

MRes Research Methods in Psychology

Programme Specification

Awarding Institution:

University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London

Name of Final Award and Programme Title: MRes Research Methods in Psychology

Name of Interim Exit Award(s): Not applicable

Duration of Programme: 1 year full-time or 2 years part-time

UCAS Code(s): Not applicable

HECoS Code(s): (100497) Psychology

QAA Benchmark Group: Not applicable

FHEQ Level of Award: Level 7

Programme accredited by: Not applicable

Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: January 2022

Home Department: Psychology

Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Not applicable

Programme overview

This programme gives you a thorough grounding in research methods in psychology. It trains you in the fundamental aspects of quantitative and qualitative research, including research design, data collection and data analysis, and provides practical, 'hands-on' experience.

The programme will appeal to you if you would like to develop your career in experimental research, or to enhance your ability to apply research skills in either the public or the private sector.

For more than fifteen years now, the programme has provided the generic and specific research training required by students in receipt of Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) studentship awards.

Since 2011, the programme has been the research methods training programme for the Psychology pathway within the Goldsmiths and Queen Mary ESRC-funded Doctoral Training Centre (2011-2016).

Students in receipt of an ESRC 1+3 PhD studentship in the Psychology pathway can take this programme as the first year of a 4- year PhD programme;. Students who have completed the MRes self-funded, are eligible to bid for an ESRC funded +3 PhD studentship in Psychology.

Programme entry requirements

You would normally have, or be expected to gain, a first degree of at least a Lower Second standard in Psychology or a closely related scientific discipline (e.g., neuroscience, speech sciences, medicine, cognitive science) with a research component. You may also be considered even if you are not a graduate or your degree is in an unrelated field but you have relevant experience and can demonstrate that you have the ability to work at postgraduate level. In practice, most students taking the programme have a first degree of an Upper Second standard or better.

Applications from overseas students are welcome and we accept a wide range of international-equivalent qualifications.

If your first language is not English, you need to be able to demonstrate the required level of English Language competence to enrol on our programmes. Goldsmiths' normal requirement is an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent.

Aims of the programme

This programme of study is taken over one year full-time or over two years part-time. It aims to equip you with a sound understanding of methods and skills necessary to conduct high-level research, using a wide range of approaches and techniques. The MRes provides a broad training in behavioural and social science research methodologies, including the fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research, and students have the opportunity to develop their own research interests by conducting an empirical research project under the supervision of a member of staff.

This programme is intended primarily for people who wish to pursue a career in psychological research, or a career in which enhanced research skills would be beneficial. The programme's structure and content reflects the fact that such careers currently span a wide range of settings (including academic, civil service, industrial, educational and clinical contexts).

What you will be expected to achieve

There are two types of learning outcomes relevant to this programme: (a) subject-specific theoretical knowledge of psychological research and associated techniques; and (b) transferable procedural skills and competencies in the application of psychological and generic research techniques. During the programme you will acquire and consolidate the understanding and skills listed in the sections below.

Reaching these discrete learning objectives will enable you to synthesise theoretical, technical and applied knowledge of psychological research in a variety of contexts. You will then be able subsequently to conduct independent psychological research, of the level required for a PhD. This synthesis combines both subject-specific knowledge and transferable generic applied skills.

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Understand the relationship between theory, experimental design and statistical inference	Research Design and Analysis; Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Dissertation
A2	Understand the principles of quantitative and qualitative research	Research Design and Analysis; Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School) ; Dissertation
A3	Have a working knowledge of a range of behavioural and social science research methodologies, including core qualitative methods, and the full range of advanced quantitative methods relevant to psychological investigations	Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School); Research Design and Analysis; Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Research Placement (RMIP); Matlab
A4	Understand the principles and potential application of at least one contemporary approach to investigating psychological function	Foundations in Neuroscience (CCN); Behavioural Genetics (SPGE); Individual Differences (SPGE); Twin and family studies (SPGE); Cross-cultural and Individual Differences in

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
		Attention and Awareness; Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP)
A5	Understand the criteria for science and the relationship of these criteria to other forms of intellectual activity	Research Design and Analysis; Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP)

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Critically analyse and evaluate scientific material, independently identifying limitations of specific studies/ methods	Research Placement (RMIP); Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Foundations in Neuroscience (CCN); Behavioural Genetics (SPGE); Individual Differences (SPGE); Twin and family studies (SPGE); Cross-cultural and Individual Differences in Attention and Awareness; Psychology of the Arts, Aesthetics and Attraction; Dissertation
B2	Synthesise complex information	Research Placement (RMIP); Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Research Design and Analysis; Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School); Foundations in Neuroscience (CCN); Behavioural Genetics (SPGE); Individual Differences (SPGE); Twin and family studies (SPGE); Cross-cultural and Individual Differences in Attention and Awareness; Psychology of the Arts, Aesthetics and Attraction; Matlab; Dissertation
B3	Understand the principle of statistical interpretation	Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods;

