

## Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

<b>Basic Course Information</b>		
1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	School of Social Sciences / City Campus
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling (Full Time) BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling (SW) (Full Time)
4.	Normal Duration:	3 years for: BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling  4 years for: BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling (SW)
5.	UCAS Code:	C (3 year) and C (4 year)

6. <b>Overview and general educational aims of the course</b>
<p>The BSc (Honours) Psychology with Counselling is an exciting multi-disciplinary degree that provides the opportunity to study psychology in combination with counselling. The course would particularly suit anyone who wants to acquire a breadth of experience and knowledge in psychology, whilst at the same time follow a specialised and distinctive programme in counselling .</p> <p>The BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling course is currently undergoing accreditation by the British Psychological Society (BPS), the main professional body for psychology in the UK, as conferring eligibility for Graduate Membership of the Society with the Graduate Basis for Chartership, provided you achieve the minimum standard of qualification of second class honours and passing the final year research project. Accreditation holds for all varieties of BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling offered.</p> <p>The aims of the course are to produce graduates who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Are skilled and competent psychologists, in both theory and research;</li> <li>2 Are equipped with highly desirable skills and knowledge for being employable in a range of settings and/or to undertake further study towards a career in counselling or related professions;</li> <li>3 Have developed a range of counselling related skills and competencies in theory, research and practice.</li> <li>4 Have developed a range of transferable intellectual and personal skills; including independent learning, critical evaluation, oral and written presentation skills, group work skills, ICT skills;</li> <li>5 Have developed their own knowledge, values, understanding and skills in order to enhance their employment prospects;</li> <li>6 Have developed their own knowledge, values, understanding and skills in order to address international concerns;</li> </ol> <p>The aims and learning outcomes of the course are consistent with the national qualifications framework, and with subject specific psychology benchmarking. The BPS and the external examiners have repeatedly commended modules on this course on their standards and quality, including the sound, broad and balanced curriculum, which is regularly renewed and updated; the imaginative and innovative forms of assessment</p>

that are used; the online resources that are available to students;; the way in which staff research expertise informs the curriculum; and the approachability and professionalism of staff.

The course is designed to give you a thorough grounding in the foundational knowledge, skills and understanding of core areas of Psychology and Counselling throughout all years of your studies. During year three this provision continues, but you are also able to select specialist final year modules linked to the areas of staff research expertise within Psychology.

The course also provides you with a rigorous training in research methods, and has a substantial practical component throughout the three years of teaching. Designing and running research studies as well as data analysis and interpretation are all part of your learning experience. Not only are these skills used for your final year research project, but also proficiency in this area can be crucial for postgraduate development and future employability.

You have the options of integrating studies abroad with your degree by expanding the three year course into a four year sandwich course (SW). Between levels five and six, you can decide to use NTU's exchange schemes to study in another country for a year. Studying abroad typically takes place under the Erasmus scheme at European partner universities and results in an Erasmus certificate in addition to the sandwich degree title. Other options for studying abroad are also possible. Strong and active support for managing a year abroad is provided directly by NTU Psychology. More information can be found in the section on course structure. All students who use a study abroad option start out on the full time version of the course

It is also possible to apply directly onto a four year sandwich course in which you will undertake a work placement between levels five and six. Note that a sandwich course that includes a work placement requires direct entry. Strong and active support for managing a work placement is provided directly by NTU Psychology. More information can be found in the section on course structure.

Further training in psychology after your undergraduate degree can lead to Chartered Psychologist status. About a third of psychology graduates (nationally) who go into permanent employment as psychologists enter public services such as the health service, education, the Civil Service and the Armed Forces, and a third go into industry or commerce. Of the remainder, about a tenth teach and research in schools, colleges and universities. Around 15-20% of psychology graduates end up working as professional psychologists (BPS figures). Graduates who do not enter psychology as a profession are well equipped with a rounded set of key transferable skills.

