

Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

Basic Course Information		
1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University.
2.	School/Campus:	School of Social Sciences/City
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	MSc Applied Child Psychology FT, PT
4.	Normal Duration:	FT 1 year, PT 2 years
5.	UCAS Code:	Not applicable

6.	Overview and general educational aims of the course
	<p>The MSc Applied Child Psychology is a research focused postgraduate degree course that offers specific, in-depth, study of child psychology across a range of different contexts and settings. The MSc Applied Child Psychology provides students with an in-depth and critical coverage of relevant psychological theory and research and considers the implications of both for policy and practice across a range of applied settings (e.g., education, clinical, and social contexts). Further, the course takes a contemporary view that requires students to challenge issues and approaches relating to inclusion, disability, and diversity across different aspects of child development in typical and atypical populations.</p> <p>The general aims of the MSc Applied Child Psychology are to produce graduates who are independent, ethical, sensitive to diversity issues, and recognise the importance of the application of psychological theory and research to understanding child development across a range of applied contexts and settings. You achieve these aims through following primary course objectives, which will: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide extensive knowledge of applied issues in child psychology, including relevant professional knowledge and skills, an informed respect for the principles, values, and ethics of your chosen profession or discipline;2. Develop the capacity for independent critical thought, rational inquiry, and self-directed learning throughout the course of study;3. Develop your understanding of the complex issues involved in explaining child psychology across a broad range of settings and contexts, and to deal with these in a systematic and creative manner;4. Equip you with the necessary research knowledge and skills to apply a range of appropriate research methods and techniques in response to addressing specific problems in explaining applied aspects of child psychology; and5. Equip you with an independent and reflective approach to life-long learning and to future career plans. <p>A strong emphasis of the course is research informed teaching and learning. Department of Psychology staff have considerable expertise of working with children within child-related contexts.</p>

There is also a strong focus on exploring the importance of ethical and professional issues that are integral to working with children, adolescents, and vulnerable populations. This focus is embedded and emphasised throughout all modules contained within the MSc Applied Child Psychology course. This course-level focus on ethical issues ensures that you are aware of, and able to reflect upon, the importance of ethical issues when working with children from a range of different contexts or backgrounds.

All the learning outcomes of the course (outlined in Section 7) are consistent with, and can be mapped against, the Level 7 National Qualifications Framework.

7. Course outcomes

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical understanding of how complex issues of child development can be addressed in a systematic and creative manner;
2. Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge, understanding, and critical awareness of the key theoretical and methodological issues and debates that lie at the forefront of child psychology;
3. Understand and critically reflect on the importance of a range of theoretical approaches in explaining child psychology across a broad range of applied topics, disciplines and settings
4. Demonstrate a critical understanding of inclusion, disability and diversity, in relation to studying different aspects of child development across typical and atypical populations;
5. Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge, understanding, and critical awareness of psychological theory for the assessment, identification, and intervention of atypical child development; and
6. Demonstrate knowledge of advanced psychological research methods and their application to address real world applied issues in child psychology.

Skills, qualities and attributes

By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Address complex issues that lie at the forefront of child psychology in a systematic, creative, and reflective manner;
2. Address a range of methodological and theoretical approaches in a way that allows an explicit application of these methods for explaining child development within applied contexts/settings;

3. Demonstrate an ability to assess complex theoretical issues in a systematic and creative way;
4. Demonstrate an independent, ethical, culturally sensitive and reflective approach to the application of psychology and research;
5. Demonstrate sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative, and a range of transferable skills necessary for employment.
6. Demonstrate skills in the planning, design, and implementation of an independent research project within one core area of child psychology.

8. **Teaching and Learning Methods**

A variety of teaching and learning approaches – including lectures, interactive workshops, individual support, self-directed learning, and project work – supports your development on the course. These approaches are designed to help students to achieve the intended course learning outcomes. The teaching staff in psychology pride themselves on being an approachable and friendly team and demonstrate a strong research-informed approach to teaching and learning. The course team are enthusiastic about their subject areas and active in the generation of new, research-based knowledge and our course is structured around their specialisms. By providing you with a broad range of academic and pastoral support, we strongly encourage your participation and interaction. Building on these foundations, the MSc Applied Child Psychology fosters a dynamic and supportive learning environment in which you can be enthused about the academic study of child psychology and its research methods. Key methods of teaching and learning provision include the following:

Lectures: These provide a strong subject-based knowledge with regard to the delivery of core themes and issues throughout the course and provide you with key information required to critically evaluate and synthesise ideas in a way that is relevant to applied settings.

Interactive workshops: These workshops enable you to critically discuss and evaluate current theories of child psychology and to synthesise ideas in a supportive manner. There is a strong focus on collaborative work, and a focus on providing formative assessments as a way of developing your knowledge and understanding. These comprise a mixture of tutor-led and student-led workshops.