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
		Statistical Data Analysis Project; Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Research Design and Analysis; Dissertation
B4	Formulate coherent and persuasive interpretations and arguments, and communicate them clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing	Research Placement (RMIP); Research Design and Analysis; Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Foundations in Neuroscience (CCN); Behavioural Genetics (SPGE); Individual Differences (SPGE); Twin and family studies (SPGE); Cross-cultural and Individual Differences in Attention and Awareness; Psychology of the Arts, Aesthetics and Attraction; Dissertation

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Acquire expertise in the range of quantitative research methods commonly used in the collection and statistical analysis (using SPSS) of psychological data	Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Matlab; Dissertation
C2	Demonstrate an awareness of the qualitative research methodologies relevant to psychological research including computer-assisted qualitative data analysis	Research Design and Analysis; Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School)
C3	Demonstrate an awareness of ethical issues and other matters of professional conduct in the context of psychological research	Research Placement (RMIP); Research Design and Analysis; Dissertation
C4	Identify, plan, design, implement, analyse, and present in its appropriate theoretical context an original piece of	Dissertation

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
	empirical psychological research to a high standard	

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Integrate, analyse and evaluate extant research in a critical, rational and objective manner	Research Placement (RMIP); Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Individual Differences (SPGE); Cross-cultural and Individual Differences in Attention and Awareness; Psychology of the Arts, Aesthetics and Attraction; Dissertation
D2	Design research studies that are fit-for-purpose and address cutting-edge questions	Research Placement (RMIP); Individual Differences (SPGE); Cross-cultural and Individual Differences in Attention and Awareness; Psychology of the Arts, Aesthetics and Attraction; Dissertation
D3	Implement data-collection procedures and manage large data sets effectively	Dissertation
D4	Apply advanced statistical techniques appropriate for the analysis of many types of data	Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Dissertation
D5	Use, in an efficient and fluent manner, (the SPSS) data management and statistical analysis software	Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Matlab; Dissertation
D6	Produce high quality scientific reports showing evidence of intellectual rigour	Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Dissertation
D7	Produce oral presentations on scientific material using appropriate visual aids	Research Design and Analysis; Dissertation
D8	Summarise and evaluate the impact of research in ways that may be understood by non-specialists	Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Dissertation

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D9	Demonstrate an awareness of legal issues in research (the Data Protection Act; intellectual property rights)	Research Placement (RMIP); Research Design and Analysis; Dissertation

How you will learn

The teaching and learning methods to which you will be exposed have been designed in recognition of: (a) the different knowledge routes to learning; (b) the learning requirements of different types of information and skills; and (c) the need for you to engage in a complementary range of learning activities leading to the synthesis of academic knowledge with applied skills and competencies.

To achieve the learning outcomes, you will experience a range of teaching/learning methods, including formal lectures, workshops, seminars, and summative coursework (essays, reports, reviews and audiovisual presentations). In addition, as part of the substantial independent research project that you will undertake, you will have one-to-one supervision sessions with an experienced psychological researcher (supervising your research). You will also prepare a 10,000-word dissertation on your research project, where you will implement most of the skills covered by the programme in a specialised area of your own interest.

Learning activities are chosen to meet the particular requirements of this MRes programme. You will attend lectures (e.g. on Multivariate Statistical Methods) in order to provide the background theoretical knowledge which is then used in practical activities (e.g., computer workshops in which you implement the methods that you have been taught). This link between theory and practice is central to the development of the skills required for competently carrying out psychological and other research.

In addition, you will attend seminars and workshops designed to encourage discussion and debate and to foster independent thinking and a critical perspective, also essential for research.

You will receive feedback on written work (essays and reviews) relating to the logic of your arguments, their coherence, references, coverage of background literature, etc., as well as in the form of written constructive criticism, highlighting the major strengths and weaknesses sufficient to allow you to know how to improve your work. During meetings with your Personal Tutor/ Programme Director and peer group, you will have a further opportunity to receive academic guidance. These group meetings are complemented by individual meetings with your Personal Tutor or the Programme Director.

