training in the UK and elsewhere.

### What kinds of placement are there?

We work closely with numerous stakeholders (such as researchers and local health and social services) to offer a variety of placements, although the precise availability will vary from year to year. Examples of settings where placements (both research and clinical) might take place include working with children and adolescents with anxiety disorders, working with at-risk families (e.g., those with mental health problems which impacts parenting), and within a specialist eating disorders service.

### When will placements be allocated? When will I know what placement I am on?

Academic staff allocate students to clinical placements so we will contact offer-holders regarding their preferences prior to the start of the academic year. Research placements are usually allocated in the first Term of study. Placements vary from year to year, and some are not finalised until late summer, so it will not be possible for us to provide details about specific placements prior to start of the academic year. Students' preferences will be considered alongside other factors but, due to elements beyond our control, it is not possible for us to provide detailed information about specific placements, or allocation to placements, sooner than the start of the academic year.

### Will students be able to practise therapies during their placement?

This will depend on the nature of the placement although students on TPCP with Clinical Placement can expect direct patient contact as part of their placement. Some clinical placements may offer exposure to psychological therapy under close supervision, but this will depend on the client group and, importantly, the abilities demonstrated by the student. Students enrolled on TPCP with Research Placement will be contributing to clinically relevant

research, typically conducted directly with populations such as older adults, children, and adolescents.

Furthermore, taught modules relating to psychological therapies and psychiatric disorders will provide all students (those on Clinical and Research Placements) with the opportunity to develop therapeutic skills via role play and group work with peers.

In the UK, training to deliver psychological therapies takes several years, and is accredited by a number of professional bodies such as the HCPC and BABCP.

#### **Do I get a choice in modules?**

Yes, there are a number of optional modules from which you can choose. Please visit the programme description page for more information:

<https://www.reading.ac.uk/Ready-to-Study/study/Subject-area/psychology-pg/msc-theory-and-practice-in-clinical-psychology>

Core modules for 2022/23 include:

- Empirical Project
- Project Preparation
- Clinical Placement
- Clinical Research Methods
- Evidence-Based Treatments Across the Lifespan
- Introduction to CBT

Optional modules include:

- Qualitative Methods in Psychological Research
- Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience
- Systematic Review
- Methods in Cognition and Neuroscience

Please note that all modules are subject to change.

#### **When do lectures take place?**

The UoR teaching week is Monday to Friday, 9am – 6pm, and teaching will fit within this timetable. Timetables are generated by the University and are not finalised until the start of the academic year, and so it is not possible to provide students with a timetable prior to that. As far as possible, MSc teaching is grouped into 2 – 3 days per week. There is comparatively little teaching in the Summer Term and summer, when students are focusing on activities relating to their project and placement.

#### **Where are the lectures held?**

All timetabled teaching takes place on Whiteknights campus.

#### **How much 'contact time' is there?**

Full-time students are expected to be available between Monday and Friday, 9am – 6pm during their enrolment (September – September). A student's precise 'contact time' will depend on the modules selected. As a rough guide, students should expect around 15 – 20 hours of teaching and 85 hours of self-study and assignment preparation per 10-credit module, but this varies according to the module. [Module Descriptions](#) provide an indication of the 'contact time' for specific modules.

### **Can I work alongside the MSc?**

For the University policy relating to work and study for full-time students, visit the [university website](#).

It is important to ensure that you achieve a balance between your academic work and other activities. Undertaking an MSc requires substantial commitment, and the Autumn and Spring terms are particularly intensive. While the Summer Term and summer are less intensive in terms of teaching, students are expected to undertake and complete projects and placements that together contribute more than half of the credits for their degree.

While students may choose to have part-time jobs while studying, it is unrealistic for most students to successfully complete the programme if they work full-time.

### **How is part-time study split out?**

Part-time study is offered over two years. Students will usually complete all taught modules in the first year, with the placement and research project (dissertation) taken in the second year. As a result, teaching in the first two terms (Autumn and Spring of Year 1) is almost identical to full-time students, so the amount of teaching can be quite intensive at first. From the Summer Term, the requirement for part-time students is substantially less, with little formal teaching in the Summer Term and summer. The majority of the second year is taken up with placement work and completion of the dissertation. Therefore, the amount of 'scheduled' teaching is less, but students will have 'informal' teaching through attendance at placement and meetings with project supervisors, for example.

### **How many hours a week will the placement be and when will they run?**

For placements, students undertake 320 hours of activities which are agreed at the outset with the Placement Provider. This will include relevant training and is supplemented by an additional 80 hours allocated for assignments. Most placements are likely to require students to undertake activities on one or two days per week, although this might vary according to the needs of the service / supervisor. Similarly, some placement providers will want students to undertake placements throughout the academic year, perhaps on specific days, while others will want placement hours to be undertaken in blocks of time. Where students have preferences, these will be considered when allocating placements and we will aim to satisfy them wherever possible.

### **Where are placements located?**

The majority of research placements will be around the Whiteknights Campus, as will some clinical placements. Other placements will be across Berkshire. Students will be expected to undertake reasonable travel to placements using public / independent transport. Students who have restrictions relating to travel to placements should inform us when expressing preferences about placements.

### **Do placements offer supervision?**

Ongoing supervision will be provided by the placement provider, and students can contact the Placement Module Convenors for additional guidance and support. The exact nature of supervision provided will depend on the placement.

### **How are students assessed?**

In order to provide students with opportunities to show their developing skills, modules employ a range of assessment methods, such as essays, clinically relevant reports, formal examinations, and multiple-choice questions. [Module Descriptions](#) provide guidance of the assessments for specific modules.

### **Are there any additional costs?**

Students should expect to bear reasonable travel costs to placements as this is not funded. Any other costs associated with modules can be found in the [Module Descriptions](#).