The degree caters for both students who wish to become professional psychologists and those who wish to pursue a career in counselling or related professions. Throughout the course you will receive training on a range of skills that will appeal to employers, such as reflective practice, training in research methods, numeracy training in statistics, as well as gain experience developing and critically analysing ideas and arguments in written form or oral presentations. In your first year you will have the opportunity to develop a foundation in professional, legal, and ethical issues; basic counselling skills; and theoretical approaches. During the first two years we will also encourage you to reflect on your skills and potential career paths to enable you to shape your university experience and development appropriately. In your second year you will gain work related experience through our Personal and Professional Development module, which will enable you to appreciate the importance of employment related experience and skills. In your final year you will be introduced to the complex range of issues (e.g. bereavement, trauma, self-harm) that clients may bring to counselling, ways of working

with clients in terms of application of theory and skills, and how issues of difference (e.g. sexuality, disability, and ethnicity) may affect the counselling process. The course therefore will give you a set of skills and experiences that we believe will benefit you in your future careers. Importantly, across all three years you will be supported in your development by a comprehensive tutorial system

Throughout the degree the University Careers Centre provide a range of employment related initiatives, and in addition to this NTU Psychology organises careers talks and events. The department has numerous long-standing links with employers and external organisations, ranging from prisons to charities and emergency services that we make use of during the delivery of the course.

The course also has a strong international perspective. During the degree you will be discussing theories and ideas in Psychology and Counselling that have been developed in different places around the world at different times. Where appropriate, modules will also take international perspectives and consider differences between countries and cultures. Our students and staff also come from a variety of backgrounds and the perspectives that our international students and staff bring to the course are valued and feed into the curriculum's international perspective.

#### 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. Critically evaluate psychological and counselling theories and evidence within the core knowledge domains of psychology and counselling. (B)
2. Critically evaluate current issues in psychology and counselling and core psychological/counselling debates. (B)
3. Demonstrate a critical awareness of the applications of psychology and counselling and the role psychology plays in engaging with organisations and wider society. (B)
4. Critically reflect on the relations between psychology and related disciplines, such as counselling, and the integration within psychology across different perspectives. (B)
5. Critically evaluate the scientific method and empirical methodology within psychology. (B)
6. Critically reflect on the social context and the conceptual and historical perspectives in psychology and counselling, taking into account the international setting of the discipline. (B)
7. Demonstrate specialist understanding of counselling theories, research, and concepts, including the application of basic counselling skills..
8. Critically evaluate the role of brain function in human behaviour and experience. (B)

(B) Indicates these outcomes having specific reference to the QA Psychology Benchmark Statements

#### **Skills, qualities and attributes**

<p>By the end of the course you should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues outside an academic context, including organisational contexts, in order to make practice-based recommendations. (B)</li> <li>2. Apply an evidence-based approach to critically evaluate patterns of behaviour, psychological functioning, and experience, taking into account distinctive psychological approaches and the international setting of the discipline. (B)</li> <li>3. Critically appraise a range of resources, including primary research papers, and retrieve and organise information effectively. (B)</li> <li>4. Make critical judgements and evaluations, using evidence-based reasoning, to present and evaluate research in psychology and counselling. (B)</li> <li>5. Apply scientific method and formulate relevant research questions in psychology. (B)</li> <li>6. Carry out empirical studies involving a variety of methods of data collection and appreciate the practical, theoretical, and ethical issues related to different methodologies. (B)</li> <li>7. Carry out data analysis using both qualitative and quantitative methods. (B)</li> <li>8. Demonstrate competency in working with others. (B)</li> </ol> <p>(B) Indicates these outcomes having specific reference to the QA Psychology Benchmark Statements</p>
<p><b>8. Teaching and Learning Methods</b></p> <p>A variety of teaching and learning approaches are used to support you in your development of psychological and counselling knowledge and understanding and transferable skills. The pattern of teaching and learning methods across the three years reflects the principles of progression and development outlined below. As you progress through the course you are encouraged to become increasingly responsible for your own learning and you are expected by your final year to develop independence and autonomy with respect to learning, thinking and research. This is an important skill to develop for future employability or postgraduate study.</p> <p>In years one and two, your learning is focussed around lectures, seminars and tutorials. Lectures develop your subject knowledge and understanding. Seminars comprise a variety of interactive exercises, such as discussions, debates, presentations or simulations. These provide you with the opportunity to clarify or apply ideas, debate issues, explore possibilities or appraise learning. Tutorials provide the opportunity for you to develop both subject knowledge and a range of transferable skills. In the first year, tutorials focus on a range of study skills which prepare you for the kind of academic work you need to do successfully in order to complete your degree. In your second year, your academic tutorials offer practical support for the assessments in your core modules as well as helping you to develop your own interests in psychology, which you will then pursue in the final year of your studies. In your final year, tutorials take into account your increased independence and specialisation as well as your ambitions after graduation. Final year tutors support you in your final year project and offer practical guidance and support related to your future employment prospects.</p> <p>In your first and second year you will also attend research methods classes. In these classes in the first year, you will be expected to follow laid down procedures and to learn</p>