The written and oral feedback you will receive are designed to serve a number of functions: (a) to identify areas in need of further development, serving a diagnostic function; (b) to encourage you to think critically and independently; and (c) to provide you with tangible criteria against which your progress can be monitored.

The reliability and validity of these forms of assessments are assured by meetings between tutors and the use of model answers where appropriate. In addition, all summative coursework is either second marked or moderated. Detailed criteria for marking bands are provided in the Programme Handbook (see below).

How you will be assessed

The learning outcomes are assessed by a variety of means: (1) unseen examination papers in May-June; (2) summative essays, reports, critical reviews or articles; (3) presentations during seminars; and (4) a large piece of original empirical research in the form of a research project and associated 10,000-word dissertation.

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	In addition to the criteria for an excellent grade it will also have an excellent or original line of argument that can be followed very easily.
70-79%	Distinction	<p>Overall the work shows evidence of rigorous analytical research in its conceptualisation; an excellent level of response to the set tasks; the conceptual coherency of the work is strong and ideas are researched and deployed within a clearly defined contextual framework. The work shows ample evidence of sustained academic enquiry, draws on a wide range of sources all of which are critically evaluated; issues are readily identified and contextualised using appropriate theoretical frameworks.</p> <p>A mark of 70% - 79% is likely to be awarded to work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the topic in an explicit manner • announces its structure at the start and stick closely to this announced structure • has relationships between statements that are very easy to recognise • gives wide-ranging and appropriate evidential support for claims that are made

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
		The mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.
60-69%	Merit	<p>Overall evidence of a very good level of response to the set tasks; the conceptual coherency of the work is good and ideas are researched and deployed within a defined contextual framework. The work shows evidence of sustained academic enquiry, draws on a wide range of sources most of which are critically evaluated and synthesised within a clear argument/structure; most issues are identified and contextualised using appropriate theoretical frameworks.</p> <p>A mark of 60% - 69% is likely to be awarded to work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempts to address the topic or answer the question • has a detectable structure which is adhered to for the most part • has relationships between statements that are generally easy to follow • has a good quality line of argument • supports claims by reference to relevant literature <p>Within this category, the mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.</p>
50-59%	Pass	<p>Overall mainly adequate level of response to the set task; the conceptual coherency of the work is largely adequate and ideas are researched and deployed with an inconsistent recognition of the need for a contextual framework. The work shows some evidence of the identification of relevant issues; limited range of sources; evidence of some analytical and contextual skills but inconsistently employed.</p> <p>A mark of 50% - 59% is likely to be awarded to work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents relevant material but fails to use it to answer the question or address the issue • has a structure, but one that is rather loose and unannounced • has relationships between statements that are sometimes hard to follow

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a fair quality line of argument (information drives argument, rather than other way round) • tends to make claims without sufficient supporting evidence <p>Within this category, the mark awarded will depend on the extent to which the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.</p>
30-49%	Fail	<p>Overall the work may not be without merit but not Masters standard. The concepts in question are realised inappropriately or under-developed. The work shows little evidence of the identification of relevant issues; limited and inadequate range of sources; little evidence of analytical and contextual skills, inconsistently employed.</p> <p>A mark of 30-49% is likely to be awarded to work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fails to adequately address the topic or to answer the question, either by reproducing material that is only partly relevant, or by inaccurately reproducing material that is relevant, or by reproducing only a very small amount of relevant material. • lacks a clear structure or framework • has relationships between statements that are often difficult to recognise • has a poor quality line of argument • makes poor use of evidence to support most of the claims that are made <p>The mark awarded will depend on the extent to which the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.</p>
10-29%	Bad fail	<p>Overall inadequate level of response to the set task; the work does not utilise a sufficient range of processes and materials; level of response is not always appropriate or consistent. The range of sources in the work is very limited, there is little interpretation or analysis and it lacks breadth or awareness of a contextual framework.</p> <p>A mark close to 30% might be awarded to an answer that contains some indication that the student can recall something relevant to the question. 20% might be awarded to an answer</p>

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
		that contains something that shows that the student has attended the relevant lecture module, even if there is little in the answer that is of direct relevance to the question. A 10% answer contains no evidence that the student knows anything from the literature that is relevant to the question.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

How the programme is structured

The programme is comprised of compulsory and optional modules. The programme structure is based on the Goldsmiths Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme (CATS), in which the whole MRes programme is equivalent to 180 credits.

In addition to the taught modules, you will be encouraged to attend the Psychology Department Invited Speaker Series, and any other relevant seminars and career talks.