Individual support and tutorials: Individual support for the development and refinement of ideas are offered for projects and tutorials support the career focus and development module. These enable staff to challenge you and to help you develop your ideas, and to provide a 'context-related' focus on studying children across a range of applied settings at the same time as you are developing professional practice and self-reflection.

The course also makes extensive use of Nottingham Trent University Online Workspace (NOW), which gives you access to course materials, access to additional resources and information, and provision of feedback on learning throughout the course.

The ethos underlying the MSc Applied Child Psychology course is that of professional practice and self-reflection, together with personal development in terms of academic knowledge and practical skills, in order to produce professional graduates who are equipped to work in an educational or other child related setting. The strong focus on formative assessments throughout each of the modules allows you to demonstrate your ability to deal with complex issues in a critical and evaluative manner.

9. **Assessment Methods**

The Department of Psychology pursues a policy of establishing a varied, fair, and rigorous assessment regime based upon clearly specified criteria. The course makes use of a variety of assessment practices across its modules and provides a balanced diet of assessment. Assessment of your work ultimately determines whether you have satisfied the learning objectives and outcomes of individual modules and the course as a whole. Apart from their evaluative function the assessments are also designed to encourage your independent and active learning and to serve a number of 'formative' purposes:

1. To inform you of your strengths and weaknesses, facilitating your academic development.
2. To increase motivation by giving you opportunities to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills and to receive positive, constructive feedback.
3. To provide you with increased opportunities to review and consolidate what you have learnt during each individual module and the course as a whole.

The course offers a clear and well informed 'diet of assessment' to ensure that you are assessed across a range of different formats of assessments (both formative and summative) in a balanced and cohesive manner. The main assessment methods included in the MSc Applied Child Psychology are as follows:

Independent Research Project: The research project requires you to work independently, to synthesise material, to design, plan and carry out a piece of empirical research, to meet ethical standards, to analyse research data, and to produce a written report according to appropriate professional standards. It is thus a key assessment device both in terms of the formative feedback given during supervision and in terms of the summative assessment of the project report.

Formal Report: These reports enable you to develop appropriate skills in reporting empirical research data. This is vital preparation for the independent research project and for any research-related career inside or outside psychology.

Essay: Essays enable you to demonstrate your ability to focus on a particular problem or issue in child psychology and to explore its parameters in a well-balanced and critical manner.

Examination: Examinations assess your ability to marshal clear and concise arguments swiftly, showing an appreciation of the issues raised, and addressing arguments in a critical manner.

Presentation: Presentations assess your ability to communicate clearly with different audiences to meet set objectives on a range of topics. This is a vital skill for employability and progression.

10. **Course structure and curriculum**

The MSc Applied Child Psychology consists of 180 credits. In term one of the full time course, you will complete the following four taught modules (worth 60 credits total):

- *The Child in Context (20 credits)*
- *Social and Cognitive Development in Children (20 credits)*
- *Research Skills for Working with Children (10 Credits)*
- *Observational Methods (10 credits)*

The first two modules in this list are designed to provide you with a philosophical and theoretical background to key theories and approaches alongside a rationale for studying child development across a range of applied contexts (social, educational, and clinical contexts). Specifically, the first two twenty-credit modules provide a strong theoretical and philosophical underpinning for the course, and these are concepts that are integral to developing your thinking in the remaining core modules offered in Teaching Unit 2.

The *Social and Cognitive Development in Children* module introduces you to some of the core issues relevant to understanding children's educational development and achievement. The topics covered allow you to demonstrate the application of theories and approaches to classroom settings.

The Child in Context introduces you to some of the core themes examined throughout the MSc. The module focuses on examining concepts such as inclusion, diversity, and cross cultural issues in relation to studying different facets of child development.

The remaining two modules (*Research Skills for Working with Children* and *Observational Methods*) provide you with in-depth research training in research methods and covers both philosophical and methodological approaches to experimental design. These modules also develop your knowledge of research design, data handling, management, and analysis.

In term two of the full time course you complete a further two taught modules (40 credits total), and Career Focus and Development (20 credits) which is based on independent study:

- *Developmental Profiles of Language and Learning (20 credits)*
- *Psychological and Behavioural Difficulties in Childhood (20 credits)*
- *Career Focus and Development (20 credits)*

The first two modules in this list build on the material presented in term one, allowing you to engage with current theories and approaches at the forefront of atypical development in child psychology and to provide critical insights

into developmental profiles and clinical aspects of child development. *Developmental Profiles of Language and Learning* is a module that considers current issues in the identification, diagnosis, and treatment of development disorders in an educational context while the *Psychological and Behavioural Difficulties in Childhood* module explores behavioural disorders within a more clinical context. Identification and treatment are considered in the context of a range of practical examples. Both of these modules draw on the material and philosophical underpinnings presented in earlier core modules within the course. The *Career Focus and Development* module requires you to select a job advert or training course that fits with your progression plans, supported by tutorials, and reflect on the skills and knowledge required to apply for such a position.