basic skills of doing and reporting empirical work. In year two, a similar model is used but you will have more responsibility for certain aspects of the tasks you are expected to undertake. You will also learn to work effectively in teams and have the opportunity to practise your presentation skills.

The final year modules vary greatly in terms of teaching and learning methods as appropriate to the subject matter and the skills required for success. Some modules are lecture-based while others involve working in groups or individually. An important part of the final year is the research project in which you undertake a substantial piece of empirical work. An apprenticeship approach is taken in supervising students on these projects, so you develop your research skills in a supportive and carefully directed environment. All modules in this year are characterised by their close alignment with the professional and research expertise of staff members.

Throughout your degree the course team and teaching staff actively encourage you to work with your peers to ask questions, solve problems and make suggestions. There are both formal and informal opportunities within the curriculum for this to happen. This experience of working with others to reflect on your own learning not only is important for successful completion of the degree, but also has positive outcomes when you apply for jobs and pursue careers.

An additional tool used by the teaching team is the Virtual Learning Portal (the NTU Online Workspace – NOW). Staff members use the portal not only to provide supplementary information to lectures, and tutorials, but also to point students to useful topics for discussion and questioning.

The psychology department's 'Teaching and Learning Committee' oversees strategies and systems related to issues of teaching, learning and assessment across all undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Discussion of issues by this committee is informed by discussion and decisions made at the School level through the School's Teaching and Learning Committee.

## **9. Assessment Methods**

The course makes use of a variety of assessment practices across its modules including a range of different kinds of essays, written examinations, online multiple-choice tests, oral presentations, laboratory reports, research projects, and poster presentations. This range of assessment tools has been highlighted by the BPS Accreditation Committee and by External Examiners as one of the strengths of the course.

The design of the assessment tasks follows the following principles:

1. Patterns of assessment are carefully planned both within individual levels and across the whole course, such that you have opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychology and a range of specific transferable skills throughout the course.
2. The type of assessment selected for each module is appropriate to the level and learning outcomes of that module and preparation for these assessment tasks is developmental. For example, multiple choice assessments and examinations are used at level four to test your descriptive knowledge and understanding of the discipline. Coursework at level four enables you to develop a range of academic skills that will be important to you in the second and final year. In contrast, examinations and coursework at level six provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate fully your skills in presenting a well-structured argument, synthesising information from a range of sources and critically evaluating evidence. By year three, you will have developed skills and other attributes

which enable you also to succeed on more demanding assessment tasks such as oral presentations and your final year research project.

3. Criteria for assessment tasks are made clear to you and follow a developmental progression through the three years of study.

You will receive feedback on your progress and development during the year as well as at the end of each year. In the first and second year this comes regularly during the year via the tutorial modules and research methods module. In the final year, you receive formative feedback during the year about your progress from module leaders.

## **10. Course structure and curriculum**

The BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling course is studied on a full-time basis. When you graduate you will possess a range of transferable skills which will put you in a strong position for the world of work.

Level four: Foundation - you acquire a sound, descriptive knowledge of basic concepts of psychology and counselling. Most learning is directed, with a limited amount of self-directed learning. A key strand of modules provides the opportunity for you to develop, and be assessed in, academic and transferable skills within supportive small groups. Here you will be given individual feedback about your progress.

Level five: Development and application - analytical skills are developed in the application of basic principles of psychology to the study of human behaviour. You are expected to accept a greater level of responsibility for your learning. As in level four, you will get individual feedback about your progress through the strand of small group teaching you receive.

Level six: Critical evaluation and analysis - you develop, at a deeper more critically aware level, knowledge of your discipline and the ability to evaluate arguments and assumptions. Self-directed learning and autonomy (with respect to research and the consultation of primary sources) is expected.