The following table provides a breakdown of credits across each of the compulsory and optional modules in this MRes programme. Compulsory modules are:

1. Multivariate Statistical Methods (15 credits)
2. Statistical data analysis project (15 credits)
3. Core Qualitative Research Methods (15 credits)
4. Advanced quantitative methods (15 credits)
5. Research Design and Analysis (15 credits)
6. Research dissertation (60 credits)

Optional modules - you will choose 45 CATS of optional modules ensuring that no more than 30 CATS come from any one programme other than RMIP. Please note that the optional modules available will change from year to year and not all optional modules listed in the table below will be available in any one year.

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Research Design and Analysis	PS71054D	15	7	Compulsory	1
Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School)	PS71053B	15	7	Compulsory	1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Multivariate Statistical Methods	PS71020E	15	7	Compulsory	1
Theoretical Issues in Psychology (RMIP)	PS71026B	15	7	Optional	2
Advanced Methods and Techniques (CCN)	PS71068C	30	7	Optional	2
Foundations in Neuroscience(CCN)	PS74005D	15	7	Optional	1
Critical Analysis (RMIP)	PS71052B	15	7	Optional	1-2
Behavioural Genetics (SPGE)	PS71060A	15	7	Optional	1
Individual Differences (SPGE)	PS71062A	15	7	Optional	1
Twin and Family Studies (SPGE)	PS71063A	15	7	Optional	2
Dissertation	PS71024C	60	7	Compulsory	1-3
Cross-cultural and Individual Differences in Attention and Awareness	PS71073A	15	7	Optional	1
Psychology of the Arts, Aesthetics and Attraction	PS71081A	15	7	Optional	1
Introduction to Coding with MATLAB	PS71089A	15	7	Optional	1
Statistical Data Analysis Project	PS71083A	15	7	Compulsory	2
Advanced Quantitative Methods	PS71082A	15	7	Compulsory	2
Research Placement (RMIP)	PS71085A	15	7	Optional	1

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the

autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The [Disability](#) and [Wellbeing](#) Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)).

The [Academic Skills Centre](#) works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

Most graduates are likely to either continue their careers in research/academia (e.g., via a PhD studentship or research assistant post) or pursue other professional careers in psychology (e.g. clinical psychology) for which advanced research skills are advantageous. The Goldsmiths' Careers Service will be available to you to help you make decisions about your future employment.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

All taught postgraduate degrees have a minimum total value of 180 credits and involve one calendar year of full-time study. Some programmes may extend over more than one calendar year and, when this is the case, they have a higher total credit value. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. Part-time students normally take modules to the value of 90 credits each year. If a programme has a part-time pathway, the structure will be set out in the section “How the programme is structured” above. Normally, all modules are at level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

More detailed information about the structure and requirements of a Goldsmiths degree is provided in the [Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).

Modules

Modules are defined as:

- “Optional” – which can be chosen from a group of modules
- “Compulsory” – which must be taken as part of the degree

Progression

Some programmes may require students to pass specific modules prior to completion of the dissertation/major project (or equivalent). Additionally, where a programme of study extends beyond one calendar year, students may be required to pass specific modules in their first

year of study before progressing to the second year. Where this is the case, these requirements will be set out in this Programme Specification.

Award of the degree

In order to graduate, students must successfully complete all modules specified for the programme, as set out within the section “How the programme is structured” above.

Classification

Final degree classification is calculated on the basis of a student’s mean average mark (based on credit value) across all modules on the programme.

Masters degrees are awarded with the following classifications:

- Distinction – 70%+
- Merit – 60-69%
- Pass – 50-59%

More detail on the [calculation of the final classification](#) is on our website.

Interim exit awards

Some programmes incorporate interim exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and/or Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the minimum value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. The awards are made without classification.

When these awards are incorporated within the programme, the relevant learning outcomes and module requirements will be set out within the “What you will be expected to achieve” section above.

The above information is intended as a guide, with more detailed information available in the [Goldsmiths Academic Manual](#).

Programme-specific rules and facts

General programme costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information at gold.ac.uk/programme-costs.

Specific programme costs

Not applicable.

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules are formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year, such as in departmental committees, a variety of student feedback mechanisms and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme has at least one External Examiner who reviews comments annually on the standards of awards and student achievement. External Examiner(s) attend Boards of Examiners meetings and submit an annual written report.

Modules, programmes and/or departments are also subject to annual and periodic review internally, as well as periodic external scrutiny.

Quality assurance processes aim to ensure Goldsmiths' academic provision remains current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all these procedures are published on the [Quality Office web pages](#).