

MSc Psychology of the Arts, Neuroaesthetics, and Creativity 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:

MSc Psychology of the Arts, Neuroaesthetics, and Creativity (PANC)

Name of Interim Exit Award(s):

Postgraduate Certificate in Psychology of the Arts, Neuroaesthetics and Creativity

Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology of the Arts, Neuroaesthetics and Creativity

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:

Computing; Institute of Management Studies; Media, Communications and Cultural Studies

Programme overview

The MSc Psychology of the Arts, Neuroaesthetics and Creativity (PANC) is a unique postgraduate programme for the scientific study of aesthetics and creativity. With a strong interdisciplinary focus at the intersection of the arts and the sciences, the programme provides an in-depth introduction to the scientific study of aesthetic experience and creative practice.

Why do humans enjoy art? How do we come up with creative ideas and solutions? Is art a uniquely human capacity? Aesthetic and creative decisions are relevant in the visual and the performing arts, and in many applied and commercial contexts, from advertising to curating. Based in the Department of Psychology, but in collaboration with Computing, Media, Communications and Cultural Studies, and the Institute of Management Studies, the course builds critical knowledge and research skills across the arts and the sciences,

centred around two key topics: the psychological and brain mechanisms of making (Creativity) and appreciating (Neuroaesthetics) the arts.

The scientific study of creativity covers topics ranging from experiments in creative problem solving to visual art production and musical improvisation. Neuroaesthetics covers the psychological and brain mechanisms underlying human preference and affect in relation to the visual and the performing arts, architecture and design, but also to food or other people. In addition, the programme provides in depth knowledge of experimental design, statistics and neuroscience methods providing the necessary research skills for an empirical investigation of these topics in a dissertation research project.

To challenge and complement the scientific perspective, the course includes an interdisciplinary invited speaker series and optional modules in for example creative computing, marketing and consumer behaviour or embodiment and experience, which will be delivered in collaboration with the departments of Computing, Media, Communications and Cultural Studies, and the Institute of Management Studies (IMS). The course is aimed at students with backgrounds in the sciences and the arts, paving the way for a research career in aesthetic or creative science, working in the creative industries, arts organisations, or to enrich their artistic practice.

Programme entry requirements

Entry requirements will be matched to current entry requirements for the MSc Music, Mind and Brain, as this course also allows for students with arts backgrounds (in this case music).

Entry requirements will normally be a good degree (2:1 or above) in Psychology or a related subject (Cognitive Science, Neuroscience) with a research component. Candidates with a background in the Arts or Business or a related subject will be required to demonstrate background knowledge and/or experience of psychological and/or neuroscientific approaches and Multivariate Statistical Methods. In exceptional circumstances, other degrees and professional qualifications may be considered. Applications from overseas students are welcome. Students whose first language is not English will be asked to provide evidence of their English language skills. The College norm of an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent will be applied.

We expect applicants from at least three different backgrounds.

1. Students with an UG degree in Psychology or a related subject (Cognitive Science, Neuroscience) who wish to specialise in the Psychology of art, neuroaesthetics or creativity.

2. Students with an UG or PG degree in the visual or performing arts who wish to change careers (arts administration/curating/research/creative industry) or want to enrich their artistic practice with knowledge from the subject area.
3. Students with UG or PG degree in Business/Marketing who wish to acquire knowledge in scientific methods, cognitive neuroscience and experimental psychology in relation to aesthetics and creativity.

A preparatory statistics workshop is offered to all students who have been accepted on PG psychology programmes. It comprises a two-days, takes place immediately before the beginning of term and covers basic descriptive (measures of centrality and variance) and inferential (T-tests and univariate analysis of variance) statistics. It is offered at no additional costs. Completion of the preparatory stats course is not a prerequisite for starting on the programme, but it is recommended in particular to students with little knowledge in statistics or students whose UG degrees in Psychology was completed some time ago.

Aims of the programme

PANC aims to integrate knowledge from aesthetic and creative practice with scientific methodology and thinking to provide students from both backgrounds with the knowledge and skills to work in interdisciplinary contexts, located in the creative industries, arts organisations, academia or as artists. Specific aims include:

- Preparation students for working in an emerging field of academic research
- Preparation for employment at the intersection of the arts and the sciences
- Providing education in experimental and neuroscience methods to students with diverse backgrounds
- Encourage students to critically engage with diverse perspectives from neuroscience, the humanities and creative practice.
- To develop writing, professional and communication skills that allow for effective communication interdisciplinary contexts.
- Encourage independent study and critical thinking.