In order to complete the MSc course, you must complete the *Child Psychology Independent Research Project* (worth 60 credit points). This affords you the opportunity to carry out an extended piece of empirical research of your own design, under the supervision of an individual staff member. The Independent Project allows you to identify a particular topic within child psychology and to design, implement, and assess this particular topic in depth.

The MSc Applied Child Psychology is designed to further develop your written and oral presentation skills, numerical proficiency, and problem-solving abilities. It also encourages a range of other attributes characteristic of Nottingham Trent University graduates, including extensive knowledge of the your chosen discipline and relevant professional skills, proficiency in the use of relevant software, a capacity for independent thought, and strong information, data, and time management skills.

Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert in Child Psychology) and Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip in Applied Child Psychology) awards are also available on an interim basis should you have to terminate studies early due to illness, for other personal reasons, or if you fail to complete all parts of the course. By achieving 60 credits, you will be awarded a PGCert, whilst 120 credits will award you a PGDip.

11. Admission to the course

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the `Applying` tab on the course information web page.

12. Support for Learning

Academic and pastoral support for you is provided in various ways, with a considerable amount of work being provided face-to-face, by email, or through NOW. Within the course, you are assigned a personal tutor who provides both pastoral and academic support throughout the course of studies. All the modules on the course are taught by a small team of experienced staff, used to dealing with students from a wide variety of backgrounds and with varying skills and experiences. We strongly encourage

your participation and interaction in all modules and provide a fortnightly tutorial system to further support learning and to encourage the development of transferrable skills. Tutorials are a mixture of planned and student-led sessions and are also used to support the Career Focus and Development module. Building on these foundations, the course aims to foster a dynamic and supportive learning environment in which you become enthused about the academic study of psychology.

International students are given tailored support through additional regular sessions with the Psychology Department's International Student Support Officer. These additional sessions are open to international students from across all of our postgraduate courses and are designed not only to facilitate language and study skills, but to provide a supportive environment for students who may be studying in the UK for the first time. Some of the support sessions are designed specifically for students who don't have English as a first language and these are conducted in collaboration with the Nottingham Language Centre at NTU. Even those who do have good English language skills often require support for getting used to employing discipline-specific language to enable them to cope with the demands of a psychology course. In addition, study skills support is provided for those students that come from an educational environment that is very different to the UK Higher Education system.

13. Graduate destinations / employability

The MSc Applied Child Psychology enables you to develop a wide range of analytical abilities, a proficiency in research methods, data handling, data management, analysis and interpretation, as well as good written and verbal communication skills. The programme can prepare you for PhD (or further postgraduate) study, for research-related careers in academic or further applied psychological disciplines, or for any career in which research, data handling and analytic skills are of relevance. Tutorials and one-to-one meetings with the Postgraduate Careers Coordinator are available to help you recognise and enunciate where and how you have acquired such skills in order that you can best present yourself to future employers.

The MSc Applied Child Psychology teaches a range of transferable skills that are likely to appeal to a wide range of employers (including oral and written communication and presentation skills, effective planning and organisation, teamwork and independence, use of IT, and numeracy). The MSc programme will continue to support NTU's high rate of graduate employability and its commitment to producing confident graduates who are equipped to innovate in their chosen careers. An MSc Applied Child Psychology student is entitled to receive support from the University's Careers Service. In choosing Nottingham Trent University for postgraduate and professional study, you benefit from the knowledge, experience, and resources of many leaders in research, business, and industry.

14. Course standards and quality

Quality management of the course is in accordance with the University Academic Standards and Quality Handbook and school practice.

External Examiners also play a crucial role in the quality management and enhancement of psychology provision. Their comments are invited at meetings of the Board of Examiners and their recommendations addressed through the Teaching and Course Committees.

Module Leaders are encouraged to position themselves as reflective individuals, critically evaluating the quality of their modules. Part of this role involves their writing an annual report on their module, which requires them to reflect, on the basis of evidence, on the module's strengths and potential areas for development. The Department of Psychology engages in peer observation of teaching, which promotes reflexivity in monitoring teaching styles in a warm, supportive manner. Student feedback is an important part of the evidence, and ongoing feedback is systematically sought via student representatives who formally report to the Course Committees. In addition a Student-Staff Consultative Committee further enhances communication between you and the teaching team. This committee emphasises the view that regular dialogue and discussion helps to inform practice in all aspects of subject provision.

1. Assessment regulations

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in its [Academic Standards and Quality Handbook](#)). Any course-specific assessment features are described below:

There are no course-specific exceptions from the University regulations.

2. Additional Information

Collaborative partner(s):	None
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	Psychology
Course recognised by:	Not applicable
Date implemented:	23 May 2018
Any additional information:	