Students who do not progress to the final stage may receive a Certificate of Higher Education (completion of Level 4), Diploma of Higher Education (completion of Levels 4 and 5) or an Ordinary Degree (completion of Levels 4 and 5 and 60 credits at Level 6). To gain BPS accreditation it is mandatory that you undertake an empirical psychology research project in your final year.

### *Level 4*

All modules in the first year are compulsory. These are as follows:

- Introduction to Psychology (20 credits)
- Statistics 1 (20 credits)
- Research Methods in Psychology (20 credits)
- Approaches to Counselling (20 credits)
- Counselling Toolbox (20 credits)
- Counselling in Context (20 credits)

### *Level 5*

All modules in the second year are compulsory. These are as follows:

- Research Methods and Statistics (40 credits)
- Cognitive and Biological Psychology (20 credits)
- Social and Lifespan Developmental Psychology (20 credits)
- Critical Thinking in Counselling (20 credits)

- Personal and Professional Development (20 credits)

### *Opportunities in between levels 5 and 6*

With years one and two designed to provide you with a thorough grounding in all core areas of psychology, you then have the option of taking a year to study in another country (turning your full time, FT, degree into a sandwich, SW, degree). Alternatively, if you started out on the SW degree, you would be expected to take up a work placement instead of moving straight into the final course year.

You will receive strong support from NTU Psychology for plans to study abroad for a full year. The department has exchange agreements in place with European partner institutions under the Erasmus scheme. The scheme allows to study in another country for a year, and afterwards to return to your studies at NTU for a final year. In consequence, your degree title will be BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling (SW). The awarding classification will be based on three years of NTU modules. In addition, students will receive an Erasmus certificate. Exchanges are overseen by the department's own internationalisation officer and are further supported by the university's Erasmus Office. Possibilities for non-EU studies also exist.

Going on a year-long work placement will lead to the degree title BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling (SW). Placements follow NTU regulations to ensure quality standards and appropriate links with Psychology during the placement year. Placements last for a minimum of 36 weeks and a maximum of 48 weeks and would normally pay at least the minimum wage. It will be your responsibility to secure a placement. For this, you will receive support from the Placement Co-ordinator in Psychology and from the university's Careers and Placements Team.

Note that preparations for studying abroad and a year-long placement are both time consuming and require a sufficiently long planning stage. You will receive timely information during the first year of your studies to guide you through the process. Numbers will be limited for both options, and details of the selection procedure will be made clear to you well in advance.

### *Level 6*

At level 6 students take the following compulsory modules:

- Psychology Research Project (40 credits)
- Client Issues in Counselling (20 credits)

Final year students then select one 20 credit option module from the following list:

- Advanced Cognitive and Biological Psychology (20 credits)
- Advanced Social and Developmental Psychology (20 credits)

Final year students then select two 20 credit option modules, one from Set B and one from Set C below. Availability of optional modules may change from year to year depending on staff availability and expertise but generally they provide students with the opportunity to study a specific area of psychology in depth. Optional modules include:

#### SET B

- Biological Perspectives on Psychiatric Disorders
- Community, Health and Applied Social Psychology
- Evolutionary Psychology
- Infant Development
- Person Perception

- Psychology, Educational Needs and Inclusion
- Psychology of the Paranormal
- Psychology of the Family
- Statistics III: Advanced Statistics for Research
- The Psychology of Sleep
- The Psychology of Aging and Neurodegenerative disease
- Black and Cultural Psychology

#### SET C

- Addictive Behaviours
- Clinical Neuropsychology
- Language and Literacy Development in Children
- Psychology of Trauma
- Psychopathology and Offending Behaviour
- Social Development in Children and Adolescents
- The Psychology of Sex Offending
- The Science of False Memory

### 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**

Within the course, you are assigned a personal tutor who will provide both pastoral and academic support through your full three years on the course. You first meet this tutor during the induction events which are organised for you when you arrive. In addition, at this event you receive information about:

1. Services to support students, for example the Students' Union, Student Welfare, accommodation, financial advice, the Careers Service, counselling
2. Services to support learning, for example computer and IT resource services, the Library and Learning Resources, the Learning Support Unit
3. Policies relating to health and safety, equal opportunities, harassment, codes of behaviour, assessment regulations, complaints and appeals

At the beginning of the course you will receive a Course Handbook. This handbook provides a range of information about studying psychology at Nottingham Trent University. Specifically, the handbook includes:

1. The course structure and assessment details
2. Module descriptions
3. Information relating to your responsibilities as a student including information about academic misconduct, attendance and student behaviour
4. Information about how to inform us if you have special situations which you feel might have an effect on your work at university
5. Details about how to contact members of staff
6. Information on BPS requirements and accreditation

The University, the School of Social Sciences and its departments will ensure that adequate and appropriate resources are provided for the course. All students will have access to the University's library and computer facilities. On-line teaching and learning



resources are updated frequently by the dedicated Social Science Librarian. The School also has a number of learning resource rooms with ICT equipment and technicians. In addition, all modules use the University's NOW to provide on-line resources to support other modes of teaching and learning.

### **13. Graduate destinations / employability**

As well as being eligible for graduate membership of the British Psychological Society with the Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) provided the minimum standard of qualification of second class honours is achieved and the final year research project is passed, the study of psychology will enable you to develop a wide range of analytical abilities, a proficiency in research methods and analysis, as well as good written and verbal communication skills.

The majority of students graduating with a degree in psychology from Nottingham Trent University are successful at gaining employment. Some graduates have broken into the highly competitive, high status psychology professions (such as Clinical Psychology and Forensic Psychology). Many students each year go on to pursue a range of professional careers in psychology following further training. A number of our graduates are now either career researchers or academics working in the subject area of psychology in higher education. The skills and knowledge acquired during the course are also suited for careers in, for example, research, social and youth work, advertising and marketing, human resources and teaching.

If you have applied for the four year course you will be expected to take a psychology-related placement between years 2 and 3 of your studies. This is a year-long placement lasting a minimum of 32 weeks and a maximum of 48 weeks and would normally pay at least the minimum wage. Organising your placement will be your responsibility, but you will receive considerable support from the university careers and placements team as well as the designated psychology placement co-ordinator.

During the final year of your studies you will take the 'Personal and Professional Development' module. This module encompasses personal reflective exercises to help you develop self-awareness and group activities to enable you to appreciate the importance of the way groups might work within a professional setting. You will also have the opportunity to gain further experience and skills relevant to employability with a work-based practice element..

All our students receive support from the University's Careers Service who put on careers events throughout the year, provide careers guidance and develop initiatives that give students the chance to develop work related skills. In addition, the Psychology department may organise additional career events to support your employability profile holds an annual careers week that includes for example workshops on CV writing, job applications and interview techniques; visiting speakers representing the main psychology career paths, general graduate employment and volunteering organisations. Student's also have tutor lead support throughout the degree in examining the skills that employers are looking for and reflecting on progress with such employability skills.

### **14. Course standards and quality**

The quality management of the psychology course has developed in line with University regulations and guidelines. The Course Committee which meets once a term oversees all quality management issues. Each year an Interim Course Report and Course Development is prepared. This is a report prepared by the members of the course management team throughout the year which reflects on issues of standards and quality

raised. The Psychology Department also has a Teaching and Learning Committee which addresses a range of learning, teaching and assessment issues.

External Examiners 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 Committee and Course Committee. External Examiners have commended the motivation of the course team to respond to their recommendations and to enhance the provision on the course.

One important aspect of quality control and enhancement operates at a local level through Module Leaders, who are encouraged to position themselves as 'reflective practitioners', critically evaluating the quality of their modules. They are required to write an annual report on their module, reflecting, on the basis of evidence, on its strengths and potential areas for development. Student feedback is part of the evidence that is used. Module Leaders' Reports have been praised by External Examiners as 'a model of good practice' and as 'refreshingly self-critical'.

Ongoing student feedback is also systematically sought via student representatives from each year of the course who formally report to the Course Committee and who liaise more informally with Course and Deputy Course Leaders.

In addition, a Student-Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC) operates to further enhance communication between students and the teaching team. The aim of the SSCC is to enable student representatives from all year groups and across all courses in psychology to meet and to discuss issues that their peers have raised. The expectation is that regular dialogue and discussion helps to inform practice in all aspects of subject provision. Issues raised by the SSCC are taken seriously by the course team and feedback from students about this process is very positive.

**15. 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.

**16. Additional Information**

Collaborative partner(s):	None
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	Psychology
Course recognised by:	British Psychological Society
Date implemented:	March 2018
Any additional information:	