What you will be expected to achieve

Students who successfully complete the **Postgraduate Certificate** will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|--|---|
| A1 | demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theories, key concepts and findings in experimental aesthetics and creative cognition | Neuroaesthetics and Creativity modules |
| A2 | Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of methodologies in aesthetic and creative science | All modules, especially research skills and Foundations of Neuroscience |
| A3 | recognise the interdisciplinary nature of research in aesthetics and creativity | All modules, especially optional modules with collaborating departments |
| A4 | understand the possibilities and limitations of a scientific approach to aesthetics and creativity | All modules |

Cognitive and thinking skills

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|---|
| B1 | Critically evaluate scientific research in experimental aesthetics and creative cognition | Neuroaesthetics and Creativity modules, research skills |
| B2 | Integrate scientific and humanities perspectives on aesthetics and creativity | Neuroaesthetics and Creativity modules, optional modules with collaborating departments |
| B3 | Expand their analytical, evaluative, critical and reflective capacities | All modules |

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|---|
| C1 | Critically engage with primary research literature in psychological research and neuroscience | Aesthetic Science and Creativity modules, Research Skills |

Transferable skills

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|-----------------------------------|
| D1 | Interpret a variety of sources closely and critically | All modules |

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|--|---|
| D2 | Produce creatively and coherently written arguments in an accessible and credible style | All modules |
| D3 | Give oral presentations | Aesthetic Science and Research Skills |
| D4 | Develop transdisciplinary communication skills, bridging perspectives from the arts and the sciences | All modules, especially optional modules with collaborating departments |

Students who successfully complete the **Postgraduate Diploma**, in addition to the learning outcomes above, will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|------------------------------------|
| A1 | demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge of Multivariate Statistical Methods and experimental design | Statistics and Experimental Design |

Cognitive and thinking skills

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|--|------------------------------------|
| B1 | Conduct quantitative and qualitative data analyses | Statistics and Experimental Design |
| B2 | Critically evaluate quantitative and qualitative methodologies | Statistics and Experimental Design |

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|---|
| C1 | Translate research questions into testable hypotheses | Statistics and Experimental Design, all modules |

Transferable skills

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|--|---|
| D1 | Communicate across disciplines, bridging research methodologies from the arts and the sciences | Statistics and Experimental Design, all modules |

Students who successfully complete the **MSc**, in addition to the learning outcomes above, will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|--|
| A1 | Demonstrate systematic knowledge of current topics in aesthetics and creativity, applicable to their own research | All modules, especially Research Project |
| A2 | Demonstrate systematic understanding of current methodologies, applicable to their own research | All modules, especially Research Project |

Cognitive and thinking skills

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|--|
| B1 | Identify and address a specific knowledge gap in aesthetic and creative science | All modules, especially Research Project |
| B2 | Integrate knowledge from multiple sources to address a specific research question | All modules, especially research project |
| B3 | Reflect on their own research practice | Research Project |

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|---|-----------------------------------|
| C1 | Develop, conduct and report empirical research in aesthetics and creative science | Research Project |

Transferable skills

| Code | Learning outcome | Taught by the following module(s) |
|------|--|-----------------------------------|
| D1 | Undertake independent research | Research Project |
| D2 | Communicate complex ideas effectively and across disciplinary boundaries | Research Project, all modules |

How you will learn

The teaching and learning methods on this course are tailored to the learning requirements of different types of information and skills and the need for students to engage in a complementary range of learning activities leading to the synthesis of academic knowledge and professional skills/competencies. Moreover, the programme places a strong emphasis on developing communication skills that allow to exchange knowledge across disciplines.

Key concepts, theories and findings will be taught and learnt through lectures, seminars and tutorials with a strong interactive focus, e.g. by including dedicated sessions to include journal clubs and group discussions. All teaching and learning activities will be structured in such a way that they promote knowledge exchange between students from diverse backgrounds.

Specific skills including scientific writing, writing for non-specialist audiences, data analysis, literature research and review will be practiced in dedicated workshop. Lab-classes and tutorials, as well as through targeted coursework assignments, and both written and oral examinations. Regular-drop in and one-to-one tutorials will further support students, particularly in relation to the research project. In addition to course-specific teaching and learning, students will have the opportunity to attend existing college-wide career skills workshops, for example on interview and CV skills, applying for a PhD or on working in arts administration.

Knowledge exchange and communication across disciplines will be practiced across all modules, but will be especially encouraged during invited speaker presentations, through project presentations and oral examinations. Self-study will complement all teaching activities to foster creative and critical thinking and develop independent thought and working attitudes.

How you will be assessed

Marking criteria

| Mark | Descriptor | Specific Marking Criteria |
|---------|--|--|
| 80-100% | Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional) | In addition to the criteria for distinction, the student's work will also have an excellent or original line of argument that can be followed very easily. |
| 70-79% | Distinction | 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 |

| Mark | Descriptor | Specific Marking Criteria |
|--------|------------|--|
| | | <p>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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. addresses the topic in an explicit manner 2. announces its structure at the start and stick closely to this announced structure 3. has relationships between statements that are very easy to recognise 4. gives wide-ranging and appropriate evidential support for claims that are made <p>The mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.</p> |
| 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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. attempts to address the topic or answer the question 2. has a detectable structure which is adhered to for the most part 3. has relationships between statements that are generally easy to follow 4. has a good quality line of argument 5. 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</p> |

| Mark | Descriptor | Specific Marking Criteria |
|--------|------------|---|
| | | <p>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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. presents relevant material but fails to use it to answer the question or address the issue 2. has a structure, but one that is rather loose and unannounced 3. has relationships between statements that are sometimes hard to follow 4. has a fair quality line of argument (information drives argument, rather than other way round) 5. 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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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. 2. lacks a clear structure or framework 3. has relationships between statements that are often difficult to recognise 4. has a poor-quality line of argument 5. makes poor use of evidence to support most of the claims that are made |

| Mark | Descriptor | Specific Marking Criteria |
|--------|-------------------------------|--|
| | | The mark awarded will depend on the extent to which the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria. |
| 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 that contains something that shows that the student has attended the relevant lecture course, 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.</p> |
| 1-9% | Very bad fail | A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes (shall be deemed a non-valid attempt and unit must be resat). |
| 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

Compulsory modules (150 credits) and optional modules to the value of 30 credits.

| Module Title | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Status | Term |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|-------|---------------|------|
| Aesthetic Science | PS71087A | 15 | 7 | Compulsory | 2 |
| Creativity | PS71088A | 15 | 7 | Compulsory | 1 |
| Research Skills | PS74011C | 15 | 7 | Compulsory | 1/2 |
| Multivariate Statistical Methods | PS71020E | 15 | 7 | Compulsory | 1 |
| Research Design and Analysis | PS71054D | 15 | 7 | Compulsory | 1 |
| Foundations of Neuroscience | PS74005D | 15 | 7 | Compulsory | 1 |
| Research Project | PS74012B | 60 | 7 | Compulsory | 2/3 |

| Module Title | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Status | Term |
|--|-------------|---------|-------|---------------|-------|
| <p>30 credits of optional modules can be selected from an annually approved list. Other appropriate Level 7 modules can be taken with the approval of the programme leader but an indicative list is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Quantitative Methods (15 credits) • Magic and the Mind (15 credits) • Embodiment and Experience (15 credits) • Politics of the Audiovisual (15 credits) • Workshops in Creative Coding I (15 credits) • Workshops in Creative Coding 2 (15 credits) • Physical Computing 1 (15 credits) • Physical Computing 2(15 credits) • Psychology of Marketing and Advertising (15 credits) • Consumer Behaviour (15 credits) | Various | 30 | 7 | Optional | 1 & 2 |

NB: Physical Computing 1 is a prerequisite for Physical Computing 2 and the two x15 credit modules must be taken together.

Award of Postgraduate Certificate (60 Credits)

Compulsory: Aesthetic Science, Creativity, Foundations of Neuroscience, Research Skills

Optional: Two module options from psychology or collaborating departments (Computing, Media, Communications and Cultural Studies, and the Institute of Management Studies).

Award of Postgraduate Diploma (120 Credits)

All modules for PG Cert and two additional compulsory module: Research Design and Analysis; and Multivariate Statistical Methods.

Award of MSc (180 Credits)

All modules for PG Dip and the compulsory Research Project module.

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

The psychology department has a range of existing links with the private sector and other external organisations, which we will use to support students on this programme to develop their career prospects and their employability, in both academic and non-academic routes.

The Psychology Department at Goldsmiths has an ongoing 'scientist in residence' programme with advertising agency adam&eveddb. As part of this programme, the agency sponsors final year research projects with an advertising focus. Each year, up to two students will be selected from the programme to conduct a research project with an advertising. Collaborative research projects may also result in work placements for these students either as part or following the research project.

Further opportunities for research projects with external partners might arise from ongoing research collaborations with, e. g. the National Gallery, Siobhan Davies Dance, Sadler's Wells theatre and the Dance Department at Laban Trinity College of Music and Dance. Specific arrangements will be made with external partners depending on their level of involvement and in close collaboration with professional services at Goldsmiths, in particular career support services and collaborative provision.

We are currently establishing a working relationship with the Max-Planck Institute of Empirical Aesthetics in Frankfurt, Germany. This might involve research internships/work placements in Germany with a view to providing opportunities for a PhD in creative or aesthetic science. Throughout this process we will closely collaborate with career support services and collaborative provision at Goldsmiths. Finally, we will invite guest speakers from external partners to the invited speaker seminar series.

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](#).